

Dhaka Day by Day

Power's Pariah Treatment

By Nilratan Halder

In this city of stark inequalities, contradictions and the opposite, skyscrapers and slums are no longer in dispute to discover themselves as neighbours. Certainly, the amenities and facilities in the form of public utilities vary — much the same way the economic activities in their respective ambience take place. Yet some spill-over benefits are supposed to give mutual gains to the unequal neighbours. In a economic venture, even the smallest cog is not thought to be indispensable.

However, some areas in this ever-expanding metropolis seem to have gone out of a few public utilities' reckoning. The Dhaka Electric Supply Authority, the creation of which generated enough heat and contradictions, promised so much for the residents of this city! But it neither started with a bang nor ended with a whimper; it has simply degenerated in certain areas — areas the DESA by now has started treating like pariahs. This metropolis is divided into zones and areas where even public utilities must not be equally generous to reach their benefits.

One such area, one of the twins, covers a large part of Mirpur starting from Agargaon Talloia upto section 10. Power disruption has become endemic to say the least. It is humanly impossible to keep track of the discontinuation of this essential utility service. Power, better say energy, consumption is a measure of the quality of life or of the development of a country, the wise of our times would readily agree. If this is also true for a particular locality, the inhabitants of the area in question should be relegated to a position even the country's average energy consumption figure would not be willing to accommodate.

The pattern (if there is any pattern at all) of power disruption in the area suffers from irregularities to an alternate duplication with the other of the twins, parts of Cantonment starting from Kalur in the south to Manikdi in the north. Indeed the ingenuity of the power distributionmen is unequalled. If the area on the

east side of the runway of the old airport is lucky to enjoy the generosity of the DESA in the evening, the west of the runway, without fail, will have to make do without electricity and be fated to plunge in pitch darkness. If one hopes against hope that the much sought after power will be restored soon to facilitate the viewing of a rare quality TV programme, the agonising wait may never come to an end. The euphoric ecstasy in the eastern part however, more often than not, will come to an abrupt end.

The absence of the ubiquitous electricity for hours together in the western part of the hapless area is thus suddenly ended and the process goes on and on until the power-wielders decide that both parts have had enough of the hide-and-seek game and now qualified to have a simultaneous boon of their grace. Funnily, if the residents of one part is deprived of the early part of a TV programme, they may be compensated in a rather queer way through restoration of power supply just before the culmination of the programme. The powermen at least, cannot be blamed for outright discrimination of their treatment. So considerate they are that neither of the two localities have been allowed to have a full viewing time.

Compared to this loss of TV programmes, the loss of study to students and others is however considered colossal. If electricity takes its routinely leave, say at about eight at night, it will not reappear before 10 pm and by this time the mosquitoes are ready to make a mincemeat of anyone staying outside a mosquito net. So what is the option? Just go to bed and start dozing. However, if the heat is intolerable, one only tries to move about anything one can lay one's hand on with the sole purpose of keeping the body cool and the tiny insects at bay. If the fanning is inconvenient, the final exercise one can resort to is cursing the luck and praying for reappearance of the precious power.



Work to set up democratic society : Speaker

The Speaker of the Jatiya Sangsad, Shaikh Razzaque Ali yesterday underscored the need for putting in concerted efforts by all concerned to solve basic national problems, reports BSS.

He was speaking as chief guest at the District Awards Presentation Ceremony '93 of Rotary Club at a city hotel, a PID handout said.

The function, organised by Rotary Club of Dhanmondi, was presided over by District Governor Rotarian L K Siddique MP.

Speaker Razzaque Ali said that this was the best time to take coordinated efforts by voluntary organisations to work for the well being of common man. In this context, he highlighted the various activities of Rotary Clubs throughout the country to serve the humanity. He urged all to work for the establishment of democratic society on a solid foundation.

Earlier, the Speaker distributed prizes among the Rotarians for their activities in various fields.

Painting show of nine artists begins

A fortnightly exhibition of painting and art works of nine eminent artists of the country began Thursday at the Shilpakala Academy Art Gallery here, reports BSS.

National Prof Abdur Razzak inaugurated the exhibition, titled 'Nine Modern Artists of Bangladesh' in which works of S M Sultan, Mohammad Kibria, Aminul Islam, Murtaza Bashir, Abdur Razzak, Quayum Choudhury, Syed Jahangir, Debdas Chakraborty and Kazi Abdul Basset are on display.

A book with the same title, 'Nine Modern Artists of Bangladesh', was also published on the occasion.

National Prof Razzak said during the last 50 years artists including Zainul Abedin had played a significant role in enriching the national heritage.

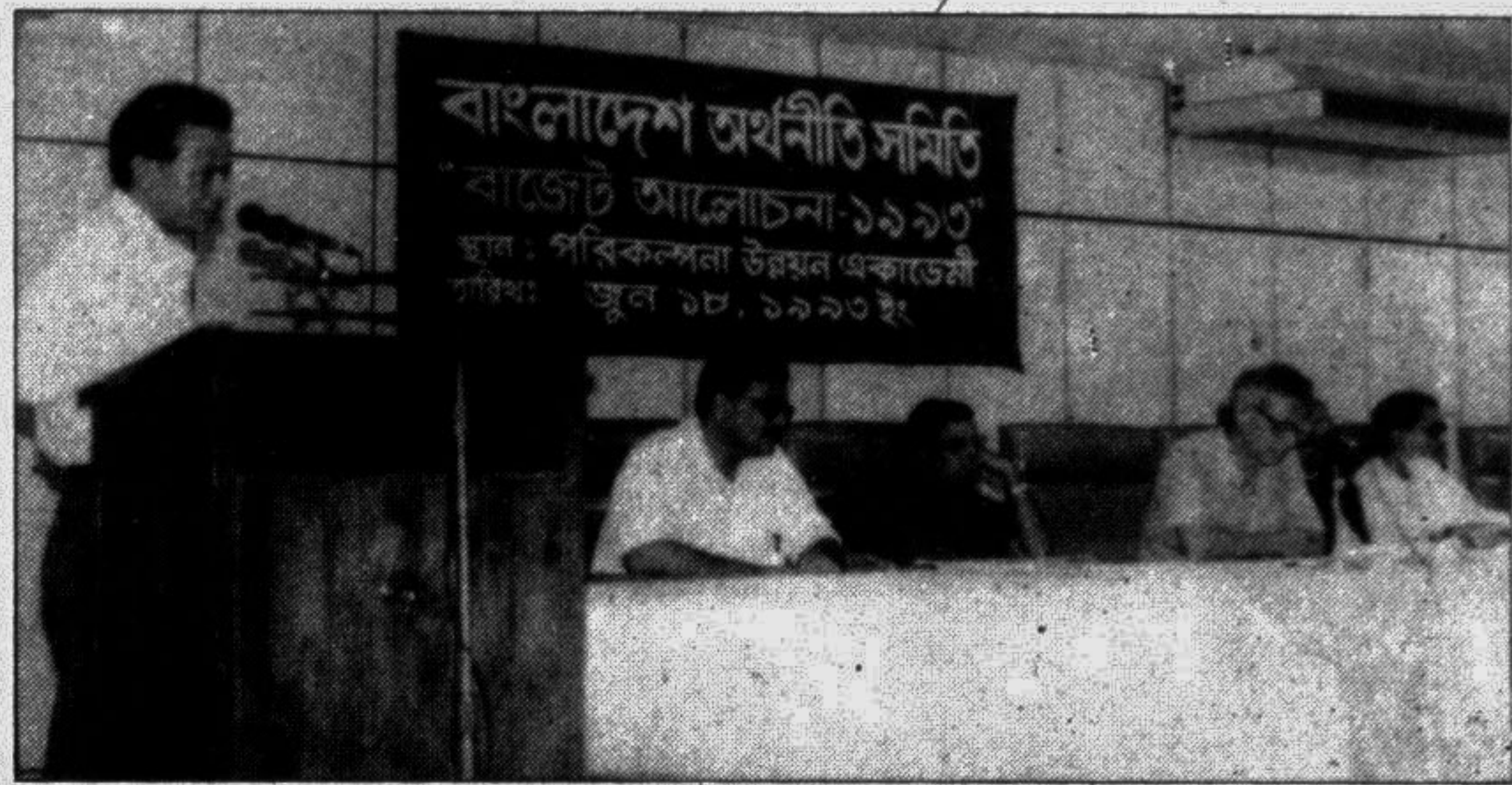


Emdad gets top Rotary Int'l award

Rtn Emdadul Huque, past president of Rotary Club of Dhaka was considered one of dedicated and distinguished Rotarians by the RI Board of Directors which also decided to honour him with the RI Service Above Self Award.

Rtn Emdad's honour is a great achievement for the rotary movement of Bangladesh as no other Rotarian in the past could earn such honour.

His services include establishment of a Rotary College at Austagram, Nine Rotary Primary Schools, Seven Eye and Dental camps.



Amir Khasru Mahmud an MP of the ruling party, speaking at a discussion on the budget for '93-94 fiscal organised by the Bangladesh Economic Association at the Planning and Development Academy in the city yesterday. Also seen (from left) Dr Debapriya Bhattachariya, Abdul Bayes, Prof Anisur Rahman and Rashed Khan Menon. Story on Page 1 — Star photo

Joint efforts of males, females vital for overall progress

"We need a broader socio-economic agenda to translate it into a strong political commitment through democratic process for achieving overall progress of the country."

This was observed at a seminar here yesterday where the speakers also stressed the need for joint efforts of both the sexes to reach the goal, reports BSS.

The seminar on "Young women in Bangladesh and their life choices" organised by the Society for International Development (SID), Bangladesh chapter, was held at the BIRDEM auditorium with its President A T M Shamsul Huq in the chair.

Former Deputy Minister for Health Ms. Mabud Fatema Kabir presented the keynote paper. Prof Jahanara Huq and SID executive committee members Syed Ali Kabir and Dr. Quazi Kholiquzzaman Ahmad participated in the discussion.

Ms Mabud Fatema Kabir in her paper said women were used to be treated as assets in a family even a few decades ago but, at present, their position was being devaluated and degraded in the family.

In this respect, she mentioned dowry, early marriage, divorce, desertion, polygamy, male domination, less access to jobs and schools, sexual abuse, prostitution, lack of freedom and lack of security as main tragedies being faced by the country's womenfolk.

The former deputy minister said women of very poor families often enjoy more freedom and control over their lives than those of higher income groups.

Export of shrimp to USA on rise

Bangladesh's export of shrimp and frozen fish to the United States has been rising rapidly, reports BSS.

The Eastern Seafoods of Dhaka has received an order from the Farport International of USA to export shrimp worth 10 million US dollars urgently.

A U Ahmed, Chairman of the Eastern Seafoods of Dhaka and a leading exporter of the country, has received the order from the US firm on June 11, 1993 and hoped to export black tiger headless, white headless and peeled and unpeeled shrimps worth 10 million US dollars within a few weeks.

Bangladeshis in Vienna host reception to FM

The Bangladesh scientists and other professionals working with the IAEA and UNIDO in Vienna hosted a reception Thursday for Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman, now in Vienna, according to a message received here, reports BSS.

The Foreign Minister exchanged views with the expatriate Bangladeshis and enquired about their welfare.

The Foreign Minister also visited the exhibition and stall set up by the Bangladeshi NGO groups in the Austria International Centre, Vienna. Begum Sigma Huda, wife of the Information Minister, explained to Foreign Minister the various aspects of the stall. He appreciated the efforts of the Bangladeshi NGO's representing the human rights issues of Bangladesh.

Rahman is in Vienna to attend World Human Rights Conference.

The Foreign Minister also attended a meeting of the Islamic foreign ministers here which was held in the sideline of the World Conference on Human Rights. The issue of barbaric violation of human rights in Bosnia-Herzegovina was discussed.

The Foreign Minister made an emphatic intervention supporting the proposal for insertion of special paragraph on Bosnia-Herzegovina in the final declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights.

Dhaka-Moscow cultural exchange programmes discussed

The high-level officials of the Russian Federation and Bangladesh met Thursday at the conference room of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs to strengthen mutual cooperation in the field of culture, education, science, technology, sports, and mass media, reports BSS.

Ambassador of Russian Federation in Bangladesh E S Shevchenko and Joint Secretary of Cultural Ministry Md Moslem Ali led their respective sides. The visiting high officials of Russian Federation including Counsellor of Cultural Relations of Foreign Ministry P Lazovik and Cultural and Foreign Ministry of Bangladesh were present at the meeting.

The meeting discussed in details the signing of a cultural exchange programme for the term 1993-95. The matters of cultural delegation exchange, cultural programme exchange, scholarship programme in science and technology sectors, exchange the visit of journalists and radio, TV programmes and other relevant issues also came up for discussion.

Weather

Downpour likely

By Staff Correspondent

Under the influence of a land depression crossing over Bangladesh, moderate rain or thunder shower accompanied by gusty or squally wind will continue over most of the places of the country during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today.

Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged during this period.

The Met office forecasts heavy downpour is likely at a few places over Chittagong, Barisal and Dhaka divisions till 6 pm today.

The country's highest temperature yesterday of 28.5 degree Celsius was recorded in Teknaf and the lowest of 22.2 degree was recorded in Chittagong.

The country experienced rainfall at most of the places yesterday. Rainfall recorded during the day yesterday were: Chittagong 112 mm, Dhaka 65 mm, Khepupara 63 mm, Teknaf 54 mm, Bogra 51 mm, Patuakhali 46 mm, Sandwip 45 mm, and Rajshahi 41 mm. Other places experienced rainfall below 40 mm.

The sun sets today Saturday at 6.48 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) 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 degree Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	26.8	25.2	93	95
Chittagong	26.4	22.2	97	100
Rajshahi	25.8	24.6	100	95
Khulna	26.4	25.6	-	-
Barisal	26.6	23.8	100	97
Cox's Bazar	28.0	25.0	97	92
Sylhet	27.5	24.7	95	88
Dinajpur	26.6	24.8	96	90

We like to think the world revolves around the new Pajero. Actually, it's the other way around.



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