

# Dhaka Day by Day

## The Flower Gatherers

by Parveen Anam

It is wonderful to be able to go for a walk in the mornings. The city, otherwise a mad rush of just about everything under the sun, is somehow slow to wake up. Seems almost as if it's reluctant to face the day. The streets are deserted, the stragglers have just managed to get home, to get ready for a new day and the 'mischreants' are more likely to be bed, after a night of rowdiness.

The early rising Dhakaite, and I hurry to add, there are not very many, revel in the clean air and the quiet streets. But the sight which never fails to greet his eyes, in the half misty morning, is the inevitable woman, with a long stick attached to a pointed three-pronged metal 'catcher', quietly going from house to house, leaning over the walls and gently 'catching' a flower which she quickly puts in her little bag, which looks as if it has seen better days.

These flowers are the ones which find their way into the garlands and the bouquets adorning the cars of the bridegrooms and the bridal beds, the endless garlands used to felicitate the 'leaders' and the VVIP guests: the list is actually endless!

And yet, these flowers come from somebody else's garden; in the quiet of the morning, that little flower picker, without a qualm, will collect whatever flower she can lay her hands on and quickly move away to sell them to the wholesale flower collector. 'I get paid Taka 10 for every fifteen flowers,' she will candidly inform you. If you are inquisitive, as to how she can move so nonchalantly from house to house without being stopped, she will further

inform you that the security guards, the only human beings awake in the house will look the other way for a share of the money she makes selling the flowers! Ah, 'Honour among thieves' is indeed a noble gesture!

Of course, the ultimate gainer in the entire process is the wholesale buyer, who will place his orders the day before. Depending on the orders he has from customers for 'car decorating' or bridal suite decorating, he will tell the flower gatherer a day ahead, as to which flowers he prefers.

The audacity of the entire situation is quite hilarious, I personally feel. Thieves placing orders, somehow takes the cake.

But then, it takes all sorts to make the world after all, does it not? And the thief has to make a living too. What better way to make a living than to sponge off somebody else? The house's proud owner tends his gardens endlessly, to make his flowers blossom, only to wake up each morning to find them gone! And the 'security' guard looking the other way. Quite frustrating, the entire episode. For the house owner. The flower gatherer is happy. As long as there are house owners who will insist on planting flowers, these members of humanity will be around, insisting on relieving them of the burden of the flowers, from their own garden. Perhaps the people involved in endlessly trying to grow flowers, only to have them stolen, should gang up and form an 'anti-flower gatherer brigade' which will lie in wait in the wee hours of the morning to catch the flower stealer red handed! That would surprise the thieves. And may the 'best man win'!



## Biswas, Khaleda greet King, PM of Spain

President Abdur Rahman Biswas felicitated King Juan Carlos-I of Spain on the occasion of the National Day of Spain, reports BSS.

In a message of felicitations President Biswas wished personal well-being of the King and for the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Spain.

In another message Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has greeted Felipe Gonzalez Marquez, Prime Minister of Spain, on the occasion of its National Day today.

Khaleda wished good health, happiness and long life of the Spanish Premier as well as for the continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Spain.

## Jahanara opens mass education centre

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum yesterday called upon the womenfolk to educate themselves for establishing their rights in society, reports BSS.

She made this call while inaugurating a mass education centre at the Shah Nuri Model High School here. Presided over by Begum Shamsun Nahar Khawaja Ahsanullah MP, the function was also addressed by State Minister for Textiles Abdul Mannan, politician AKM Feroz Noon and vice chairperson of the Bangladesh Jatiya Mahila Sangstha Dr Shahida Rafiq.

Underlining the need for informal education as well as formal education, Prof Jahanara Begum said for attaining the cherished goal of an educated nation, it was essential to spread informal education.

The State Minister for Textiles observed that as citizens of the densely populated country it is our moral obligation to increase the literacy rate aiming at checking the population boom.

Organised by Bangladesh Association for Women Rights Implementation (AWRI), the mass education centre will be conducted by Tasnim Banu, an eminent social worker. The centre will provide education to about one hundred fifty women per year.



The Bangladesh Maimed Freedom Fighters' Sangsad brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting attack and ransacking of the central office of freedom fighters at Mohammadpur.

## National committee for ICTM formed

A national committee for International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) in Bangladesh has been formed with Prof Jahanara Begum, State Minister for Cultural Affairs, as chief patron, reports BSS.

Islam Uddin Malik, Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs has been made advisor, while Mobarak Hossain Khan, Director General, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, was elected president and Asaf Khan, a reputed vocalist, the secretary.

The national committee also includes Dr Anwarul Karim, ICTM in Bangladesh and Dilara Zaman as vice presidents and principal Mazharul Hannan, Dr Karunamoi Goswami, Al-Kamal Abdul Wahab, Shahadat Hossain Khan, Prof Abdul Matin Sarker, Muhammad Asadul Haq, Khandker Nurul Alam, Dr Mridul Kanti Chakraborty, Mrs Manjuresh Sarker and Mrs Laila Huq as executive committee members.

The central committee of ICTM was established in 1947 in London with the aim to further study, practice, documentation, preservation and dissemination of traditional music, including folk, popular, classical and urban music and dance.

So far national committees of the ICTM have been established in 23 countries of the world Bangladesh is the latest inclusion as the 24th country.

## 1.5 lakh acre arable land remains uncultivated in CHT

RANGAMATI, Oct 11: About 1.5 lakh acres of arable land remain uncultivated every year due to various reasons in Chittagong Hill Tracts, reports UNB.

Official sources said about 2.5 lakh metric tons of foodgrains worth about Tk 3 crore could be produced annually if those lands were brought under cultivation.

The lands remain fallow due to lack of agricultural inputs, irrigation and credit facilities, scarcity of draft animals, absence of agricultural and technical know-how.

About 1.68,082 metric tons of foodgrains are produced annually in 25 thanas of three hill districts of Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban.

The production of foodgrains in the fallow lands could play a vital role in solving food deficiency of the country, said Parijat Kushum Chakma, Chairman of Rangamati Local

Government Council. He urged the concerned authorities to take all possible measures to bring the fallow lands under cultivation without further delay.

## Hannan meets Chinese State Counsellor

Jute Minister ASM Hannan Shah, who is now on a visit to China, called on Luo Gan, State Counsellor (equivalent to Vice Premier) recently, according to a message received in city yesterday, reports UNB.

The two leaders recalled the existing excellent ties of friendship and cooperation between Bangladesh and China and vowed to strengthen it further for enhancing the welfare of the people of both the countries.

## Dhaka to attend int'l confce on natural disaster

Bangladesh will participate in an international conference on natural disaster beginning in London tomorrow, reports BSS.

The three-day conference is being organised by the United Kingdom as part of its contribution to the international decade for natural disaster reduction (IDNDR) to protect vulnerable communities from natural disaster.

Four Bangladesh experts have already left for the UK to attend the conference. The British government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) is providing financial support for the conference.

Bangladesh delegates to the conference are Akramul Islam, DG, Disaster Management Bureau, Dr Alnur Nishat, BUET, Dr Atiqur Rahman of BIDS and Dr Aftab Alam Ansari, Director, BWDB.

## Photo show on children's rights begins

A 12-day photo exhibition on 'Right and Reality' reflecting children's rights, began at Hotel Sheraton yesterday, reports UNB.

The exhibition, organised by Drik Picture Library with the help of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum and UNICEF, is designed to uphold the rights of the children.

UNICEF representative in Bangladesh, Rolf C Carriere, Mariam Khatun of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum and Dr Shahidul Alam of Drik Picture Library briefed the newsmen before the opening of the show.

Happy Birthday To TANI SANA



Health Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf addressing the inaugural session of the workshop to present the draft national FP and MCH IEL strategy for Bangladesh yesterday at a local hotel. Seated from right are: Edson E Whitney of Johns Hopkins University and Health Secretary Syed Shamim Ahsan.

## DMP road blockade brings miseries

Star Report

The Dhaka Metropolitan Police traffic office has 'experimentally' blocked the entry point of the Paribagh Road at the VIP Road crossing for the last one month bringing miseries specially to the middle class rickshaw travellers.

Moreover, the blockade at this point has affected the Elephant Road and Hatir Pool Bazar Road which have become crammed with different types of vehicles most of the times, observe many city dwellers.

The Traffic Inspector-1 of DMP told The Daily Star 'We have noticed that often buses and trucks enter this road and the rickshaws also violate traffic rules.'

The traffic inspector, however, denied that blockade of this road, which connects the Ramna zone with the Dhanmondi zone of the city, had created any traffic jam in Elephant Road or Hatir Pool Road.

During the mid-eighties, the DMP had prohibited movement of rickshaws on the VIP Road which started from the Shahbagh crossing and ended at the Zia International Airport.

Thousands of rickshaws each day coming from east of the VIP Road move towards the west can only use the Shahbagh crossing, Bangla Motor crossing and the Sonargaon crossing presently.

## Akbar Hossain accorded reception

Environment and Forest Minister Akbar Hossain yesterday called upon the freedom fighters to come forward unitedly under the leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia towards resolving the Farakka problem being imbued with the spirit of Liberation War, reports BSS.

The minister was addressing as chief guest a reception accorded to him by Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad central command council at its office premises in city.

Akbar Hossain, who is also the chief advisor of the Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Sangsad, said, 'the affects of Farakka is a major cause for the environmental imbalance in Bangladesh and a hindrance in our efforts for poverty alleviation.'

The minister also mentioned the damage caused to the environment by Farakka as a national and regional problem and said it had caused deforestation and desertification in the northern area of the country.

He said afforestation should be the prime objective for environment protection programme and the present government was implementing the tree plantation programme all over the country.

## Turn population into resources: Mannan

Minister for Labour and Manpower Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan yesterday stressed on the need for turning the population into human resources for institutionalising democracy and attaining economic emancipation, reports BSS.

He said the present government was emphasising on converting the population to resources for making Bangladesh self-reliant and has taken initiative to tune all technical training institutes under the ministry suiting the changing need.

Table with BTV logo and Tuesday program schedule: 5:00 Opening announcement, 5:10 Al-Quran, 5:15 Programme summary, 5:25 News in Bangla, 5:35 Mass education programme: Esho Para Shikhi, 6:00 Final programme of National TV Debate Competition: Sir Salmullah Medical College vs Dhaka Medical College, 6:40 Open University, 7:20 Modern Songs: Sangeeta, 8:00 News in Bangla, 8:40 Drama serial: Janmabhum (6th part), 10:00 News in English, 10:30 Film show: ENG, 11:30 Khabar/The News, 11:40 Tomorrow's programme summary, 11:45 Closing.

The minister was speaking at the opening of a training course on English language for nurses to be sent abroad here at the briefing centre of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET).

Held under the joint auspices of BMET and International Organisation for Migration, the function was also addressed by Dr Shah Mohammad Farid, Secretary of the ministry and DG BMET MAM Ziauddin.

Mannan Bhuiyan said despite ample opportunities of jobs for nurses abroad, they could not be sent because of language problems. He said other manpower exporting countries like Philippines and Sri Lanka having an edge due to the language capturing the market.

A total of 40 nurses are participating in the first batch of training lasting six weeks. Presently 160 nurses will be trained and the number will be raised in phases.

## Shah Alam's death condoled

State Minister for Education Principal Eunus Khan yesterday expressed deep shock at the death of Vice-President of Barisal District BNP, Advocate Shah Alam Khan, reports BSS.

## Weather

## Light rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

The weather forecast for the next 12 hours commencing 6 am today (Tuesday) says the sky will remain mainly cloudy over the coastal regions and partly cloudy elsewhere over the country.

During this time, temporary light rain or thundershower is likely to occur over the regions of Chittagong, Noakhali, Barisal, Patuakhali and Khulna. The weather, however, is likely to remain, mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

The Met Office forecasts, day temperature is likely to remain unchanged.

The country's highest temperature yesterday of 35.0 degrees Celsius was recorded in Comilla and the lowest 21.7 degrees at Sitakunda.

The sun sets today at 5:55 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:35 am.

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

Table with 4 columns: Cities/towns, temperatures in degree Celsius (max/min), Humidity in percentage (9am/6pm). Cities include Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Barisal, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet, Dinajpur.

Notice Inviting Tenders. Tender Notice No. 34 (Thirty-four) of 1993-94. Name of Work, Estimated Amount, Earnest Money, Time Allowed. For protective work by providing Sal bullah and Bamboo palisading with earth work for restoration of damaged road flanks at different KM of Dhaka-Tangail Road during the year 1993-94 (Ch. to FDRP & 168 Mc to Dhaka-Tangail Road).

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