

Dhaka Day by Day

The Latest Way to Say 'Hello'

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



The latest technological convenience in town.

Making a call from a public phone booth used to be a nightmare. Remember the times you desperately rummaged through pockets or purses to find the twenty-five paisa coins that have almost become extinct from our everyday lives — even for the beggars on the street? Recall the occasions when even after bribing the phone with endless coins or banging it with your fists, it stubbornly refused to give you that longed-for sound of the dial tone? Those unhappy days are finally over, thanks to the latest convenience provided by the T & T board, the 'card phone'.

Just with the slide of a card one can call anybody anywhere in the world. The card, which is both easy to use and time saving is the latest device to make the life of the citizen better.

To make a call one has to merely insert the card which has value in it, wait for the dial tone, press the numbers and lo and behold! The call actually gets through! The instructions are all given in front of the telephone set including a customer service number in case there is any difficulty. The caller can talk as long as he likes, depending of course, on how much money he has spent on the card. The cards which are in a pleasing green colour and have an environmentally friendly message, can bear a value of 50 taka, 100 taka, 500 taka or more.

While the caller speaks, the meter on the phone shows how much value is remaining. This means that the caller speaks for as long as he can afford to without worrying about running up the bill. This is especially true for the incurable long-distance caller who will find the most unlikely excuses to call across the world: 'I just called to say, I can't afford to call you' and such like. You can talk to your loved one in the US for example, for about 10 minutes with a card that has a value of about 1000 taka, after which the line will get cut. This, although a little cruel if it means the end of a beautiful relationship, provides the caller with the relief of not having to face that dreaded piece of paper at the end of the month. This is the notorious, phone bill which has become the most fearful object in our lives, often showing amounts that show neither reason nor mercy.

Another advantage of the card phone is that it saves the trouble of booking a call and then waiting for ages for the operator to get the line through, that too at some ungodly hour.

Dhaka alone has 116 card phones all with ISD lines and located at various strategic spots

all around the city. This includes major hospitals such as PG, DMC and Suhrawardy, major banks, BIRDEM, Biman offices, the airport, government offices such as the Secretariat, Kamalapur Railway Station, the Press Club, and BIWTA (Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority). A few private organisations such as BCAS (Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies) and Bikalpa clinic also have these card phones. Although most of the phone booths are locked up at night when the offices are closed, a number of them are open 24 hours. These include four booths in Kamalapur Railway Station, three in Ramna Telegraph office, four in Suhrawardy hospital and four in Zia Airport. The cards can be bought at the post office, major government banks and a few other places.

Like anything else in this imperfect world, the card phone is not without shortcomings. Since there is no fixed time for each call as with the coin-operated phones, many callers consider the card phone to be the best medium of socialising. Unfortunately, for the persons waiting behind to make the emergency calls, this means being subjected to a long drawn-out account of what the boss said, what one had for breakfast, what the mother-in-law said to the uncle-in-laws' son's friend and so on. The result is a long line of disgruntled, sweaty and exasperated individuals ready to dismember the person happily babbling away in the phone booth.

Another drawback of the card phone is that many callers are so caught up in the conversation they have just had that they completely forget to pick up the card when they have finished and so lose all the money they have invested. This could easily be solved if the callers had their own code numbers as is the case with calling cards in other countries.

For the users, however, nothing is a deterrent and the phone card is both a convenience and the latest curiosity. Many callers allegedly pick up the phone and dial just for the thrill of sliding that little piece of paper and finding out if the thing really works. For others, it solves to some extent, the problem of having a telephone line at home.

Whatever the reason, card phones have become extremely popular with a sales figure of Tk 27 million for the month of July, according to Sirajul Haq Khan, manager T&T customer service. This in itself is ample proof of the need for more public phones. Especially the ones that actually work!

Mostafa Faruque envoy to Vietnam

The government has appointed Mostafa Faruque Mohammad as the country's Ambassador to Vietnam where Bangladesh will open its mission shortly, reports UNB.

A Foreign Office source said yesterday that an official would be proceeding to Hanoi in the first week of the next month to arrange opening of the embassy there.

WB assures help in trade, commerce

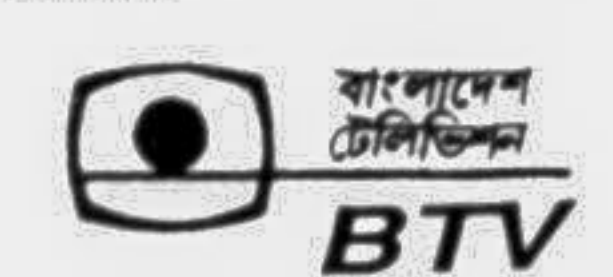
World Bank has assured its continued cooperation to Bangladesh in the field of trade and commerce, reports UNB.

The assurance came when the WB mission chief R Willoughby made a courtesy call on Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam at the latter's office in the city yesterday.

Barisal Medical College team calls on Biswas

A 10-member delegation of doctors led by Principal of Barisal Medical College Dr Azizur Rahman called on President Abdul Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday, reports UNB.

The delegation apprised the President of certain problems of the college and sought his co-operation in developing the college and obtaining the recognition from the British Medical Council.



Friday Morning session

- 8.00 Opening announcement
- 8.10 Al-Quran
- 8.15 Programme summary
- 8.20 News in Bangla
- 8.25 Alor Dishari
- 8.30 Natun Kuri
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Moner Mukure
- 11.15 Film: Tarzan
- 11.40 Shikkha-Dikkha
- 12.10 Film: Border Town
- 12.30 Closing

Afternoon session

- 3.00 Opening announcement
- 3.10 Al-Quran
- 3.15 Programme summary
- 3.20 Recitation from the Tripitak
- 3.35 Cartoon: Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
- 3.40 Movie of the week: Rayan's Daughter
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.25 Sports programme
- 7.00 Open University
- 7.25 Malancha
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Comedy series: Perfect Strangers
- 9.00 Magazine: Dristkone
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Drama serial: LA Law
- 11.30 Khabar/The news
- 11.40 Tomorrow's programme
- 11.45 Closing

Md. Humayun Rashid Khalifa
Executive Engineer, RHD,
Ferry Divn. Barisal.

3 regional TV centres soon, JS told

Three regional television stations will soon be set up in the country, Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda told parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

The TV centres will be set up in Sylhet, Bogra and Chittagong, he said while replying to a question from Md Abu Baker of Jamaat-e-Islami.

The government also plans to set up five relay stations in Patuakhali, Thakurgaon, Brahmanbaria, Jhenidah and Rajshahi during the current fiscal year, the minister said, adding that the one in Rajshahi would be provided with studio facilities.

The TV stations will be set up with grant assistance from France, Huda told Maj (Reid) Quamrul Islam of BNP.

Newsprint price raised twice

Newsprint price was raised twice in the country since 1991-92 fiscal year, Industries Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan informed parliament.

Replying to a question from K J Hamida Khanam (BNP), the minister said that in the first instalment, the price of newsprint was increased by Tk 600 to Tk 18,600 per ton and the second time by Tk 1,280 to Tk 19,880 per ton.

1,534 garment factories in country

At present, the country has 1,534 garment factories, State Minister for Textiles Major (Reid) Abdul Mannan told parliament.

Replying to a question from Tabibur Rahman Sardar (AL), the state minister said these factories produce 115.60 crore pieces of garments annually and the annual export earning is Tk 200 crore.

Industrial growth target fixed at 8.5 pc

The target of industrial growth in the country has been fixed at 8.5 per cent for the current financial year, Industries Minister A M Zahiruddin Khan informed parliament.

Industrial sector growth during 1992-93 was 11.5 per cent on the basis of Constant Price (Base year 1984-85), which is 8.6 per cent higher than the previous financial year (1991-92), the minister told Kazi Abdul Rashid (AL) during question hour.

FDC earns Tk 51.56 cr

The Film Development Corporation has earned about Tk 51.56 crore and spent about Tk 49.89 crore in the last three fiscal years.

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda said this in parliament yesterday replying to a question from Abdul Awal Mia of Awami League.

He said the FDC earned about Tk 12.74 crore and spent about Tk 14.28 crore in 1990-91, its earning in 1991-92 was about Tk 16.13 crore as against the expenditure of about Tk 17.28 crore while the earning was about Tk 21.01 crore and the expenditure about Tk 19.90 crore in 1992-93.

106 new newspapers declaration

A total of 106 new declarations for publication of newspapers were attested by the district administrations in the country during the last fiscal year (1992-93).

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda disclosed this in parliament yesterday replying to Khalilur Rahman of the Jatiya Party during question hour.

Tk 713 cr allocated to WDB against 45 projects

More than Taka 713 crore has been allocated to the Water Development Board (WDB) to implement 45 projects including 30 in investment category and 15 technical assistance under current year's Annual Development Programme, reports BSS.

Besides this, a bulk allocation of Taka 38 crore has been made for implementation of part-A and part-B of Greater Dhaka Integrated Flood Protection Project.

This was told at a review meeting held in the city yesterday at the conference room of the WDB with Irrigation Minister M Majid-ul Haq in the chair. Senior officials of the ministry, representatives of the Planning Commission, attended the meeting.

The projects to be completed during 1993-94, include Naogaon polder one, Madhumati-Nabaganga project, Burnai project, the GK irrigation and rehabilitation project and the coastal embankment rehabilitation project part-B and Part-C.

The meeting was told that the board had fixed current year's irrigation target at 4,37,835 hectares, compared with 2,64,200 hectares in last year. The board has taken up tentative plan for implementation of 225 schemes under food for works programme using 1,36,475 metric tons of wheat while 7,531 metric tons of wheat had already been released by the world food programme for immediate repair of embankments damaged by current year's flood.

A set of 150 Bangla Academy books for PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday suggested the Bangla Academy to promote publication of creative and original works for enriching the country's language and literature, reports BSS.

The Prime Minister said this when she was presented with a set of 150 books published by the Academy this year. State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum presented the books to Begum Zia at the Prime Minister's office.

Begum Zia was apprised of the publications which included an English to Bengali dictionary, Bangladesher Chalchitritr Itihās (History of Bangladesh's film industry) written by Mirza Tariqul Kader, books on Jamdant sarres, and a Bengali translation of the Bokhari Sharif.

Director General of the academy Prof Muhammad Haroon-ur-Rashid was present on the occasion.

No more 'sweet voices' after 1996

In three years' time, telephone subscribers of the country may be deprived of the 'sweet voices' they now hear from the other end as a result of rampant cross-connection, reports UNB.

'You are lucky enough to hear the sweet voices during cross-connection caused due to old cable lines. But you will miss this opportunity with the installation of new cables by 1996,' Posts and Telecommunications Minister Tariqul Islam said in Parliament Wednesday.

The minister's humorous reply was directed towards Abdus Shahid of the Awami League during the question hour.

Earlier, putting a supplementary question, Abdus Shahid said he had to suffer a lot of trouble in getting a correct number during the rainy days this year and one night he heard a sweet voice of a lady from a wrong number.

'I was overwhelmed with the lady's voice,' Shahid said and wanted to know from the minister how long 'I will have to hear the sweet voices because of faulty telephone lines?'

Tariqul Islam informed the House that frequent cross-connections are mainly caused because of old cable lines. But he said old cable lines would be replaced with new ones by 1996.

He said some 18,500 new telephone lines will be made available this year at an estimated cost of Taka six crore. Besides, 60,000 new telephone connections will be given in 1995 and another 80,000 in 1996.

Bill raising compensation for acquisition passed

A bill providing 50 per cent additional money on the assessed compensation to owners for acquisition and requisition of the immovable property was passed in Parliament Wednesday, reports UNB.

Happy Birthday Maheen

Congratulations!
Samina & Ejaz
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Shamsur R. K. Maruf

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The containerised cargo ex. M.V. MONT BLANC MARU V-25002 from Tokyo, Yokohama, Kobe, Nagoya & Hongkong have been relayed to M. V. FONG YUN V-9325, Imp. Ref. No. 753/93 is due to arrive Chittagong on or about 25-9-93 from Singapore.

Consignees are requested to take delivery of their cargo from FCL containers within 5 days free time from the date of landing and if cargo not cleared within 45 days will be guided by Customs Act.

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PAY SCALE: Tk. 5790-190-7500/= plus other admissible allowances.
AGE: Maximum 40 years as on 1st Oct. 1993.

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a) M. B. A. (minimum G. P. A-3.0, specialization in Finance) or Masters degree in Commerce or Chartered Accountant or I. C. M. A. (Intermediate). Minimum two first class/division in all examinations. No third division or equivalent is acceptable.
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MINIMUM GRADES FOR THE CANDIDATES FOR 'O' AND 'A' LEVELS WHO HAVE STUDIED IN ENGLISH MEDIUM FOR BOTH THE POSTS:

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Manager Administration

DFF (BA) 8564-21/9 Biman
G-1254 100, Motiheel C/A, Dhaka



Kuwait Maitri Hall unit of the Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal brought out a colourful procession on the DU campus to mark their freshers' reception today. — Star photo

Weather

Light rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

The sky will remain cloudy over the coastal regions and partly cloud elsewhere over the country.

Temporary light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by gusty wind is likely to occur at a few places over Chittagong, Barisal, Khulna divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions.

Met Office forecasts, day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The country's highest temperature of 33.5 degrees Celsius was recorded in Rangamati while lowest of 22.4 degrees Celsius was recorded in Sylhet yesterday.

The sun sets today (Friday) at 5:53 pm and rises tomorrow (Saturday) at 5:48 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature in degrees Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	30.8	25.2
Chittagong	32.5	25.0
Rajshahi	31.7	25.8
Khulna	31.4	26.0
Barisal	31.0	25.6
Dinajpur	26.5	24.6
Sylhet	29.8	22.4
Cox's Bazar	31.5	25.0

JP (Nationalist) dist committees by Oct

The central organising committee of the Jatiya Party (Nationalist) at a meeting Wednesday decided to form its district committees by October, reports UNB.

The national council of the party will be held in January next year, said a resolution of the meeting chaired by Shamsul Huda Chowdhury, chairman of the organising committee.

3 UP chairmen join BNP

Three Union Parishad Chairmen of Lakshma thana in Comilla district have joined BNP, reports UNB.

The chairmen are Khorsheed Alam, Chairman of Agara UP, Nurul Islam, Chairman of Baishgan UP, and Abdul Jalil, Chairman of Shaanashpur UP.