

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Where Fat is Beautiful

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

Going to the movies has become quite a rarity for the middle class and this has nothing to do with affordability but due to a growing sense of disillusionment with the type of films shown on the screen. It is not just the oversized, over made up actresses that has turned off the middle class person, but the general deterioration of quality of these films. Plots are predictable and unrealistic, acting is unnatural and exaggerated and dialogues sound either pretentious or inane.

But any talk of Bangla films is incomplete without mentioning the Amazonian women who fill up, literally speaking, the huge screen at the cinema hall. Unlike their western counterparts who may become bulimic or anorexic to stay slim, the Bangla film heroine seems to take pains to maintain her 40"-40"-56" statistics.

Sources say that these well endowed ladies live on a high calorie-high starch diet for this and those who are a little 'skinny' wear extra padding on the sets to get that big but 'proportioned' look. Apparently this is what the audience, which consists mainly of poor working class, repressed males, like. One explanation is that they are so tired of seeing their own women thin and emaciated reminding them of their poverty, that plump women look far more attractive symbolizing both wealth and health.

For the on screen Romeos, however, it must be quite painful especially when they have to lift up those 150-pound weight Julietts. In the air, during a fainting fit or a hectic dance sequence. Speaking of which one must not forget that it is the songs and dances that make or break a Bangla movie. People in these films sing at the drop of a hat. Whether it is happiness and love or hatred or sorrow that the scene wishes to portray — everything will be done through a song. The upbeat songs will be accompanied by an upbeat dance that includes frenzied acrobatics and gyrations that are made more vulgar with the tasteless outfits worn by the actors.

If this seems exaggerated, just sit through an episode of 'Chhaya Chhanda', a popular TV programme on film songs. This will show that the fatter the heroine the tighter her clothes. In one particular song a famous actress wears a white mini dress over purple exercise lycra pants and pink leg warmers and black leather boots. To accentuate her 36 inch waist line she wears a body clenching wide silver belt. In another song the same lady wears a balloon-like outfit in glaring gold with the same silver waist band. Wearing knee length white dresses with white net stockings to show jumbo thighs, white shoes and white lace gloves, (yes gloves), is also common attire to be worn on the set.



A world far from reality.

The hero, not to be outdone, wears painted white 'disco' shoes over white trousers and bright red body hugging shirt and, of course, don't forget the shiny, unpainted wig that threatens to fall off with every leap and swing that the dancing fit demands. Make up especially for the actresses, is slapped on like layers of plastic paint that never comes off rain, hail or storm.

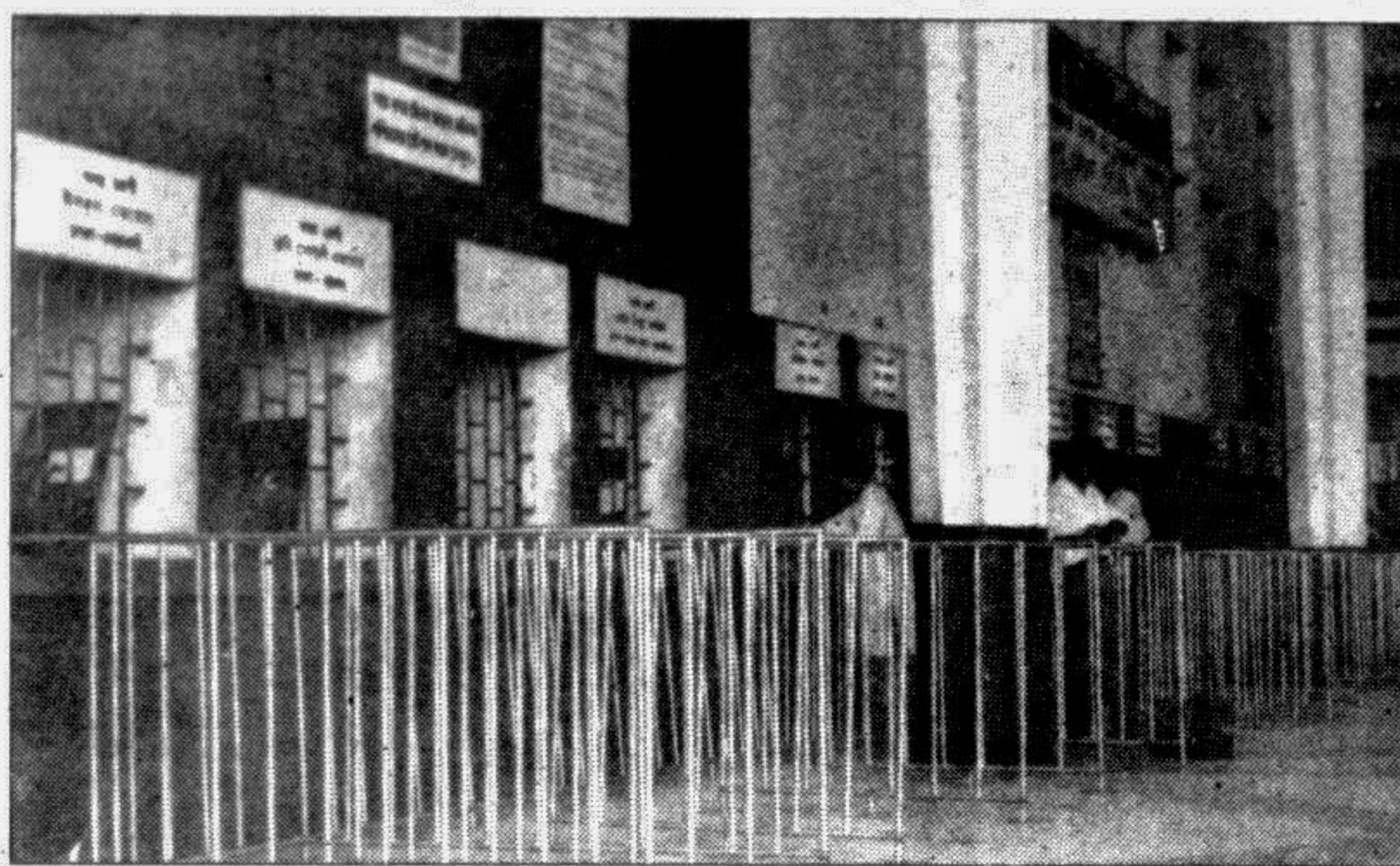
Thus, if it is reality you are looking for look somewhere else. These films are pure fantasy to the extreme. One favourite theme is the snake princess who performs all sorts of magical feats with the powers derived from a snake. Kings, queens, wizards and fairies are all usual characters in these films.

Modern-day plots, however, have the usual rich spoilt brat who woos the poor yet 'handsome' and perfectly groomed chauffeur

whose pride and egocentrism leads to all sorts of complications. The stories have stereotyped themes of the bad rich and the good poor, with the ruthless, lecherous 'moral' (village chairman), the honest but poor farmer, the decadent businessman and the helpless lady in distress — the heroine, who invariably appears to be quite pea-brained.

Many directors believe that the secret to box office hits are shots taken in foreign locations. This has led to such disasters as *Love in America*; *Love in Singapore*, and so on. *Love in America*, for example, seems to be a really low budget film since most of the film has the quality of a mediocre home video. One thing very interesting is that in the US scenes where the half-foreign heroine is being kidnapped, the ruffians are suspiciously Bangladeshi-looking and so are the police who just happen to be wearing khaki uniforms. Well, perhaps they were from New York.

In spite of all the anomalies, however, Bangla films are being churned out by the dozens each year. Some of them even become super hits. The reason why these fantastical, unrealistic and unconvincing films are so popular is that they cater to an audience that wants to experience fantasy. It includes people who are so bogged down by the burdens of life that reality is something they wish to forget. Those few hours inside the cinema hall in front of a big screen where larger-than-life people sing, dance and fall in love, give them that longed for respite. For them these films do not hold any moral, nor do they create social awareness. For them going to the movies means only one thing: three hours of pure entertainment. Perhaps in that sense, they do serve a social purpose.



The ticket counters of Kamalapur Railway Station after Eid-ul-Fitr wear a deserted look. The picture was taken yesterday. — Star photo

## Salam Talukder refutes AL's allegations

BNP Secretary General and LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdus Salam Talukder last night rebutted Awami League's allegations of violation of election rules by the BNP ahead of parliamentary by-election in Magura-2 constituency.

The BNP Secretary General described the opposition's allegations against his party as illogical and unfounded saying the Election Commission has been entrusted with the task of conducting the polls here.

He said the Election Commission has been acting as an independent body and it has been conducting the election with required number of officers and employees.

The BNP Secretary General was talking to the BSS over telephone refuting the Awami League's complaints it lodged with the Election Commission. Salam Talukder said a particular political party has become scared by seeing the people's sentiments in favour of the BNP candidate and the development works in Magura-2 constituency.

The people of the constituency, which was held by opposition MPs for several terms in the past, alleged that no development works were carried out in the area, the BNP secretary added.

He said the people also told the BNP leaders that they wanted to see development by electing the BNP nominee here.

Salam Talukder also turned down the Awami League's contentions that the Prime Minister and her cabinet colleagues were making development commitments during their campaign and that the three union parishad chairmen were threatened with arrest.

The BNP Secretary General said the union parishad chairmen were working in favour of different nominees according to their wishes and the question of creating pressure on the chairmen to work for the BNP nominee did not arise.

Salam said the opposition leaders and MPs have told various election rallies that there was no certainty whether they would join the Parliament session in future.



- BTV Saturday**
- 4:30 Opening announcement Al-Quran
  - 4:45 Program summary
  - 4:45 Cartoon show: Stories to Remember
  - 5:10 News in Bangla
  - 5:25 Magazine for children: Shoregole
  - 6:00 Magazine for varsity students: Shikhanagan Shamacher
  - 7:00 Folk songs: Banshari
  - 8:00 News in Bangla
  - 8:30 Mati O Marush
  - 9:05 Biwa Natak
  - 10:00 News in English
  - 10:30 Drama series: Dallas
  - 11:30 Khabar/The News
  - 11:40 Tomorrow's programme summary
  - 11:45 Closing

## Weather

### Dry weather likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely to occur over the regions of Mymensingh, Comilla, Sylhet in the next 12 hours commencing from 6 am today (Saturday).

The Met Office forecasts, weather is likely to remain dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere over Bangladesh.

The day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged across the country during this period of time.

The highest temperature of the country of 36.8 degrees Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest of 19.0 degrees Celsius at Rajshahi.

The sun sets today at 6:09 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6:03 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperatures and relative humidity recorded in the divisional towns yesterday are:

Towns	Temperature in degrees Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	35.0	23.0	78	55
Chittagong	31.4	23.0	77	85
Rajshahi	36.2	19.0	47	36
Khulna	36.4	23.8	83	37
Barisal	34.8	25.0	86	71

## PM's intervention sought to solve PIO issue

Bangladesh Civil Service Information Association has sought the intervention of the Prime Minister in appointing one of its senior members as Principal Information Officer (PIO) instead of an outsider, reports UNB.

The association in a statement yesterday said its members were frustrated as their chain of promotion was seriously hampered following the appointment of former journalist Abdur Rahim in the highest post of the cadre in 1992 for two years.

Their frustration and resentment deepened as his contact-based appointment was renewed for another year on March 9, it said adding that there was no other cadre service in the country where an outsider was appointed in its highest post.

The association had enforced an 11-day programme of wearing black badges from March 10 at different offices including PID, DFP, mass communication department, film archive, film censor board and parliament secretariat, to press for cancelling Rahim's appointment.

It will announce fresh programme of agitation at a

general meeting on Monday if its demand was not met by Sunday.

The statement said none was appointed as PIO on contact-basis except Abdur Rahim after the finalisation of recruitment rules of the Information Cadre formed in 1981. Members of the Information Cadre served as PIO with efficiency at different times, it claimed.

Some 70 members on March 5 called on the Information Minister who assured them of appointing a senior member of the cadre as PIO. But only two days later, four senior cadre members were transferred, the statement said.

## Masterda's birth centenary Mar. 21

The birth centenary of Masterda Surya Sen, a hero of the movement against British imperialism, will be observed on March 21, reports UNB.

The Centenary Celebration Committee formed with former Chief Justice Kemaluddin Hussain as Convener has planned an elaborate programme to celebrate Surya Sen's 100th birth anniversary.

## Ainjibi Forum Eid reunion

Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda yesterday called upon all to work unitedly for the implementation of the ideals of nationalist forces, reports BSS.

The minister was speaking at an Eid reunion function of Jatiyataabdi Ainjibi Forum in the city at Hotel Purbani.

Justice T H Khan, convener of the forum was the chief guest of the function. Recalling the role of the lawyers in various fields of national life and particularly during the anti-autocratic movement, Barrister Huda called for further strengthening the nationalist forces to foil the attempts of a particular quarter which was attempting to halt the March of the nationalist forces after it came to power.

He told the gathering that the present government during the last three years had implemented massive development programmes for improving the lot of the people.

The function was addressed, among others, by Abdur Rob Chowdhury, MP, and convener of the Supreme Court unit of the Forum, Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, Ziaur Rahman, MP, president of the Supreme Court Bar Association Kazi Golam Mahbub and secretary general of Bangladesh Human Rights Implementation Society Sigma Huda.

If they (opposition MPs who have boycotted the last Parliament session) do not join the Parliament then why they were now seeking votes here, he questioned.

"We have also told the voters that you vote for those who would go to Parliament," Salam continued.

The BNP Secretary General further said a large number of Jatiya Party leaders and workers of Magura joined BNP today.

UNB adds: Jamaat Secretary General Muttur Rahman Nizami MP yesterday urged the people to vote for his party nominee in the Magura by-election to help establish the rule of Allah.

Addressing an election rally at Magura's Mohammadpur (thana court premises in the afternoon, Nizami said the ruling BNP has failed to improve the lot of the people by solving their problems in last three years.

The Jamaat leader criticised the government for failing to resolve the longstanding issue of sharing of the Ganges water with India.

He also criticised the BNP for not taking any realistic steps to solve the growing unemployment in the country.

Referring to Jamaat's support to BNP for forming the government after the last parliamentary election, Nizami said his party had supported BNP to avoid a constitutional crisis.

## World Day for Water Tuesday

Bangladesh will observe the World Day for Water on March 22 by holding a seminar on management of international river basins and environmental challenge, reports UNB.

March 22 is to be observed as World Day for Water globally every year in pursuance of the decision of the 47th Session of UN General Assembly to promote public awareness through publication and diffusion of documentaries and by organising seminars, conferences and exhibitions on conservation and development of water resources.

Bangladesh, a member of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), has chosen 'Management of International River Basins and Environmental Challenges' as theme of the seminar to mark the day.

The theme of the seminar has a special relevance to the national context of Bangladesh, which is suffering an acute shortage of water due to remorseless withdrawal of the Ganges flow upstream by India.

A competent source confided to UNB that the Ganges registered a precipitous fall from 38,000 cusec last month to 17,500 cusec on March 16 this year. On the day last year the flow slid down to 11,000 cusec.



Women are no longer unequal to their male counterparts. These women are giving labour in an earthwork. This picture was taken yesterday. — Star photo



ZIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KEMUNDA, DHAKA. PHONES: 94711, 94712, 94713, 94714, 94715, 94716, 94717, 94718, 94719, 94720, 94721, 94722, 94723, 94724, 94725, 94726, 94727, 94728, 94729, 94730, 94731, 94732, 94733, 94734, 94735, 94736, 94737, 94738, 94739, 94740, 94741, 94742, 94743, 94744, 94745, 94746, 94747, 94748, 94749, 94750, 94751, 94752, 94753, 94754, 94755, 94756, 94757, 94758, 94759, 94760, 94761, 94762, 94763, 94764, 94765, 94766, 94767, 94768, 94769, 94770, 94771, 94772, 94773, 94774, 94775, 94776, 94777, 94778, 94779, 94780, 94781, 94782, 94783, 94784, 94785, 94786, 94787, 94788, 94789, 94790, 94791, 94792, 94793, 94794, 94795, 94796, 94797, 94798, 94799, 94800.

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- a) Full Name, b) Father's Name, c) Present Address, d) Permanent address, e) Date of Birth, f) Nationality, g) Educational Qualifications from S.S.C. upwards with name of institutions, Division/Class obtained and year of passing, h) Other Qualifications/Experience, if any & i) Names and Addresses of two Referees.

N.B. Envelope should be marked Probationary Officer.