

Dhaka Day by Day

Rain-soaked Rickshawpullers

by Abdus Shahid

To the city commuters they appear to be godsend but they themselves feel accursed on a rainy day. They are the rickshawpullers of Dhaka.

The life of a rickshawpuller is never easy, but it seems to be particularly hard in the rainy season. They literally soak themselves to earn their everyday livelihood. Their earning of the normal days is not enough to save something for the rainy days. That is why they accept inclement weather of the season as part of professional hazards and try to make the best of it.

But their professional hazard includes more than braving the shower. Says Sahed Ali, a rickshawpuller in his forties, "People grumble when we ask for something extra on the normal fare in such days. They really don't understand the hardship we go through in the roads."

He narrates, roads become very slippery in a rainy day and for a primitive mode of transportation like rickshaw it is very dangerous. Very often gusty winds accompany the rains, making it even harder for the rickshawpullers. Then, cars and other vehicles often ignore traffic laws in such days. Dripping water from the head blur rickshawpullers' vision which is very dangerous for any driver. "And when rain-water submerges the roads for hours, which has become quite common now-a-days, our misfortune accumulates, because we cannot then see the pits and uncovered manholes on the streets and we avoid these only with the help of our instincts," adds Sahed Ali.

In other seasons, rickshawpullers can take some kind of protection against adverse weather conditions. In winter, they put on

some warm clothes. In summer, they sometimes bundle a piece of cloth, very often a gamsha (napkin) on their heads as protection against the scorching sun. But in the rainy season they are completely at the mercy of mother nature. They cannot use a rain-coat as it is too inconvenient to pull rickshaws with rain-coats on, and it is too costly anyway. And they cannot now use umbrellas with one hand and drive the rickshaws with another, as some of them used to do in the past, because traffic in the streets has now swelled and become too



fast and demand much more attention than before to ply any vehicles.

But like many other unpleasant things, driving in a rainy day too has a brighter side for the rickshawpullers. Their income in these days are substantially higher than in any normal working day. While a rickshawpuller can expect to earn about one hundred taka in a regular day, they easily earn more than hundred and fifty taka in a rainy day. "It is not true that every passenger complains about the higher fare," says

Sahed Ali. "Some are very happy just to reach their destinations and pay more than we ask."

That good feeling of earning something extra vanishes soon if one develops high temperature afterwards and remains bed-ridden for some days. Cost of medicine and lost income then may mean hardship for the whole family for a long time.

Dhaka's hopeless dependence on such outmoded means of transport is never evident than in the rainy days. And only in these days Dhaka's citizens feel a sense of gratitude to the rickshawpullers whom they otherwise blame, unjustly, for all the wrongs of the city's transport and traffic system.

Follow ideals of poet Nazrul, Tarikul urges children

Social Welfare and Women Affairs Minister Tarikul Islam yesterday called upon the children of the country to take lessons from the life and works of poet Nazrul Islam to build themselves as the lovers of humanity, reports BSS.

He made this call at a children rally at the Shishu Academy auditorium here, arranged on the occasion of the 94th birth anniversary of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam.

The minister said throughout his checkered life, Nazrul always voiced for the freedom

and welfare of the oppressed and downtrodden section of the society. Celebration of his birth anniversary would be successful if we all endeavor for the betterment of the distressed humanity, he said.

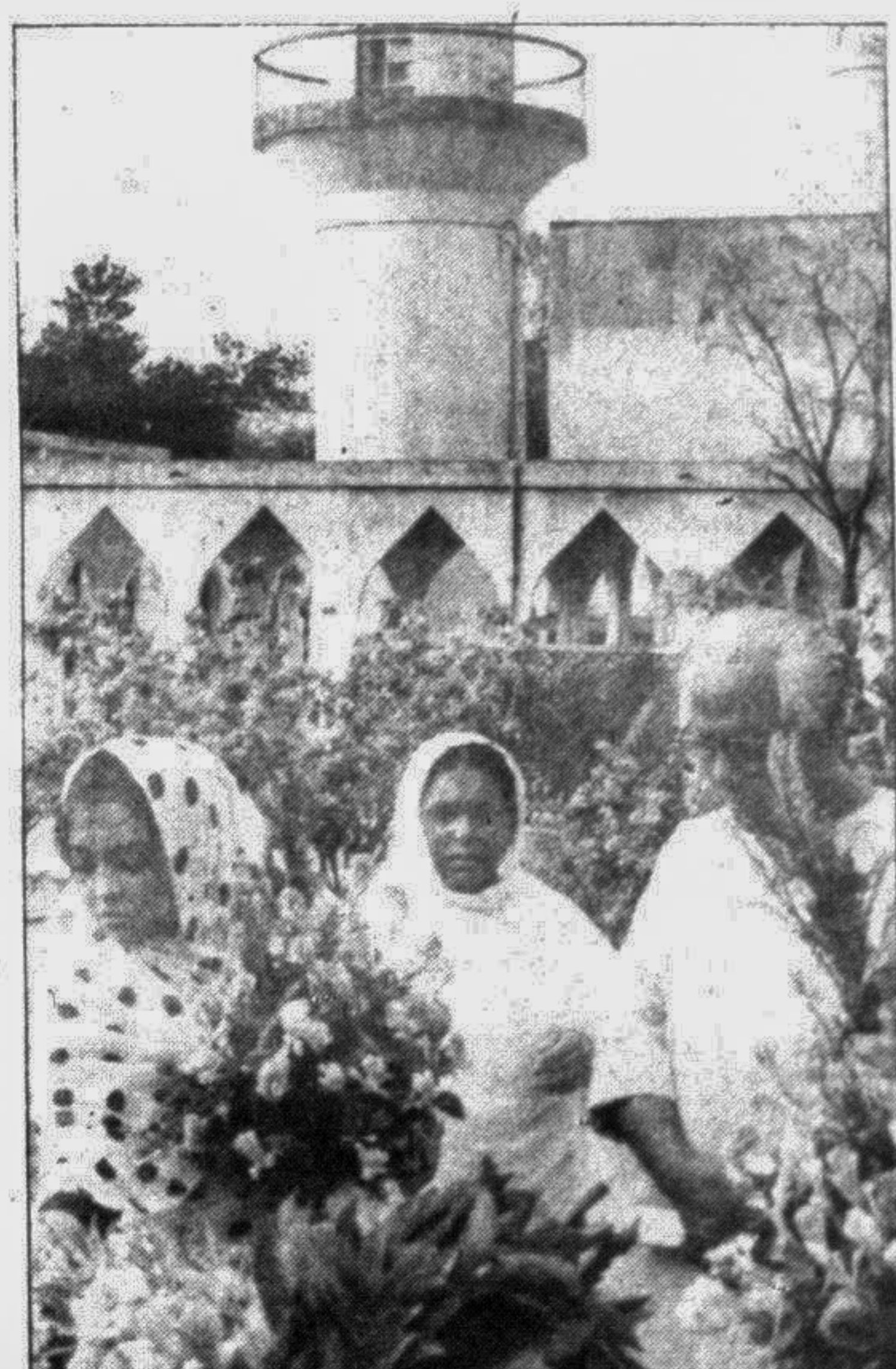
Islam said Nazrul was a born genius but from his very boyhood he had to go through the hard realities of life that made him a poet of humanity and party.

He also called upon the well-to-do guardians of the country to come forward with their helping hands for the development of the distressed

children and generate the sense of parity among their own children.

Arranged under the auspices of Bangladesh Shishu Academy, the function was chaired by its Chairman Dr Kazi Anwara Mansur. Prof Zubaida Gulshan Ara and Director of the Academy Golam Kibria also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, the minister inaugurated a children's exhibition on the portrait of Nazrul. The discussion was followed by a cultural function.



Plan to project life, works of Nazrul

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum yesterday said the government would formulate a perspective plan to project the whole life and works of the national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, reports BSS.

The state minister was addressing as chief guest a function organised by the Jatiyabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha (JSSS) at the Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka marking the 94th birth anniversary of the national poet.

Case against six BADC officials filed

The Bureau of Anti-corruption has filed a case against the superintending Engineer and some other officers of the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) on charges of misappropriating nearly Taka one and a half crore, an official press release said here yesterday, reports BSS.

It was stated that the accused persons through mutual connivance smuggled out machinery share parts worth Taka about one and a half crore from BADC's Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural godowns no 5, 11 and 16 and replaced those with unserviceable, old and rejected spares from outside.

The accused persons are AGM Sultan Ahmed Shah, former Executive Engineer of the central godown and at present superintending Engineer of Tangail, AKM Noor Hossain, Assistant Engineer, Serajul Islam, Sub-Assistant Engineer, Ashrafuzzaman, Security Officer, Bipul Chandra Biswas, Sub-Assistant Engineer and Manzoor Rahman Khan Sub-Assistant Engineers.

The Anti-corruption Bureau, filed the case under section number 420/409/109 of BPC and 5(2) Sub-section of section number two of Anti-corruption Act 1947 after the allegations were proved in course of preliminary investigations.

Samad Azad off to Jeddah

Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Awami League leader Abdus Samad Azad left Dhaka for Jeddah yesterday at the invitation of the Saudi government to perform Hajj in Makkah, reports UNB.

Biswas, Khaleda felicitate Shevardnadze

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday felicitated Eduard Shevardnadze, Chairman of the State Council of Georgia on the occasion of its Independence Day, reports BSS.

In his message, President Biswas extended best wishes for good health, happiness and long life of Shevardnadze and for the people of Georgia progress and prosperity.

In a separate message, the Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday greeted Eduard Shevardnadze on the same occasion.

Prime Minister Begum Zia wished him good health, happiness and long life



Family members of Kazi Nazrul Islam (top), and Dhaka University teachers led by Vice-Chancellor Professor Emajuddin Ahmed (above), placing wreaths at the mazar premises of the National Poet near the Dhaka University in observance of his 94th birth anniversary yesterday. Story on page 1.

One gets 10-year RI for keeping counterfeit notes

CHITTAGONG, May 25: Third Additional Sessions Judge of Chittagong Mohammad Mafizul Islam on Monday sentenced one Nabi Hussain to ten years rigorous imprisonment (RI) and fine Taka 2,000 in default to suffer more three years imprisonment on charge of keeping eight counterfeit notes of 500 Taka, reports BSS.

The prosecution story in brief is that Nabi Hussain of village Garangia under Satkania thana went to a shop for buying a packet of cigarette with a

500 Taka note.

The shop-keeper Jakir Hossain suspected the note to be a counterfeit one and took Nabi Hussain to local Union Parishad member Manir Ahmad. Nabi Hussain confessed that he had seven more 500-Taka notes.

The UP member later handed over Nabi Hussain to Satkania police with the fake notes and filed a case in this connection.

The Sessions Judge examined four witnesses and found Nabi Hussain guilty.

Postal holidays on Eid-ul-Azha

All post offices will remain closed on June 1, 2, and 3 on the occasion of the holy Eid-ul-Azha, a press release of Bangladesh Postal Department said here yesterday, reports BSS.

But the post offices with G E P and E M S services will remain open during the Eid vacation to facilitate the people.

Besides, sale of envelopes and stamps will be in force as usual from the R M S O mail and sorting office counters during the period, the press release said.

It said there will also be arrangement for distribution of unregistered letters on June 1 because of holidays for four consecutive days including Friday.

CUTA praises appointment of Justice Abdur Rahman Chy

CHITTAGONG, May 25: Dr Yusuf Sharif Ahmad and Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, President and General Secretary respectively of Chittagong University Teachers' Association (CUTA) today hailed appointment of Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury as Chairman of Bangla Academy by the government, reports BSS.

In a statement here they said, "We thank the government for appointing Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury as Chairman of Bangla Academy and we hope the Academy under his leadership would function smoothly."

Weather

Temperature may fall

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast for the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Wednesday) says, rain or showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind may occur at one or two places over Dhaka and Chittagong divisions and the regions of Jessore, Kushtia, Pabna and weather is likely to remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over the country.

The Met office forecasts, day temperature is likely to fall by one degree Celsius over the country.

The Met office adds, south-west Monsoon is likely to advance up to the Bangladesh coast within a week.

The country's highest temperature 36.6 degree Celsius and the lowest 24.8 degree were both recorded in Rajshahi yesterday.

The amounts of rainfall recorded in 12 hours from 6 am to 6 pm yesterday were: Teknaf and Satkhira 7mm each and Jessore 2mm.

The sun sets today (Wednesday) at 6.39 pm and rises tomorrow (Thursday) at 5.11 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity recorded in 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	35.0	27.2	75	64
Chittagong	33.7	26.0	72	78
Rajshahi	36.6	24.8	72	58
Khulna	35.4	27.4	77	79
Bartala	34.2	27.2	86	84
Sylhet	35.4	25.6	80	69
Dinajpur	33.6	25.0	77	55
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.8	72	78

Indian sarees seized

RAJSHAHI, May 24: Members of 20 Rifle Battalion in two separate raids today seized smuggled goods worth about Taka 19 lakh from the district. The petrol team of BDR seized 647 pieces of Indian sarees, 260 blouse pieces and 320 metres of cloth from Arany area under Bagha thana while another BDR squad seized 3900 pieces of sarees, four cartoon catechu, sugar, salt and electric parts from Chorghat and Mirganj area under Chorghat thana, reports BSS.

Dr Shelly leaves for London

Dr Mizanur Rahman Shelly, member of the advisory committee of Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR), left here for London yesterday to attend a Commonwealth conference, reports UNB.

The two-day conference on "Human Rights Approaches Towards Environmental Protection" will begin today, said a press release.

What's on today

Bangla Academy

The Bangla Academy will organise a 3-day cultural programme in observance of the birth anniversary of Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam at its premises.

The function will begin today (Wednesday) at 6pm.

BEA pre-budget Seminar

Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) will hold a pre-budget seminar at National Press Club auditorium today (Wednesday) at 4 pm.

BEA President Professor Anisur Rahman will preside over the seminar while leading economists of the country will participate.

IRAA Seminar

A seminar on "Bosnia: A scar on civilisation" organised by International Relations Alumni Association of the Dhaka University will be held today (Wednesday) at 5 pm at the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants (ICMA) auditorium, Nikhet in the city.

Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, Minister for Local Government Rural Development and Cooperatives will grace the seminar as the chief guest while Abdus Samad Azad, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in Parliament will attend as the special guest.

. . . . and tomorrow

Institute of Business Admn

The 23rd MBA course concluding ceremony of the Institute of Business Administration Dhaka University will be held tomorrow (Thursday) at 5 pm at its auditorium.

DU Vice-Chancellor Professor Emajuddin Ahmed will be the chief guest and distribute certificates.

SRGB awarding ceremony

The Certificate awarding ceremony of the Workshop on Managing Sales organised by Survey Research Group of Bangladesh (SRGB) will be held tomorrow (Thursday) at 6.30 pm at Hotel Purbani.

AHM Abdul Ilye, Secretary of the Ministry of Industries will be the chief guest while Anis Ud Dowla, President of BEA will remain present as the special guest.

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad

Bangladesh Mahila Parishad will hold a press conference at its central office at 10/B, Segunbagicha tomorrow (Thursday) at 11 am.

MITSUBISHI LANCER



MITSUBISHI LANCER cradles your child as perfectly as his bed

RANGS LIMITED

113-116, OLD AIRPORT ROAD, TEJGAON, DHAKA-1215
PLOT # 3, COA AVENUE, SHOLOSHAHAH C/A, CHITTAGONG



CREATING TOGETHER