

Dhaka Day by Day

Maintaining Sanctity of Ekushey Observance

by Raffat Binte Rashid

Ekushey February (Feb 21st), 1952, is a turning point in our history, a stage set for independence years later in 1971.

But with each passing year, the observance of the occasion is falling prey to vandalism. Last year's burning of the red sun behind the Shaheed Minar or erasing the famous sayings on the wall opposite the Minar are among the despicable deeds. It is our shame.

"Observance of Ekushey is a national responsibility and since the Minar is in the University area, we are obliged to shoulder the responsibility of its upkeep," says Professor Shahadat Ali, coordinator of Ekushey Observance Committee.

"Every year we have few set programmes and this year too the agenda remains more or less the same," he informs.

Placing wreath barefooted on Shaheed Minar throughout the morning, starting from the zero hour is the main attraction of the day. Moreover the students of Fine Arts Institute write famous quotations and sayings on the walls opposite the Shaheed Minar and draw alponas on the street.

"These are all temporary jobs and students, teachers, officials and volunteers help every year," says Ali.

"We have set, rules and have brigades to maintain peace and order on that particular day, but to lead processions, according to the plan and on the set roads is definitely the people's job," he explains.

"People who come here are all conscious and alert, they are educated, they should go by the norms and make our work less difficult."

"Maintaining peace is their job too," Ali feels. "They come here to pay respect and not for personal aggrandisement," Ali emphasises.

"Ekushey ultimately gave birth to our nation, it's an occasion close to our heart we should celebrate it with due fervour and gravity and of course maintain discipline," he says as a message to all.

"This observance is mainly done with the university budget but additional funds, when required, are given by the government," reports Dr. Arefin Siddique, Co-ordinator of the Observance Committee.

"Last year writings, painting etc worth Tk 50,000 to Tk 60,000 were destroyed and thus this year we have planned few permanent changes in matters relating to Ekushey Observance," informs Ali.

The wall-writings would be permanently shaped in black ink on marble stones, Ali informs. "This idea was conceived last year. Though its budget is not yet finalised, yet we plan to start the work immediately after this year's observance," says Siddique.

"Another important work that the Municipal Corporation is doing this year is carpeting the nearby roads and we are extremely grateful for this kind gesture," Ali thinks. Last year, only the road in front of S M Hall, was fixed and the others were not quite fit to walk barefooted.

Shahadat Ali, strongly believes, that something permanent should be done to all these so that no untoward incidents recur. "Moreover these temporary works tend to make us some what slow. For example, the erased writings on the wall, we did nothing throughout the year because it takes a lot of money and above everything it is temporary."

"The sun behind the Minar is made of red cloth which the rain and weather destroys. It is very natural, what we try to do is replace this as soon as possible," feels Shahadat strongly.

But now with all these plans for permanent changes, the people might look forward to a different kind of Ekushey Observance next year.



Dr Abdullah Al Muti Sharfuddin, Coordinator of the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) is seen speaking at a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. Rasheda K Chowdhury, Executive Director of ADAB (extreme left) and Dr Mahmud Hasan of the Gana Sahajya Sangstha are also seen among others in the picture. (Story on page one).

— Star photo

WHO studies suggest

10 per cent of country's population disabled

Some one crore people of the country either cannot see, hear, walk, speak or even think and communicate, according to estimates by World Health Organisation (WHO) and a number of international voluntary organisations, reports UNB.

More than 37 lakh people are visually impaired, some 23 lakh have auditory disabilities, about 16 lakh are physically disabled, and the remaining suffering from either mental retardation, epilepsy or mental illness.

Based on the United Nations figures as well as other surveys carried out by the NGO sector indicate that a high proportion of Bangladeshi households have a disabled member in the family.

A recent survey by an NGO

suggested between 8 to 9 per cent of the country's 110 million population is disabled while the WHO studies suggest that approximately 10 per cent of the population is disabled.

However, all these findings are in stark contrast to the statement made by Social Welfare Minister Tariqul Islam in parliament on February 14.

Quoting figures compiled by Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the minister said that some 0.52 per cent or about six lakh people of the total population are disabled.

Surveys commissioned by ACTIONAID-Bangladesh and Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS) indicate there may be as many as one crore people with various forms of disabilities.

However, a publication by

UNICEF in joint collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh projected that approximately 40 per cent of the population is at risk from iodine deficiency has directly caused 18 lakh cases of mental impairment and cretinism in Bangladesh.

Reports from different UN agencies show that more than 30,000 children go blind every year from Vitamin-A deficiency and that around 10,000 cases of paralytic polio occur every year.

Faisal Hussain, a young Bangladeshi researcher from UK and at present working here as a Disability Programme Coordinator for an international NGO, said the 0.52 per cent figure given by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics did not accurately reflect the true magnitude of disability situation in Bangladesh.

He suggested that due to an inaccurate perception of disability and incorrect information by the government, the urgent needs of the 10 per cent of the citizens of the country are being overlooked.

"The question of early detection is also important so that we can prevent the number of people who are being impaired every year," Hussain said.

Immediate steps are also required to rehabilitate the disabled so that they may begin to participate more fully in social and economic activities, he added.

The same sentiment was expressed by the UN agencies in Bangladesh who state that the government has given a low priority to disabled people here.

Country in trade deficit with 3 SAARC states, JS told

By Staff Correspondent

Leaders of the Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) Friday appealed to the governments of Bangladesh, Pakistan and other Islamic countries to help the fire victims at the Jhataula refugee camp at Halishahar in Chittagong.

In separate statements, they said that no immediate relief has yet been sent to the refugees, who have lost all of their belongings.

Some 300 stranded Pakistani families were now living under the open sky after the Thursday's devastating fire in the camp, the leaders said.

US Embassy closed on Feb 20

The American Embassy, the United States Information Service (USIS) and the American Cultural Center Library and the Student Counselling Services will be closed on Sunday, February 20, in observance of President's Day, an American national holiday, says a USIS press release.

President's Day is observed in the United States on the third Monday of February to commemorate the birthdays of two of the country's most respected presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

At one time, Lincoln and Washington were remembered individually on their birth dates, February 12 and February 22 respectively.

SPGRC's appeal

By Staff Correspondent

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Publication ceremony

By Staff Correspondent

The essence of the flowering democracy can be traced in the writings of Reza Arefin.

The remark was made by noted litterateur Shawkat Osman at the publication ceremony of Reza Arefin's book 'Nirbachito Shironam' held at a local hotel yesterday.

The publication ceremony was also attended by Faridur Reza Shagor, Abir Hasan and Mahboob Alam.

Ageing journalist-litterateur Nasiruddin in a written message said that the penmanship of the new generation is bold and courageous.

"The consciousness reflected in the writings of the young journalist are significant and promising for the country," Mohammad Nasiruddin added, who could not attend the ceremony due to ill health.



Shawkat Osman, country's grand old man of literature, speaking as special guest at a publication ceremony of Nirbachito Shironam by Reza Arefin, news-editor the Ajker Kagoj, at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday. Author of the book (seated 1st R) is also seen in the picture. — Star photo

Weather

No change in temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Dry weather with fair sky is likely to prevail over the country.

Met Office says, night temperature will remain nearly unchanged across the country.

The maximum temperature of the country of 33.2 degrees Celsius was recorded at Teknaf and the minimum of 11.4 degrees Celsius at Srimangal.

The sun sets today (Saturday) at 5:56pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6:29 am.

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

Cities/ Towns	Temperatures in degrees Celsius	Humidity in percentage
	Max	Min
Dhaka	29.6	16.0
Chittagong	31.0	17.8
Rajshahi	27.8	13.8
Khulna	31.2	17.5
Barisal	30.6	17.8
Cox's Bazar	32.5	18.0

Realise local taxes effectively: Hye

Deputy Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Abdul Hye yesterday urged the officials of the country's municipalities to effectively realise local taxes and ensure proper use of government sanctions for the development of the urban areas, reports BSS.

"The urban areas of the country are known by their municipal bodies and government has given high emphasis on the autonomy and effectiveness of these local government bodies," he said.

Hye was addressing the national conference of Bangladesh Municipal Secretaries and Administrative Officials Association in the national institute of Local Government (NILG) auditorium in the city.

Secretary of Local Government Division Syed Alamgir Faruq Chowdhury, Joint Secretary Nazmul Alam Siddiqui and Director General of NILG Aftab Uddin Khan attended the function as special guests while, convener of the association M A Mannan was in the chair.

Referring to the government policy regarding the municipalities, the deputy minister said the municipalities which would show better performance would get more facilities and incentives from the government.

He urged the municipal secretaries and officials to extend all-out cooperation to the elected chairmen of their offices to ensure a healthy democratic process at the local government level.

Secretary of Local Government Division Faruq Chowdhury said government allocation for municipal bodies had stood at Taka 110 crore from Taka 18 crore in only two years' period.

He called upon the officials to increase the income of the municipal bodies so that they could work independently minimising dependency on the central government.

Book show opens

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman yesterday called upon the people to get involved with the nation building activities imbued with the spirit of Ekushey for materialising the dream of the Shaheeds of Language Movement, reports BSS.

He was addressing as chief guest the inaugural function of a four-day book exhibition arranged in connection with the observance of Shaheed Day at Bagerhat Adarsha Shishu Bidyalaya.

BCIC International Re-Tender Notice

বিনিময়ীর ন্যা শিয়ারনে জাতীয় অর্থপতির প্রতীক

The Managing Director, Jamuna Fertilizer Company Ltd, Tarakandi, Sarishabari, Jamalpur hereby invites sealed tender on C&F (C), Chittagong basis under any suitable financial source in two envelope system for importation of 1500 kgs POTASSIUM NITRATE against Tender Enquiry No JFCL/FP/AMMONIA/1.09/43, dated 8.2.94. The tenders will be received up to 11.00 AM on 23.3.94 and be opened on the same day thereafter. Tender documents containing detailed terms and conditions will be available on payment of Tk 300/- (Three hundred) in cash (non-refundable) from the office of the (i) Controller of Accounts, BCIC, 30-31, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka (ii) BCIC Branch Office, 6, Agrabad C/A, Chittagong and (iii) Jamuna Fertilizer Company Ltd, on all working days. No tender documents will be sold on the date of opening of tender.

BCIC 166-12/2
DFF (BA) 1178-13/2

G-279

'Dhaka self-sufficient in food'

James J Novak, former resident representative of the Asia Foundation in Bangladesh, said Bangladesh has become self-sufficient in food, according to a message received in Dhaka Thursday, reports BSS.

Production of wheat, corn and other grains and cattle-meat have also increased due to the extraordinary success in agriculture, he said.

Participating in a presentation—Bangladesh: the Country and the People—organised by the United Nations Delegations Hospitality Committee in New York on Tuesday, Novak spoke on "Bangladesh: Today and Tomorrow".

He said, "Thanks to realistic fiscal policies of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Bangladesh has a surplus budget this year and it has now the highest foreign exchange reserve in its history."

It is the fifth largest exporter of garments to USA, he said adding "It exports frozen food to Middle East. It also exports leather products. With the expansion of export of garments to Europe and farm products to Japan, it will quadruple its exports earning soon, Bangladesh has also

made remarkable progress in reducing birth rate."

Novak said, "I am confident, Bangladesh will emerge as a dynamic economy. It will become another Taiwan in Asia by the end of the present century."

He said the people of Bangladesh, particularly its farmers can do miracle, they did it on several occasions in the past and they can also do it again. He said Warren Hastings in 1776 had said, the farmers of Bangladesh were most intelligent, hardworking and adaptive people. "What was true in 1776 is also true in 1994," he added.

Novak said international donor agencies and donor countries should continue to provide aid to Bangladesh during its present economic transition, urging foreign investors to invest in Bangladesh. He said what can be produced in any other country can also be produced in Bangladesh. He, however, said labour unions of Bangladesh should cooperate in this respect and pointed out that wages in Bangladesh were higher than those in Thailand and Sri Lanka.

Standard Chartered SITUATION VACANT

Standard Chartered Bank is seeking qualified candidates to fill the following positions immediately in its Dhaka Office:

Manager, Information Technology

To supervise the operations of IBM 36 and various LAN based applications operating in two sites.

Candidates should possess a sound knowledge of Novell-Ethernet LAN and WAN technology, preferably gained in a financial environment and through having independently managed an IT installation.

Strong inter-personal skills are required in order to motivate professionally qualified subordinate staff and to build positive relationships with system users.

Project management experience is a prerequisite as is the ability to make lucid oral and written presentation in English. A post graduate degree in management is preferred.

System Operator

To perform the daily operation of the system 36 and LAN server and to manage the Information Technology help desk. Candidates should possess a sound knowledge of DOS and be familiar with Lotus, Wordperfect, Database packages. A degree in a business discipline is preferred and fluency in written and spoken English essential.

The prospective candidate for the above position may apply with detail C.V. and one copy of recent photograph, and contact telephone number by March 3, 1994, to the Head of Human Resources, Standard Chartered Bank, Alico Building -1/floor, 18-20 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka - 1000.

Application should be hand delivered to avoid postal delay.



Invitation of Bids

বিদ্যুৎ বিল নিয়মিত পরিশোধ করুন

Tender Enquiry No. Pur-103/94

Dated: 14/02/1994

1) The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is expected to allocate necessary funds in cash foreign exchange towards the cost of the Power Rehabilitation Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this fund will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for REHABILITATION, RENOVATION AND AUGMENTATION OF GRID SYSTEM PROJECT.

2) The Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) proposes to use proceeds of aforesaid fund for procurement of line materials for rehabilitation of various 132 KV transmission lines.

3) The Bangladesh Power Development Board now invites sealed bids in one envelope system from eligible bidders for the supply of: Lot No. 8-Line materials for following 132 KV lines:

- 2nd circuit Ashuganj-Jamalpur 132 KV line
- Replacement of earth wire on various 132 KV lines (Siddhirganj)-Madanhat-Kaptai, Madanhat-Halisahar, Goalpara-Bheramara).
- Replacement of conductors on various 132 KV lines
- Replacement of insulators on various lines (Kaptai-Siddhirganj-Ashuganj-Sylhet)
- Replacement of 33 Nos of spare towers

4) Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the Director Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka, Bangladesh. (Telephone Nos. 2300259, 252673, 232129, Telex No. 675617-BPB-BJ).

5) A complete set of bidding documents may be available for purchase with effect from February 28, 1994 by any interested eligible bidder on submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Taka 5,000 (Taka Five Thousand) only in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh in favour of the Director Purchase, BPDB, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

6) All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 2(two) percent of the total bid price and must be delivered to the office of the Director of Purchase, BPDB, WAPDA Building (9th Floor), Motijheel C/A, Dhaka, Bangladesh on or before 11.00 hours Bangladesh Standard Time on June 02, 1994.

7) Bids will be opened in presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend at 11.30 hours Bangladesh Standard Time, on June 02, 1994 at the above mentioned office.

8) Bids will neither be sold on the date of opening nor it will be received through Telex/Post/Fax.

Biddut/Jana-972 (5)/93-94

DFF (BA) 1216-15/2
G-282

Director of Purchase

Bangladesh Power Development Board,
Dhaka, Bangladesh