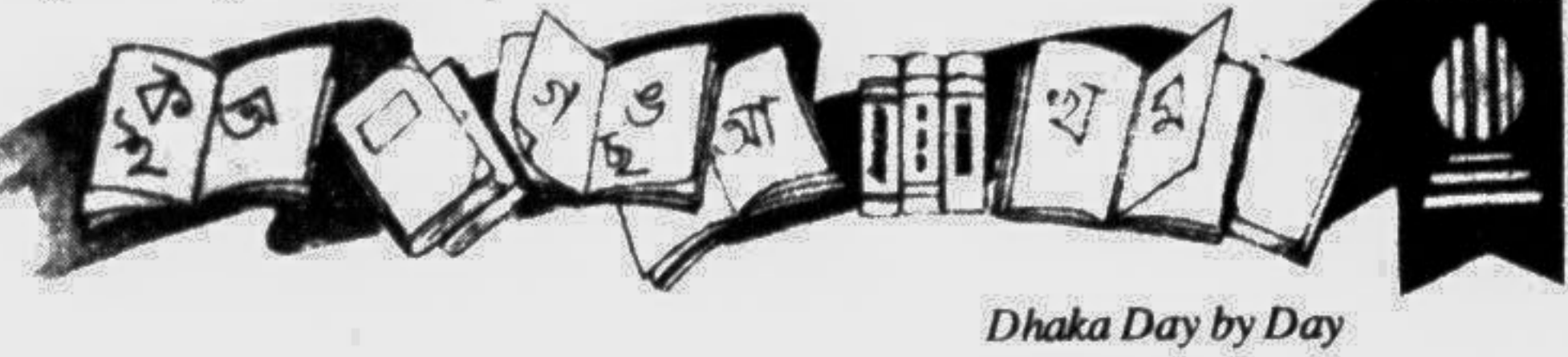


Spirit of Ekushey Lives On



Dhaka Day by Day

Poignant and Passionate

by Fayza Haq

'Zimmy', written by Mannan Heera, one of the plays presented by the Dhaka City Theatre at the Shaheed Minar, had its goal in the right direction: 'Ekushey' was being portrayed as a struggle to obtain the rights of the common Bangladeshi, to use their mother tongue in their own country.

Before the performance commenced, there was a fiery recitation and presentation of skits, which dwelt on the national language of our country. These included ominous words such as, 'Hindus will take over our country', and 'We will march to the National Assembly, if necessary'. All the consistent struggle of the Bangladeshis since '52 were presented by reciters of both sexes. The mood of the young participants was bellicose and remarkably determined.

The young participants spoke loudly and clearly of how the shops in the country had suddenly been shut, and people shot at. They declared the latter incident was unjust and said, 'We will not tolerate the present state of affairs, and we have no fear of death as we have faced it earlier. The presentation was sophisticated and well rehearsed. What also included in the programme, before the play, were songs of the 'Bongo Bondhu Shilpi Gosthi'. This included pieces such as 'Bangla amar jonmo bhumi, Bangla amar pran', which had the accompaniment of 'tabla' and 'harmonium'.

The song 'Amar Bangla maer mukti elo, emon chheer jonno' followed with the same vivacity and steady pulse. 'Mago maraj kumarer golpo holo, ebar onno golpo bolô', another piece, followed in quick succession, with the same emotion-charged voices.

The play itself was undoubtedly an apt one, with suitable comic relief. In the plot there was the police officer, who spoke with Sylheti intonation pattern, as well as the dialect itself from that particular district, wore clown-like pink and grey baggy pants. He carried on like some

abominable blunderbuss. The assistant police was a purely comic character, who acted with zeal, as did also his boss, the senior policeman. The 'mollah' grovelled at the knees of the police, whenever intimidated.

What the police force was out to catch was a suspected thief, who carried what the police thought was a stolen box. The so-called rogue himself, whose performance excelled that of many of the other participants, was suspected of having some 'pinched' treasure. 'Fakirs' were brought in, to provide more humour and realism. They were depicted as individuals who

were surreptitiously helping the suspect. In the hunt for the 'rascal' there were comical bickerings between the two policemen, and this brought peals of laughter from the audience.

While the 'thief' feigned death, his body moved, and it was detected that he had been smoking recently. This was no Agatha Christie-like plot, as the symbols and goals of the play were deeper than what are found in well-known detective stories.

In the finale, it was eventually disclosed that the 'thief' was hiding a red banner with the words 'Workers of the world unite'. Meanwhile, there was the apt chorus, near at hand, of 'Ghumer manush aur ghumiyona'.

Directed by Azizul Hakim, the cast included Miraj Mamun as the chief police, Reza Rustum as the junior police, and Azad Abul Kalam as the suspected 'crook'.

The play that followed 'Zimmy', presented by 'Aronyak Natyo Gosthi', was even more subtle and suave; with layers of meanings; a melange of symbols, and a marvellous manner of combining the well-known characters of the past and present — their dialogues being carefully juxtaposed.

It is always a pleasure to see young enthusiasts perform with vigour and ingenuity, as was witnessed in the play by the Dhaka City Theatre and the one that followed.



A scene from Zimmy, a play presented recently at the Shaheed Minar.

Italian paediatric team operates 120 children in Khulna

By Staff Correspondent

A visiting Italian paediatric surgery team performed operation on 120 children affected by congenital malformations and acquired deformities in Khulna district during last two months.

It was reported by leader of the team Professor Carmine Del Rossi at a press conference at the Italian Embassy, Gulshan, Wednesday.

Dr Rossi said that they chose the under privileged children in the district of Khulna in Bangladesh.

The surgery team came from Parma of Italy jointly worked with two humanitarian organisations — Xaverian Fathers of Parma and the Christian Service Society of Khulna. Besides Dr Rossi, five others doctor-surgeons — G Gerasoli, L Cirillo, S Ata, P Marengi and A Murra and four nurses — R Mattioli, D Soldi, C Michelazzi and E Belli worked in the team.

All the medical equipments and supplies needed for the operations were provided by the 'Officine Rizzoli' of Bologna and 'P G Hospital' of Parma in Italy, said Dr Rossi.

He said that after the cyclone in Bangladesh in 1991, his team worked in the country for two weeks while on their second visit this time they continued their programmes for about two months.

He hoped that as a lot of patients were left without treatments they would continue their programmes in the next year.

Bangladesh-Japan Cultural Evening February 20

The 19th annual 'Bangladesh-Japan Cultural Evening', organized by the Embassy of Japan in cooperation with the Asia Bunka Kaikan Dosokai (ABKD) will be held at National Museum auditorium on February 20 from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm, reports BSS.

Bangladeshi and Japanese nationals including school children will take part in the cultural show.

Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Minister for Health and Family Welfare will attend the function as chief guest. Toshio Saiki, Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh will also be present on the occasion.

Founding anniversary observed

CHITTAGONG, Feb 17: The ninth founding anniversary of 'Mohila Islami Pathagar' Women Islamic Library, a leading organisation for the development of mental faculty of the women was observed here today in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

Bank holiday

The Bangladesh Bank and all scheduled banks will remain close on February 21, on account of the Shaheed Day, reports BSS.



Thursday

- 5:00 Opening announcement Al-Quran
- Programme summary
- 5:10 News in Bangla
- 5:25 Debate
- 6:30 Open University
- 7:10 Special programme on Amar Ekushey
- 7:30 Jibancor Alo
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:40 Drama of the week: Bharat Pakhi
- 10:00 News in English
- 10:30 Parliament roundup
- 10:40 Film show: China Beach
- 11:30 Khabar/The News
- 11:40 Tomorrow's programme summary
- 11:45 Closing

Weather

No change in night temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast valid for the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Thursday) says rain or showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur over the regions of Mymensingh and Sylhet while weather may remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

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

The minimum temperature of 17.0 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi and Dinajpur yesterday (Wednesday) and the maximum of 35.5 degree was from Chuadanga.

The sun sets today (Thursday) at 5.56 pm and rises tomorrow (Friday) at 6.29 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	32.0	22.4	81	67
Chittagong	29.0	21.9	83	78
Rajshahi	33.8	17.0	94	45
Khulna	33.0	21.0	77	71
Barisal	30.4	21.6	88	87
Cox's Bazar	29.0	21.5	71	83
Sylhet	25.5	19.3	92	90
Dinajpur	28.2	17.0	94	81



Gianfranco d' Ignazio Brown, Deputy head of Italian Mission in Bangladesh briefing the journalists on visiting Italian paediatric surgery team at the Italian Embassy yesterday. The team leader, Prof. Carmine del Rossi is on her right while another official of the embassy Rossana Massari is on the left. — Star photo

Biswas, Khaleda greet President, PM of Lithuania

President Abdur Rahman Biswas has felicitated Vytautas Landsbergis, President of Lithuania on the occasion of the National Day of Lithuania, reports BSS.

President Biswas wished good health, happiness and long life of Vytautas and the friendly people of Lithuania peace, progress and prosperity.

KHALEDA

In another message Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has, felicitated Aleksandaras Abisala, Prime Minister of Lithuania on the occasion of its National Day.

The Prime Minister, expressed her best wishes for the personal health and happiness of Abisala and for the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Lithuania.

Foundation stone of CU Shaheed Minar laid

CHITTAGONG, Feb 17: Chittagong University Vice-Chancellor Prof Rafiqul Islam Chowdhury laid the foundation stone of the university's Central Shaheed Minar at a simple ceremony held on the varsity campus today, reports BSS.

Chittagong University is rebuilding the Shaheed Minar as the previous one was destroyed by 1991 cyclone.

Speaking on the occasion the Vice Chancellor said, the new Shaheed Minar will reflect the expectation of the people and the language movement.

'Varsity can play due role if free from control'

The universities in free societies act as multi-purpose institutions for the welfare of the national and international community, reports BSS.

This was stated by the visiting Director General of Islamic Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) Dr Abdul Aziz Othman Altwajri yesterday in a discussion on 'The Role of the University in a Free Society' here.

Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar conducted the discussion held at the conference room of the Ministry. State Minister for Education Principal Eunus Khan was present.

Dr Abdul Aziz said the university is the conscience and guardian of a nation and it can play the due role only when it remains free from all sorts of control.

Referring to historical roles of the earlier universities of the world including the universities of Grenada, Cairo, Medina and Samarkhand he said the success of these insti-

tutions contributed to a great extent to the emergence of the free societies that guaranteed freedom of thought and actions.

Pointing out examples of different advance countries he said universities serve as centres of debate and exchange of ideas and act as thinktanks that help the state to formulate national and international policies.

Happy Birthday

To our very dearest

Zeenat T Islam (Eka)

Abbu, Ammu and Anika

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Help keep prices of essentials steady during Ramadan: Anwar

Commerce Minister MK Anwar yesterday urged the importers, wholesalers, retailers, big and small merchants and all concerned to help the government's effort for keeping the prices of the daily necessary commodities steady and reasonable and under the buying capacity of the people during the coming holy month

of Ramadan, reports BSS. He was presiding over a meeting to review the demand, supply and price of the daily necessary items for the coming holy month of Ramadan at the conference hall of the Ministry of Commerce.

The meeting was attended, among others, by senior officials of the ministries of

Commerce, Agriculture, Industries, Food, Home, Local Government, Communications, Shipping and Information and their sub-ordinate organisations, and executives of different trade organisations representing rice, pulses, edible oil, fruits, fish, meat and vegetable trade in different markets of Dhaka city including Badamtali, Maulvi Bazar and Mohammadpur Bazar.

A report on the prices of rice, wheat, pulses, edible oil, spices, fish, meat, powdered milk and other items prepared by the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) were presented in the meeting.

It was informed in the report that price of rice in the country had been decreased by Taka two in respect of last year's price and Taka one in respect of the price before two years. The price of other commodities had been slightly increased or decreased but they remain under the buying capacity of the people.

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