

Dhaka Day by Day

Inter-Library Lending

by Fayza Haq



Jody Bales Foote with her son Jackson.

There are many more things out in the media world with which libraries are competing," said Jody Bales Foote, a Fullbright Professor, when asked if she thought that our youth were getting distracted by videos and cassettes and were not reading as much as they used to. "But the libraries are moving in that direction and we now have computerised data bases, computerised catalogues, interactive videos and films, online encyclopedias and journals that you can read on the computer. I do think people are getting out of the habit of reading and teachers and parents have an obligation to control that."

Has she seen the libraries of Bangladesh and what is her impression of them? "I have been to Rajshahi, Chittagong, the BUET, and the Dhaka University. They need additional resources primarily to acquire and preserve books. I realise that there is a lack of funds. Humidity takes its toll on the books. Some of the libraries are better kept than others. Lighting is a problem in the shelf areas. Because of this and the humidity the books are aging much quicker than they should. There is also not sufficient student work area. I have been to the USIS and the British Council libraries too and I find them well equipped with well trained staff and good overall basic collection, specially the USIS," Foote said.

Do they have problems of books not being returned or damaged in the libraries abroad and what can be done to check this? "Theft of library materials and mutilation of library materials is a universal problem. Installing security system, limiting access by closing the stacks, where you have to call for your book and you are not allowed to browse through the shelves can cut down the harm done. The pity is that library things are arranged by subject. If you are looking for a particular book on World War II, if you are able to go to the shelves and retrieve the book, as compared to a staff member doing it, you might find lots of World War II books sitting alongside it. This increases the reading," Foote answered.

What type of library does she think is the ideal? "and ideal library is one where the books are free. In USA in the public libraries you don't have to pay to be a member but you must be a resident of the city. Yet, due to inter library loan system I can be a resident of Carbondale Illinois and can borrow books from any other public library like that of Chicago. This is all free of charge," the library expert replied.

The philosophy of librarianship is to make information available to everyone. Films and videos are high demand items and great care must be taken while using them. As a result some libraries put a restriction to their usage. I think this is a sensible policy. They add

charging fees or restrict the loan period from a day to a week," Foote added.

Could she suggest some remedies for improving the availability of reading materials? "One remedy I have been telling in Bangladesh is to establish a formal inter library loan or resource sharing network. The important thing is to find out what other university libraries own. Once you know you have established a network of a system where lending and borrowing can take place among university libraries. I say university libraries because the majority of the books in Bangladesh are located in these university libraries. I suggest the directors of the libraries sit and implement a plan to establish a resource sharing network," she replied.

She continued, "I have suggested that they begin looking at serials in each library and by serials I mean magazines, periodicals, journals and newspapers because I think that is a manageable project. Each of the university libraries can take an inventory of their serials, the titles, volumes and the years. They can put it in a united list of all the serials owned by all the library universities. If this list is distributed to each of the university libraries then if a faculty member is at Rajshahi University needs an article from a journal that Rajshahi University does not own, they can verify that perhaps Dhaka or Chittagong owns, it they can request permission to photocopy it and send it to Rajshahi."

What are the problems that a librarian normally faces? "Much of it stems from lack of resources, inadequate staff training and the need for improved working conditions."

Talking about her work Foote said, "I began in the library as an undergraduate student and I began by shelving books, filing cards, which are the most elementary tasks. I liked the environment of the library which is peaceful and surrounded by books. It is a service oriented profession and I have the desire to help people and like the detective work that reference service offers."

Foote taught at the Library Training Institute, sponsored by the Library Association of Bangladesh. She took classes in new information technology and systems analysis and development. She gave a speech to the Dhaka University Department of Library and Information Science.

This was her second trip to Bangladesh and she was here with her husband, whose field is political communication, and her three small children. Talking about her impression of Bangladesh, she said, "There are problems but you look beyond it, and you go on with life. There is the noise, the smell and overcrowding but you get adjusted as you focus on your work."

Sentiment centering Babri mosque not political: Noman

CHITTAGONG Dec 7: Minister for Forest, Fisheries, Livestock and Environment today called upon the people to remain calm in the face of any provocation and in the greater interest of the communal harmony in the country, reports BSS.

"This sentiment demonstrated by the people in Chittagong and elsewhere in the country centering round the Babri Mosque issue is never a political one," he said.

Addressing a press conference at the Circuit House here this evening, the Minister said all necessary measures including posting of police contingents in vulnerable areas had been taken to prevent untoward incident.

He said some unruly people last night attacked a few temples in the city area but could not do much harm because of prompt action by the police.

The Minister said local administration had meanwhile taken adequate measures to prevent recurrence of any incident as 135 strong police squads were posted in different parts of the city.

Noman said that the government had allocated Taka 10 lakh in cash, eight tons of rice, 300 bundles of CI sheet, 500 blankets, two tons of pulse and edible oil for distribution among the affected people. He also said that the damaged temples would be repaired within the shortest possible time.

Regimental colour presented to Roaring Nineteen

A ceremonial parade marking the presentation of regimental colour to the Roaring Nineteen, a battalion of the East Bengal Regiment, was held at the Rangpur Cantonment Monday last, according to ISPR yesterday, reports BSS.

Chief of Army Staff Lt General Muhammad Nooruddin Khan who is also the Colonel Commandant of the East Bengal Regiment was present as chief guest on the occasion and handed over the regimental colour to the Roaring Nineteen. He also reviewed the smartly turned-out parade and took salute at the impressive march past.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief of Army Staff called upon the members of the army to attain the highest standard of professional efficiency by rising above self-interest. Moral values, loyalty, strict discipline and hard training are the root of success in the life of a soldier, he added.

General Noor Uddin observed that the Roaring Nineteen had received the regimental colour in recognition of its high standard of training, discipline and dutifulness. The regimental colour is a token of firm confidence and trust of the army. All officers and troops of the battalion should keep it ever high at any cost, he said.



Chief of Army Staff and Colonel of the East Bengal Regiment Lt General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan handing over the regimental colour to the Roaring Nineteen at the Rangpur Cantonment Sunday last. — ISPR photo

DU teachers, students condemn demolition of Babri mosque

By DU Correspondent

Teachers and students of the Dhaka University yesterday condemned the demolition of Babri Masjid.

Several hundred students of the university brought out a procession yesterday morning and held rally to protest the damage of the mosque.

Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA), different student organisations and Jagannath Hall Students' Union condemned demolition of the 16th century old mosque.

Hundreds of students gathered at the Aparajeo Bangla and brought out a procession which marched the campus.

The students later dispersed in front of the Jatiya Press Club after holding a rally.

The speakers at the rally urged all to maintain communal harmony in the country.

Meanwhile, the Jagannath

Hall Students' Union held a press conference yesterday evening.

The hall union leaders at the conference alleged that the Indian fundamentalist political party BJP instigated to damage the mosque.

The conference was attended, among others, by Shubhas Singh Roy, Sujit Roy Nandi and Shapon Basu.

The Dhaka University Teachers Association (DUTA) in a statement yesterday urged the people to be alert in keeping communal harmony in the country.

The DUTA leaders expressed deep concern over the incident in Ayodhya.

Meanwhile 52 Dhaka University teachers in another statement condemned the damage of the Mosque at Ayodhya.

The university teachers urged the government and people to take necessary steps to maintain communal stability in the country.

The statement was signed among others by the DU teachers Dr. Arefin Siddique, Dr. Golam Rahman, Professor QAIM Nuruddin.

The pro-Awami League Chhatra League (M-I) and the Ganatantrik Chhatra Oikya (GCO) also held rallies on the university campus.

BNP voted to power with some electoral manifesto: Huda

Seventy five per cent of the repairing work of the temporary complex of the Barisal divisional headquarters has been completed, an official handout said yesterday adding, the work is going on in full swing and expected to be completed by December 25, reports BSS.

The State Minister for Establishment Nurul Huda yesterday visited the complex in Barisal and gave directives to the concerned authorities to ensure timely implementation of the work.

The state minister also saw for himself the proposed site for the divisional complex situated 5 kilometers away from the town.

At the first stage, the hand-out said, the divisional offices for the 14 different departments would be set up.

The state minister met the district level officials at the conference room of the Barisal Circuit House and advised them to work with full sincerity and honesty so that the hopes and aspirations of the down-trodden people of the region have been realised, the handout added.

Huda said, BNP was voted to power with some electoral manifesto and people gave their mandate to implement these manifesto.

Projonmo condemns Ayodhya incident

By Staff Correspondent

Projonmo '71, organisation of the children of martyrs of the War of Liberation, has strongly condemned the destruction of the historic Babri Mosque in India at the instigation of extremist Hindu communal party the BJP.

In a press statement yesterday, Projonmo '71 described the demolition of the 16th century mosque in the northern Indian city of Ayodhya as a "heinous crime," and asked the people to remain alert against any attempt by communal forces in this country to exploit the situation.

The statement requested the Bangladesh government and all political parties and other organisations to help prevent communal forces from using this event to realise "their abominable goals."

Reception

The Resident Representative of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Charles H Larstmont, last night hosted a reception at his residence on the occasion of the UNDP country programme annual review and to strengthen relations between the press and the United Nations, reports BSS.

The reception was attended by diplomats, officials and newsmen.

Rule issued on govt for impounding Mizan's passport

A High Court Division bench Sunday issued a rule upon the government to show cause within two weeks as to why the impounding of the passport of Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury shall not be declared to have been made without lawful authority and of no legal effect, reports BSS.

The bench comprised Justice Anwarul Haq Chowdhury and Justice Khandker Mahmud Hasan.

The court also fixed the date of hearing on January 18, 1993.

According to the petition former Prime Minister Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury was holding a valid international passport bearing No G 364154 but on April 29, 1991 without showing any reason or serving any show cause notice one Khalilur Rahman, assistant superintendent of police Special Branch came to the house of Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury to take his passport away by showing a Ministry of Home Affairs memo dated April 29, 1991. The officer finally impounded the passport on the same day, by giving a hand written seizure receipt.

Thereafter Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury made repeated requests, by submitting a representation and finally served legal notice to the Ministry of Home Affairs for returning his passport but concerned ministry did not come forward to do so.

Being aggrieved and dissatisfied Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury filed a writ petition challenging the action of impounding of the passport

200 grams of heroin seized from city hotel

A special squad of Narcotics Control Department recovered 200 grams of heroin from Hotel Surma at Farmgate here Sunday, a press release said yesterday, reports BSS.

The squad arrested one Emdadul Hoq (Mintu) of village Baghmara under Kotwali thana of Mymensingh from the hotel and recovered the heroin from his possession.

Anniversary of Aatur Rahman's death observed

A milad mahfil and discussion meeting was held in observance of the first death anniversary of veteran politician and former Prime Minister Aatur Rahman Khan at his Dhanmondi residence, reports BSS.

Deputy Leader of the House Professor AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, ministers, members of the parliament were, among others, who attended the milad.

Weather

Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

Weather will remain dry with partly cloudy sky over the country during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Tuesday).

The Met office forecasts slight rise in night temperature over the country.

The Met office adds, weather may deteriorate within two days.

The minimum temperature of 9.2 degree Celsius was reported from Srimangal yesterday (Monday) and the maximum of 27.5 degree was reported from Satkhira.

The sun sets today (Tuesday) at 5.11 pm and rises tomorrow (Wednesday) at 6.30 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	9am	6pm
Dhaka	26.2	12.2	77	74
Chittagong	25.6	15.2	83	66
Rajshahi	25.8	12.7	74	73
Khulna	26.0	13.0	84	74
Cox's Bazar	27.0	15.5	80	61
Sylhet	26.8	13.0	63	67
Rangpur	24.2	12.8	72	77
Barisal	26.4	12.2	90	80



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Stands out for taste

সর্বমুখ্য সত্যিকার!
কৃপাশীল বাস্তবের জন্য সত্যিকার