

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Journalist Who Dares Take Risks

by Fayza Haq

Wusatullah Khan, producer, BBC Urdu Service since '91, dealing mainly with current affairs, who came to Dhaka recently, was born in Rahim Yar Khan, a 'casbah' in Pakistan. His parents had migrated from India (his mother being from Rajasthan and his father from Bhopal). Khan graduated from the International Relations Department of Karachi University. He then did research in European Studies and has been freelancing since '79. His job at BBC is his eighth one.

He has been writing in 'Nawaahwaqth', has done current affairs in 'Hurriyat', next he did editorial writing in 'Saverah'. He has written 1,300 articles, features and interviews within twelve years, till '91. His areas of interest are international and domestic political affairs.

Asked about his favourite newspapers in Pakistan, he said, "English language journalists there are better than the Urdu ones, as they are more rational in their approach, while the Urdu language journalists are committed to one person or party or another. As the Urdu journalists are under pressure, their standard of writing is limited by it. Their opinions remain biased as they do not read English newspapers."

Khan went to Iran in November '83, when he was still at the university stage, and stayed there for 15 days. At that time the Iran-Iraq War was on.

"There I had the opportunity to go to the front and see many things — even the destruction during war. There was intense terror in Tehran those days and there was a strong campaign against the opposition group 'Mujahideen-e-Khalq'. Thus I had the opportunity to study terror from close quarters. There was random checking. The girls had to fully cover their hair with scarves. If their hair was noticeable they were immediately reprimanded. At that time summary executions were rampant. When I met people on the footpath or street, they would tell me in hushed tones about the gory details. I had a fair idea of the socio-political situation of Iran at that time," he said.

"I also met officials at that time. Hashmi Rafsanjani was the Speaker of the 'Majlis' then. I spoke to Ayatullah Khatami who was the Chief Justice of the revolution then and had passed the order for many summary executions. I also met the individuals who held the American hostages in their embassy for 52 days. Thus, I met and interviewed various government officials. These interviews had been pre-planned. At that time the opposition was not visible. The officials naturally gave me their version of the official point of view. Their viewpoint on human rights was different from that of the universal one. They explained that the people who were harassed and executed were against the Islamic state of Iran. As a consequence, they felt they had the right to wipe them out at will. They justified their action as 'jihad'," he added.

When asked to elaborate on his experience in Afghanistan in '86, Khan said, "I was in the field most of the time. At that time the Soviet army was present there, as is well known. Thus I got an opportunity to make eye-witness reports on the situation." He did not wish to comment on the 'Mujahideen' whom he met there, being of Pakistani origin.

When questioned about his brief stay in Bangladesh, Khan said that he had been briefed earlier that the work in progress in Bangladesh is being done in a more organised way than perhaps in other parts of the world. "I came basically to report on UNICEF's ORT conference. After the conference, I met and spoke to various NGO project heads, such as that of 'Nijerakor'. I was greatly impressed by its organiser Khushi Kabir, and I also met Dr Zafarullah Chowdhury, the head of 'Gono Swasthya Kendro'. I chatted with people of BRAC during the conference I mentioned earlier. I found the NGOs operating in a fairly unique manner," he informed.

His own thoughts and observations were that the NGOs were performing very well. "Their target is 'How to Help the People' and they are trying to create an infrastructure on the basis of which the people can be more self-sufficient. They give medical training on the whole, such as how and why vaccinations should be done; explain ways of improving child-care and need for drinking clean water. I feel that the NGOs alone may not be able to cope with this Herculean task, but whatever work they are doing appears positive to me," Mr Khan.

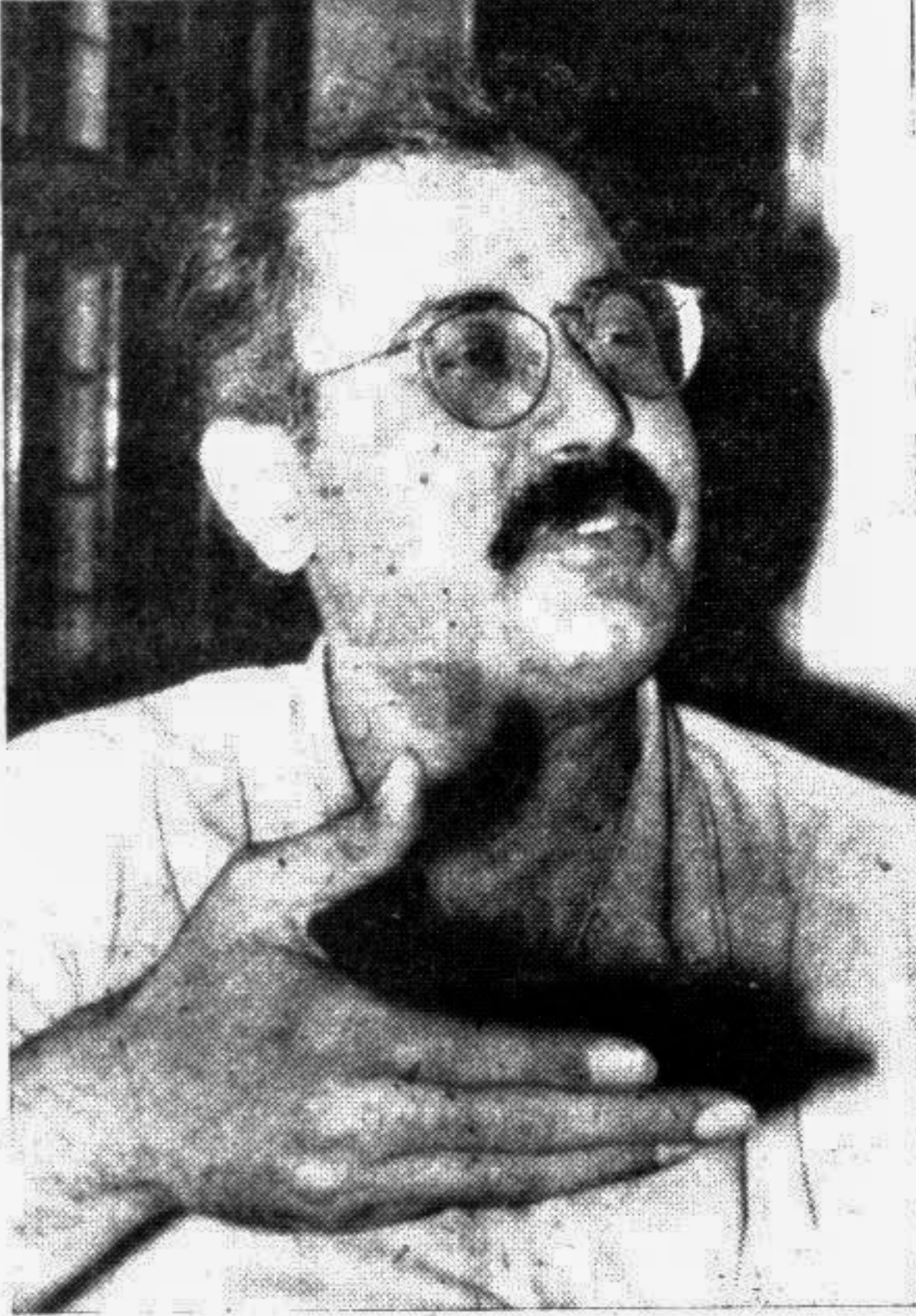
"I found the rural women more aware of themselves and their environment compared with those in Pakistan. For example, women in Pakistan have not got into commercial driving as yet. The educated women in Pakistan do manage to drive their own cars. Here, illiterate women, on the other hand, operate heavy duty vehicles. In each society, literacy and illiteracy have different meanings. If an illiterate woman gets an opportunity, she is capable enough, that if given the opportunity, they can work wonders," he elaborated.

"My third observation is that there is no straight jacketing of projects which cannot solve health problems, as has been experienced in many Third World countries. The way the rural health programmes have been integrated proves that they have a good concept of rural health. These are models which other Third World countries in Asia and Africa would be well advised to follow," Khan continued.

When asked to comment on how he felt about working in the BBC as an Asian, Khan said, "The white people get the better jobs as they are in the majority. Yet, in the BBC there is the Equal Opportunities Department which encourages the non-white people to attain managerial skills and get opportunity for further education. Ten years ago, this opportunity was not there. Today, the non-white people can progress tremendously in the work structure. I am not aware if such opportunities prevail in other organisations in the UK."

Speaking about his own duties at BBC Urdu Service, Khan elaborated, "No one has exact duties there apart from magazine programmes, such as the weekly programme on current affairs 'Mizaan', and the science and technology programme 'Daryafat', which I have produced myself. I have been a news reader too. In other words, the duties rotate."

Like most foreigners, Khan was fascinated by the Dhaka rickshaws, and the Bangladeshi women's dark, long hair.



Wusatullah Khan



Rehena Begum attending her ailing husband Sanwar Hossain at the corridor of Dhaka Medical College Hospital outdoor on the first day of doctors' indefinite strike yesterday. She came from Manikganj for the treatment of her husband. — Star photo

### Asma's art show ends tomorrow

A five-day painting exhibition by Asma Kibria is now being held and it will end tomorrow. The exhibition was inaugurated at La Galerie in the city Sunday. The exhibition remains open for all from 9 am to 8 pm everyday, says a press release.



### Thursday

- 4:30 Opening session
- 4:40 Geeta recitation
- 4:45 Dance programme for children: Rummjum
- 5:10 News in Bangla
- 5:25 National TV School Debate
- 6:30 'Mass education': Esho Para Shikhi
- 7:00 Programme on Islam: Jiboner Alo
- 7:25 Nazrul songs
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:30 Drama of the week: Tumi Shudhu Tumi
- 10:00 News in English
- 10:30 Mini series: Marco Polo
- 11:30 Khabar/The News

### AJML, LEADS sign contract

Adamjee Jute Mills Limited (AJML) signed a contract with LEADS Corporation Limited, exclusive distributor of NCR Corporation (now known as AT&T Global Information Solutions) for the purchase of NCR 3450 Multiprocessor Computer System, says a press release.



Mir Jamal Uddin, Executive Director, Adamjee Jute Mills Ltd and Shaikh Abdul Aziz, Managing Director, LEADS Corporation Ltd signing a contract for the purchase of NCR Multiprocessor Computer System.

### Weather

#### Rise in temperature likely

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

The Met office says that the weather will remain mainly dry over Khulna and Barisal divisions during the period while slight rise in temperature is expected across the country. Slight change in the weather is predicted for the next two days and it may deteriorate in the following week.

The country's highest temperature 34.2 degrees Celsius was recorded at Sathkhira while the lowest 24.0 degrees at Ishardi.

Maximum rainfall 20 mm, was measured at Dinajpur during the last 12 hours, while 17 mm was recorded at Rangpur and 9 mm at Bogra. The lowest recorded rainfall, one mm, was at Mymensingh during the period.

The sun sets today at 5.5 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.48 am.

Temperature in different districts measured in degrees Celsius and humidity in percentage recorded yesterday are given below:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.0	26.4	76	72
Chittagong	32.5	24.7	78	78
Rajshahi	28.5	24.5	86	77
Khulna	33.6	26.0	70	-
Barisal	33.5	26.6	78	70
Jessore	33.6	24.2	72	-
Cox's Bazar	32.0	25.0	78	-

### Govt urges WFP to extend VGF to drought-hit areas

The government has requested the World Food Programme (WFP) to extend emergency Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF) assistance to 534 unions of eight northern districts for a period of two months, reports BSS.

This will require about 34,000 metric tons of wheat. The eight districts — Dinajpur, Thakurgaon, Panchagarh, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Lalmonirhat and Kurigram — have been worst hit by drought and crops there have been damaged. The prices of foodstuff and other essential commodities have shot up as also widespread unemployment in those areas.

This was disclosed at a high level review meeting of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief held yesterday at its conference room with State Minister for Disaster Management and Relief Harun-al-Rashid in the chair.

The government has already sanctioned 2,200 metric tons of wheat under the special relief programme for the eight districts in this connection, the meeting was told.

The government has given

emergency charges to seven ministers, state ministers and deputy minister to monitor the relief and rehabilitation activities in the areas.

The meeting decided that further allocation of relief would be made on the basis of reports by the ministers deputised for the purpose.

Additional Secretary in-charge of the Ministry M Hafizuddin Khan, DG of the Disaster Management Bureau, DG of the Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation and other high officials of the ministry were present in the meeting.

### Dividend declared

Bangladesh Thai Aluminium Ltd, a public limited company listed with the Dhaka Stock Exchange, has declared 13.5 per cent dividend for the year ending 1993, reports UNB.

The declaration was made at the 15th annual general meeting of the company held at the BCIC auditorium yesterday.

The shareholders present expressed elation at the declaration and passed unanimously the agenda and proposals placed by the Board of Directors.

### JP blames govt for shattering economy

KHULNA, Sept 21: Jatiya Party (JP) leader Moudud Ahmed today, blamed the government for shattering the country's economy and failure to address the unemployment problem, reports UNB.

"Country's economy is on the verge of ruin, production in mills and factories have fallen sharply and unemployment is mounting," he told newsmen at a press conference at the WAPDA auditorium here.

Turning to the caretaker government issue, Moudud said the government was not sincere to end the stalemate. He pointed out that some leaders of the ruling party were speaking of a dialogue with the Opposition to resolve the issue while others were making contradictory statements.

Replying to a question, he said the present political crisis should be resolved politically as "the people do not feel the necessity of military intervention."

The JP leader called the BNP government incompetent and said it had failed to solve the people's problems and stop smuggling across the border.

## RETIMING OF FLIGHTS FROM DHAKA TO SINGAPORE

DURING 30 OCTOBER '94 TO 25 MARCH '95

Due to renovation at the Zia International Airport from 30 October, 1994 to 25 March, 1995 the flight timings for Singapore Airlines from Dhaka will be revised as follows:

DAY	FLIGHT	DEP	ARR
MONDAY SINGAPORE-DHAKA DHAKA-SINGAPORE	SQ420	1305	1500
	SQ419	1615	2210
THURSDAY SINGAPORE-DHAKA DHAKA-SINGAPORE	SQ414	0800	0955
	SQ413	1615	2210
FRIDAY SINGAPORE-DHAKA DHAKA-SINGAPORE	SQ420	1305	1500
	SQ419	1615	2210
SATURDAY SINGAPORE-DHAKA DHAKA-SINGAPORE	SQ420	1305	1500
	SQ419	1615	2210
SUNDAY SINGAPORE-DHAKA DHAKA-SINGAPORE	SQ414	0800	0955
	SQ413	1615	2210

The Flights & timings for DHAKA-KATHMANDU-DHAKA will remain unchanged.

For any queries, please do not hesitate to call us at the following numbers.

HEAD OFFICE	GULSHAN OFFICE	CHITTAGONG OFFICE	SYLHET OFFICE
863650-51 868297 / 862661 863640 / 863670	888769/888779	505770 / 502569	8124 / 6573

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### NOTICE

#### OF THE SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Seventeenth Annual General Meeting of International Finance Investment And Commerce Bank Limited will be held at Sonargaon Hotel, Dhaka on Monday October 10, 1994 at 4-00 p.m. The agenda of the meeting is given below.

1. Chairman's address
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual General Meeting held on July 18, 1993.
3. Consideration of the Report of Directors and Auditors and approval of the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Accounts for the year ended as on December 31, 1993.
4. Declaration of Dividend.
5. Election of Directors.
6. Appointment of Auditors and fixation of their remuneration.
7. Vote of thanks by the Managing Director.

Date: 22nd September, 1994.

By order of the Board  
for and on behalf of IFIC Bank Ltd.  
SD/  
A. H. Anwar Hussain  
Secretary

- Note:
1. Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Monday October 03, 1994 to Monday October 10, 1994 (both days inclusive).
  2. Votes may be given either personally or by attorney, or by proxy through any person or persons or in the case of a corporation also by a representative duly authorised by a resolution of the Directors of such corporation.
  3. The instrument of proxy duly stamped by Revenue Stamp of Tk. 4.00 and power of attorney or other authority if any under which it has been signed or a notarially certified copy of that power or authority must be deposited at the Registered Office of the Company at least 72 hours before the time for holding the meeting at which the person named in the instrument of proxy proposed to vote and in default the instrument appointing the proxy shall not be treated as valid.
  4. The retiring Directors shall be elected/nominated as provided in the Articles of Association of the Company.

# নতুন হুইজ প্লাস ফ্লোর ক্লিনার

ঘর নোংরা হবেই, মেঝেতে জমবেই ময়লা — আর সেজন্যেই ঘরে সব সময়ের জন্য থাকা চাই হুইজ প্লাস। যত রকমের কঠিন ময়লা দাগ থাক না কেন, পরিমাণমত হুইজ প্লাসে পানিতে মিশিয়ে মেঝে ধুয়ে ফেলুন। মুহূর্তেই মেঝে হয়ে উঠবে জীবাণুমুক্ত বকবকে পরিষ্কার আর তারই সঙ্গে ঘর ভরে যাবে তাজা লেবুর সুগন্ধে।

ঢাকাসহ অন্যান্য অঞ্চলের ডিস্ট্রিবিউটর  
সানোয়ারা কর্পোরেশন,  
৫৭ শান্তিনগর  
ঢাকা

চট্টগ্রাম বিভাগের ডিস্ট্রিবিউটর  
মোসার আমিন ট্রেডার্স  
গোলাম রসুল মার্কেট  
বিয়াজ উদ্দিন বাজার  
চট্টগ্রাম

**তাজা লেবুর সুগন্ধিযুক্ত**

**হুইজ প্লাস** স্বাস্থ্যোজ্জ্বল প্রতিদিনের জন্য  
সানোয়ারা-আই, পি, লিমিটেড