

# Dhaka Day by Day

## In League with the Sun

by Iftikhar Ahmed Chowdhury



Where electric fans fail, hand-fans begin.

Hashem, a youth in his late teens, was vending hand-fans at Mahakkhal bus terminal. One can notice from his very appearance that he has weathered a good number of years in the streets of the city and was occupied in trade of the similar sort or the other. His expertise at selling these manually operated fans, which are more commonly known as, *Tal Patar Punkha* speaks for his experience.

Hashem, knows well when and where to sell his hand-fans. In the infernal heat of the summer, he rushes off to the long route bus terminals and also sometimes to the Kamalapur railway station to sell his commodities. "At these places, you see, people get onboard a bus or a train and wait impatiently for the vehicle to get rolling. But they are usually delayed and sometimes the passenger have to wait in the unbearable heat and sweat; heavily for a good length of time. I mostly take advantage of such situations. I go and inform them the tragic reality that they may even have to wait longer. Then I approach them to buy my fans. The trick usually works and on such days when the heat and humidity is at its zenith, bus or train schedules fail, people sweat in this oppressive heat — my business runs unthinkably well."

But Hashem does not feel any remorse in tricking people into buying his fans, as he philosophically utters, "Aren't we all tricking some people in some way? In this world you have to master over others to sustain. For us, who are poor, it is all the more applicable. Because we are the ones who have always been exploited." Again he defends his position by saying, "I am not tricking people into buying something utterly useless. It may become handy at any moment when you are betrayed by

the power supply. And what is more, not everyone has an electric fan or an air conditioner at home. Those who cannot afford electric fans depend greatly on fans of this sort, which are damn cheap and also manually operated."

Although it is a great profession, as Hashem evaluates, "It is not up to man to decide my fate, but up to the sun..." Yet it is very much a seasonal trade. During the off season Hashem remains a full time rickshaw puller. But as he suffers from an acute asthma, it becomes difficult to take the strain. However, with little or no academic qualifications to his credit, he is left with no other choices. In a rainy day he stays back at home and finds something useful to do.

Even though, the average turnover from selling *punkhas* is not adequate, Hashem seems to have a fondness for this profession. "If I could have traded *punkhas* all the year round, I would have been much happier. But it is impossible. The fan that sells for Taka six now, would not even sell for Taka two in the off season. I earn approximately Taka seventy to hundred daily from selling fans. But if I continue, my income would be reduced by fifty to sixty per cent during the off season."

Talking to Hashem it was clear that he took considerable pride in his profession. He possibly felt pride in the fact that people are being benefited or being temporarily relieved from the unbearable heat by the hand-fans provided by him. Or perhaps, his pride lay elsewhere, that, it is the sun, not man that decides his fate. We never knew the actual reason which transformed this destitute into a proud tradesman of *Tal Patar Punkha*.

# Gen Wasiuddin

## Tribute to a man of honour

by Mahfuz Anam

LI Gen Khawaja Wasiuddin died of a massive heart attack in Dhaka on Tuesday evening. He was 72. Born in the Nawab family of Dhaka, unlike his peers, he chose a military career for himself and joined The Royal Indian Military College in Deradun in mid 1930s. He was commissioned in 1940 and was adjusted as the best cadet in entire India. After partition in 1947 he opted for Pakistan and gradually rose in rank and stature through his dedication to the army and sheer hard work. The Bengali soldiers and officers, very few in number, found in him a great source of support and inspiration. According to those who served under him, Gen Wasiuddin made a great contribution in countering the Pakistani propaganda that Bengalis were not a fighting race and as such were not cut out to be good soldiers or officers.



During the fifties and sixties he encouraged more and more Bengalis to join the Pakistan army and inculcated a sense of pride and belief in Bengali nationalism among the officers and soldiers. After Bangla was adopted as a national language in Pakistan, Gen Wasiuddin insisted, and made the Pakistani military high command agree, to administering Oath to new Bengali recruits in Bangla. Gen Wasiuddin introduced the practice of addressing the Bengali soldiers in Bangla and he himself used to do so especially during ceremonial events. Without Gen Wasiuddin's initiative in this matter it would not have been possible to spread the use of Bangla in Pakistani army, which the latter continued to treat as a regional language even after it was accepted as one of the two state languages of Pakistan.

His encouragement to the Bengali soldiers to be proud of their distinct identity and insistence on the use of Bangla within the armed forces contributed significantly to rise of the nationalist feelings among Bengali soldiers during the sixties, and which resulted in the revolt of the Bengali soldiers when the liberation war started in 1971.

Unable to participate in our war of independence as he, along with thousands of other

officers and soldiers, was detained in Pakistan, he nevertheless continued to voice his support for the cause of Bangladesh and protest the atrocities of the Pakistani army. As the Chairman of the Committee of Stranded Bengalis in Pakistan, he worked tirelessly to keep up the morale of the camp inmates and work for their speedy repatriation to independent Bangladesh.

After returning to Bangladesh he retired from active service and took up diplomatic assignment as the Bangladesh's ambassador to Kuwait and then to France. He was later appointed as the country's Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

As a soldier and as a leader of troops Gen Wasiuddin commanded tremendous respect from all those who served under him. A modest man, a quiet man, he was above all a man of tremendous dignity. While others scrambled for favours and jockeyed for pivotal posts, Gen Wasiuddin waited to be asked to render whatever service the leaders of the time thought fit for him to do.

As a soldier in the traditional mould, Gen Wasiuddin was a great believer in the Constitutional process and the position of the army within it. His lifelong dedication was to be a professional soldier and to build a professional army. It is a great pity that independent Bangladesh could not put to best use the experience and expertise of this honourable soldier. May his soul rest in peace.

# Polytech teachers' strike passes third day

By Staff Correspondent

The third day of indefinite strike called by the Bangladesh Polytechnic Teachers' Association (BPTA) was observed in all the 20 polytechnic institutes in the country Wednesday.

The strike was called demanding realisation of long-pending demand of the polytechnic teachers. The demands include, promoting the Instructors, Workshop Supervisors, Lecturers and Assistant Professors to upper posts, releasing them from appearing examinations to get the senior scale, regularisation of the services of the teachers appointed on adhoc basis, providing scholarships to the students in enhanced rate and introduction of extra shifts for extending the opportunity of technical education.

# 120 arrested in city

Police arrested 120 people in the last 24 hours from different parts of the city on various charges, reports UNB.

Of the arrested, seven were wanted criminals, three were charged with burglary cases, six for theft, six on other charges, one under the vehicles Act, four under Act 54 of the criminal procedure code and 93 under the DMP ordinance.

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# Dance performer dead

Dance performer Manzur Chowdhury died of cardiac arrest at his Rampura residence in Dhaka yesterday morning. He was 52, reports BSS.

The deceased was buried at Azimpur graveyard yesterday following his Namaz-e-Janaza held at the Shilpakala Academy premises.

Prof Jahanara Begum expressed her deep consolation to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for the peace of the departed soul.

Abeda Banu, wife of late Maulana Abdus Sabar (chota bhatya peer sahib) died of a heart attack Tuesday at her Shantinagar residence in Dhaka. She was 75, reports BSS.

After Namaz-e-Janaza at the Shantinagar peer sahib residence she was buried at the Azimpur new graveyard.

She left behind four sons, three daughters and a large number of relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death.

Eminent social worker and businessman Abdul Halim Choudhury died of old age complications at his Nayapalitan residence in Dhaka Wednesday morning, family sources said. He was 80, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, five sons, one daughter and a large number of relations, friends and well-wishers to mourn his death.

# Death anniversary

The fifth death anniversary of Chandipad Chakraborty, an eminent homeopath and writer, will be observed today.

The late Chakraborty played a pioneering role in the homeopathy research, preparation and application of homeopathic medicine in this country. He earned fame at home and abroad when he conducted a scientific study on Haniman's Organon (6th edition) followed by successful application of the findings way back in 1954.

Born in Brahmanbaria, Chakraborty was a contributor to national newspapers on literature and homeopathy, and authored numerous books on homeopathy.

# Stern UN steps sought to end human rights violation in Bosnia

Speakers at a seminar in Dhaka Tuesday appealed to the international fora including the United Nations to take more effective steps towards ending the on-going severe human rights violation in Bosnia, reports BSS.

They said the emergence of Bosnia as an independent and sovereign country was a reality and urged the United Nations and other bodies like OIC and NAM to chalk out more meaningful measures for stopping the heinous atrocities on the Bosnian Muslims.

The seminar titled "Violation of human rights in Bosnia" and held at the National Press Club auditorium was organised by the centre for human rights and third world affairs.

Prof Emajuddin Ahmad of Dhaka University chaired the seminar while Dr Tarek Shamshur Rahman of Jahangirnagar University read out the main paper.

Malaysian High Commissioner in Bangladesh Ahmad Fuzi Haji Abdul Razak, Barrister Abdul Razak and Editor of Bangladesh Times Mahbub Anam took part in the discussion on the paper.

Besides, Ambassador of Turkey Ahmet H Ermisuglu, Ambassador of Egypt Kamal Al-Milgee and Councillor of Pakistani embassy in Bangladesh Jamshed Badar, were among others, present.

Ahmad Fuzi Haji Abdul Razak termed the present situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina as the worst ever human rights violation since the World War II. He said the Bosnian Muslims were being mercilessly subjected to the gross violation of the most precarious of all human rights — the right to live.

Quoting available facts and figures, the Malaysian High Commissioner said more than 60,000 Muslims in Bosnia were killed and thousands of women and young girls were raped by the Serbians.

Haji Abdul Razak also said that homes and mosques were destroyed, property confiscated and the entire Muslim community was wiped out

from their homeland of Bosnia which he termed as an act of utter shame in the civilised Europe.

Referring to his government's role in helping the Bosnian Muslims, Abdul Razak said Malaysia had severed diplomatic relations with Belgrade and applied the sanctions imposed by the United Nations. "We have joined others in extending political support to ensure the restoration of basic human rights of the beleaguered citizens in Bosnia-Herzegovina," he said.

The Malaysian High Commissioner also said that his government had already allocated a bungalow in Kuala Lumpur for establishing an office of the representative of Bosnia.

# Mahalaya Sept 26

Mahalaya, the invocation to Goddess Durga, will be celebrated in the city as elsewhere in the country on September 26, reports BSS.

Mahalaya marks the beginning of the fortnight-long programme of Durga Puja with the "Agamani Bara" which then culminates into the puja celebrations for five days from the sixth day of the fortnight.

The five-day Durga Puja, the greatest religious festival of the Bangalee Hindu community, will begin on October 2.

In the city, the programme of Mahalaya, organised by Mahanagar Sarbajatin Puja Committee, includes recitation from the Holy Chandī book followed by devotional songs.

The programme begins at 6 am at the Dhakeswari Mandir Melangan premises in Dhaka.

# Chehlum

Chehlum of Jamiruddin Ahmed, formerly Secretary of Ministry of Land Administration and Land Reforms, will be held tomorrow Friday after Aar prayers at the residence of the deceased at 2/8 Str Syed Road, Block A, Mohammadpur, reports UNB.

# Ahsan Manzil Museum earns Tk 23,400 in two days

Eleven thousand seven hundred people have visited the Ahsan Manzil Museum during the last two days, reports BSS.

As a result the museum authorities have earned Taka 23,400 by ticket selling.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia formally inaugurated the glorious Ahsan Manzil Museum on Sunday last.



# Thursday

- 5-00 Opening announcement
- Al-Quran
- Programme summary
- 5-10 News in Bangla
- 5-20 Recitation from the Geeta
- 5-25 Cartoon show: Peter Pan the Pirates
- 6-00 Deah O Biggyan
- 6-30 Jibaner Alo
- 9-05 School Debate
- 8-00 News in Bangla
- 8-30 Drama of the week
- 10-00 News in English
- 10-30 Film show: Family
- 11-30 Khabar/The News
- 11-40 Friday's programme summary
- 11-45 Closing

# Goods worth Tk 8.5 lakh seized in Rajshahi

RAJSHAHI, Sept 23: Members of Bangladesh Rifles seized here today smuggled goods worth Taka about eight and a half lakh, reports BSS.

# Rapport MD off to Madras

M Mosharraf Hossain, Managing Director, Rapport Bangladesh Limited left for Madras to attend the national convention of the Institute of Management Consultants of India, says a press release.

The convention will be held on September 25-26, at the Welcomegroup Park Sheraton Hotel, Madras.

He will present a paper on 'Prospects of Investment in Bangladesh' at the convention.

Hossain is the President of the Bangladesh Association of Management Consultants and District Governor Nominee 1994-95 of the Rotary International District 3280 Bangladesh.

# Weather

## Temperature may fall

By Staff Correspondent

Temporary light or moderate rain or shower may occur at a few places over Chittagong and Khulna divisions and weather is likely to remain mainly dry over Rajshahi division during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Thursday).

The Met office forecasts, day temperature is likely to fall by one to two degree Celsius over the southern part of the country and one degree over the northern part.

It also forecasts, weather is likely to improve within a week.

The maximum temperature of 35.7 degree Celsius was reported from Ishurdi yesterday (Wednesday) and the minimum of 20.6 degree was reported from Majdee court.

The sun sets today at 5.53 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.48 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	9am	6pm
Dhaka	34.2	26.3	67	85
Chittagong	31.3	26.0	83	97
Rajshahi	35.3	24.5	72	73
Khulna	31.8	26.6	84	85
Dinajpur	34.0	24.4	82	73
Sylhet	34.6	23.6	74	78
Cox's Bazar	30.4	25.5	77	85
Barisal	29.2	27.0	93	92

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