

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Harassed by Beggars

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

There are very few pleasures left in this overcrowded, polluted city. One of the rare treats is perhaps just sitting on the bench of a park — whatever is left of it — and enjoying the greenery around. Yet even this simple enjoyment can be hampered unnecessarily.

Take this scenario: You are standing among the beautiful Krishnachura trees of Ramna contemplating whether to have that mouthwatering *chatpati* right next to you. Soon enough, you are munching on that irresistible tamarind-pulse-potato and egg creation while listening to the delightful twittering of birds returning home with the setting of a crimson sun. Suddenly, you are awakened from this dreamy haze by a persistent tug on your sleeve and a droning that is far worse than the ultimate pest's, the mosquitoes' 'Afaaa. Afaaa ekta teha deeben, sharadeen kisu khat nat' (sister give me a Taka, I have not eaten the whole day). You're 'phuchka' gets stuck halfway down your oesophagus (and mind you this is not a pleasant feeling),

partly from surprise, partly from a sense of guilt that may prompt you to take out a taka to get rid of the intruder. Big mistake. Within seconds, like locusts, a whole army attacks you. Some are children, some are adults with

children, others are crippled, blind or have some kind of incurable affliction. Overwhelmed and mobbed, whatever lofty intentions you may have had in you, are replaced by a sense of frustration almost anger, at being forced to move away from the place.

This account may arouse in some, extreme indignation for its callousness and insensitivity regarding those 'unfortunate' people we call *fakirs* (beggars). There is no doubt that the overall poverty of this country has forced many people into beggary. For those born with a handicap, or maimed by an accident or malnutrition, there is very little scope of getting employed and asking for alms may be the only answer. But to say that 'no one wants to be a beggar' would be misinformation. There are plenty of able bodied young men and women, among this 'unfortunate group' who just won't work even if they get the opportunity. They would rather stand for hours in the sun waiting for the cars to stop at the lights and wangle a taka or two from the passengers. Just try asking one of them if they would like to work for you and they will give you several excuses why this is impossible, or just walk away.

The reason for this is simple. Begging is the easiest way to get money. The only thing that is needed is patience and a total lack of self respect. On an average a *fakir* earns between 20 to 100 taka or more per day. This amount, though erratically obtained, is far more than the earnings of a day labourer or a maid. Added to that is the freedom of moving about wherever and whenever one wishes to, with no

Directorate of Family Planning

Population Building

Azimpur, Dhaka

Memo. No. PCFP/MCHFP/1113

Dated: 7-12-94

Situation Vacant

Applications are invited from Bangladeshi National to fill the following positions for the project "Strengthening of MCWC in Bangladesh" under the Govt. executed and UNFPA project BGD/91/PO-2.

SI No.	Post Title	No. of Post	Duty Station
1.	National Consultant (Local)	02 (two)	Rajshahi or Rangpur
B.	Duration of Contract: Initially for one year on special service agreement with possible extension for another one year upon performance.		
C.	Remuneration: Tk 35,000/- (Fixed) Taka thirty five thousand/month only plus per diem and travel expenses will be paid as per UNFPA/UNDP rules.		
D.	Terms of references: To work under the supervision of the Project Director & Assist Expatriate MCH-FP Advisor.		
ii)	Field work: At least 15 (fifteen) days in a month. Travel by public transport i.e. steamer/train and bus.		
iii)	To establish comprehensive Essential Obstetrics Care (EOC) at the selected MCWC's and basic EOC in other MCWC and THC's.		
iv)	To develop quality of care through micro supervision.		
v)	Improve the skill of the clinical service providers working at different level (district, MCWC, THC etc.).		
E.	Qualification & experiences:		
i)	MBBS or equivalent degree accepted by Bangladesh Medical and Dental Council.		
ii)	Post graduate degree in Ob/Gyn and practical experience in surgical Ob/Gyn and O.T. management will be given preference.		
iii)	At least 10 (ten) years experience in MCH-FP program in the country or abroad.		

F. Selection procedures: Selection Committee reserves the right to relax the condition for age limit for healthy and extra-ordinary candidates, those having above requirements should apply on or before 25-7-94 to the undersigned along with 2 copies of recent passport size photographs and other relevant papers.

Candidates in Govt. service should apply through proper channel.



where you go until out of utter exasperation, you will hand out a one-taka note.

Many will go to any length to wangle something out of you. There are those who nurture and expose their afflictions shamelessly to attract attention. Take the emaciated topless girl who is walked around by her companion to show her caged-in chest at the Mahakali rai gate or the little boy with someone else's medical certificate who exposes a tumor in his testicles by not wearing any pants. Then there is the young woman with an infant, a familiar scene in Dhaka's streets. If she has no child of her own, she will hire one from another beggar or just pick one from the street and expose him/her to hours of scorching heat just to get some money out of some poor victim stuck in traffic.

This kind of deplorable exploitation is only possible because our culture of living off others, permits it. On a personal level we burden our well-to-do relative, on a national level, the begging bowl is offered to foreign donors. Whether we give beggars money out of compassion or compulsion, the outcome is the same: it only encourages this demeaning activity. Of course rehabilitation and employment programmes are necessary to get these people off the streets. But with this there should be a conscious effort to give the message to those people that begging is shameful and self destructive. One way to do this is by not giving alms. Otherwise we shall be forever paying this unwarranted 'tax' that actually hampers rather than helps a nation's development by encouraging idleness and parasitism.

Workshop on CSD tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare will arrange a day-long orientation workshop on the Combined Service Delivery (CSD) system for the health and family planning managers of 15 districts tomorrow at the NIPORT auditorium.

According to sources, the workshop is a follow-up of the government's recent decision to launch a CSD system in the country. A plan of action has also been taken in line with the government decision and the first phase is likely to begin this month in 15 districts. Rest of the districts will also come under the plan in phases.

People are presently receiving health and family planning services from outreach site and satellite clinic through two separate Directorates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The CSD includes seven components of essential health and family planning services. These are: Pregnancy care and birth practices, breastfeeding, immunisation, family planning, CSD, elimination of vitamin A deficiency and education on health, nutrition, iodised salt intake and ARI awareness.

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continued.



A T M Shamsul Huda speaking at a seminar on the Role of Public Administration in the Development of Bangladesh organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management at the BCS (Admn) Academy in the city yesterday. From left are Mokammel Haque, Momtazuddin Ahmed and Md Shahidul Alam.

— Star photo

'Accountability in admn can alleviate poverty'

By Staff Correspondent

Speakers at a seminar yesterday stressed the need for ensuring accountability in the administration to make the poverty alleviation programme a success.

They also spoke of the need for a national consensus on policies and strategies for poverty alleviation keeping the country's development approach away from party politics.

The seminar on "The Role of Public Administration in the Development of Bangladesh" was attended by Communications Minister Oli Ahmed as chief guest, while State Minister for Establishment Barrister Mohammad Aminul Islam was present as special guest.

It was organised by the Bangladesh Institute of Administration and Management (BIAM). Pro-Vice Chancellor of

He said the administration could maintain such accountability by maintaining law and order and ensuring the security of the lives and property of the people.

The minister said the people want an honest and service-oriented administration and the members of the bureaucracy should live up to their expectations.

What's on today . . .

Conference: A grand conference of the Mujibnagar and Freedom Fighter Officer Employees' Central Welfare Association will be held. Former Secretary Khandakar Asaduzzaman will preside. Venue: BARC auditorium. Time: 4 pm.

Condolence Meet: In memory of Saogat Editor Mohammad Nasiruddin organised by some 28 socio-cultural organisations. Venue: National Museum Auditorium, Shahbag. Time: 5 pm

Leo Club of Dhaka Central: A general meeting will be held. Venue: Startrek Computers, 53/1, New Elephant Road. Time: 5:30 pm.

Dutch envoy lauds policies for economic development

Out-going Ambassador of the Netherlands Henricus Gajentaan has lauded the government programmes and policies for economic development of the country, reports UNB.

He said that Bangladesh had achieved laudable success in poverty alleviation, women education and various other development programmes in last three and a half years.

"I am going back with a good impression about Bangladesh," the ambassador said when he paid a farewell call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday.

Henricus Gajentaan was all praise for development programmes undertaken by the Bangladesh government and said that it had achieved progress in alleviating poverty and eradicating illiteracy.

"During my four year stay in Bangladesh, I have witnessed the democratic struggle and elections. I think democracy is taking an institutional shape here alongside development," he added.

Development could be attained only in a democratic atmosphere, the Netherlands envoy said adding that Bangladesh would achieve development in every sector if the present democratic trend

continued.

He hoped that the existing relations and economic ties between the Netherlands and Bangladesh would be further strengthened. The ambassador also thanked Begum Zia for her government's cooperation during his tenure in the country.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia termed the existing relations between the two countries as excellent and thanked the ambassador for his country's cooperation in carrying forward the development programmes of Bangladesh.

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