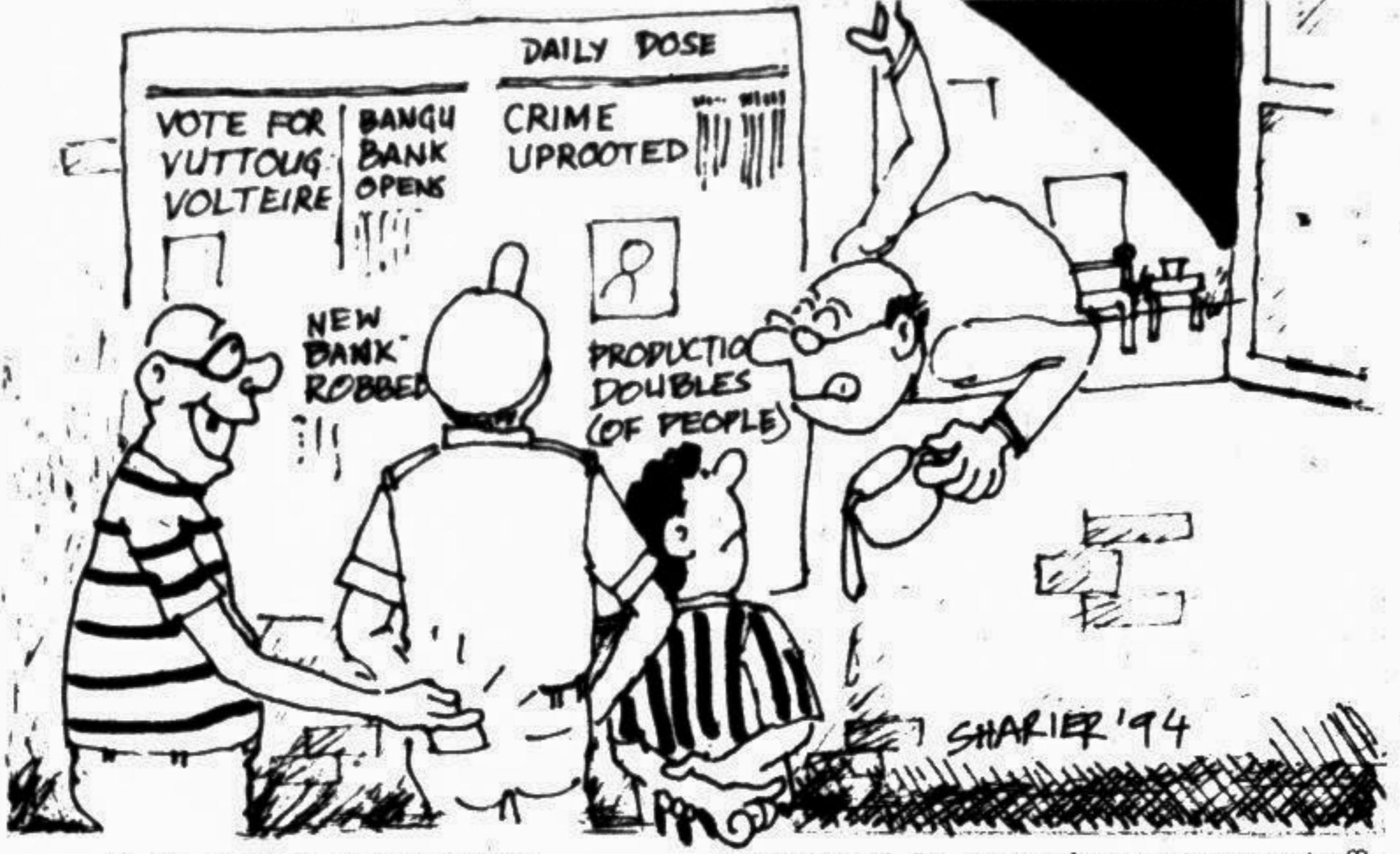


Dhaka Day by Day

Newspapers' Neglected Readers

by Iftikhar A. Chowdhury



'A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread — and Thou'

Omar Khayyam's poetic disposition could find contentment in nothing less than *sura* (wine) and *sakhi* (woman). Anti-poetic as modern man is, his demand too is prosaic and far more down-to-earth. A cup of tea will do instead of wine and the beauty's place has been taken up by a still more intriguing thing, a copy of newspaper. Cliche though it may sound, yet it is true that neither of them is complete without the other. Then not all people in our country can afford either the leisure or the expense of a morning newspaper at their breakfast table.

With the price escalation of almost all the purchasables in our country, newspapers too, have recorded the ballooning of their subscription. Many people, specially from middle and lower-middle classes, now cannot afford the monthly subscription for a newspaper. But for many, reading the dailies is an old habit that has died hard. Avail they must of the facility any way — either borrowing a copy from a neighbour or directly going to a newsstand. Most of the time they give the impression — that they are looking for something serious and the moment they come across that important thing, they will make the purchase. They know better than anyone how they are deceiving themselves. Fortunately enough, in Dhaka and other major cities of the country an alternative system has been put in place to satisfy the insatiable thirst for news of these avid readers.

The facility, as it exists, comes in the form of newspapers pasted on the walls. Although a relatively new practice, it is now widely known. Even a decade back, there was scarcely any such facility in Dhaka, let alone other cities of the country. Today, one can come across the free offer near all the major road intersections of the metropolis — starting from Science Laboratory to Sylhetabad Bus Terminal, Gulshan to Gulshan, Topkhana to Taltola and Gabtoli to Tikatoli; Farmgate to Sadarghat etc.

At first, the initiative was taken by the newspaper owners as a publicity drive and many newspapers really succeeded in attracting the attention of the readers through this endeavour. And, in turn, the readers who couldn't buy a copy for themselves received it

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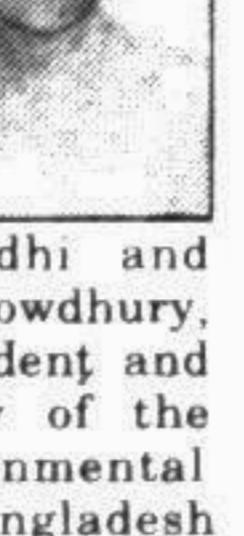
The 19th parliamentary standing committee meeting of the Health and Family Welfare Ministry was held at the Jatiya Sangsads Bhaban yesterday with Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting discussed unauthorised absence of the doctors in the government hospitals and thana health complexes of the remote areas. Recent recruitment of doctors in the family planning departments, establishment of Family Welfare Centre (FWC) in the more appropriate place of the respective unions and progress of activities of the Directorate of Family Planning.

The meeting also reviewed the progress activities of district and thana health services development committee. Besides, the recently called off countrywide doctors' strike by the Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA) also came up in the discussion.

Local MP Rezaul Karim and Secretary of the Ministry of Culture Islamuddin Malik also spoke.

Chinmoy Mutsuddhi and Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, were elected President and General Secretary of the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB).



Chinmoy Mutsuddhi and Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, were elected President and General Secretary of the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB). — Star photo

Weather

No change in temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Dry weather with fair sky is likely to prevail over Bangladesh.

Met office forecasts, night temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Country's highest temperature of 27.6 degrees Celsius was recorded in Teknaf and lowest of 8.2 degrees Celsius was recorded in Srimongol yesterday.

The sun sets today (Sunday) at 5.38 pm and rises tomorrow (Monday) at 6.42 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperatures in degrees Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	9 am 6 pm
Dhaka	25.4	10.6 77 48
Chittagong	24.8	13.5 60 53
Rajshahi	25.1	9.0 79 84
Khulna	25.9	10.6 70 61
Barisal	25.4	10.2 84 67
Sylhet	26.6	11.5 79 65
Dinajpur	25.0	10.8 88 66
Cox's Bazar	26.0	17.0 57 61

Iraqi envoy makes farewell call on PM

The outgoing Iraqi Ambassador Zuhair Muhammad Alomar, made farewell call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Prime Minister's office yesterday, reports BSS.

Books donated

A large number of books were presented by the department of Molecular Genetics of the Kumamoto University, Japan to Professor Ema-Juddin Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor, Dhaka University at an informal ceremony yesterday at the latter's residence office, reports BSS.



Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda speaking at the inaugural session of a 2-day workshop on Integrated Planning for Promotion of Child Rights in Bangladesh held at the Caritas auditorium yesterday. Also seen seated (from L to R) S A Reza Hossain, Chairman of Moitree Parishad and ADAB Chairperson Khushi Kabir. The Moitree Parishad in co-operation with the Save the Children Fund, Australia organised the workshop. — Star photo

Harkins Bill an int'l conspiracy : Huda

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda yesterday dubbed Harkins Bill as an international conspiracy and said it had been framed not to protect children's rights but to obstruct the growing garment industry of Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The much-talked-about Bill placed in the US Congress seeks a ban on import of products made with child labour.

The minister was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of a two-day workshop on 'Integrated Planning for the Promotion of Child Rights in Bangladesh' at the Caritas auditorium. Moitree Parishad organised the workshop while Save the Children's Fund Australia has sponsored it.

Huda underlined the need for large-scale planning for the development of country's millions of underprivileged children.

Children's development is a priority sector and the government is very much sincere to improve the condition of toddlers," he said, adding the Zia government had created Women's Affairs Ministry and established Shishu Academy for their uplift.

The minister said some aspects of Children Rights Declaration could be incorporated into the relevant law for better and constitutional application and preservation of child

rights. Addressing the function as special guest ADAB Chairperson Kushi Kabir said overall development would not be possible if the condition of 80 per cent people who live under poverty-line and 60 per cent landless was not improved.

On child labour, she said "we cannot force them out to the street in the name of protection of children's rights". Initiative for providing education, medicare, wages and other facilities should be taken for the juvenile labourers, Khushi suggested.

She said there can be accountability and law to control NGO activity, but discussion with NGO people is needed before changing and laws relating to the non-government organisations.

A move is underway to update the existing law concerning the NGOs in order to better regulate their activity.

Chairman of Moitree Parishad Reza Hossain and Vice-Chairman Feroz M Hasan also spoke at the inaugural session.

Helen Rahman, Rina Sen Gupta, Rokshana Khandker, Col (Retd) Mohammad Hossain, Prof Lotifa Akand and Mrs Shaheen Akhtar Munir Munir spoke at the working session of the workshop.

He asked the journalists to motivate the people for availing of the facilities provided by the government under the mass literacy programmes and get their children educated as quickly as possible. "Nobody should be left outside the school."

The delegation, led by M Mustafa Ali, president of the central executive committee of the Sangsads, submitted to President Biswas a memorandum of 12-point demands for betterment of their organisation and smooth discharge of their professional responsibilities.

Miniature Bangladesh at Sonargaon likely

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation Majidul Huq yesterday said that steps would be taken to set up a "miniature Bangladesh" at Sonargaon reflecting the heritage and traditions and the nature and environment of the country, reports BSS.

The main objective behind setting up the miniature at this ancient capital is to present the eternal image of the country and at the same time make the historic Sonargaon more attractive to the tourists, he said.

Huq was inaugurating a week-long folk festival and a handicrafts exhibition here.

Organised by the Bangladesh Folk and Handicrafts Foundation, the inaugural function was presided over by State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum.

Local MP Rezaul Karim and Secretary of the Ministry of Culture Islamuddin Malik also spoke.

Later, a session of tribal dance and baul songs were held.

BTV Sunday

8.45 Opening announcement Al Quran Programme summary
9.00 Live telecast of the exhibition one-day cricket match between Bangladesh and Pakistan

4.45 Cartoon show: Tom and Jerry Kids Show
5.25 Desh O Bigan
6.00 Sports programme
6.30 Mayeder Janma
7.00 Open University
7.25 Tagore songs
8.00 News in Bangla
8.30 Probaho
9.00 Drama series: The Sword of Tipu Sultan
10.00 News in English
10.30 Surbanee
11.30 Khabar/The News
11.40 Tomorrow's programme summary
11.45 Closing

Chinmoy Mutsuddhi and Quamrul Islam Chowdhury, were elected President and General Secretary of the Forum of Environmental Journalists of Bangladesh (FEJB). — Star photo

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