

Dhaka Day by Day

'To be or not to be'

by Parveen Anam



The latest in fashion is to be thin. This is in the adage of the hour with the doctors and the medical journals adding their bit to the cacophony. Exercise is the order of the day and those not indulging in it go about with a 'hang-dog' expression making all sorts of excuses and giving all sorts of explanations as to why and how they have not yet joined the crowd. The mad rush of joggers, walkers, you name it, make the ones not included amongst them hang their heads in shame.

But in the long run, perhaps it is the non-exercisers who will have the last laugh. Only because they will probably survive longer. Exercise is supposed to put one in peak form with vital organs functioning in top gear. What the advocates of exercise have not reckoned with is the underlying conspiracy to do away with the exercisers for good. Anybody who has had the misfortune of trying to walk in the early or the magical hour when the villains are supposed to be in bed, will bear with me. For the villains might be in bed but the trainers are not? Trainers? Trainers of what is the next normal question. The 'motor car trainers'. Or to put it in our layman's language, the trainers of 'teach yourself driving'.

The misty mornings are the hours when the driving schools like to give driving lessons to their enthusiastic learners as many a morning walker has discovered as he has had to adroitly skip to one side to avoid the madly careening motor vehicle making straight at him. Of course it is not only the driving schools which are on the roads; the drivers of the 'pucca sahabs' who have somehow managed to slip out with the car while the sahib is still catching the extra forty winks, is also at the wheel with the darwan next door. Making the extra taka by

giving the unofficial driving lesson.

The hazards of the morning walker can never be undermined. The trucks are the other ogres, in a mad rush to beat the speed of light and hit the Guinness Book of Records. The 'helper' or the 'conductor' behind the wheel, substituting for the driver who is probably taking a nap in the back could not really care less if he took a couple of morning walkers along with him to the pearly gates. He is above the law (miraculous what a difference those few extra takas to the policeman make). It's the job of the morning walker to avoid him.

As for the exercise freak i.e. the morning walker, if he still insists on keeping fit he would be well advised in any event, to keep the identity papers in the pockets. Just in case. Its a practical thought. But again, if the walker has somehow managed to avoid the inglorious exit offered him by the noble vehicle, the mugger is of course just round the corner to relieve him of the unnecessary things of life which include his watch, his chain, his ring, etc. If he is foolish enough to wear any. The day we fear is not far off though when the walker will have to carry some 'muggers' money on his person to avoid the additional wrath of the mugger at not finding any valuable with him.

The walker or the exercise fad can hardly be blamed, if after weighing the pros and cons and whether it is safer to stay in bed or try and keep fit he opts for the bed. To be or not to be might seem too complicated a question in the early hours of the morning. If the morning walker will insist on keeping fit, the non-exerciser might have the last laugh and we must remember, He who laugheth last, laugheth best.

Biswas, Khaleda greet Akihito

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday congratulated Emperor Akihito of Japan and the Empress on the occasion of the engagement of Crown Prince Naruhito, reports UNB.

In a message to the Emperor, President Biswas invoked the blessings of God on the Crown Prince and the bride-to-be.

In another message: Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday also felicitated Emperor Akihito of Japan and the Empress on the occasion of the engagement of Crown Prince Naruhito.

The Prime Minister, in a message to the Emperor, hoped that Almighty God would bestow blessings and beneficence upon Crown Prince and the bride-to-be.

Railway has 16,000 surplus staff, JS told

Railway has a surplus manpower of 16,000 employees, State Minister for Communications Fazlu Rahman told parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

He said the government had undertaken a scheme for voluntary retirement of the superfluous staff to cut the financial burden being borne by the railway sector.

A substantial amount is spent for salary of the surplus employees, Fazlu said replying to supplementary questions from the Opposition benches. Besides, he added, the donor agencies also expressed reservation about the surplus manpower.

In reply to Maulana Shakawat Hossain (Jamaat), the State Minister said so far the government had received 8,357 applications for voluntary retirement of railway officials and employees.

Of them, 2,369 had been sent on retirement till December 29 last year Tk 44,57,50,000 was spent for them.

BJMC incurs Tk 924.91 cr loss

Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) has incurred a total loss of Taka 924 crore 91 lakh during the last three financial years (1989-90 to 1991-92), Jute Minister Brig (ret'd) Hannan Shah told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday.

Replying to a question from Jamaat member Mufti Maulana Abdus Sattar the minister gave a detailed account of losses incurred by 35 nationalised jute mills in the country.

According to the statistics given by the minister, the BJMC incurred a loss of Taka 369.39 crore in 1989-90, Taka 243.09 crore in 1990-91 and Taka 312.43 crore in 1991-92.

Ctg lawyers hail Mamun as AAG

CHITTAGONG, Jan 19: One hundred and eighty six lawyers of Chittagong today hailed the appointment of Advocate Abdus Salam Mamun as an Assistant Attorney General, reports BSS.

In a statement, the lawyers said, we congratulate Advocate Abdus Salam Mamun, a Special Public Prosecutor for his being elevated to the post of Assistant Attorney General.

The signatories to the statement, among others, are Advocates Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, Abdur Rahman Jehangir, Sukumar Talukdar, M Shahed Ullah, M Ishaq Meah, Kashed Chowdhury, Abdul Hannan and Abu Saikh.

'Terrorism should be uprooted for spread of edn'

State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Barrister Aminul Haq said that the nation which was properly educated could not but be prosperous, reports BSS.

He said this while addressing a freshers reception at the Government Bangla College at Mirpur here yesterday.

The function was addressed among others by BNP city President Mir Shawkat Ali, MP, Amanullah Aman, MP, Jaimul Abedin Faruk, MP and BNP city Secretary Salahuddin.

The State Minister asserted that if the mass literacy programme initiated by President Ziaur Rahman could have sustained, literacy rate would have raised satisfactorily.

He stressed the need for uprooting the trend of terrorism and lawlessness from the campus so as to bring back congenial atmosphere for smooth spread and promotion of education.

Matin blasts Awami League for looting nat'l economy

Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury yesterday called upon the workers irrespective of their political affiliations to maintain peace and discipline in the industrial belt to boost the national economy, reports BSS.

He was addressing as chief guest at a workers rally organised by Adamjee Jute Mills unit of Jatiyatatabadi Sramik Dal to observe the 57th birth anniversary of President Ziaur Rahman at Adamjee Jute Mills Sramik Kalyan High School ground last afternoon.

Presided over by Abul Khayer Khwaja, President Adamjee Jute Mills unit of Jatiyatatabadi Sramik Dal the rally was also addressed by Abdul Mannan, State Minister for Textiles, Ashraf Hossen, Whip Jatiya Sangsad, Rezaul Karim MP and Jafrul Hasan, Joint Secretary General Jatiyatatabadi Sramik Dal.

He said the national economy was looted and plundered during Awami League misrule and added it was late president Ziaur Rahman who brought back the national economy to right gear.

He assured the workers that measures are being under way to implement the wages commission for the wellbeing of the workers of the country.

State Minister for Textiles Abdul Mannan said jute sector had incurred loss of Taka 4500 crore and textile sector sustained loss of Taka 500 crore during the nine years of autocratic rule of Ershad.

He said the government of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia was trying its best to overcome the loss of the past regime.

He urged the workers not to be misguided by the false propaganda of the vested quarters as they ruined the national economy in the past.

BSB sanctions Tk 7.63 cr loan

Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) sanctioned Tk 7.63 cr loan including foreign currency equivalent to Tk 7.26 crore for a new and five existing industrial projects, says a press release.

The sanction was given at the 201th meeting of the BSB's Board of Directors held yesterday in the BSB's head office in Dhaka with ATM Alamgir, MP and chairman of the board in the chair.

Obituary

Al-Haj Major (Ret'd) SM Yusuf, retired DIG prisons, died here of prolonged illness, yesterday. He was 86, reports BSS.

He left behind his wife, five sons and four daughters and a host of grand children to mourn his death.

His eldest son Sajjad Yusuf is a Professor of International Relation in Virginia, United States.

The body of Major Yusuf was taken to Chittagong for burial at his village.

Weather

Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast for the next 24 hours commencing 6am today (Wednesday) says weather is likely to remain dry with fair sky over the country.

The Met office forecasts, night temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The minimum temperature of 7.6 degree Celsius was reported from Srimangal yesterday (Tuesday) and the maximum of 27.4 degree Celsius was reported from Cox's Bazar.

The sun sets today (Wednesday) at 5.36 pm and rises tomorrow (Thursday) at 6.43 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	23.7	9.6	66	46
Chittagong	26.0	14.7	88	61
Rajshahi	24.2	8.9	53	53
Khulna	24.7	11.7	63	56
Barisal	25.0	11.5	85	72
Cox's Bazar	27.4	15.6	66	73
Sylhet	23.6	11.5	91	53
Litnagar	21.0	8.7	78	65

Govt decides to wind up BJC

The government has decided to wind up Bangladesh Jute Corporation (BJC) since it could not fulfil the objective for which it was set up, Jute Minister Brig (ret'd) ASM Hannan Shah told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, reports BSS.

In a written reply to a question from Mirza Azam of Awami League, the minister said the decision to wind up BJC was taken in keeping with the government's policy of denationalisation.

Hannan Shah said the BJC incurred a total loss to the tune of Taka 1,100 crore since it was set up in 1985 with a view to ensuring stable jute market and fair price to the growers. But because of corruption of a section of officers, damage of jute kept in godowns due to natural calamity, reduction in the demand of jute in the international market and inability to repay outstanding loans to the banks it was impossible for BJC to become a viable organisation on commercial basis, he added.

He said it also became impossible for the government to provide funds to the BJC and bear its huge losses.

The minister said after reviewing last few years' activities of BJC it was seen that the BJC could purchase only 10 to 15 per cent of the country's total jute production and had failed to ensure purchase of 85 to 90 per cent of jute at fair price.

Answering another question from Kazi Abdur Rashid of Awami League, the minister said the BJC had not purchased any jute during 1992-93 season.

IDB adviser meets Lutfor

The visiting Adviser of Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Abdur Rahman Nur Hesi called on State Minister for Relief Lutfor Rahman Khan at his office yesterday, reports BSS.

They discussed matters related to progress and utilization of IDB grant for the help of the Rohingya refugees.

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Short Film as Alternative Cinema

3RD INTERNATIONAL GOLD LEAF SHORT FILM FESTIVAL DHAKA

21st - 29th January, 1993

Main Festival Premise
Central Public Library Auditorium, Shahbagh

Screening time: Everyday at 11 A.M., 3 P.M., 5 P.M. & 7 P.M.

In this 9-day long Festival more than hundred short films from around 25 countries will be screened. There will be also retrospectives, a two-day international seminar and meet-the-director session.

The Festival is dedicated to the memory of renowned film maker Satyajit Ray.

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Wednesday

5-00 Opening an nouncement Al Quran Program: summary

5-10 News in Bangla

5-25 Sports Programme

6-00 Country and Science

6-30 Open University

7-05 Banaphul

8-00 News in Bangla

9-00 Film Show: The Fall Guy

10-00 News in English

10-30 Muktabara

11-00 Khabar / The News

11-40 Tomorrow's programme summary

11-45 Closing