

Dhaka Day by Day

Seamy Side of Life

by Fayza Haq

Salahuddin, a self-taught artist, wishes to depict the conditions of Old Dhaka, as he was born and brought up there. Old structures are being neglected and destroyed there where as the artist feels they should be preserved so that the future generation can take pleasure and pride in the past. He does this in his recent display at "La Galerie".

In "Moonlight Magic" he shows a romantic moment for a poor young struggling couple. The two are surrounded by poverty and desolation and yet find some happiness despite the destruction and waste that they are faced with. They know that morning will bring back the need for struggle and strife but they find joy in the moment of uninterrupted happiness. The sky is a mixture of variations of blues while the surrounding broken walls and piled up carts have been given an idyllic wash. The figures and objects are sketched in. Despite the surrounding gloom there is hope and happiness for the young lovers.

"The Outcasts" brings in two prostitutes, seen clinging to each other. The backdrop has circles which symbolise the confines to which the women have to restrict themselves. The arrows that we see along with them are the slings and arrows in the lives of the poor women. Dark lanes are brought in with splashes of brown red and yellow these are what these desperate women must limit themselves to. The yellow colour has traditionally been used to mark the houses of the fallen women and this too has been brought into the lines and circles of the composition.

We find the same theme in "Circular Lives" which is a combination of circles and rectangles done in red and beige, with the forlorn figures of the fallen women sketched into them. The same subjects, presented in a different way, are found in "Waiting in the Alley". Walls confine the women as if they were caged animals with no rights or say of their own, and at the mercy of their human masters. Beyond the walls are the dark hovels of the outcasts. Black and brown sketches depict the hovels to which the women must restrict themselves, while the very society that uses them condemn them and treat them like pariahs.

"I see them regularly at English Road and at the side of the Stadium. I feel it is a pity that people condemn them and mock them doing little to improve their lot," Salahuddin comments.

Heaps of broken, crumbling walls, depicted as rectangles, triangles and squares are found in "City of Memories-I". There are coloured

pendulums inside the walls. These pendulums are depicted as static because the artist believes that this is what the state of our society will be if it can no longer find joy in the past and only clamours for industrial and mechanical progress.

"Life is simply dragging along at a snail speed in Old Dhaka without people finding any comfort in their surrounding," the artist comments about his work "City Rhythm-I". This painting shows rickshaws and people milling and pushing and pulling, side by side. The painting brings in the themes of narrow, congested lanes, broken and clumsy buildings and depression all around. The sky is grey and sombre while there is very little light or air to take delight in. The painting is in layers of dull brown, beige and yellow. There is nothing healthy or promising.

The ugly, jarring noise, the emitting smoke and the sight of battered tempoes are brought into "The Intruder". Here the tempoes are

shown as vitiating the atmosphere of city life. They have become a part and parcel of our daily life as we find them all around us. These black and yellow monsters are shown rushing about and standing ominously all over the city streets. The city itself is sketched in an impressionistic form in blues, white, and grey with dramatic sweeps of brown. The unpleasantness of these vehicles is stressed upon as the rest of the painting bears a relatively tolerable atmosphere of calm

and peace.

"The Scorched City" has people, trees, buildings and vehicles that were once drenched in torrential rain and are now baked dry in the blazing heat of summer. The scene reminds you of T.S. Eliot's "Wasteland". The atmosphere all around is dry, desolate and bleak. There is nothing delightful that meets the eye, and the purpose of the artist is just that - to point out the sordid atmosphere of our city.

Salahuddin is an artist who finds it difficult to plead his case with the big businessmen and embassies. "It is a pity that you cannot get sponsors as readily as you might for sports. Again, there are few local buyers and if you are exhibiting in an off season, the expatriates to be found are few and far between."

The artist who works on plywood and paper uses his knife instead of a brush for eighty per cent of his work. He does some sketches in the day time but the major part of the work is done at night. For someone who relies on intrinsic talent and has no academic training, Salahuddin has come a long way.



Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the first National Debate Festival at the Teacher-Student Centre of the Dhaka University yesterday. — Star photo

Sonargaon bus plunge

10 bodies identified

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, Aug 2: Ten victims of the yesterday's bus plunge at Sonargaon thana have been identified by police today.

They are Hanif Patwari, 35, A Mannan, 12, Al Fakir Nesa, 54, Abdul Matin, 40 and Plara Khatun, 35 of Lakshmipur, Swapan, 6, Mizan, 30, Yusuf Ali, 35 of Obayesi Corporation, Jahangir Alam, 34 of Daudkandi, and Asmat Hossain, 30 of Arahazara thana.

The identity of the rest four bodies could not be ascertained.

Meanwhile, the ill-fated bus was salvaged today. No new body were found inside the bus that plunged into the wayside ditch filled with water yesterday at Darikanda village of Sonargaon killing 14 passengers.

Khetmajur Union council tomorrow

Bangladesh Khetmajur Union (BKU), claimed to be the largest platform of landless farm labourers in the country, will hold its council in the capital tomorrow, reports UNB.

Some 700 elected councillors from 38 districts will attend the session, the organisers said.

Hanif visits some city areas

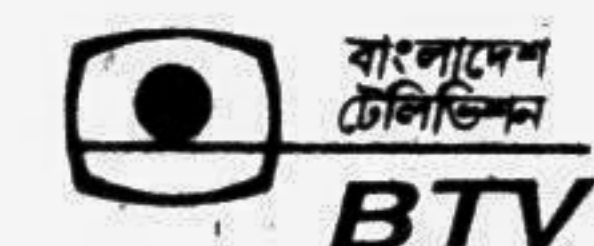
By Staff Correspondent

Dhaka city Mayor Mohammad Hanif yesterday visited some areas from the Jhigatola crossing to the Rayer Bazar tannery industrial zone to see the bad condition due to the absence of a proper sewerage system.

During the visit, the mayor assured the local people of removing the sewerage problems of the area.

Hanif was accompanied by the local ward commissioner Abdus Sattar Bhuiyan.

Later, the mayor saw the construction works of the Sher-e-Bangla Road and Gaznavi Road.



Wednesday

- 4:30 Opening announcement, Al-Quran Programme Summary
- 4:45 Sports Programme
- 5:10 News in Bangla
- 5:25 Children's programme: Amra Natun
- 6:00 Musical programme: Hija Tamal
- 7:00 Open University
- 7:25 Tagore songs
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:30 Dance programme
- 9:05 Film show: Equalizer
- 10:00 News in English
- 11:30 Khabar/The News
- 11:45 Closing

Weather

Rain with gusty wind likely

Moderately heavy falls are likely at places over Chittagong division during the 24 hours ending 6 am today, reports UNB.

Met office says light to moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at most places over Chittagong division, at many places over Dhaka, Barisal divisions, at a few places over Khulna division, and at one or two places over Rajshahi division.

Day temperature may fall by 1-2 degree Celsius during the period across the country.

Country's highest temperature 37 degree Celsius was recorded at Bogra and the lowest 24.2 degrees at Chittagong.

The sun sets today (Wednesday) at 6:41 pm and rises tomorrow (Thursday) at 5:29 am.

The maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity in some cities and towns recorded yesterday were as follows:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	34.0	28.3	87	83
Chittagong	30.0	24.2	97	86
Rajshahi	34.6	28.0	90	79
Khulna	30.6	27.6	89	98
Barisal	28.8	27.4	95	98

Steps to improve traffic system suggested

A tripartite review meeting on the final report of Greater Dhaka Metropolitan Area Integrated Transport Study (DITS) was held at committee room of the NEC building in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan was in the chair.

The meeting discussed several issues which came up while examining the draft final study report.

The meeting stressed the immediate action plan, suggested in the report and highlighted in the meeting. Dr Khan emphasised that some immediate measures should be undertaken to ensure proper and effective transportation and improvement of the traffic system in the Dhaka metropolitan area.

The measures include: 1. Ensuring coordination between and amongst the various agencies which are engaged in providing public utility services to the city dwellers.

2. Construction of a number of link roads in different parts of the city to ease the traffic flow.

3. Elimination of certain T-junctions.

4. Establishment of parking lots at suitable places.

5. Introduction of possible one-way traffic system where

ever it is deemed necessary.

6. Identification of badly congested road junctions and ensure smooth traffic flow in at least a few of these on a top priority basis.

7. Institutional development of traffic management in the city.

8. Ensuring fixed bus stops from where people will board on and alight from buses away from road junctions.

9. Undertaking of awareness raising and training programme for the city roads users, and

10. Publish a complete set of road maps for Dhaka City.

The meeting was attended by Mushfiqur Rahman, member, Planning Commission, team leader of study group from Australia, Assistant Resident Representative of UNDP, team leader of Dhaka Metropolitan Development Plan (DMDP) and other concerned high officials.

Indonesian envoy meets Mannan

Ambassador of Indonesia to Bangladesh Hadi Awyari Al-Hadar called on State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan at his office yesterday, reports UNB.

They discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations of the two countries.

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Mainul Hosein made party in Ittefaq vs Press Council case

By Staff Correspondent

The High Court Division yesterday admitted the prayer of Mainul Hosein to be made a party as respondent No. 4 in the writ petition No. 1008 of 1994 filed by Anwar Hossain, Editor, Daily Ittefaq against the Bangladesh Press Council's order regarding the appointment of a professional editor for the widely-circulated Bangla daily.

At the same time the court, which earlier issued a rule and stayed the operation of the Press Council order, admitted an affidavit-in-opposition filed by Anwar Hossain, which will be taken into consideration at the time of disposal of the case, said a press release.



Dr Abdul Wazed Miah, husband of Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina, speaking at a seminar on the role of women in the Liberation War organised by the Sadhana Sangsad in the city yesterday. — Star photo



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