

## Dhaka Day by Day

### She Defies Elements and More

by Neil Ray

Dominique Lapierre is no Charles Dickens, nor is he a native of the city he has presented with all its filth, squalor and perhaps an ounce of grace in his much-heralded novel, 'City of Joy'. Dhaka did not have the fortune or misfortune to come under such a searching gaze of Western writers.

A writer of Dickens's stature and vision would perhaps treat Dhaka and Calcutta as the twin cities like Paris and London. Sunil Gangopadhyay made an attempt to bring in the political struggles and the trauma of being uprooted from one's own soil following the division of Bengal. Yet the subject have stopped short of becoming a gripping experience.

Yet Dhaka has an attractive history which no one has fully captured in fictions where the spirit matters more than the statement of bare facts. What Sir Laurens van der Post has done for the South Africans — the Blacks in particular or the Bushman of Africa or Kalahari Desert — may not be applicable for olden Dhaka or the original Dhakites who are evidently a dying species now, but at least the floating populace of this city could be a subject of historical study with the depth of Laurensian compassion.

Neither historical nor compassionate treatment of the city's unwanted has so far riveted the attention on them in a humanitarian way. Perhaps to challenge such a mindless indifference an old woman has resorted to a most unusual culinary practice. The place she has chosen is the narrow strip of road divider

in between Dhanmondi and Shukrabad. No, she has not intruded into the enclosure with iron railing but squeezed exactly into the small opening where the long fencing from two sides ends to allow pedestrians to cross from one side of the road to the other.



While vehicles move in opposite directions in an endless flow, blaring their high-decibel horns, the woman goes on peeling or slicing her vegetables for cooking right in the middle of the automobile melee. A Lapierre would have something to show to the world as a seamy side of Dhaka life. But that did nothing to assuage the wretchedness, the agony of the woman and also the indignity of man in a myopic civilization. Writing stunt is one thing and opening an inner vision, a god-like insight is a completely different matter.

The old woman who lives on that small space under the open sky is a living protest against a civilization boasting of space or micro chip age. She defies natural elements with the same disdain she demonstrates against law and order. She is lucky that no small man of law has as yet considered her intrusion as an act of defiance to his authority and has not ordered to pack her insignificant belongings. The old woman has made a point but there is none to notice it. The gaping holes in our society most of the time are tried to put under the blanket. She takes the gloss of our society but we are too inhuman to see it and feel it.

### Malaria claims 200 since Jan

Deputy Minister for Health Strajul Huq yesterday told the House that some 200 people died of cerebral malaria in the country since January 1, reports UNB.

Replying to a question from Sardar Shakawat Hossain Bakul (BNP), the minister said Taherpur thana in Sunamganj was the worst affected by malaria where it spread in an epidemic form and claimed 117 lives.

He said 8,504 people were attacked by malaria in 46 thanas. The government has taken emergency steps in the affected areas.

Badly affected areas are: Taherpur, Kalmakanda, Dharmapasha, Matiranga, Alikadam, Ukhia and Nikhangchhari.

Replying to another question from Begum KJ Hamida Khanam, the minister said according to 1991 census, the country's population growth rate was 2.17. But the growth rate reduced by 0.83 per cent since family planning programmes were launched.

### 'Prithvi' launch to escalate tension, says Pak leader

A Pakistani leader yesterday described the test-firing of India's home-built missile, 'Prithvi', as a 'blatant disregard' of global trends towards dialogue for denuclearisation and disarmament in the unipolar world, reports UNB.

"As a representative democratic government, India should make more efforts in defusing tension in the region, rather than testing missile and arms buildup," said Shanawaz Wazeer Ali, Special Assistant to the Pakistan Prime Minister, who arrived here yesterday on a three-day visit.

She said when Pakistan was undertaking nuclear programmes for peaceful purposes "it is unfortunate that India had tested missile which will escalate tension in the region." Pakistan has called for immediate meeting of the SAARC to work out means of easing tension.

### 19 new hospitals set up at thana level since Jan '91

Nineteen new hospitals have been constructed at a cost of Tk 55.53 crore in different thana headquarters since January 1991. Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf told Parliament yesterday, reports UNB.

In reply to another question from Hafeza Asma Khatun, the minister said the government has no plan to appoint any MBBS doctor in the Family Welfare Centre at the union level.

But 250 MBBS doctors have been appointed at the union level under the Fourth Five Year Plan.

### D-Day photographic exhibition begins

The photographs were all about the "Great Crusade" — The brothers-in-arms landing on the tough Normandy beaches on June 6, 1944, known as the D-Day.

The black-and-white mosaic of the pictures, portraying the courage and sacrifices at Normandy, France, were put on display on the international commemoration of the landing and liberation of France in the Second World War.

The cultural section of the French Embassy organised the 10-day photographic exhibition that began yesterday at the Alliance Francaise in the city.

The exhibition is being hosted as part of the worldwide celebration organised by the French Cultural Ministry to mark the 50th anniversary of the D-Day.

Opening the function, Ambassador of France in Dhaka Jean-Michel Lacombe said that the landing of the Allied Forces in Normandy, condemned Operation Overlord, was a great gamble that cost thousands of lives.



Tuesday

4:30 Opening announcement  
Al-Quran Programme summary  
4:45 Mass education programme: Esho Para Shikhi  
5:10 News in Bangla  
5:25 Cartoon show: Captain Planet  
5:45 National TV debate competition  
6:20 Open University  
6:45 Musical programme: Sangeta  
8:00 News in Bangla  
8:30 Fortnightly drama serial: Tathapi  
10:00 News in English  
10:30 Film show: Northern Exposure  
11:30 Khabar/The News  
11:40 Tomorrow's programme summary  
11:45 Closing



Siberian Kaleidoscope, a Russian cultural troupe, arrived in the city yesterday to participate in a six-day long Russian Food and Cultural Festival beginning today at the Sheraton Hotel. — Star photo

### JS obituary references

The Jatiya Sangsad yesterday condoled the deaths of six eminent personalities, reports BSS.

Before starting the question and answer session, Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali moved obituary references on former minister and member of Parliament Dr Mofiz Chowdhury, former minister and member of Parliament Rezwanul Haque Chowdhury (Idu Chowdhury), former member of Pakistan National Assembly Golam Ahad Chowdhury, former member of provincial assembly and eminent litterateur Ashab Uddin Ahmad, elderly litterateur and Saogat editor Mohammad Nasiruddin, and Buddhist religious leader Bishuddhananda Mahathero.

The House unanimously passed the obituary references.

### 297 private clinics

Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf yesterday told the Jatiya Sangsad that there were 297 registered private hospitals and clinics in the country, reports BSS.

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### What's on today . . .

#### Bangladesh Photo Journalist Association:

Will hold its Family-Day and prize giving ceremony of "Rupashi Bangla" Bata photo competition. A cultural function and a dinner also arranged. Chief guest: Minister for Communication Oli Ahmed. Special guest: DCC Mayor Mahammad Hanif. Venue: National Press Club auditorium. Time: 5pm.

**Painting Exhibition:** Of young artist Ranjit Das. Renowned artist Prof Mohammad Kibria will inaugurate at 5.30 pm. Prof Rashida Begum will be present as guest of honour. Venue: La Galerie. Time: From 9 am to 8 pm daily upto June 13.

### Weather

#### No change in temperature

Light to moderate rain or thundershower likely to occur at a few places over Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi, Khulna divisions during the next 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office said day temperature will remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

Yesterday's maximum temperature in Dhaka was 33.6 degrees Celsius and the minimum was 23.2 degrees while the country's highest temperature was recorded 35.7 degrees in Satkhira and the lowest 21.5 degrees in Rangpur.

Sun sets today at 6.44 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.10 am.

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Newsman mob Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali as he comes out of a meeting with Leader of the Opposition Sheikh Hasina at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhavan yesterday. — Star photo

### 'Include environment edn in schools'

Speakers at a seminar called for more conscious efforts to preserve environment and include environmental education in the school and college curriculum, reports UNB.

The seminar was held in observance of the World Environment Day, organised by the United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) at the

Scout Bhawan auditorium in the city yesterday.

The key-note paper on "Global Warming and the Environment" was presented by eminent scientist Dr. Abdullah Al-Muti Sharifuddin.

The scientist in his paper called for a global policy on environment to save the

manhood. He also appealed to the world community to allocate sufficient resource for the preservation of environment.

National Professor M. Innas Ali, President of the UNAB presided over the seminar. The theme of this year's environment day is "one earth; one family".



### Tender Notice

No 220-14/Engg

Dated: 5/6/94

UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA: Sealed tenders in Dhaka University form "Tender for works" are hereby invited from the enlisted Contractors (Bldg/Furniture) of Dhaka University for the undermentioned works. The tender will be received by the undersigned up to 12 Noon on the date mentioned against each work and opened on the same day at 12.15 pm in presence of the undersigned, Registrar/Director, Planning & Development (only furniture supply) and the contractors who may remain present. The tenders may also drop their tender (only for supply of furniture) in the Tender Box kept in the office of the Chief Engineer & the Treasurer, Dhaka University. Contractors will have to deposit as Earnest Money a sum of Taka as stated below against each work in Demand Draft or Pay Order from any scheduled bank of Bangladesh. Specification & other particulars may be had from the office of the undersigned on all working days except on the date fixed for submitting of the tender after depositing the cost of schedule & tender form as stated below (non-refundable) after showing the necessary enlistment papers endorsed by the undersigned.

Sl. No	Name of works	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Price for tender form	Time allowed	Opening date
1	Supply of furniture in the Deptt of Pharmacy (At Science Library Bldg) M H Khandaker Bijnan Bhawan area, DU	Tk. 5,84,258/90	Tk. 11686/-	Tk. 200/-	90 days	20th June '94
2	Construction of Inspection pit for Sewerage line at Curzon Hall area, DU.	Tk. 1,33,452/-	Tk. 2670/-	Tk. 100/-	30 days	20th June '94
3	Construction of water bound macadam road in front of F H Hall Extension Bldg, DU	Tk. 47,925/15	Tk. 960/-	Tk. 30/-	15 days	20th June '94
4	Repairs to the Bio-Chemistry Store Bldg, Dhaka University.	Tk 1,62,999/70	Tk. 3260/-	Tk. 100/-	60 days	20th June '94

Mohammad Ali  
University Engineer  
University of Dhaka

D-496

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