

Down to Earth

Mosquito Menace Returns

By A S M Nurunnabi



Low lying area at Bashabo — one of the breeding grounds of mosquitoes in city. — Star photo

The mosquito menace is again upon us in the city. Last year the menace assumed distressing proportions with no relief in sight. The citizens heaved a sigh of relief when the misery it wrought came to a natural end without the apparent help from any agency.

Mosquitoes are said to have a short life span: about 30 days in all-15 days in larva stage and 15 days at adult stage. November to February is their breeding season.

According to Dhaka City Corporation sources, the Corporation is more alert to the menace this year. The city has been divided into 10 zones for the purpose of mosquito control and an allocation of taka 1 crore has been made in the current year's budget on this account.

Last year the City Corporation could not initiate timely control programme on account of delay experienced in mobilisation of necessary insecticides. As a result, there was no effective control of mosquitoes at high time. Similar delay, though on a reduced scale initially, reportedly also occurred during this year, in the matter of testing and procurement of pesticides. For this reason, the control operation could not be started before November. The operation is, however, reportedly going on now in all the 10

Some 2465 kilometres of drains and hundreds of ditches and stagnant water areas are considered to be the mosquito breeding grounds in 210 sq km area of the city. Two kinds of insecticides are used: Siccifying as adulticide and pyrethrin as larvicide. The City Corporation, in their recent press briefing, stated that in spite of the initial delay, they are now well prepared for the control job. It is understood that the personnel and equipment for the job consist of 300 sprayers, 340 field staff, 600 power and hand sprayers, 3 vehicle mounted and 20 fogger sprayers.

Along with the Dhaka City Corporation the Mosquito Control Department of the government are the relevant agencies for control of mosquitoes. It is reported that their activities, however, leave much to be desired. Often the lack of co-ordination between two agencies and their dual authorities lead to lack of expeditious and timely action.

As of now, on account of the delayed control programme of the Corporation, no impact is yet felt in providing relief. There is doubt in some quarters that control programme may not be comprehensive to cover all areas in a short time with the result that relief may not be immediately felt. The Corporation sources, however,

stress that the Corporation's programme can hope for success if it is supplemented with the efforts of citizens to keep their own immediate neighbourhood clean.

One factor that poses a big challenge to the efforts of the City Corporation is the existence of the vast expanse of hyacinth-filled water areas in the city, for example on the east side of Motijheel and in the Rampura and Bashabo neighbourhood. There are other networks of big drains and nullahs which seem to be beyond the reach of Corporation's squads spraying insecticides. To tackle the situation successfully requires the combined efforts of those who may be owning these low-lying areas. Otherwise the efforts for mosquitoes made in other areas are likely to be nullified by the existence of these vast areas of mosquito breeding grounds.

It is not known if the controversy over the desirability of aerial spraying for mosquito control has been resolved in its favour at expert level, and if so, when such spraying will be taken up again by the Corporation. If control efforts are not geared up to the full by all means available during the remaining period of breeding season, the citizens of Dhaka will be exposed to another bout of suffering from the mosquito menace.

Boat capsizes in Padma: 5 missing

From Our Correspondent

RAJBARI, Dec 25: Five boat passengers have been missing since a boat capsized after colliding with a cargo vessel in the river Padma today.

The boat was going to Aricha from the Faridpur C & B Canal.

Officials here said that the boat with 30 passengers sank at about 4 pm. Twenty-five passengers swam ashore.

The identity of the five missing passengers could not be immediately known. Fire Service personnel are searching for them.

'Sit-in' for reopening of Fenchuganj fertilizer factory on Dec 31

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Dec 25: The greater Sylhet Ganadabi Parishad would stage a "sit-in" at the gate of Natural Gas Fertilizer Factory at Fenchuganj on December 31 in protest against the government decision for shutting down the factory from January 1. The organisation took this decision yesterday at an urgent meeting.

They also decided to launch a vigorous drive throughout the four districts of greater Sylhet for moulding support from cross-section of people for starting a larger movement to press for the demand of establishing a new fertilizer factory at Fenchuganj immediately.

Earlier, a grand rally was held at Fenchuganj on December 23 demanding withdrawal of government decision to shut down the Natural Gas Fertilizer Factory at the call of Fenchuganj Ganadabi Parishad. Presided over by Dr. Minhajuddin Ahmed it was addressed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the parliament Abdus Samad Azad, Abdul Mukit Khan MP, Moksud Ibne Aziz MP, Emran Ahmed MP, Azizur Rahman MP, M A Shahid MP and Sharfuddin Khasru MP, and other leaders.

Two killed in Barisal road accident

From Our Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Dec 25: Two persons were killed and two others injured when a Patuakhali bound bus "Sharmim" hit a rickshaw van today at 11 am on the Barisal-Patuakhali Highway at Burirhat under Nachity Thana of the Jhalakathi district.

Driver of the rickshaw van, Shamsu (28) died on the spot while one of the passengers of the van Hanif (54) succumbed to his injuries at the Barisal Medical College Hospital (BMCH).

Two other injured, Ayesha Begum (45) who is also the wife of Hanif and Zakir Hossain (32) were admitted to the BMCH in critical condition.

Witnesses said that the bus knocked the rickshaw van while it was trying to avoid another bus coming from the opposite direction.

Clash at orphanage leaves 10 injured

By DMCH Correspondent

At least 10 people were injured, two of them seriously, when orphans clashed with outsiders at the Sir Salimullah Orphanage at Azimpur Friday evening.

Of the wounded, Shahadat, 18, and Shahidullah, 19, were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Witnesses said that the clash ensued when a group of armchmen stormed into the orphanage and attacked the inmates.

Several blasts and gun shots were heard during the clash, witnesses said.

One murdered

From Page 1 Col 8

fused threatened his life Thursday. Mantu was the manager of Noyan Hotel and Restaurant at Mirpur, they added.

Local residents alleged that incidents of extortion and other crimes had increased manifold at Mirpur but no measure was being taken against the culprits.

Last Saturday night police raided different places at Mirpur and Kalyanpur and picked up 48 people for their alleged involvement in various crime incidents but on the following day a mob laid siege to Mirpur Police Station for two hours and forced release of the arrested persons.

Meanwhile, Mantu's body was sent to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Mirpur Police said that a murder case was lodged with them in this connection but no arrest was made till midnight last night.

Christians in India feel insecure

NEW DELHI, Dec 25: India's

Christian minority say they fear the country's secularism is under threat from a tide of Hindu fundamentalism following religious riots over the destruction of the Ayodhya mosque, reports Reuter.

Leaders of India's 23 million Christians have sought government assurance that religious rights and place of worship will be protected in the wake of the Hindu-Muslim riots which killed more than 1200 people.

The Christian people believe that inspire of all that has happened, tolerance is still part of the Indian ethos," Reverend Pritam Santram, General-Secretary of the Protestant Church of North India, said in an interview.

But the destruction of the mosque in the northern town by Hindu zealots on December 6 had "exposed the myth of Hindu tolerance," he said.

"It shows that there are fascist and fundamentalist forces within the Hindu community that are capable of indulging in violence."

There are Christians who feel that this kind of monster

30 injured as bus skids off road at Bolta

By DMCH Correspondent

At least 30 passengers were injured, seven of them seriously when a Dhaka bound bus skidded off the road at Bolta Friday noon.

The bus coming from Narsingdi met the accident at around 12:30 pm yesterday when it swerved to avoid a collision with a truck coming from the opposite direction, witnesses said.

The seriously injured admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) are Abdus Samad 50, Tapan Chandra 12, Jibon 12, Kala Rani 60, Renu Bala, 45, Satish Chandra, 55 and Zakir Hossain, 25.

Opposition may join JS

From Page 1 Col 7

to attend the next session of parliament. "We shall, however, not be lagging behind in criticising the ruling party for its failure in different areas," the CPB leader added.

Of the boycotting parties, the CPB went back to the House afterwards saying "staging walk-out was the valid form of registering protest against the misdeeds of the Treasury bench but continuous boycott of sessions virtually weaken the practice of parliamentary democracy."

The Workers Party was absent from the House as its sole MP Rashed Khan Menon was wounded before Parliament went into session.

Although the boycotting parties are now considering joining the next session separately, they would soon meet together to review their stance.

A senior leader of the AL requesting anonymity told the Daily Star, that the opposition should officially accuse the government of its failure to improve law and order, inability to restore communal harmony following the demolition of the Babri Mosque in India, mishandling of the Rohingya problem, indifference to the indemnity issue. Registering an official protest would require the AL's presence in the parliament session scheduled for January 3, the AL leader added.

Another AL leader, who is close to the AL high command told the Star last night that "even if the AL decides to join the winter session it would definitely boycott the opening session as President, Abdur Rahman Biswas is scheduled to address the House." Biswas was one of the infamous people who actively opposed the country's War of Independence in 1971," the AL leader stressed.

The AL leader, however, said that the decision about joining the next session of Parliament would be finally taken at the Parliamentary Party meeting of the AL scheduled to be held on January 2.

One can not rule out the AL's continuing the boycott of parliament sessions, an influential presidium member of the party told the Daily Star.

The JP Joint Secretary General Monirul Hoque Chowdhury, while talking to this correspondent Wednesday said that since his party boycotted the last session jointly with others, the decision of joining the coming session should be taken jointly. The JP will however decide its own course, in the first place, at its parliamentary party meeting immediately before Parliament goes into session," he said.

Shamsuddoha, leader of the parliamentary group of the CPB, said last night that his party had no reservation so far

is rising and if it is permitted to go on it would lead to a complete destruction of secular ideas," he said.

Santram and other Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders met President Shankar Dayal Sharma on December 9 and handed over a memorandum spelling out their concerns.

Privately, some church leaders say Hindu fundamentalism had already affected the practice of Christianity, particularly in northern India, the Hindi-speaking heartland where lower-caste tribal converts have been harassed by Hindus.

"We are facing problems in the north in propagating our faith," said a Roman Catholic priest who declined to be named.

Diabetic Hospital cash looters still at large

By Staff Correspondent

The gangsters who escaped with the looted money from the Diabetic Hospital Wednesday were at large until Friday.

Three of the armed bandits while escaping after looting Taka 17,500 from the hospital's cash section at Shahbagh fell victim to a road accident within 250 yards of the hospital which left a gangster dead and two other miscreants seriously wounded.

A pedestrian was also killed in the accident.

The two wounded gangsters identified by the cash officer, Abu Bakar Ali, of the hospital were being treated under police custody at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

No fresh headway in the investigation into the incident was made until yesterday. But police said that they were vigilant to arrest the culprits.

Police are also yet to recover the money looted from the hospital's cash, according to police.

The Midnight File

Pak-Saudi move to resolve Mujahideen dispute

ISLAMABAD, Dec 25: The Pakistani and Saudi ambassadors to Afghanistan met leaders of the warring Mujahideen parties in Kabul today to try to resolve their differences, state-run Pakistan television said. The two ambassadors held talks with Foreign Minister Sayed Ahmad Gilani, Head of the Moderate National Islamic Front of Afghanistan, and a representative of the formerly communist militia now allied with the Mujahideen, it said, reports Reuter.

India accuses Ishaq of crossing limits

NEW DELHI, Dec 25: India today accused Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan of crossing "all previous limits" in remarks over the situation in Kashmir and the razing of the Babri Mosque by Hindu zealots. "It has indeed been habitual for this President of Pakistan to indulge in vituperative rhetoric over India with total disregard of the norms and conventions of good neighbourly relations," the External Affairs Ministry said, reports AFP.

Hasina

From Page 1 Col 8

election to Chhatra League. The opposition leader said local people caught red-handed some of the terrorists with arms during the time of looting and handed them over to police. But later they were released as police mysteriously charged them under Section 54 of CRPC without lodging specific case against the armed looters.

Hasina urged the government to arrest the armed terrorists immediately for the sake of peace in public life and society.

Pope

From Page 1 Col 3

traditional Christmas ceasefire in Northern Ireland, but gave no indication it will halt bombings and bomb scares intended to drive the British out of the republic. Cardinal Cahal Daly, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, implored the guerrilla group to call a permanent truce in Northern Ireland and end decades of violence.

In her Christmas message, Queen Elizabeth II acknowledged that 1992 has been a tough year for her family, but also expressed sympathy for others who have suffered more.

Roman Catholics in the northern Albanian town of Shkoder are celebrating the return of their cathedral, which was converted into a sports hall under former Communist rulers who outlawed religion.

In Cuba better relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the once-militantly atheistic Communist government allowed more open celebrations.

English-language radios in Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates were playing Christmas carols for the first time, and English-language newspapers were allowed to use the words "Christmas" and "Santa Claus" previously the holiday was referred to as the "festive season," and Santa was taboo.

In Saudi Arabia, by contrast, religious volunteer police went into the central post office in Riyadh, residents said, and destroyed outgoing mail thought to be Christmas cards.

CHT talks

From Page 1 Col 7

will be received Saturday morning by the members of "Liaison Committee" at Dudu-kekhari, a bordering village under Panchhari thana of Khagrachhari district. From there they will be flown by helicopter to Circuit House for the dialogue scheduled to begin at 10 am, official sources said. They will be flown back there after the talks. The Shantibahini's demands placed recently to parliamentary team are expected to be discussed in the talks, sources added.

The main points of the demand included regional autonomy with constitutional embodiment, expulsion of Bengali-speaking settlers from CHT and formation of independent police force.

Observers say, "there are glimmers of hope for progress in the talks though the demands placed by Shantibahini are very tough."

UNB adds: Liaison committee sources said the negotiation may continue for five years or may linger up to day after tomorrow.

Besides the Communications Minister the government sponsored committee includes MPs Kalpanjan Chakma, Abdul Matin Khasru, Mustaq Ahmed Chowdhury, Shahjahan Chowdhury, Barkatullah Bulu, Syed Wahidul Alam and Mohammad Shahjahan.

The other member of the committee, Rashed Khan Menon, MP cannot attend the meeting as he will return home on January 9 from London where he had been treated for bullet wounds.

The PCJSS team will include Rupayan Dewan, Goutam Chakma, Raktautpal Tripura and Shudhasindhu Khishu.

Sylhet navigation workers continue strike

From Our Correspondent

SYLHET, Dec 25: The Navigation Workers' strike was continuing for the fifth day today throughout the greater Sylhet region. The strike for an indefinite period was called by the Noyan Samik Federation to press for their 22-point charter of demands.

All types of passenger launches and goods carrying cargo vessels had stopped plying in the different riverine routes of greater Sylhet region.

People in these region are mainly dependent on these for transportation. Taking advantage of the situation, owners of the engine-driven small boats have started doing brisk business by carrying passengers and goods in the short-distance routes risking lives and valuables, it is alleged.

Hundreds of passenger launches and cargo vessels had been stranded at the different river stations namely, Chitragarh, Sherpur, Markuli, Ajmiriganj, Lakhal and others.

Noor Uddin back home

Chief of Army Staff Lt. General Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan returned home yesterday after a visit to Cambodia, reports BSS.

He led a military delegation there.

Gorbachev

From Page 1 Col 4

serted him after he resigned. "Many people only respected my post," he said. "My relations with them are now more than cold — frozen."

"But you should know that Gorbachev is not alone. I receive many letters. People support me, and this is very important for me," he added.

"I regret that it happened thus," he was quoted as saying. "Alas, I see now that many dangers I have warned about are now becoming real. People's lives have deteriorated so sharply to levels unimaginable a year ago."

At the same time, however, Gorbachev said economic reform would be a long process and was not a "fad."

Rabin

From Page 1 Col 4

to the board was lodged Friday on behalf of Adli Yash, 42, from the West Bank city of Nablus, said his brother, Rifat.

No date has been set for the appeal hearings.

The Palestinians deported by Israel and rejected by Lebanon chanted Koranic verses to keep up their spirits Friday as they huddled around fires in a freezing no-man's land between army checkpoints.

Israel says the men are Muslim fundamentalists, and expelled them in retaliation for the deaths of six members of the Israeli security forces.

The deportees' makeshift tent camp was covered by snow during the night.

Woman stabbed, robbed of gold chain

By DMCH Correspondent

A 40-year-old woman was stabbed and robbed of her gold chain and ring while she was having a morning walk at Dhanmondi Friday morning.

The victim, Fatema, was admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) with two stab injuries.

While walking at Dhanmondi Road No 4, a gang of muggers driving a white car stopped her near the Delta Medical Clinic, stabbed and snatched her gold chain and ring.

Dhanmondi police said that they were informed of the incident in the evening but no arrest was made in this connection.

Christmas

From Page 1 Col 5

Christian's Church at Asad Gate and Kafrul Catholic Church.

The Christian devotees — male female and children — were seen parading the streets till late Thursday night singing Christmas rhyme and visiting churches or relatives and friends.

The Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television broadcast special programmes while the national dailies published special news items highlighting the significance of the occasion.

The day was a public holiday.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina in separate message conveyed their warm greetings and good wishes to the members of the Christian community.

In Narayanganj the Christian community celebrated the holy Christmas with jubilation and enthusiasm.

Christian men, women and children attired in their best participated at a congregation followed by an hour long carol and prayer at Chashara St Paul Church.

The inside of the church was decorated with Christmas trees and crib with a replica of mother Mary with her baby son Jesus Christ.

The members of the Christian community of Chittagong also celebrated the Christmas with traditional enthusiasm and solemn devotion.

The main congregation and special prayers were held at Catholic Church at Patarghata, Saint Mary's Church at Jamal Khan and a church at Jamal Khan.

Local dailies published special articles highlighting the happy Christmas Day, while Radio Bangladesh Chittagong broadcast programmes to mark the day.

Editor: S. M. Ali

Executive Editor: Mahfuz Anam

Published by the Editor on behalf of Mediaworld Ltd., 52, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka-1000 and printed by him at The Sangbad Ltd., 36, Purana Paltan, Dhaka. Editorial, News & Commercial Offices: House No 11, Road No 3, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka-1205. PABX: 500091-4. Advertisement: 500091. Fax No 88-02-863035. GPO Box No 3257. GRAM: DAILY STAR DHAKA.