

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Enchantment of a Sleeping City

by Iftikhar A Chowdhury



When the veil of darkness spreads over this beloved city of ours, it assumes a different look altogether. It no longer remains the ever-busy metropolis where people always seem to be on the run, the humming of human voices no longer invade one's private thoughts. This sleeping Dhaka then resembles more to a quiet and lethargic mafassil town where life comes to a near standstill by 9 to 10 pm.

It can be a wondrous experience for any adventurous person to take a ride through this city by a rickshaw or walk along the main roads at around 2 am or even later in the night. If you can shrug off your fear of being attacked by the elements of the night, be it natural or super natural, then you can always come out in the streets and have a full share of your nightly adventure.

As it is with the other busy metropolis of the world, one cannot expect to see the neon lights sparkling from a casino entrance, robust and fashionable urban people coming out or going into discotheques to enjoy life, or people of all descriptions frequenting bars that stay awake till the next day's sun peeps through the eastern gates of the horizon. Dhaka by night gives an impression contrary to all these. Its beauty is marked by its unusual quietness, where every little sound created by the human voice is echoed and magnified manifold, where the roads seem to gain in length because of the absence of people. One may very likely to have the feeling of being the king of the road while taking this lonesome journey through the city which is so much known to us, yet so unknown!

There is no reason for one to believe that only muggers, dacoits, prostitutes, policemen and newspapermen are to be seen at that hour of the night. There are other people too, who might be noticed. One may be seen rushing off to a medical emergency unit in an attempt to save a relative's life, or people heading home from long-distance bus terminal or train sta-

tion. Their tired and sullen face seems to brighten while going home.

Rickshaws can be found throughout the night, although not in a great many number. The fare also doesn't vary greatly. Mostly, rickshaw pullers who find it physically impossible to pull the vehicle in the burning heat of the day, or have an alternative job to attend to, pull rickshaws at night. Scooters can also be found at anytime in the night, although, much fewer in number.

Some tea-stalls and roadside restaurants operate throughout the night. If one feels like eating *vapa pitha* and tea at 3 am, one only has to go to Farmgate, Kamalapur or Mohammadpur Bazar area of the city. Eating in these stalls wouldn't exactly be a delight for everyone, but it will definitely bring a change.

While travelling in the city by night one problem anyone is going to face is the inquiring policemen on the round. One often runs the risk of being harassed and asked all types of peculiar questions by them. In one incident, two journalists were returning home from their official duties. They chose to return home on foot. On the way, they were stopped by the men in uniform, who told them in their inimitable jargon, "You guys shouldn't move around in white clothes (civil dress) at this hour of the night." To this one of the journalists replied that "We are not policemen, we do not wear uniform, we are supposed to walk around in civil dress."

One Anwarul Haq was surprised to notice one thing which to him seemed very extra ordinary. There were more cows in the Dhaka streets than men during the dying hours of the night. Why so many cows? There is no reason to believe that these cows are the reincarnation of the sleeping Dhakaites. These poor creatures are taken to the various slaughter houses of city only to be slain in the morning. A terrible night for them indeed!

Speaker leaves for Saudi Arabia today

Australian envoy meets Shahabuddin

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali leaves for Saudi Arabia today to perform Hajj, commencing Friday, reports UNB.

The Speaker has been invited by the royal protocol of the kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Prof Hai dead

Prof Syed Abdul Hal, former Chairman, Department of Philosophy, Dhaka University, died at a city clinic yesterday afternoon. He was 77, reports BSS.

Namaz-e-Janaza of Prof Hai will be held at the Dhaka University Mosque after johr prayers today.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali expressed his profound grief at the death of Prof Hai.

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Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman (extreme left) speaking at a function organised by the Rotary Club of Dhanmondi at Sonargaon Hotel in the city yesterday.

Nat'l Museum to preserve cultural heritage

The Bangladesh National Museum has taken up a programme to preserve the local heritage of each of the country's 64 districts, reports UNB.

The programme is designed to enable the people, particularly the future generation, discern and understand their own culture and heritage.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahan Ara Begum opened the experimental programme through a video and film show on Rajbari district at the National Museum auditorium yesterday afternoon.

Md Mokhlesur Rahman, Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs addressed the function which was presided over by Director General of the National Museum Md Moslem Ali. Secretary of the Museum Md Darul Ahsan also spoke.

Opening the programme, the State Minister said that it was an important task of the government to preserve and uphold the country's tradition and culture.

Weather

Rains with gusty wind likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain and thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty and squally wind likely to occur at a few places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions during the next 24 hours.

Met office forecasts the weather may remain same at one or two places over Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal divisions.

The day temperature is likely to remain unchanged.

Yesterday's highest rainfall 16 mm was recorded at Tangail while the minimum 2 mm at Bogra. The second highest 14 mm was recorded at Srimongol.

The Sun sets today at 6.64 pm while rises tomorrow at 5.15 am.

DU Alumni Association Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting of the Dhaka University Alumni Association will be held on Friday, May 27, 1994 at 5:00 pm at the Planning and Development Academy auditorium at Babupara, Nilkhet. Election of executive committee members, besides other matters, will be held at the meeting.

The meeting will be followed by a cultural function and dinner. Professor Emajuddin Ahmed, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dhaka is expected to grace the occasion as chief guest. Separate cards for the cultural function and dinner have to be obtained on payment. The rate is single Tk. 150.00 and couple Tk. 250. The following telephone numbers may be contacted for the purpose: 815119, 317366, 501329, 406633, 405021, 504797, 507627, 401100, 317035, 833204 & 882955.

All members of the Association and other interested old students of the university have been requested to attend.

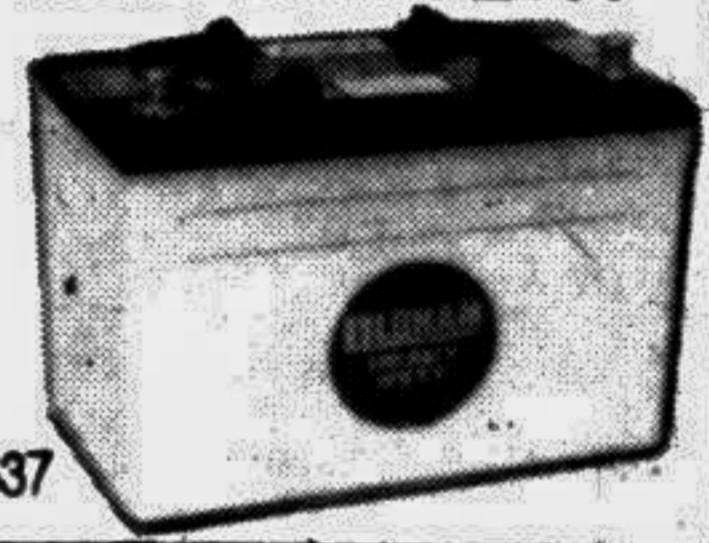
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Five get Satyen Sen awards

By DU Correspondent

Five personalities have been awarded Satyen Sen Memorial Award for their outstanding contribution to their respective fields.

The recipients are poet Shamsur Rahman, litterateur Shawkat Osman, Wahidul Huq, Sanjida Khatoon and litterateur Sunil Gangopadhyay of West Bengal.

The Kheleghar, a children organisation, awarded the medals at a colourful function at the Teachers and Students' Centre (TSC) auditorium of the Dhaka University yesterday afternoon.

Presided over by Panna Kaiser, chairman of the Kheleghar, the function was attended by Justice Kemal Uddin Hossain, and Gazul Huq as Special guests.

3 killed in

Khulna

KHULNA, May 15: Three people were killed, including a woman, and two others injured in three separate accidents in the district on Saturday, police said, reports UNB.

The dead were identified as: Nurun Nahar, 60, Krishnapal, 18, and police official Akhterul Islam, 22.

Nurun Nahar was killed on the spot when a Rupsha-bound speedy truck hit her rickshaw from behind on Khan Jahan Ali road in the town at 9:00 pm.

BTV Monday

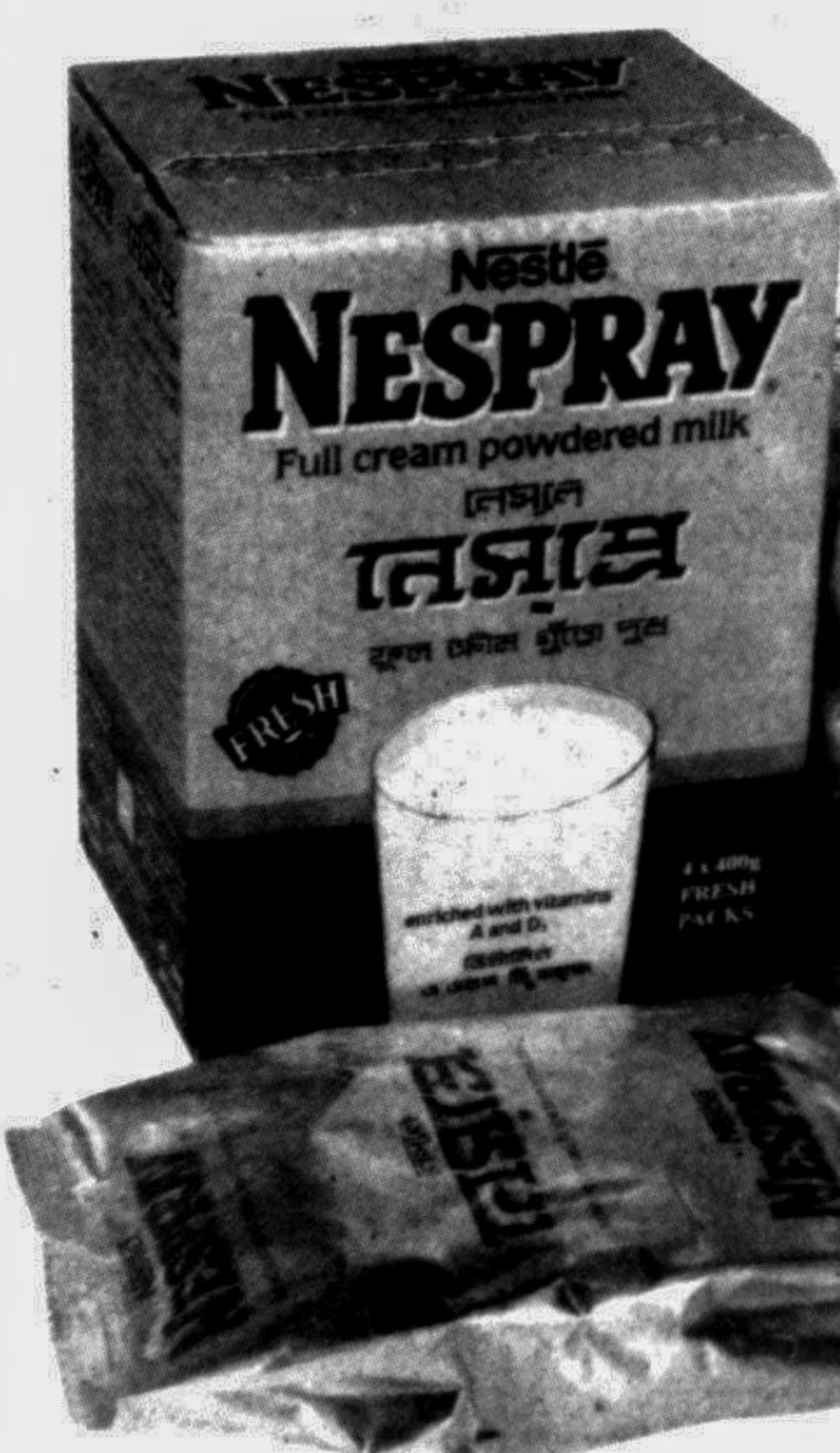
4.30	Opening announcement
4.45	Al-Quran
	Programme summary
5.10	Documentary: Growing up
5.20	Children
6.10	News in Bangla
6.50	Sports programme
7.15	Football
8.00	Pratibha
8.30	Open University
9.00	Nazrul Songs
10.00	News in Bangla
10.30	Special programme: On Falak Day
9.00	Ghore Baire
10.00	News in English
11.00	Comedy series: Murphy Brown
11.30	Musical programme: Disco Rally
11.40	Khabar/The News
	Tomorrow's programme summary
11.45	Closing

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