

DOWN TO EARTH Eid Rejoicing in City

By A.S.M. Nurunnabi

Eid, the festival of cheer and merriment, is in the offing. After a month-long observance of restraint and self-discipline during Ramadan, feelings of joy and contentment on this occasion acquire an undertone of sobriety. The high spirits affecting us at this time make us forget, however temporarily it may be, some of our problems in life.

In the down to earth view of things, the problems of Eid celebration that we commonly face relate mainly to shopping, visiting ones near and dear ones in villages and preparation of various tasty dishes for family and friends. Whatever be ones station in life, these problems are sought to be met within the capacity of ones means.

The major part of the preparations consist in shopping for the various new things needed. For most people Eid shopping is no easy job. As Eid day draws near, the buying spree gets momentum in crowded roads and shops.

In the city, there are different locales for shopping for different classes of people: affluent, less affluent and the

are seen before some shops. In most cases, these banners can be misleading. Some observers are of the opinion that most of these are eyewash to attract customers.

But the most distressing aspect is the tendency among many sellers to ask arbitrarily high prices at random. A wide variation is also found in prices for the same thing in the same area from one shop to another. The shopkeepers have, of course, their explanation for this, but that does not seem to be convincing.

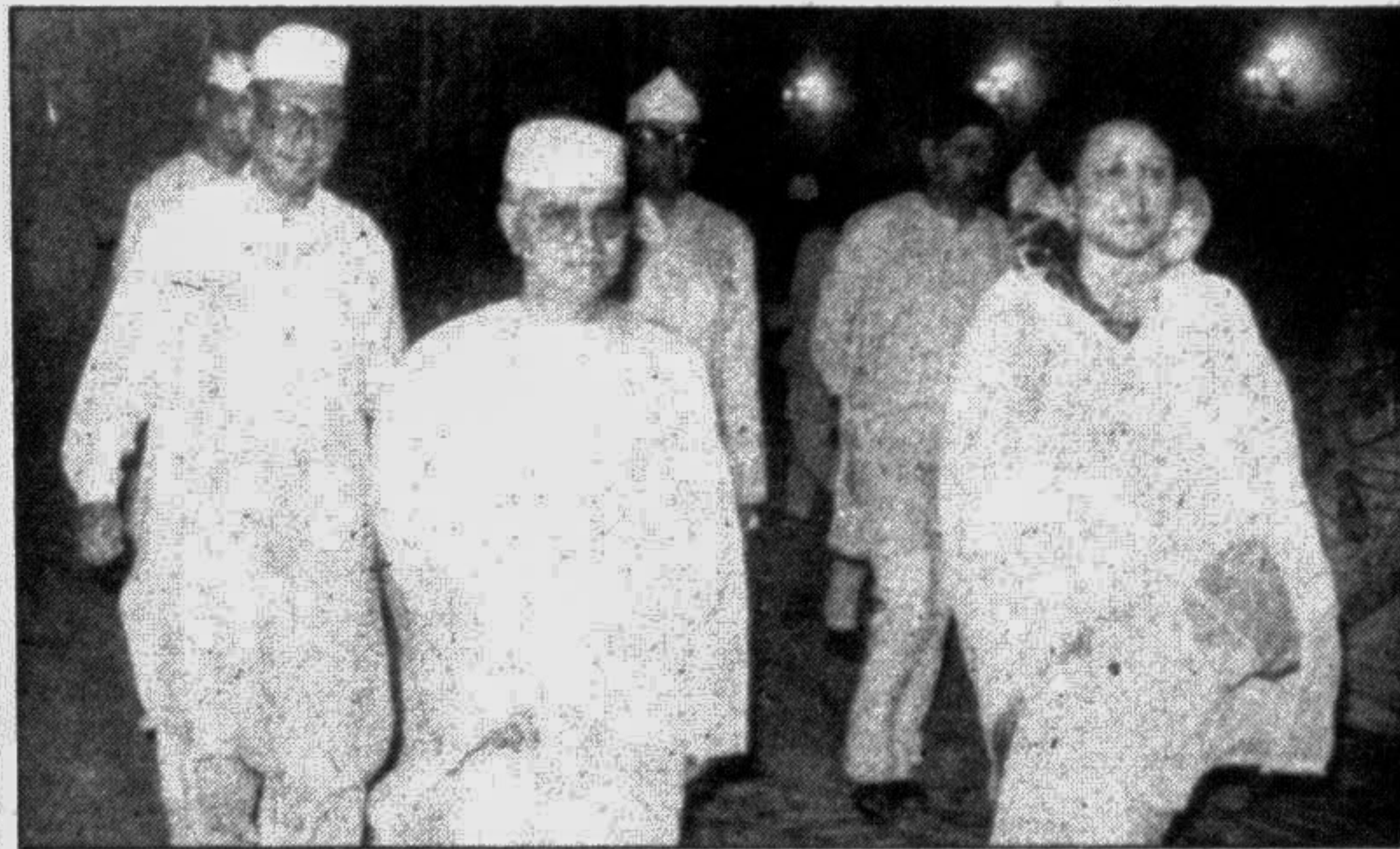
The wise thing in such situations for the economy-minded buyers, according to some experienced persons, is to verify a price, as far as possible, from a couple of shops before making a purchase. But during this season, it is not easy to follow the dictum of verification in the heavy rush of shoppers which drives ones energy and temper to the edge.

Many economy-minded people will take resort to shopping on the footpaths. In the city, roadside shops have lately proliferated to such an extent that there are few

extreme. Though the respective agencies run extra services to meet the increased demands, they fall far short of the requirement.

The galling thing to which intending passengers by different modes of transport are subjected at this time of inordinate rush every year is the black market racket by organised groups charging high prices on tickets earlier collected by them through covert means. The intending passengers will be greatly relieved if the law-enforcing agencies are more alert and active in co-operation with the booking staff to ensure that the black market operators are not given a free hand in their business. Any corruption at the ticket counters should be checked and a suitable procedure formulated under which tickets are sold to bonafide passengers.

During this time all the modes of transport will be carrying additional loads of passengers. In the past this had resulted in some cases in tragic accidents causing loss of life. It, therefore, behoves the concerned operators to ob-



President Addur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at an iftar party at Bangabhaban arranged in honour of members of the cabinet and ambassadors from the Muslim countries yesterday. —PID photo

Pak minister

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According to a Pakistani newspaper, Dhaka and Islamabad are signatories to a memorandum of understanding on transfer of equipment primarily from the Pakistan Ordnance factories. The memorandum expires in 1995.

"A regular level contact is maintained between the defence establishments of the two countries," said The News, in a report after Begum Zia's visit, referring to frequent exchange of trips by the services chiefs.

During the Prime Minister's visit, Lahore-based News International reported, Pakistan had offered to supply an unspecified number of Chinese-built military aircraft. No official comment came from Bangladesh.

On the "strategic significance" of growing Dhaka-Islamabad military connections, The News commented: "To some extent it helps to offset the Indian menace in the region."

The paper said that trainees from Bangladesh were attending courses in Pakistan's military academies while Dhaka was not eager to respond to similar offers from India.

RU VC

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come but the situation will not improve if we all are not sincere," the Vice-Chancellor said.

He said that the politicians were not sincere about their words and sometimes they had no control on their workers. "We had talks with the politicians who promised to contain their organisations but violence occurred," the VC said adding that "most of the troublemakers are outsiders who come with their friends and leaders."

Prof. Rahman who is a teacher of Botany Department from 1964 said that the role of police in curbing campus violence was not satisfactory.

He said that the university authorities had little power to ban politics and punish the culprits.

He, however, said that many people had started thinking about the positive effect of a ban on campus politics might have.

Prof. Rahman who was once the president of local Zia Parishad said that as a vice-chancellor he now had no connection with the parishad. He slated the move by the Rajshahi University Teachers Association which demanded his removal accusing him of failure in controlling February 6 incident, and said that similar incidents happened during the tenure of other vice-chancellors including his predecessor Amanullah Ahmed.

He reacted a bit angrily when asked about the allegation by APSU that he was favouring the Shibir and said it was baseless.

"I am not in favour or against anybody as all are my students," he said. He said that most of the newspapers published misleading reports on the campus situation.

Jumatul Wida

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President Abdur Rahman Biswas offered his Jumatul Wida prayer at the Garrison Mosque at the cantonment here.

The Jumatul Wida was coincided with the Al-Quds Day yesterday. Al-Quds committee held a seminar at Jatiya Press Club.

Speaker at the seminar called upon the Muslims all over the world to unite themselves and make all out efforts in freeing the first kebla from the Zionist occupation.

Another report from Chittagong says: Jumatul-Wida was also observed in the port city and elsewhere in the district yesterday.

Muslims devotees of all ages assembled the main juma congregations held at Andarkillah Shahe Jam-e-Masjid and Jamiatul Falah Complex and offered prayer

Another bomb blast

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"They are not great conspirators", he told newsmen.

Police have identified some of the cars and motor scooters used in the bombing and traced them to the Memon family, who own several restaurants and hotels and who police say were involved in smuggling gold and narcotics.

"The case is as good as solved. Now we know what happened and who did it. It is a case of getting them," Samra claimed.

But police admit they don't know if the fugitives were the planners or just the executioners of the bomb plot. They also have offered no convincing motive for the underworld to have carried out the assault.

Police also were trying to trace more than 5 million rupees (dhs 160,000) the Memon brothers reportedly received from Indians living in the Persian Gulf, Samra said.

The Statesman newspaper quoted unnamed police sources as saying the Memon brothers had fled from Dubai to Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, and were seeking asylum in Pakistan, India's hostile neighbour.

A Sikh militant group may have been involved in the string of bombings in Bombay, the police chief of the northern Indian State of Punjab said today.

The outlawed Khalistan Liberation Force (KLF), one of half-a-dozen Sikh militant groups battling for a homeland in Punjab, "could be one of the organisations involved in the bombings," Kanwar Pal Singh Gill said.

"Militants from different areas in the country have developed a nexus," he told a news conference in Panjab. "It could be one of the organisations involved in the bombings."

Gill said that Sikh militants had often used RDX, a high explosive used in the Bombay blasts, in Punjab. He could not explain why Sikh separatists would choose to target far away Bombay.

Gill discounted the possibility that another Sikh militant group, the largely dormant Khalistan Commando Force (KCF), played a role in the attacks.

Pilot killed in Indian fighter crash

NEW DELHI, Mar 19: An Indian air force fighter crashed during a sortie killing its lone pilot in the northern desert state of Rajasthan, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said Friday, reports BSS.

The Midnight File

Sheikh Omar denies any role in WTC attack

NEW YORK, Mar 19: A radical Muslim cleric whose name has surfaced repeatedly in the probe of the World Trade Center bombing denied any role in the attack and said he doesn't know the suspects under arrest. Sheikh Omar Abdul-Rahman preaches at a Jersey City, N.J. mosque where two of the suspects worshipped, reports AP.

Rushdie ends French visit under tight security

PARIS, Mar 19: Author Salman Rushdie on Friday ended a heavily guarded visit to France, his first since Iran's former leader, Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini sentenced him to death in 1989, reports AP.

Rushdie spoke to an audience of French intellectuals and politicians Thursday under tight security at the Grand Arch at La Defence on the western edges of the capital, reports AP.

Shopkeepers abort Myanmar

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In the past few weeks several anti-smuggling drive failed in the city markets here in the face of agitation and attack by the shopkeepers while open sale of Indian made sarees and other contraband textile items is being carried unabated, sources added.

According to a disgruntled government official in anti-smuggling squad, the task force can not fight the menace unless their operation is well planned, well organised, well protected and well coordinated. Editorial on Page 4

2 children

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Report from Barisal says: Twelve houses were completely gutted and cash and valuables worth about Taka five lakh were destroyed when a devastating fire broke out in village Faridpur of Bakerganj thana in the district Friday.

Witnesses said the fire originated from a kitchen at about 12 noon.

An amount of Tk 5,000 of a villager, which were taken as loan from Grameen Bank, were also gutted in the fire.

About 100 people of 10 families of the village were affected.

Local people rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control.

The Chairman of the local Union Parishad, Golam Mostafa along with local elites visited the spot and distributed sarce, lungi, and foodstuffs among the affected people.

Myanmar

From Page 1 Col 7

Oli Ahmed mentioned of the proposal of joint venture in pulp and clinker industries between the two countries and handed over a letter in this connection to Myanmar Foreign Minister who was present at the meeting.

He also offered seats for Myanmar students in the medical and pharmaceutical faculties in the UTC, the private sector University of Technology of Chittagong.

The Prime Minister appreciated the gesture and promised to give his government's response soon. General Than Shwe was assisted by Maj Gen Tin Oo, Secretary II of SLORC and Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw.

Later, Oli Ahmed had a meeting with the Minister of National Planning and Economic Development of Myanmar Brig Gen D O Abel at the Ministry of Planning.

Diarrhoea

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Laxmipur, 171 in Barguna and 166 in Pataukhali districts.

Death figures in other affected districts are: Bagerhat-137, Khulna-68, Jhalakati-115, Bhola-85, Barisal-41, Narayanganj-2, Gopalganj-15, Kishoreganj-12 and Netrokona-9.

The disease last year killed over 5,000 people out of 5,68,000 afflicted.

Nearly 700 medical teams, one in every union of the affected areas, and over 200 temporary mobile teams are working around the clock to combat the scourge.



Hectic Eid shopping at Bangabandhu Avenue in the city yesterday. —Star photo

vast majority of persons with limited means. For the affluent, shopping presents little problem of bargaining. They have select centres and plazas, where the buyers' main concern is just to select the objects of their choice. Price is no problem here; if there is any bargaining here, it is on a marginal scale.

The real problem is faced by other classes of people. In the market there is no dearth of indigenous products in sarees, dresses, shoes, etc. But according to observers, their prices generally register a rise. This is in contrast with situations in many countries, where, at times of big festivals reduction sales are a normal feature. But here no such trend is noticeable. Of course, some isolated reduction sale banners

things which are not available at these places. But to buy anything here you should have the ability of deft bargaining. This is no place for chicken hearted shoppers. The price initially asked at such places may be high but the expert player knows where to begin in the bargaining game. All this is admittedly exacting and time-consuming.

The next part of the celebration scenario relates to the frantic bids of a substantial part of the city population to leave the city to join their near and dear ones in the villages. The exodus will reach the height of its momentum when public and private offices close for the Eid holidays. The sight of the mass movement by rail-ways, buses, steamers and launches is staggering in the

serve due caution and safety formalities in the operation of their services.

The other important aspect of Eid celebration is the general proclivity for indulgence in gastronomic luxuries. Here also the scope is considerably limited for the majority by the rising trend of prices at this time. In spite of this, some of the characteristic dishes like 'sami', 'firni', 'pollau' will be prepared in many homes, whatever be their financial limitations. This is as much part of the festive ritual as wearing new clothes.

Overcoming all odds, when Eid comes, it will be an occasion for general elation and euphoria, throwing into temporary limbo all our cares and anxieties.

Rouf murder case

From Page 1 Col 5
A Deputy Superintendent of Customs, Abdur Rouf, was reportedly tortured to death at the DFI Headquarters, Dhaka Cantonment, on May 27 in 1983 after Rouf had detected a large quantity of smuggled watches at the airfreight godown at Zia International Airport (ZIA) on May 24 in the same year.

Even after ten years the death of Rouf is still shrouded

in mystery. In a hasty autopsy of the body at the Forensic Department of Dhaka Medical College the death was recorded due to heart failure.

The then Home Minister Major General Mohobbat Jan Chowdhury in a press conference on June 6, 1983, told the journalists that Rouf died of heart failure while being interrogated in connection with the watch smuggling.

After ten years, a murder case was lodged with Cantonment Police Station on March 13, 1993. The two former high defence officials were arrested on March 23 following the filing of the case.

Charges brought against the accused persons were under Sections 342 (for wrongful confinement of a person), 302 (for committing murder), 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false information to screen offender) and 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC), according to police source.

Meanwhile, a police source connected with the investigation said that several senior police officials are investigating the murder of Rouf.

"No major headway was made. Interrogation is being continued. Involvement of other persons are yet to be confirmed," said the source.

However, four day police remand of the two accused will end on Sunday

Emazuddin

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The President appointed Prof Emazuddin Ahmed to act as Vice Chancellor of the university following the resignation of Prof Moniruzzaman Miah on November 1.

From Emazuddin Ahmed joined the Dhaka University as Assistant Professor of Political Science in 1970 and became Associate Professor in 1978. He became Professor in 1985.

Besides being a teacher, he has served the university as house tutor of Surja Sen Hall and as Proctor of the university. He was appointed Pro-VC in December, 1986. Before that he was the Provost of Mohsin Hall.

Prof Emazuddin Ahmed is associated with different national and international organisations.

So far 14 books and more than 100 articles of Prof Emazuddin have been published.

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Romanian govt survives

BUCHAREST, Mar 19: Romania's minority left-wing government survived a no-confidence vote today. Senate leader Oliviu Gherman announced a 260-192 result in the government's favour after a parliamentary no-confidence debate and vote. The session was televised live, reports Reuter.

RU Syndicate

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The signatories are M. Ali Asger Khan, Abul Fazal Huq, Syed Rafiqul Alam Rumi, Mohammad Nurullah, Sheikh Mattiar Rahman and A KM Shaiful Islam.

The VC was appointed by the Chancellor and took office on July 22 after his predecessor Amanullah Ahmed resigned.

They challenged the Vice-Chancellor regarding his power to transfer employees and said that all transfers he made without consulting the concerned body, were illegal.

They said in the memo that the tenure of the previous committees on appointment of assistant professors, lecturers and employees expired on February 16 but those committees were still working 'illegally'.

Appointment of the provost and employees for the 13th residential hall was also a misuse of power as the hall was not yet handed over by the contractor to the university authorities.

They also pointed out some anomalies in teachers promotion and allotting of rooms in Zuberi Guest House where some teachers had been residing over the years because of residential problem.

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