

Dhaka Day by Day

The Mistri Syndrome

by S Bari



They had done it: after 15 years of saving every taka and searching high and low, they found their ideal house. It consisted of two bedrooms, a sitting room, and a closet that the advertisement had euphemistically termed "a kitchen". There was even a garden large enough to stand in with both feet.

It was time to repaint, scrub, and generally do all they could to pretend this was actually a house that had passed the City Corporation test and not the brainchild of a vengeful engineering student who had flunked his finals.

For this mission, the expertise of that specialist was called for: the *mistri*. Accordingly, two head *mistris* were appointed. One would strip the walls of that subtle shade of lime green so dear to the Bengali home decorator and repaint them a colour that did not cause young children to have nightmares.

The other would re-work the plumbing inwards of the house, which at present were geared so that in order to take a shower in the bathroom down the hall you had to turn on the tap in the kitchen sink.

The two *mistris*, however, soon need three assistants each: one to do the work while the boss gave orders, one to hand him the tools, and one to take tea breaks. As things slowly progressed, the third assistant drank so much tea the homeowner contemplated moving to Sylhet to cut costs.

The painter had given an estimate. An advance was handed over. As the days turned to weeks and the lime green stayed on the walls, more advances were paid. One day the owner sat down and added it all up and found that the equivalent of the defence budget had been paid out in advances.

He discovered the *mistri* on the verandah, scratching his head and gazing contentedly at the 4-foot square area that had so far been honoured with paint. He shook his head

mournfully at the mention of such large sums of money.

The 120-taka extra were for paintbrushes. No, he did not have any brushes of his own. Every time he painted a house, he bought brand new brushes. Over his 15 years as a *mistri*, he had surely accumulated an absolute Louvre of paint brushes.

The 500-taka was because of the cement. So what if the house already had walls? They had knocked out a little bit, just a tiny bit, in their enthusiasm for removing the paint.

So it went on. Taka 120 for the turpentine, 500 for brick, 240 for coming to work on a rainy day, 35 taka for even showing up. All this made the employer wonder what the estimate had covered. Oh, that was for the privilege of hiring them.

The *mistri* is no amateur. He has a code of ethics. The second article of this code is: never reveal where the money goes. The first article is: be absent when looked for and present when unwanted.

The first part of this article guaranteed that when the bathtub faucet spontaneously started gushing like a rig that has struck oil, the water *mistri* boss was away visiting his in-laws in Barisal. The assistant had never laid eyes on a water faucet before.

Conversely, the second part of the article explained why *mistris* could pop out of the woodwork whenever the family least wanted them.

If the bell rang at 6.30 am on a Friday morning, it was the *mistri* asking for 30 taka that he needed urgently. This was the same man who thought sunrise on a workday morning meant 10.30.

The third article of the code states that: no matter what you do, the employer will always need you. Two days after the house was completed, the electric line went out.

Children's Rights week begins today

Children's Rights Week will begin today throughout the country for implementation of the UN convention on the rights of the children, reports BSS.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to inaugurate the week in the Osmany Memorial Hall in the capital at 10 am.

Social Welfare Ministry has already chalked out elaborate programmes to observe the week in a befitting manner.

The programmes include children's rally, discussions, seminars, painting exhibitions, children's procession, cultural function, film shows, children's congress and submission of memorandum to the Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad by children.

A cultural programme will be held on the first day of the week at 5 pm at the Ziaur Rahman Auditorium of Bangladesh Shishu Academy.

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda will be present as chief guest.

Khaleda's message

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon all to be more responsible and careful to the children to help build a happy and prosperous Bangladesh.

In a message on the eve of Children's Rights Week, she said the government has undertaken different programmes as it attaches much importance to the neglected and distressed children.

The Prime Minister said, there cannot be success of any programme without sincere support and cooperation of the masses.

Bangladesh is a signatory to the UN charter of children's rights through which it is pledge-bound to ensure and protect rights of the children, she said.



Workers of W Rahman Jute Mills on hunger strike in front of National Press Club yesterday, demanding reopening of the mill. — Star photo

Tk 8 lakh US grant for narcotics control project

The US government will donate 20,000 dollar (approximately Taka eight lakh) to the government of Bangladesh for a project of narcotics control activities, reports BSS.

A letter of agreement was signed yesterday between the two governments in this regard. Azizur Rahman, Joint Secretary (Administration) of Home Ministry signed the agreement while Lee O. Coldren, the Deputy Chief of US mission represented his government.

The project is designed to support Bangladesh government to eliminate the illicit trafficking of narcotics within Bangladesh and the transit through contiguous territorial waters.

The project would help Bangladesh increase capability to suppress the consumption and trans-shipment of illicit narcotics.

The fund would be used for

procurement of telecommunications photographic equipments and supplies, tape recorders and programme administration support required for narcotics control activities.

The length of the project is planned for the fiscal year 1992. This is the first step and the United States would continue to grant funding support for narcotics control activities, said the US representative.

The letter of agreement signed yesterday was the implementation of the commitment by the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State and chief of the Bureau of South Asian Affairs Sichen Siv to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury during his visit to Bangladesh in mid September.

New police station demanded

CHITTAGONG, Sept 28: A meeting of the Karnaphuli thana implementation committee held here Sunday demanded immediate setting up of a new Karnaphuli Police Station comprising 11 unions of west Patiya, reports BSS.

Held at the committee's temporary office here the meeting was presided over by Principal Abu Taher Chowdhury and addressed, among others, by Osman Gani, Mazammel Haq, Nurul Absar and Selim Chowdhury.

The meeting demanded completion of the Karnaphuli bridge reconstruction work, check the erosion of Sikalbaha canal and building up of cyclone shelters in the area.

It also decided to hold a representative meeting on October 5, to take an action programme in support of their demand.

Chhatra Kallyan Samity submits memo to PM

Bangladesh Chhatra Kallyan Samity Monday submitted a memorandum to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, demanding restoration of academic atmosphere and security of life on university campuses and in other educational institutions, reports UNB.

The memorandum contained a 7-point proposal and a six-point programme aimed at cleansing educational arena of political violence, terrorism and anarchy.

5 JU teachers hurt in road mishap

By JU Correspondent

Five Jahangirnagar University teachers were injured when a university bus carrying teachers overturned near Montpur in the city yesterday.

Abdulla Al Farooque, Lecturer of the Pharmacy Department was admitted to the Orthopedics Hospital in a critical condition while four others were released after first aid.

The incident occurred when the campus going teachers' bus (Dhaka Metro 02-0008) hit the road divider to avoid collision with a rickshaw in the rainy morning yesterday at Montpur under Sector 10 of Mirpur.

'Posterity should know correct history of Liberation War'

Communications Minister Oli Ahmed said the country's future generation should know the correct and undistorted history of the Liberation War, reports UNB.

He was inaugurating the 18th annual rally of 'Kendrio Phulkuri Aashar' at Shaheed Ziaur Rahman auditorium of Bangladesh Shishu Academy yesterday.

The Minister said, the next generation will not excuse the seniors if they fail to present the country's folk culture, nationalism, history and heritage correctly.

"We all should help to build themselves capable of shouldering the future leadership of the country" the Minister said.

Presided over by the President of the organisation Sanaullah Noori, the inaugural session was also addressed by Zahurul Abedin Azad, Mahabul-Huq and Hassan Mortuza.

Sixth Happy Birthday

to



TRINA



The Daily Azad journalists, employees staged token hunger strike at National Press Club yesterday demanding payments of arrear salaries. — Star photo

French frigate in Chittagong

CHITTAGONG, Sept 28: A frigate of the French Navy Commandant Ducuing arrived here today on a six-day goodwill visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

During her stay in the country, the commanding officer of the visiting ship will call on the Mayor of the Chittagong City Corporation, the local area commander of the Bangladesh Army, the commodore commanding Chittagong, the commodore commanding BN

Flotilla, the commodore superintendent BN dockyard and the air officer commanding of the local airbase.

Other activities of the visiting ship will include receptions in honour of the ship, friendly football, volleyball and basketball matches with the BN Flotilla teams and visit to the naval training establishments in Chittagong.

She has a complement of 8 officers and 86 sailors.

'Danga' awarded special prize in Pyongyang film festival

A Bangladeshi movie "Danga" has been awarded special prize at the recently held Pyongyang film festival, reports BSS.

A film directors' association press release said the movie, directed by Kazi Hyat was nominated the "Afro-Asian Solidarity Federation" for the award.

Dateline Rajshahi

401 projects undertaken in 9 thanas

RAJSHAHI, Sept 28: A total of 401 projects have been undertaken in nine thanas and City Corporation of the district with an allocation of 754 tonnes of wheat under test relief (TTR) programme, reports BSS.

The projects included reconstruction of roads and embankment tree plantation, renovation of mosques and temples, and re-digging drain, according to an official hand-out. State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain approved the projects at meeting of district TR programme coordination committee held at Rajshahi Circuit House yesterday.

The meeting was attended by Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation Mizanur Rahman

Minu, Azizur Rahman MP, Tazul Islam Farook MP Deputy Commissioner, thana nirbahi officers and other concerned officials.

The State Minister who is the chairman of the district TR committee directed the concerned officials to start the work of the programme had to be ensured with frequent supervision and warned that misappropriation of single grains would not be tolerated.

Kabir Hossain said, every one is accountable for his work as the government wanted to establish an accountable and transparent administration. He called upon the official to carry forward the TR programmes as per guideline with patriotic

Ph D conferred on BUET teacher

A professor of Water Resources Engineering Department, BUET, has been awarded Ph D degree in civil engineering from the University of Strathclyde, UK, reports UNB.

Selina Begum, Assistant Professor of the department is the first female Ph D holder in Civil Engineering in Bangladesh.

Dr Selina completed her thesis supported by Commonwealth Scholarship.

Sonargaon Hotel celebrates World Tourism Day

Sonargaon Hotel on the occasion of World Tourism Day yesterday received the international travellers arriving at Zia International Airport, says a press release.

Andrew McBurnie, General Manager of Sonargaon Hotel was present to personally greet the travellers who were garlanded and offered coconut water.

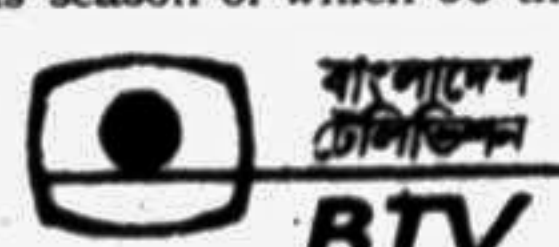
zeal, sincerity and coordinated efforts.

Tree plantation programme

A massive tree plantation programme which was undertaken by Rajshahi City Corporation during this season is nearing completion.

Mizanur Rahman Minu, Mayor, Rajshahi City Corporation Monday planted trees in different graveyards and road island on the eve of last phase of the programme.

Rajshahi City Corporation has planned to plant one lakh saplings in the city area during this season of which 90 thou-



Tuesday

5:00 Opening announcement
Al-Ghuram Programme summary
5:10 News in Bangla
5:20 Recitation from the Geeta
5:25 Cartoon
6:00 Shikhyia Dikhyia
6:30 Mayeder Janiya
7:05 Nazrul Songs
8:00 News in Bangla
8:40 Drama series: Aashay
10:00 News in English
10:30 Film show: Fortunes of War
11:30 Khabar/The news
Wednesday's programme summary
11:45 Closing

Weather

Thundershower likely

By Staff Correspondent

Moderate to moderately heavy rain or thundershower may occur at most places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions and at many places over Chittagong and Khulna divisions while the regions of Tangail, Mymensingh, Sylhet, Rangpur and Bogra may experience heavy rainfall during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Tuesday).

The Met office forecasts, day temperature is likely to rise slightly over the southern part and remain nearly unchanged over the northern part of the country.

It also forecasts, weather is likely to improve within two days.

Most of the places of the country yesterday (Monday) experienced rainfall. The major amounts of rainfall recorded in 12 hours from 6 am to 6 pm were: Rangpur 129 mm, Dinajpur 102 mm, Isardi 77 mm, Sandwip 59 mm, Mymensingh 56 mm, Dhaka 52 and Feni 22mm.

The maximum temperature of 32.3 degree Celsius was reported from Jessore yesterday and the minimum of 21.1 degree from Sylhet.

The sun sets today at 5.48 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.50 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity of some of the major cities and towns of the country yesterday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degree Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	27.5	25.5	92	89
Chittagong	31.8	25.2	85	88
Rajshahi	26.7	24.4	82	85
Khulna	29.8	23.5	97	90
Dinajpur	24.2	22.0	98	89
Cox's Bazar	31.6	25.0	73	77
Sylhet	27.3	21.1	92	98
Barisal	29.5	24.6	90	92

NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES

The containerised cargo ex. M. V. "SUCCESS HOPE" V-12049 from Kobe, Nagoya, Yokohama & Hongkong, ex. M. V. "HOECHST EXPRESS" V-05337 from Hongkong have been relayed to M. V. "FONG SHIN" V-9229, Import Rotation No. 725/92, is due to arrive Chittagong on or about 1.10.1992 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.

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FEEDER VESSEL M.V. NGS EXPRESS VOY 0192 IMP. ROT NO. 709/92 IS EXPECTED TO ARRIVE CHITTAGONG OUTER ANCHORAGE ON OR ABOUT 30.09.92 WITH EVERGREEN CONTAINERS RELAYED AT SINGAPORE EX FOLLOWING VESSEL :-

VESSEL

E. LOADING
0412RE-075

PORT

ANTWERP
HAMBURG
ROTTERDAM
THAMESPORT

CONSIGNEES ARE REQUESTED TO CLEAR THEIR CARGOES IMMEDIATELY ON DISCHARGE. CARGOES UNCLEARED WITHIN 45 DAYS FROM THE ARRIVAL DATE OF THE VESSEL WILL BE DISPOSED WITHOUT ANY REFERENCE TO THE CONSIGNEES, AS PER CUSTOM RULES.

M. V. NGS EXPRESS VOY 0192 WILL ALSO LOAD CONTAINERS UNDER EXP. ROT NO. 703/92 FOR SINGAPORE FOR ONWARD TRANSHIPMENT TO U.S.A. WEST & EAST COASTS, EUROPEAN, U.K. & MEDITERRANEAN PORTS.

FOR DETAILS AND CARGO BOOKINGS
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