

Dhaka Day by Day

Life Tied to the Wheel

by Rashed Mahmud Titumir

For Akkas Ali the wheel of life and a push-cart are synonymous. His livelihood and even existence are tied to that clumsy cart.

Many Akkases wait in front of F Rahman Hall, at Shantinagar corner and in other areas of the metropolis.

Their life virtually rotates with the push-cart. We take bath in the lake of the Ramna Park, and rush to the public toilet of Shantinagar Bazar, and then again to the cart. The cart, which we drag for livelihood in the day time turns in a sleeping bed at night," says Akkas.

Babul, 36, of ComiHa jokingly but quite aptly said, "We don't dream, the plying auto vehicles around have taken away our feelings."

Many of the push-cart men think that it would have been better, if they were literate. It is their abject poverty, that has compelled them not to go to school.

What they earn, is divided into three parts, of which the owner gets one-third. The remaining two-thirds are divided into five or six parts, because a push-cart need that much of a manpower.

They maintain a sort of a 'commune'. According to Babul, if he and his mate did not get any trip and failed to earn, the members of the other carts, who get the trip, help them by lending money. "We enjoy our peak demand in the last quarter of the month. Because people then shift their belongings to another house", says Akkas.

Akkas Ali's two sons and a daughter, along with their mother live in Damudda of Faridpur. Hardly he can manage to send them more than Tk 500 a month. The cost of travelling home is so high that he visits them once in two or

three months. So, his wife has to work as a paid labourer. "She has been suffering for some time from dyspepsia, laboured breathing, but my limited income does not permit me to send more money for her treatment," says Akkas with a sigh.

"How can I sleep at night with so much troubles and worries?" asks Akkas.

Babul has his parents. As the eldest son of the family he has to send home money every month. The whole family has to run on what he saves and manages to send.

In the months when he fails to earn an average wage, both he and his family in Comilla suffer. His father writes, to him with the help from other, "May you be well" and he responds "Yes, I am", though both father and son have already forgotten what 'well' means to their lives.

"Nobody wants to give me any work, thinking that I will not be able to accomplish that", says Abul Hashem, 53.

Moreover, I have two marriageable daughters. So, I have to manage dowry for their marriage," puts Hashem.

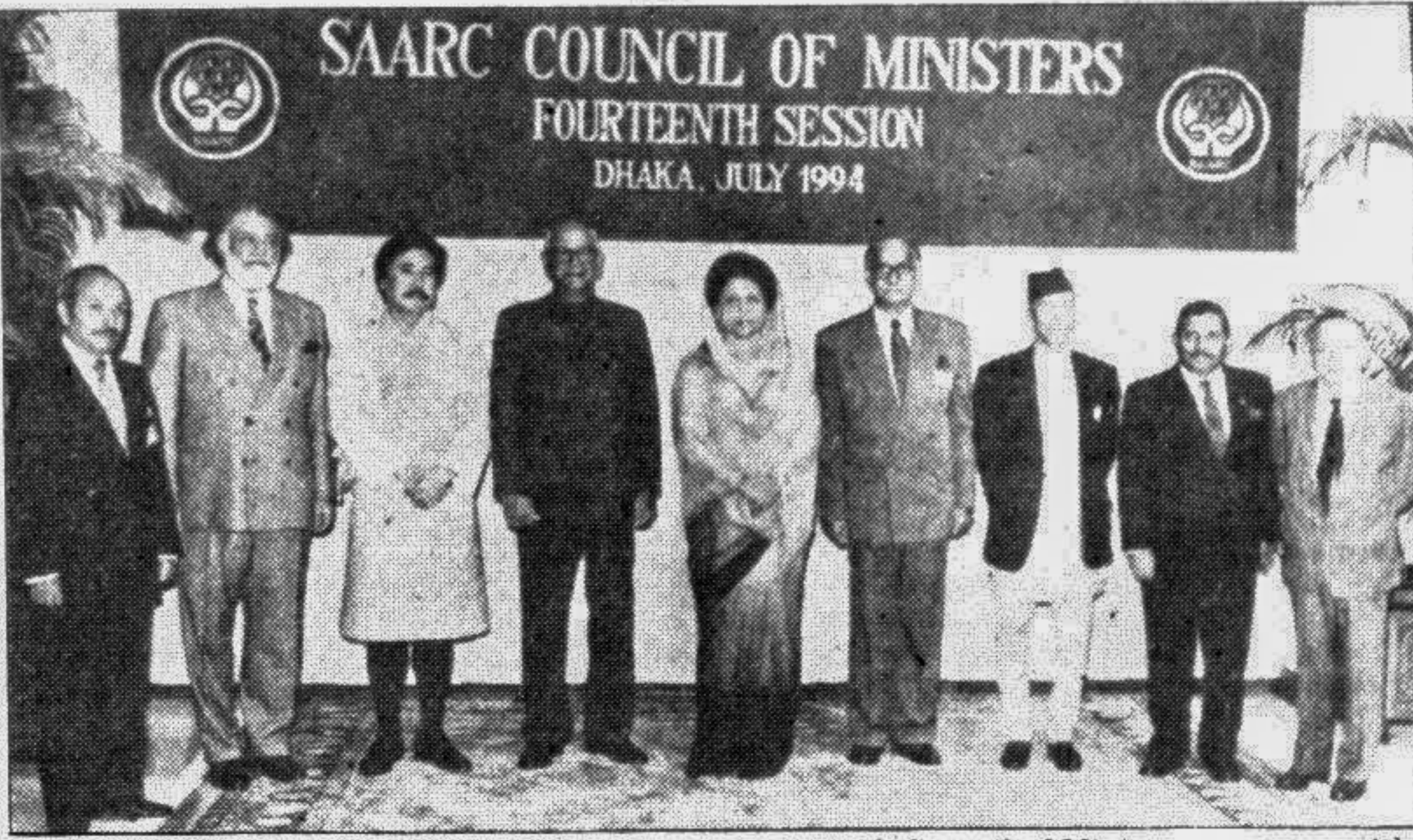
At a time when there is a lot of brouhaha in the name of environment, these people, who can say that push-cart is an environment friendly vehicle, offer only cold comfort. Much as they may claim that their vehicles do not emit harmful gases, which produces green house-gases, they are getting a raw deal from society.

The question is, in this age of advanced technology, how can a man lead a sub-human life like theirs to earn a livelihood?

Whatever may be the arguments, they are in the street leading a substandard life. That is the hard fact.



Pushing to the limit of Physical Strength.



SAARC Minister attending the 14th session of the SAARC Council of Ministers are seen with SAARC Chairperson and Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia before inauguration the plenary session at the International Conference Centre in the city yesterday. SAARC Secretary General YK Siwal is seen on extreme left. —PID photo

Trade imbalance with Bhutan discussed

Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman yesterday discussed with his Bhutanese counterpart Lynpo Dawa Tsering the issue of trade imbalance between the two countries, reports UNB.

Tsering, who is representing his country to the 14th SAARC Council of Ministers meeting now in progress in the capital, called on Mostafiz at Sheraton Hotel in the afternoon.

Bangladesh imported goods including fruit, wood and mineral resources worth 6.5 million US dollar from Bhutan in 1993. But the country exported jute, jute goods and dairy products worth 0.5 million US dollar to the tiny Himalayan Kingdom the same year.

Mostafiz said, "Bangladesh is keen to develop and diversify bilateral trade and economic relations with Bhutan."

He mentioned that Bhutanese students were studying at various institutions in Bangladesh under the technical programmes existing between the two countries.

The Bhutanese Foreign Minister expressed his satisfaction at the existing friendly relations between the two countries, which he described as "excellent". "It will continue to grow further in days ahead," Tsering said.

He observed, "Bangladesh and Bhutan—the two developing countries—face common challenges of poverty."

Call for vibrant SAARC

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Tsering said, "Our aspiration is that our regional body becomes a vibrant, dynamic factor in the lives of our people."

He favoured inclusion of some more categories to the SAARC visa exemption scheme, which became operational from March, 1992 to help promote close interaction among the peoples of the region.

Referring to institutionalisation of areas of cooperation through the establishment of the various regional centres, like the SAARC Documentation Centre in India and SAARC Meteorological Research Centre in Bangladesh, the Bhutanese Foreign Minister said, "There is a general feeling that some of these centres, are not functioning in the manner that was originally envisaged."

He had words of appreciation for the cooperation extended by various regional and international organisations, which he said would help strengthen the regional body. In this context, he recalled the cooperation extended by the government of Japan through the SAARC — Japan Special Fund.

The Bhutanese Foreign Minister praised the governments of Nepal and Sri Lanka for ratifying the SAPTA. Referring to progress vis-a-vis setting SAPTA in motion, he said, "In spite of the complexity of such an exercise, we are happy to note that most of the member states have exchanged their lists of items. Since economic cooperation is the best means of promoting prosperity, we must ensure that SAPTA is made operational at the earliest."

He said the decision by SAARC leaders to evolve a common position on issues of mutual interest, like the world conference on natural disasters reduction held in Yokohama and the UN conference on environment and development held in Brazil, "not only reflects one of the objectives of our charter but enhances the international profile of South Asia."

Lynpo Dawa Tsering paid tributes to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the current SAARC chairperson, for "delivering an inspiring address. In Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the SAARC has found a true champion," he said.

561 more Chakmas return home

CHITTAGONG, July 30: Another batch of 561 tribal refugees from Indian state of Tripura today voluntarily returned to their homes in Khagrachhari hill district bringing the total number of repatriated persons to 2295 in the second phase of repatriation.

Khagrachhari control room sources told BSS that the telephone tonight that this fifth batch was seen off by the tribal leader Upendra Lal Chakma and some Indian officials while they were crossing Tabalchhari border point.

Kalparanjan Chakma MP, chairman of the repatriation committee, Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachhari Yar Mohammad and other Bangladesh officials received the refugees.

The repatriated persons will be rehabilitated at their homesteads at Dighinala of Khagrachhari hill district. Earlier, 1841 tribal refugees of 379 families was repatriated to Khagrachhari in three batches from February 15.

The second phase of the repatriation will continue till the first week of the next month, official sources said.

Aseff assures SPGRC of early repatriation

By Staff Correspondent

Foreign Minister of Pakistan Sardar Aseff Ahmed Ali yesterday assured the leader of the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh of beginning their repatriation programme again before the end of the current year, a press release issued by the Stranded Pakistanis' General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) said last night.

The Pakistan Foreign Minister reportedly said all the bottlenecks have been removed and arrangements have been made to start the repatriation.

He also informed the three-member SPGRC delegation, who met the minister last night at the Sheraton Hotel, that the body of the Trust has been re-constituted and the Cabinet Division has been given the green signal by the government to implement the joint declaration of August 12, 1992, announced simultaneously from Dhaka and Islamabad, the press release said.

The three-member SPGRC delegation led by its chief patron M Nasim Khan also handed over a memorandum to the Pakistan Foreign Minister describing the poor condition of the stranded Pakistanis.

The delegation also requested Aseff Ahmed Ali to arrange a visit of a Pakistani parliamentary team to observe the condition of the stranded Pakistanis.

The SPGRC delegation also met Bangladesh Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman at the lobby of the Sheraton Hotel, the press release added.

JS body on Edn meets today

The postponed 33rd meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Education, will be held today at 4:30 pm at the committee room No-1 of the Sangsad Bhaban, reports UNB.

The meeting was scheduled to be held yesterday at 4:30 pm. It was postponed due to unavoidable circumstances, said an official handout yesterday.

Steps taken to develop neglected areas: Huda

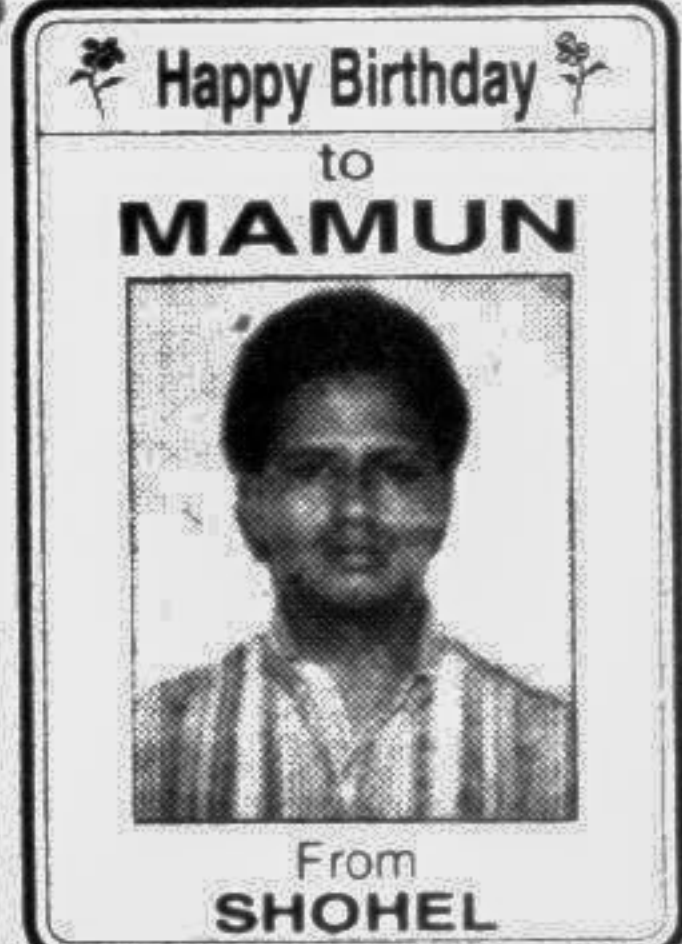
Information Minister Nazmul Huda yesterday said the present government had taken up appropriate measures for the development of undeveloped and neglected areas across the country, reports BSS.

He said this while addressing a reception accorded to the newly elected office-bearers of Uttarabanga Unnayan Parishad (North Bengal Development Council) and the Greater Rangpur Welfare Association arranged by Greater Rangpur Cultural Council at Motijheel Government Boys High School auditorium in the city.

Secretary of Cultural Ministry Mkhlesur Rahman attended the function as the special guest, while chairman of the council Nimmi Chowdhury was in the chair. Secretary general of Greater Rangpur Cultural Council Nannu Chowdhury, senior vice chairman Amjad Hossain also spoke.

The minister said considering the importance of the balanced development of every part of the country, the present government had taken steps for the development of the neglected areas of the North Bengal. He urged people of all sections to extend their hands for smooth and proper implementation of the development programmes.

Huda planted a sapling at the school premises. A cultural function followed the reception.



What's on today . . .

Drama Circle: The first show of Drama Circle's new play 'Drishti' will be staged. The play is written by Indrashis Lahiri and directed by Mustafizur Rahman. Venue: Guide House auditorium. Time: 7 pm.

Seminar: On 'The Budget and Related Issues in the Economy of Bangladesh' organised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Bangladesh. Professor Abu Ahmed of Economics, Dhaka University, will present the key-note paper. Chief guest: Commerce Minister M. Shamsul Islam. Venue: Chartered Accountant Bhaban, 100 Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. Time: 4:30 pm.

Rotary Club of Metropolitan Dhaka: The regular weekly meeting will be held. Rtn M Ahsanullah, General Manager (Dhaka zone) of Sadharan Bima Corporation, will speak on 'Development of Insurance in Bangladesh'. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 5:30 pm.

Zahir Raihan Film Society: A film session on films of Jean-Luc Godard has been arranged. Film: 'A Bout De Souffle (Breathless)'. Venue: The Alliance Francaise, Road 3, Dhanmondi. Time: 6 pm.

Nazrul Institute: A publication ceremony of an audio cassette 'Nirab Keno Kabi' and a research-book 'Nazrul-O-Sanyik Patra' by Mobashar Ali, will be held. It will be followed by a cultural function. Chief guest: State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum. Venue: Institute auditorium, (Kabi Bhaban) House-330-B, Road 28, Dhanmondi. Time: 5 pm.

Manabik Shahajya Sangstha: A national seminar on 'Reflections on ensuring free and fair elections in Bangladesh' has been organised by the Study and Research Group of MSS. Chief guest: Humayun Khan Panni, Deputy Speaker, Jatiya Sangsad. Venue: WVA auditorium, Road 16, House 20, Dhanmondi. Time: 2:30 pm.

Dhaka Grammar School: First founding anniversary and Graduation ceremony '94 will be held. Chief guest: Prof M Shamsur Ali, Vice Chancellor, Open University. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre, House 510, Road 7, Dhanmondi. Time: 5 pm.

Lions Club of Dhaka Dynamic: The regular weekly meeting will be held. Lt Abu Hasan Khan will preside. Venue: TCL 1, Outer Circular Road, Moghbazar. Time: 7 pm.



Bhutanese Foreign Minister Lynpo Dawa Tsering, who is representing his country to the fourteenth SAARC Council of Ministers meeting in Dhaka, called on Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman at hotel Sheraton yesterday. —PID photo.

Fatullah Jameel

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(ICC), the Maldives Foreign Minister said, "In order to gain the full benefits of such meetings, the follow-up and implementation of programmes and recommendations arising from these exercises need to be pursued in an effective and timely manner."

Paying tributes to Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, the current SAARC Chairperson, he said, "Once again she has demonstrated" not only the commitment of Bangladesh to the objectives of the SAARC, but also her personal dedication to the noble ideals of our Association."

He said, in view of the global changes, there is a need for finding long-term and sustainable solutions to the challenges of poverty, economic deprivation and environmental degradation, which confront a majority of the populations in the region. This, he said, can,

"only be achieved through concerted efforts by all member countries taken in good faith. Our organisation, SAARC, should become the vehicle through which we can realise these noble goals for the peoples of South Asia."

He had words of satisfaction over the progress achieved in the implementation of the SAPTA, which has been described as a landmark decision in the evolution of regional cooperation in South Asia.

The Maldives Foreign Minister also supported the expansion of the visa exemption scheme to promote people-to-people contact.

He underlined the need for courageously facing the challenges, being posed by "international conflicts, emanating from narrow-minded ethnic and religious fundamentalism."

Weather

Rain likely

Heavy falls are likely at places over the regions of Chittagong, Noakhali, Barisal, Patuakhali and Khulna till 6 pm Sunday, reports UNB.

Met office says moderate to moderately heavy rain or shower accompanied by temporary gusty wind may occur at most places over Khulna, Barisal and Chittagong divisions.

Light to moderate rain or showers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged across the country.

Country's highest temperature 35 degree Celsius was recorded at Sylhet while the lowest 24 degrees at Comilla and Rangamati.

Sun sets today (Sunday) at 6:43 pm and rises tomorrow (Monday) at 5:28 am.

The maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity of some major cities/towns recorded yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.3	26.8	77	83
Chittagong	28.7	25.8	85	92
Rajshahi	32.8	26.4	83	78
Khulna	31.0	25.7	88	98
Barisal	30.0	26.0	88	92
Cox's Bazar	27.0	24.4	96	97



- 4:30 Opening announcement
- Al-Guran
- Programme summary
- Magazine programme: Dik
- Diganta
- 5:10 News in Bangla
- 5:20 Cartoon: Tom and Jerry
- Kids Show
- 5:40 Sports programme
- Health programme: Apnar
- Daktar
- 7:00 Open University
- 7:25 Tagore songs
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:30 Pop songs: Bandshow
- Drama series: Tipu Sultan
- 10:00 News in English
- 10:30 Magazine programme: Shanito Shankalpa
- Khabar/The News
- 11:30 Closing
- 11:45

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FASHION DRY CLEANING FROM JAPAN NOW OPERATES IN BAGLADESH

The world Famous Computerised Dry Cleaning Factory under Japanese management will start operation from 1st August, 94 to Provide you guaranteed Quality Cleaning for any kind of Cloth. We are committed to fulfill your fashion desire. Our following SHOW ROOMS are dedicated for your convenient services. Please, come to our nearest show room and avail our most unique facilities.

SHOW ROOMS: OUT OF 30 SHOW ROOMS 16 SHOW ROOMS WILL OPERATE FROM 1ST AUGUST 1994

(1) LONDON PLAZA-UTTARA (2) SENANI SHOPPING-COMPLEX- NEAR SHAHEEN SCHOOL (3) FARMGATE- V.P. ROAD (4) EASTERN PLAZA (HATIRPOOL) (5) MOUCHAK-MALIBAGH RAILGATE (6) PURANA PALTAN- KASTURI RESTAURENT (7) SIDDIQUE BAZAR- NORTH SOUTH ROAD (8) NEW-ASKATON T.M.C MARKET (9) NEW MARKET- ISMAIL MANSION (10) RAINAK-COMPLEX- DHANMONDI, ROAD # 2 (11) KALABAGAN- YAQUB WHITE HOUSE (12) DHANMONDI- SOHABNAGH- J & J MANSION (13) SHAYMOLI- OPPOSITE TO SHAYMOLI HALL (14) PALLABI- NEAR PURABI CINAMA HALL (15) GULSHAN-2 NEAR GOAL CHAKKAR (16) GULSHAN-1 NEAR GOAL CHAKKAR

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