

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Those Gossip-mongering Weeklies

by Aasha M Amin & Sharier Khan

'God's curse on Bush'!  
'Khaleda Zia in deep trouble'!  
BNP goes to JP's court?  
General amnesty to Ershad?  
'Ershad to be hanged in jail'!

If you have gone into a state of mild shock then that is just what these headlines intend to do. Although most of us will never admit it, it is true that we are all suckers for a little gossip now and then to colour our dull, uneventful days. To cater to this peculiar trait, a different type of newspaper can be seen in the streets of Dhaka. These are registered Bengali weekly newspapers that take sensationalism to the extreme. Bold headlines of the government in a state of immediate collapse, sex scandals about prominent figures and amazing events that defy all laws of nature and logic splash the pages. The idea is to shock, amuse and entertain in the cheapest possible way — at just two taka to be exact.

The language used, one may add, is raw and crude enough to make one's hair stand on end — and stay that way for days to come. Take for example, the headline that declares that "certain offspring of dogs" (when translated, this is a favourite Bangla abuse) eat butter. Now while this suspiciously sounds like a political invective hurled at some party or the other, the story is literally what the headlines say. It is about some dog breeders in Britain who, for reasons untold, have decided to feed their darling pets with butter. The fate of the dogs after such high doses of cholesterol or even the source of the news is, of course, left as a mystery.

Rarely does one find these weeklies at newsstands. Hawkers sell these gossip-mongering papers mainly at public meetings and busy bus stands such as Sadar, Fulbaria, Farmgate, Shat Rasta and Sadarghat. Bus passengers with bored expressions on their faces as they envisage a two to four hour long bone-shaking ride, represent the target market for these weeklies. These are people whose lives are dull and miserable enough to make their eyes gleam with interest at the sight of these papers. The content has enough spice and juice to revitalise the dulled nerves and make the otherwise unbearable bus ride at least interesting. To this, one may add that the hawkers has something for every one. He may carry BNP, Jatiya Party and Awami League supporting papers at the same time so that the reader can take his pick.

These gossip weeklies, however, are not a new phenomenon and have played a prominent role in peoples lives ever since one can remember. After Sheikh Mujib's assassination in 1975, for example, a weekly called "Khabar" was the first paper during that period, to use

the name "Bangabandhu" which had by then almost become a taboo word. During Sheikh Mujib's time Maulana Bhashani brought out another weekly 'Satya Katha' which was used to heavily criticize the Mujib government. Says an observer, the stories were often written regardless of authenticity but made a significant impact since the paper was so widely circulated.

At present, these weeklies display a particular, consistent pattern. The lead story is often an announcement of the fall of the BNP government and success of the Awami League or vice versa depending on which party the paper supports. The middle section of the front page will be about the eternal battle between Bush and Saddam Hussein with Bush portrayed as an incarnation of Satan himself. The lower half of the page will be devoted to a lurid sex scandal — the favourite being Ershad and his colourful love life in the form of the president, the thief, his wife and his lovers. The back page will invariably have an attention drawer of a sexy Indian actress and snippets of all kinds of absurdities.

A distinctive concept these weeklies try to prove is that headings and stories can be mutually exclusive. An earth-shaking headline, for example, says, 'Khaleda Zia faces the greatest jeopardy in her lifetime' with a sub heading of 'where are all the arms coming from?' The contents of the story however, does nothing to justify such screamers. It is just a historical essay on how the BNP government came to power, its success, glory, etcetera etcetera. 'God's curse on Bush' does not say anything about the wrath of a Supreme Being, it merely states that Bill Clinton is ahead of Bush in the public polls. 'First lady loses honour' is actually a mention of the sequel to 'Golapi Ekhan Trene' called 'Golapi Ekhan Dhakae' that has a lurid and most likely, distasteful rape scene.

But these weeklies also have exclusive stories such as 'a secret meeting between the Jamaat-e-Islami party and 'Ram mandir wala' (or BJP), a scoop that even our noted Kuldip Nayer seems to have missed! And for those readers who are a little weary of political gossip there are refreshing little snippets to titillate their senses. Lifted stories of sex changes, women giving birth to a dozens of babies at the same time and men becoming pregnant are often meshed together to create a "maximum shock effect". Finally, for comic relief, there are little bits of trivia such as a news story titled 'Shoe beating' describing how a thief was thrashed with somebody's shoe and another small item that declares how mosquitoes prefer to bite women confirming the belief that girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice! No matter how they are received.



Chiefs of Staff of the three services and others praying for the salvation of the departed soul after the namaj-e-janaza of Lt General Khwaja Wasiuddin (Retd) at the Dhaka Cantonment Central Mosque premises on Thursday. Story on Page 1. — ISPR photo

### Wasiuddin's death condoled

Members of the advisory committee and executive committee of Bangabir Omsany Smriti Parishad at a joint meeting in Dhaka Thursday expressed their deep condolences at the death of Lt Gen (retd) Khwaja Wasiuddin, reports BSS.

They said the country had lost an able commander and a diplomat at the death of Khwaja Wasiuddin who was also an advisor of Bangabir Omsany Smriti Parishad. The speakers also recalled with gratitude the role of General Wasiuddin in organising the East Bengal Regiment, a parishad press release said.

They prayed for the peace of the departed soul and expressed their sympathy to the members of the bereaved family.

### Mahalaya tomorrow

Mahalaya, the invocation to goddess Durga, will be celebrated in the city as elsewhere in the country tomorrow (Saturday), reports BSS.

Mahalaya marks the beginning of the fortnight-long programme of Durga Puja with the 'agamani barta,' 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 Bangladeshi Hindu community, will begin on October 2.

In the city, the programme of Mahalaya, organised by Mahanagar Sarbajman Puja Committee, includes recitation from the holy Chandri book followed by devotional songs.

### NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES

The containerised cargo ex. M. V. Piyabhum V-249 and M. V. Kota Bintang V-KBT 33 from Bangkok, ex. M. V. Ocean Sirius V-44B from Karachi, ex. M. V. Genova V-06386 from Keelung, have been relayed to M. V. "NEW GENLORD" V-8392, Import Rotation No. 708/92, is due to arrive Chittagong on or about 26.9.92 from Singapore.

Consignees are requested to take delivery of their cargo from FCL containers within 5 days free time from the date of landing and if cargo not cleared within 45 days will be guided by Customs Act.

### BIRDS BANGLADESH AGENCIES LTD.

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### BJMC Advertisement Tender Notice

Man-made fibre pollutes environment: Use natural fibre — Jute

Hafiz Jute Mills Ltd., Bara Aulia, Chittagong invites sealed quotations for supply of (1) Wages Sheet and other Printing Materials and (2) Tube Light on free mills store delivery basis.

Tenders will be received up to 2.00 PM on 30.9.92 and will be opened at 2.30 PM on the same day. Tender documents with full details of our requirement, specifications will be available (excepting opening date) from the Controller of Accounts and Finance, BJMC, Adamjee Court, Motijheel C/A., Dhaka, General Manager (A&F), BJMC (CZ), Sattar Chamber, 99, Agrabad C/A., Chittagong & Dy. General Manager (A&F), of the mills on payment of Tk. 40/= per set for Sl. No. 1 & Tk. 20/= per set for Sl. No. 2.

BJMC : 972 DFP (BA) 9262-21/9 G-1191

### Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority

141-143, Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka-2

### Tender Notice for Appointment of Surveyor

Director (P&S), BIWTA, BIWTA Bhaban (1st Floor), 141-143, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 invites sealed tenders from the bonafide and experienced surveyors to survey the imported goods of this authority as and when required at Dhaka, Chittagong, Narayanganj, Barisal, Khulna and other places in the country. The Tenderers should quote their rate for survey work and other charges (if any) and detail terms and conditions in their tenders for appointment as surveyor. Besides this, they have to submit photo copies of the trade licence, experience certificate and registration certificate from the Controller of Insurance alongwith their tenders. Otherwise, their tenders will be treated as cancelled. The successful tenderers shall have to submit necessary Performance Security for Tk. 1,000/= (Taka one thousand) only in the shape of Bank Guarantee in favour of BIWTA from any Schedule Bank of Bangladesh (refundable on satisfactory completion of the work) before signing the contract. The tenders will be received up to 12-00 Noon on 15-10-92 and opened at 12-15 PM on the same day in the office of the Director (P&S).

The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

PR-118/92 DFP(G)16860-1/99 Chawdhury Mohd. A K Azad G-1186 Director (P&S)

### UNESCO to provide all sorts of help

## Creation of separate division for primary, mass education lauded

Creation of a separate division for primary and mass education in Bangladesh was highly appreciated in the just concluded international conference on education sponsored by UNESCO in Geneva.

It was stated by Education Minister Jamruddin Sircar, who led the four-member Bangladesh delegation to the conference, while talking to BSS at Zia International Airport after his return in Dhaka Thursday.

The biennial conference on education held in Geneva from September 14 to 19, was participated by the education ministers of the UNESCO member countries.

The Education Minister, who also headed a three-member Bangladesh delegation to the 36th general conference of International Atomic Energy now being held in Vienna, said the UNESCO conference lauded the efforts of

Bangladesh government to ensure education for all by the turn of the century.

UNESCO Director General Federico Mayor, who met specially with the heads of delegation of nine countries including Bangladesh during the conference, told the Bangladesh Education Minister that the UNESCO would provide all sorts of assistance in fulfilling the country's programme of eradication of illiteracy by the year 2000.

The UNESCO chief executive put a high value on the supervision of the newly set up division for primary and mass education by the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia herself, Sircar said.

Mayor informed the Bangladesh Education Minister that Assistant Director General of the UNESCO, C N Power would visit Bangladesh in next December to have discussions with the officials how quickly

and efficiently the country can reach its target of education for all.

The UNESCO Director General would be visiting Bangladesh following the visit of Power, Sircar said.

The Bangladesh Education Minister, who was elected vice-Chairman of the commission of the international conference on education, presided over the first and the concluding sessions of the conference.

Sircar made a statement at the plenary session of the conference on September 15.

The education minister was also elected vice-president of the general conference of international atomic energy agency. The conference which began in the Austrian capital on September 21 will continue till September 25.

He presided over the first session of the conference on the opening day and gave his speech on September 22.

### World Tourism Day Sept 27

World Tourism Day, September 27, 1992, will be celebrated in Bangladesh, says a press release.

The theme of this year's tourism day is 'Tourism: a factor of growing social and economic solidarity and of encounter between peoples,' chosen by General Assembly of World Tourism Organisation.

To observe the day Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation has chalked out an elaborate programme.

The programme includes holding of seminar, offering a week-long 20 per cent reduction on accommodation

### Arrest of Mustafiz condemned

By Staff Correspondent

A meeting of the journalists and employees of Dainik Rupali Thursday condemned the arrest of Mustafizur Rahman, MP, who is also the editor of the daily.

The meeting viewed that the arrest was made with political malice and with the intention to halt the publication of Dainik Rupali.

The meeting also decided that if Mustafiz is not released by Saturday.

### Weather

## Moderate rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Temporary light to moderate rain or shower may occur at many places over Khulna division, a few places over Chittagong division and at one or two places over Rajshahi division during the next 36 hours commencing 6 pm Thursday.

Meteorological office forecasts day temperature may remain nearly unchanged during the period over the country.

Meanwhile, most part of the country experienced rain bringing some relief to the hot spell of the past few days.

The highest rainfall was recorded in Mymensingh at 32 mm in 12 hours till 6 pm Thursday.

Ishurdi had 24 mm of rain, Khepupara 15, Tangail 14, Kutubdia 10, Chittagong and Sitakunda 7 mm each, Bora 4 mm, Satkhira and Matjicourt 2 mm each and Jessore 1 mm during the period.

Patuakhali had 28 mm, Madaripur 7, Feni 4 and Chandpur 3 mm on the day.

The sun sets today (Friday) at 5: 52 pm and rises tomorrow (Saturday) at 5:49 am.

Temperature and humidity recorded at important cities and towns on Thursday were:

Cities/Towns Temperature in Degree Celsius/ Humidity in Percentange

	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	31.0	26.6	66	75
Chittagong	32.6	25.0	78	85
Rajshahi	32.7	25.0	92	82
Khulna	31.0	26.2	85	77
Khepupara	31.2	24.0	89	92
Cox's Bazar	32.3	25.0	77	82
Sylhet	32.0	22.8	73	85
Mymensingh	32.4	26.6	83	96
Dinajpur	33.8	24.3	76	83

### DU award giving ceremony Oct 1

By DU Correspondent  
All classes of Dhaka University will remain suspended on October 1 to enable the teachers, students to attend a function to distribute different awards pending for a long time.

DU syndicate at an emergency meeting Thursday with Vice-Chancellor Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah in the chair decided to suspend the classes on the occasion of the award giving ceremony.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to attend the function as chief guest and distribute the awards, medals and certificates.

The meeting observed that all quarters should cooperate to make the function a success.

### Withdrawal of enhanced price of newsprint demanded

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Sangbadptra Agents Samity and Chittagong Sangbadptra Hawkers League in two separate statements demanded withdrawal of enhanced price on newsprint.

The president of Bangladesh Sangbadptra Agent Samity, Chittagong branch, Md Ibrahim and General Secretary, Mohammad Ishaque in their statement said the higher price of newsprint will affect education as well as the newspaper industry.

They also regretted that although the government provides subsidies to different sectors, the newsprint mills does not get it.

On the otherhand, the president of Chittagong Sangbadptra Hawkers League, Tozammel Ahmed and General Secretary, A H M R Amin in their statement said the increased price would affect the subscribers and hawkers adversely.

They also demanded the withdrawal of the enhanced price.

## Govt to fulfil basic five needs, says Nazmul Huda

Information Minister Nazmul Huda Thursday called upon the union parishad chairman to motivate people in their respective areas to the use of sanitary latrines for preventing diarrhoea, reports BSS.

Addressing as the chief guest at a seminar held in observance of the 'Diarrhoea prevention and social awareness day-92' at the local thana auditorium, he asked the chairmen to take up extensive publicity programme in this regard.

The directorate of health and the UNICEF jointly organised the seminar which was also addressed by J K Boral, Zafar Ahmad Chowdhury, M A Sattar, Sirajuddin Ahmad, Dr M A Majid, Dr Saidur Rahman, Ekhlassuddin Ahmad and Abdul Jalil.

The Information Minister said the present government was implementing country-wide programme against diarrhoeal and gastro-enteritis diseases to ensure health services for all. The present democratic government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is pledge bound to fulfil the basic five needs including health for all," he said.

Huda sought cooperation of all to help create mass awareness against diarrhoeal and gastroenteritis diseases all over the country and build a peaceful and clean atmosphere for living.

He said various international organisations including UNICEF were extending their cooperation towards implementation of government's health programme all over the country.

The information minister stressed the need for strengthening the supervisory work of the thana health officers and field level health workers in this regard.

Earlier, the minister inaugurated a colourful rally to mark the anti-diarrhoeal campaign at the thana sadar. He also inaugurated an exhibition

of cheap priced sanitary wares in Dhaka and gave an ambulance and an X-ray machine to the local health complex.

Addressing the function, the information minister said the government had promulgated the anti-terrorism ordinance with a view to uprooting terrorism from the public life.

"No innocent people will be punished under the new ordinance but the those involved in terrorism will get stern punishment," he said and hoped that terrorism would be removed from the society for ever. He said a sigh of relief had been restored in the minds of the people following the promulgating of the ordinance.

The information Minister also inaugurated the newly established Latakholia junior high school in Joypara Union.

### Waz mahfil

A Waz mahfil was organized by Gausia Committee Bangladesh and Bangladesh Islami Jubo Sena Thursday at Uttar Pahartali, Chittagong.

It was presided over by Mufti Mozaffar Ahmed. The president of Bangladesh Sangbadptra Agent Samity, Mohammad Ishaque was the chief guest.

The mahfil discussed different aspects of the life of Prophet Mohammad (SM).

### New librarian of British Council

B K Saha has recently taken over as the librarian of the British Council at Dhaka. He succeeded Abdulla al Abedin who retired after 33 years of service, reports BSS.

After doing M A in Library Science from the Dhaka University Saha joined the British Council in 1983. He soon made his mark. He was posted as the audio visual librarian in 1986. He had his training in the UK and Bombay. A bachelor Saha hails from Narayanganj.