

## Metropolitan

## Dhaka Day by Day

## An Oasis of Hope for the Neglected

by Raffat Binte Rashid

The scene is a busy classroom. Students chatting and discussing the English notes for the test about to begin; the teacher enters and everyone greets her a 'Good afternoon.' Apparently, it might look like an ordinary scene from any English medium school in the city, but actually it's the Telegu Community School in Wari. But do not confuse again, the majority students of this school is from the sweeper's colony and the adjoining slum there. It might be difficult to comprehend the relationship or understand the link between Telegu school, English test and slum children; but it's easy and simple.

Almost 200 years from now, people from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu in India came to this part of the sub-continent during a spell of drought. They came in search of food and work. They got petty jobs in tea gardens in Sylhet and as construction labourers or sweepers in the city. At present a municipal survey shows that there are about 90 thousand or more such people working as sweepers all over the country. And Telegu Community School in Wari is basically for their children, even though the children from the nearby slums are also attending this school.

An interesting feature of this school is that, they follow the regular syllabus of the country's four boards, in spite of the fact that majority students are Telegu speaking. The school is supported by the Food for the Hungry International, an organisation that sponsors each child here. Explaining the role of the school, the school Manager Rabintra Mondol said, this organization funded by US and Japan agencies distribute aids and offers education to slum children. There are three school projects of this particular organization in Dhaka. Help centre in Green Road, Telegu Community School in Wari and another in Sayedabad at Number 14 Outfall.

As the name suggests — Food for the Hungry, this organization's main attraction is to motivate destitute children to educate themselves in exchange of which they would provide at least a day's meal. This worked fine till 1991. But the response was much less than expected. They changed strategies; instead they are now offering an interest-free loan to the most needy family. This refundable loan is of Tk 1500 to maximum Tk 5000, which they can repay at monthly installments. This is not a relief, they have to refund, and utilize the help till they make their own capital," Mondol said.

With the introduction of loan programme, the response has been very satisfying. It has now become easier to motivate children and their family to come to schools. Economic stability is something the parents of these children always desire, so far 100 such parents in Sayedabad have availed of the opportunity.

"This programme is yet to be developed in Wari, but at the Outfall we introduced the loan around 1992. In our Green Road project which is

a much bigger project, it's a matured programme. It was launched from 1989 and so far about 95 per cent of the parents there are helped by this loan," added Mondol.

The school projects at Wari and Sayedabad have a total of 606 students with 352 in Wari. The classes are from Play Group to Grade V and Grade VII respectively in Wari and Sayedabad. The school hours in Wari are 8 to 10:30 for students of the junior section (i.e. Play Group to Kindergarten level) and 11:15 to 4 pm till Class V.

"Students are quite enthusiastic about the school, the dropout rate has also amazingly dropped from 11 per cent in '92 to 6 per cent in '93," informed Mondol.

The school has six graduate teachers all efficient and enthusiastic about their duties. "We teach them all the subjects here, they have shown tremendous interest in studies and are quite serious," said a teacher of the school. The most striking phenomenon of this Telegu Community School in Wari is that the children, even though coming from poor background, are very optimistic and enthusiastic about their future.

Sumon, a fourth grader, whose father is a vendor selling papers and bottles and whose mother is an Ayah, said that he would continue his studies as far as it goes. "I will not stop till I am well placed somewhere in society," he said. Students here are not working children, the organization does not allow such candidates. "If we see that a child is willing to continue further, we shift him to Sayedabad which is up to Grade VII. And if someone wants to matriculate he or she is admitted to any govt. high school. We make sure that each such child's future is taken care of. We provide basic education as well as some vocational training," Mondol confirmed.

Three students of these schools passed SSC this year. One obtained star mark and one got first division and another second division. On the '92 batch two students are now in college and one of them is in a Polytechnic School, learning a trade course.

These are not just their success stories but the country's achievements too. As the saying goes 'slow and steady wins the race'. These steps are no doubt the beginning of a fresh start to build the country.

The school authority provides the children with uniforms, books and other accessories. They even take them out for educational trips and arrange functions and sports in the school premises. They have a ward booked in the Shishu Hospital where they provide them with free medication whenever needed.

A shabby school building, with raindrops dripping through the tin roof, has offered so many options and choices for the poor, deprived children. For them this place is a gateway to a better life.

## Grade A pourasavas get Tk 86 lakh each

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar yesterday said that the government had given each Grade A (upgrade) Pourasava Tk 86 lakh, Grade-A Tk 68 lakh, Grade-B Tk 56 lakh and Grade-C Tk 36 lakh for the development of 108 Pourasavas of the country in the current financial year, reports BSS.

The Minister was inaugurating an administration orientation course for the newly elected chairmen of pourasavas, organised by National Institute

of Local Government (NILG) in its auditorium here. About 40 pourasava chairmen are participating in this 3-day training course.

The function was addressed, among others, by the Secretary of LG division of LGRD and Cooperatives, Ministry of Municipalities, Mr. Md. Afzal Hossain Saki.

The Minister said that the local government institution was the most effective institution to associate the people with administration and development. It played a very vital role in alleviating their poverty.

## Over two lakh employed abroad since Jan '90, JS told

Labour and Manpower Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsad that a total of 2,57,924 persons had been employed abroad from January 1, 1990 to August 31, 1993, reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Awami League member Mansur Ahmed, the Labour Minister said those persons had been employed through various recruiting agencies.

## New British HC designate arrives

Peter J. Fowler, the British High Commissioner-designate for Bangladesh, arrived in Dhaka yesterday to take up his new assignment, reports UNB.

Before coming to Dhaka, Fowler served as British Deputy High Commissioner in New Delhi, India.

He will succeed Sir Colin Imray KBE, who has retired from the diplomatic service and joined an NGO back in England.

Fowler is a career diplomat who has served in Budapest, Lisbon, Calcutta, East Berlin, Geneva and Bonn. He was appointed as Minister and Deputy High Commissioner at New Delhi in February 1988.

Born on August 26, 1936, Fowler was educated at Nunthorpe Grammar School in York and Trinity College, Oxford. He was in the Army from 1954 to 1956 and joined the Foreign Office in 1962.

He was awarded the rank of Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) in 1990.

The High Commissioner-designate is accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Audrey June Fowler, is expected to present his credentials within three weeks.

## Ph.D. Degree Awarded

Dhaka University has awarded the Ph.D. degree in Education to Prof Saleha Khatun, Senior Specialist of NCTB for her thesis entitled, "A Comparative Study of Reliability and Validity of Examinations for the B. Ed Degree Programme of BIDE through Distance Education and the regular B. Ed Degree Programme of Teachers' Training Colleges".

Dr. Mazharul Haque, Professor and Ex-Director, Institute of Education and Research, University of Dhaka, was the supervisor of her research study.

## NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY (NSU)

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**Admission Fee:** Tk 10,000;  
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**Application Forms** may be obtained from NSU

Administrative Office and should be submitted duly filled in by 31st October, 1993 to Registrar, North South University, House 76 B, Road 21, Banani, Dhaka. Those who have appeared in Hon's Exam. in 1993 may also apply for provisional admission.

NSU offers limited number of Teaching Assistantships to the students in the Master's Program.

For further details, contact the Registrar's Office: 881495, 606047.

## REMINDER

Last date for application for admission into undergraduate programs is 5 Oct. Admission test is at 9:30 AM on 8 Oct 1993 at Titumir College.

## Cancer Society team meets Biswas

A six-member delegation of Bangladesh Cancer Society called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday, reports UNB.

The delegation explained the President about its programmes, including setting up of a cancer hospital and welfare home and cancer education and prevention activities.

The delegation, led by president Prof Syed Fazlul Haq, sought President's support towards various programmes of the society.

## Biswas, Khaleda greet President, PM of Mali

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday greeted President M Alpha Oumar of the Republic of Mali on the occasion of its National Day of Mali, reports BSS.

In a message to President Konare, President Biswas wished him good health, happiness and long life and the people of Mali continued peace, progress and prosperity.

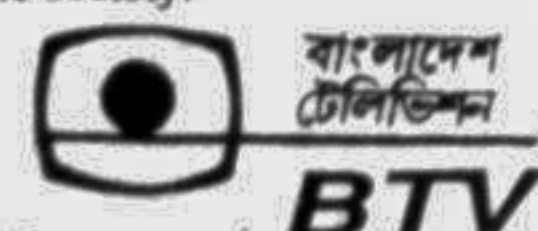
In a separate message Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia felicitated Prime Minister Abdoulaye Sekou Sow of the Republic of Mali.

Begum Zia wished him good health, happiness and long life and the people of Mali peace, progress and prosperity.

## Science fair at Udayan School concludes

A three-day science fair concluded at Udayan School here yesterday leaving an impression that the girls and boys have talents to become scientists in future, reports UNB.

The "mini scientists" in their works highlighted the adverse effects of the Farakka barrage, environmental degradation, pollution of atmosphere and health hazards.



Wednesday

5:00 Opening announcement  
Al-Quran  
Programme summary  
5:10 News in Bangla  
5:25 Khelar Jagat: Sports programme  
6:00 Nibedan  
7:00 Open University  
7:25 Tagore songs  
8:00 News in Bangla  
8:30 Bishwa Parikrama  
9:00 Film show: The A Team  
10:00 News in English  
10:30 Mukhomukhi  
11:30 Khabar/The News  
11:40 Tomorrow's programme  
11:45 Closing

## Weather

## Moderate rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Sky will mostly remain cloudy over the country. Light to moderate rain or showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur at many places over Barisal division and at a few places over Chittagong, Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka divisions.

Met Office forecasts day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The country's highest temperature of 33.5 degree Celsius was recorded in Sylhet while lowest of 23.0 degree Celsius was recorded in Feni yesterday.

The sun sets today (Wednesday) at 5:55 pm and rises tomorrow (Thursday) at 5:48 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity of some major cities and towns of the country recorded yesterday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Degree Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	31.0	26.5	82	73
Chittagong	29.0	24.5	93	89
Rajshahi	31.7	26.2	88	88
Khulna	31.5	26.4	-	-
Barisal	30.6	25.5	-	82
Dinajpur	32.0	24.0	85	78
Sylhet	33.5	25.7	83	71
Cox's Bazar	30.4	26.0	82	83

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