

Dhaka Day by Day

Unedifying Scenes in City Bazaars

by A S M Nurunnabi

In many city bazaars, a common scene is a group of load carriers known as *mintis*. Most of them are of tender age, between eight and 15 years. Some of them are even younger. It is wrong to brand them as street urchins since they are all bent on earning a living by the sweat of their brow.

The only tool of their trade is a big basket, into which they sometimes huddle to take rest while awaiting customers. But they hardly remain idle. It is an essential part of their job to be on their toes, watchful and active, in search of customers.

They follow various strategies to catch customers. While most of them maintain vigil at the entry points to a bazaar, some of them are more enterprising — they take up positions some distance away from the entry points steadily watching the movements of incoming traffic towards the bazaar. The traffic may be pedestrians or passengers in rickshaws. The more agile among them run after incoming cars or other motor vehicles supposedly carrying bigger customers.

The number of such *mintis*, particularly in the New Market area, has lately increased so much that, as you enter the bazaar, you are accosted at every step by one or other of them offering their services. When you don't need their offer, because of your intended light purchases, you may feel, if you are sensitive, a pull at your heart-strings as you turn them down.

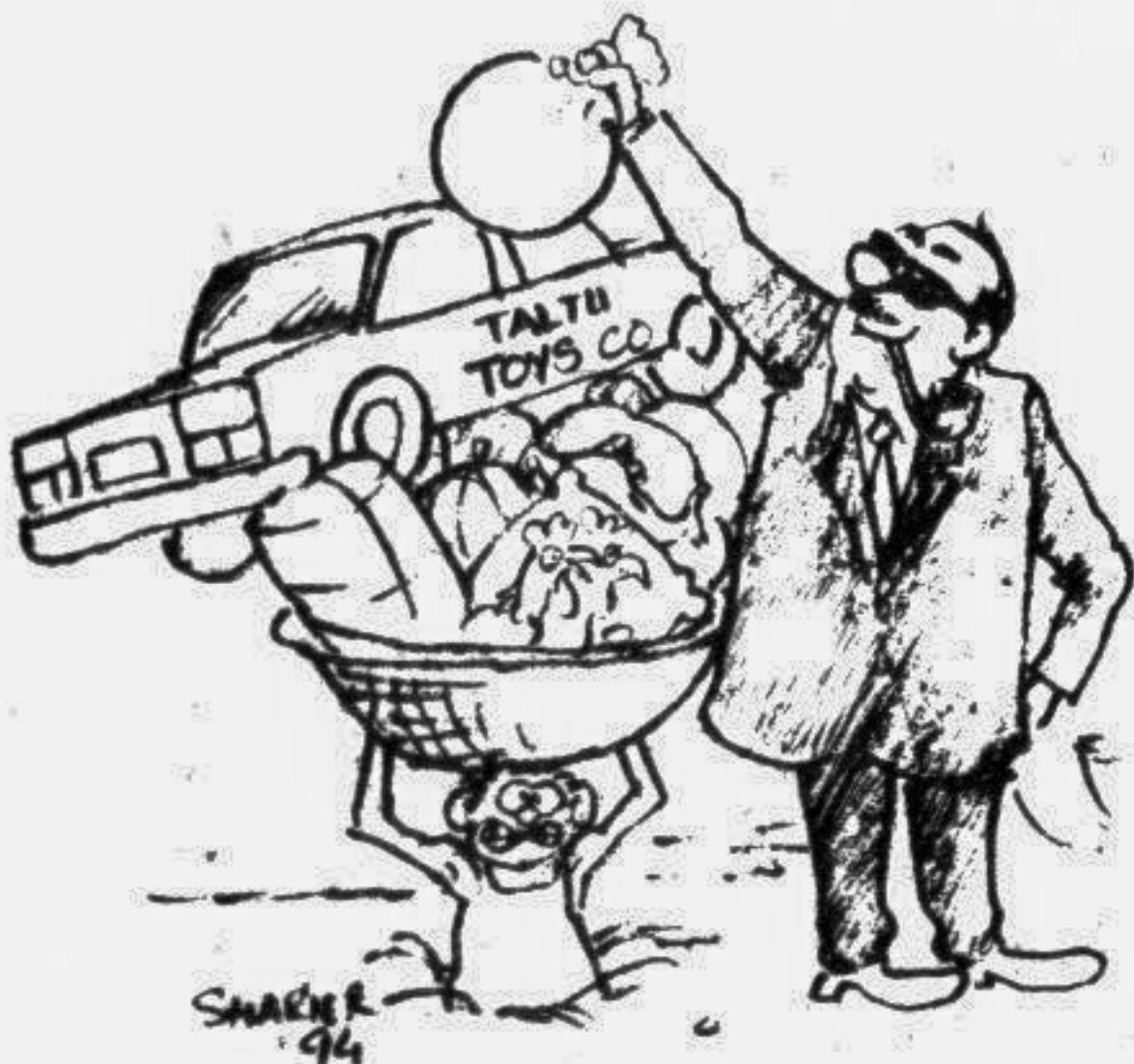
There are, however, some high points in their business activities under certain circumstances. At the beginning of every month when

the customers' pockets are fat and there is a larger number of buyers intent on making bigger purchases than usual, the demand for their services considerably increases. Again, during office hours, their custom tends to pick up when the majority of customers in the bazaar are women who can't do without their services to carry their purchases. The highest point in their business is reached before big festivals, when the heavy crowd of customers are hard put to get their services.

Behind this apparently healthy competition, looms a grim and poignant struggle for survival on the part of these young ones who should be attending schools or playing games rather than shouldering the financial burden of their families at such tender ages.

A similar scene can be observed in another situation. Many people when making purchases of live fowls in a bazaar look for easy labour-saving devices because of the constraint on their time and energy. For such people, there is a class of mini butchers, most of whom are small boys and girls, who do the grisly act of killing and dressing a fowl, in return for a pittance. This enables you to carry home your load of chickens neatly cleaned and dressed. This is our version of ready-made chickens for cooking.

These typical examples cast a lurid light on a social phenomenon which has no name other than a heartless exploitation of child labour. By and large, no compunction is felt when we use their services for our convenience, as it is a normal part of our social make-up.



14 get 'Deshbandhu' Chittaranjan award

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday called upon all to follow the ideals of 'Deshbandhu' Chittaranjan Das and work together remaining above political belief for the all-out development of the country, reports BSS.

The President was addressing as the chief guest the 'Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das Gold Medal-1993' awarding function at hotel Sonargaon. The 'Deshbandhu' Chittaranjan Das Research Council organised the function.

The recipients are: Late M Wajid Ali Khan, Mohammad Mahbubuzzaman, Mohammad Serajuddin, Amanullah Miah, A B M Firoz, A K M Motamminur Rashid, Razia Hussain, Iqbal Hasan Mahmood, Alhaj Rafiq Uddin Bhuiyan, A H M Shawkat Ali Choudhury, A J Masudul Huq Ahmad, Mohammad Younus, M Nazrul Islam Khan and M Younus.

"Love for the human being

and supreme sacrifice to independence were the principles of his life," he said adding that the 'Deshbandhu' was the first politician on the soil to turn divisive politics into friendly politics.

President Biswas said 'Deshbandhu' was a symbol of patriotism.

'Deshbandhu' had played a bold role in the improvement of Hindu-Muslim relation in the face of many obstacles in those days, he added.

Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam, Justice K M Hasan and M Majidul Islam were special guests on the occasion.

Chairman of the council Lt Col (rtd) Heshamuddin Ahmad was in the chair.

Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam congratulated the organiser for introducing such an award and told the recipients that their responsibilities had increased more with the achievement of this award.

New body formed

By Staff Correspondent

A new organisation has been formed in the city to extend all sorts of assistance and cooperation to the French people as well as the French speaking persons coming to Bangladesh for the first time.

Mrs Myriam Lacombe, wife of French Ambassador to Bangladesh formally launched the association yesterday named 'Bangladesh Accueil' (Bangladesh Welcomes) at a reception at the Ambassador's residence. The reception was attended by a large number of French and French speaking people including few heads of diplomatic missions and a large number of the French speaking new comers to Bangladesh.

Explaining the objectives of the association, Mrs Lacombe and the French Ambassador stated that assistance will be provided to the newly arrived persons and their family members to start their life in Bangladesh without facing the usual difficulties.



Dr Maksud Hossain Chowdhury, Director of the Dhaka Shishu Hospital, and Professor Robert Black of Johns Hopkins University, USA signing a memorandum of understanding on behalf of their respective authorities in the city yesterday.

Tk 10.55 cr CDA dev projects underway

CHITTAGONG, Sept 26: The Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) is implementing seven development projects worth Tk 10.55 crore during the current financial year, reports BSS.

This was told at a meeting of the senior CDA officials held at its conference room on the occasion of the visit of Industries Minister AM Zahir Uddin Khan. CDA Chairman Lt Col (rtd) M Ziauddin and the chief engineer of CDA Ahmad Abdul Matin were also present at the meeting.

The Industries Minister was also apprised that Taka two crore was being spent under

the Taka 13 crore master plan of the authority and during the current year, CDA would soon start development work on two residential areas.

Zahiruddin Khan said that Chittagong port city would be turned into a magacity at the beginning of the next century.

Zahiruddin Khan said that government had granted Taka 38 crore 11 lakh for CDA from 1991 to 1994.

The minister also held discussions with officials of the Water Development Board, Steel and Engineering Corporation and BSCIC on their development projects in Chittagong region.

DSH, US varsity sign MOU

The Dhaka Shishu Hospital (DSH) and the Department of International Health, John Hopkins University, USA have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in the city yesterday, says a press release.

The MOU aims at strengthening action-oriented research, transfer of appropriate technology and training of DSH personnel for the advancement of child health in Bangladesh.

As part of the collaboration, a research project, called 'validation of the sick child algorithm and verbal autopsy study' is being set up at the DSH.

The director of the Dhaka Shishu Hospital, Dr Maksud Hossain Chowdhury, and the chairman, Department of International Health, John Hopkins University, Prof Robert Black signed the memorandum of understanding to cover the collaboration between the two sides.

The chairman of the management board of the DSH, Justice Maksumul Hakeem, chaired the signing ceremony.

Postponement

The national dialogue on jute, scheduled to be held on September 29 at Hotel Purbani, has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances, reports BSS.



Two were killed, including a kid, while a speeding bus knocked them down on the street at Khilkhet in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Shawkat visits Badamtalee rice market

Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali yesterday visited Badamtalee wholesale rice market to see for himself the present supply situation and price of rice, reports BSS.

He went round different rice 'arats' (stores) and enquired about the price situation following sale of rice and wheat under open market sale (OMS) from September 1.



Tuesday

Mass education: Esho Para Shikhi
News in Bangla
Comedy series: Coach
National TV Debate
Competition for college and university students
Open University
Modern songs: Sangeeta
News in Bangla
Drama serial: Tathapi
News in English
Film show: Northern Exposure
Khabar/The News

Weather

Dry weather likely

Weather is likely to remain dry over the country during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

The Met office forecasts day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

A little change in day temperature is expected in the outlook for subsequent two days. Giving extended outlook for another five days it added that weather is likely to deteriorate at the end of the period.

Country's highest temperatures 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded at Jessore and the lowest 21.2 degrees at Rajshahi. The sun sets today at 5:50 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:49 am.

The maximum and the minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities/towns yesterday are:

City/Town	Temperatures in degrees Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	6am	6pm
Dhaka	34.1	24.5	56	56
Chittagong	33.6	25.2	71	69
Rajshahi	33.6	21.2	68	71
Khulna	34.7	26.6	70	71
Barisal	33.6	24.4	78	78

JS body on Establishment Ministry meet

The 23rd meeting of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Establishment Ministry was held yesterday at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, reports UNB.

The meeting discussed on a paper on the activities of the 'Bengali Language Implementation Cell' submitted by the Establishment Ministry.

Happy Birthday

HR

Many happy returns of the Day
I love you
—TEDDY

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