

Dhaka Day by Day

An Orchid Man

by Naseem Iqbal



Cattleya

These days more and more people want to participate in a flower show. People have developed their taste for growing flowers on their residential premises, however small the place may be. We see at least five to 10 pots in every house with seasonal flowering plants and decorative foliage plants. People in increasing numbers started visiting nurseries to get the seeds, pots, insecticide and fertilizer. So they have started taking keen interest in gardening.

One such gardening enthusiast seems to have developed an unusual passion for the hobby. He had a brief career in the army, and now he is a professional engineer. He is confident about his works. He will be working till he achieves the results. He believes in job satisfaction. This perfectionist of a man is behind the orchid shows held in Gulshan. Of course, credit goes to late Mr Atiqullah too.

However Major Iqbal has proved that growing orchid is no more difficult in Bangladesh. Specially *Dendrobium*, *Vanda*, *Ascocenda*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Rhynchostylis* and

Aerides. He even offers free advice on orchid cultivation and the practice of its culture. People from far places like Chittagong are coming to Dhaka to take his advice on the cultivation of orchid in particular and gardening of any types of flower or fruit plants in general.

Flower connoisseurs might find in Iqbal a dedicated soul that is capable of reading the language of nature's exotic species. He knows how to share the joy with others. He has developed a mini empire of orchids, where the communication with nature is possible almost for everyone. He believes in the maxim that some one grows, some appreciate and decorate. His love for the orchids is contagious. The entire family of this man has known the value of orchids. All the family members now give a hand to growing and nurturing the beautiful varieties of orchids. Iqbal appears to be generous enough to reach beyond his family through his love for the green friends.

Vietnam to replicate Grameen Bank

The Vietnam Women's Union, a front organisation of Vietnamese ruling Communist Party, has taken up initiatives to set up a special bank following the model of Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

According to a Grameen Bank press release yesterday, managing director of the bank Prof Muhammad Yunus visited Vietnam from December 11 to 16 at the invitation of the Vietnam Women's Union president Trango Mi Hoyer.

During the visit Prof Yunus met Vietnam's deputy prime minister Fun Van Khai, who is in charge of finance, planning and banking and other officials concerned, and discussed the setting up of the new bank there.

The women's union, during the last three years, has been disbursing credit in different parts of Vietnam on the basis of Grameen Bank model. So far it has distributed credit among 15,000 poor women there.

The union will invite internationally reputed lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain from Bangladesh to formulate the legal structure of the proposed bank, the press release said.

Dr Kamal also formulated the legal structure of the Grameen Bank in 1983.

Joinul Abedin's birth anniversary December 29

The birth anniversary of shilpachariya Joinul Abedin will be observed on December 29, reports UNB.

The Fine Arts Institute of Dhaka University has planned programmes, including art exhibition and discussion meeting to mark the day.

An art competition among the students of the institute will be held on the occasion.



Prof Muhammad Yunus, Managing Director of the Grameen Bank being received by the Deputy Prime Minister Vietnam Phan Van Khai at the lobby of his office during Prof Yunus' visit to Hanoi recently.

National qirat competition

Shipping Minister M K Anwar yesterday underscored the need for proper interpretation of the Holy Quran, reports BSS.

He was speaking as chief guest at the certificate-giving ceremony of the national qirat competition at the Kawran-bazar Ambar Shah Jame Mosque in the city.

The minister said, the Quran is a complete code of life. He said, the teachings of the Quran can only check social erosion, eliminate social disparity and establish peace and discipline in the society.

Later the minister distributed certificates among the winners of the competition.

Organised by the Al-Quran Foundation, Bangladesh, the competition was participated by 56 qirats. Mohammad Saifullah became first in the competition while Azharul Islam and Md Zahurul Islam second and third respectively.

Campaign for voting rights of slum dwellers planned

By Masud Hasan Khan

A group of lawyers, human rights activists and some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are planning an all-out campaign to fight for the voting rights of an estimated 20 lakh slum-dwellers in the capital.

The campaign includes processions, sit-in in front of the Election Commission office and dialogue with different sections of the society.

The Ain O Salish Kendro, an NGO for legal aid, recently held a dialogue in the capital in which human rights activists, academics, representatives of different NGOs, lawyers and Members of Parliament took part.

Participants at the dialogue observed that the constitutional rights of the squatter-dwellers have been seriously curbed with the denial of their voting rights.

A voters' list prepared by the Election Commission in September 1992 excluded the slum-dwellers of Dhaka.

As a result, these people could not exercise their right to franchise in the last city corporation polls.

The Section 17 of the EC manual for preparing the voters' list, while defining the term "Residence", suggested those living in unauthorised slums on the *khas* (State-owned) land cannot be included in the draft voters' list.

After the final list was announced, it was found that the poor people living in an estimated 1500 big and small slums in the capital were left out.

The discussants also pointed out that the Article 122 of the Constitution guaranteed the right to franchise to a Bangladeshi who is not less than 18 years of age and not declared insane by any competent court, and is a member of the electoral constituency.

They also questioned the validity of the EC manual instructions saying that the slum-dwellers took part in the earlier polls and had exercised their rights.

They argued that most of the people living in the Dhaka city do not own any land and rent houses, and the difference is that those having land enjoy all civic amenities unlike the slum dwellers.

Some of the participants pointed out that even the residents of different Dhaka University halls can vote while the slum residents cannot, despite the fact they compose 40 per cent of the total 66 lakh residents of Dhaka.

DU English Dept alumni reunion

The annual get-together of the ex students of the Department of English, University of Dhaka, will be held at the British Council in the city at 4 pm on December 30, says a press release.

New project to eliminate poverty likely

Bangladesh Bank is considering a new project similar to the Grameen Bank credit programme to eliminate poverty, reports UNB.

Disclosing this, Secretary (Banking Division) of the Finance Ministry ATM Shamsul Huda said the new project would also include health and education facilities for poor people.

He was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of a day-long workshop organised by Manakib Shahajya Sangstha (MSS), an NGO, under its Women's Credit Programme (WCP).

Presided over by MSS Executive Director Tarikul Ghani, the inaugural session held at the Dhanmondi Women's Complex was also addressed by Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau MA Mannan as special guest.

The workshop was participated by 600 WCP field workers from different parts of the city.

MSS executive director Tarikul Ghani said his organisation so far disbursed small credits worth about Tk 5 crore among the slum dwellers of Dhaka city.

"The response is very good," he told the workshop which was also the annual gathering of WCP.

Jahan Ara back home

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof. Jahan Ara Begum returned home yesterday after a four-day official visit to India, reports BSS.

Deputy Minister for Culture of India MS KM Selza seen her. The Urban Development Minister of Rajasthan, Bhanwar Lal Sharma, also called on the State Minister at the Ajmer Circuit House.

Tk 72 crore British aid for Proshika

Proshika, a non-government organisation, will receive an aid package of Tk 72 cr from Britain, said a press release on Thursday.

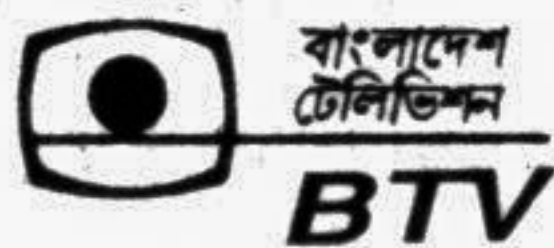
British High Commission in Dhaka Peter J Fowler and Executive Director of Proshika Qazi Faruque Ahmed were present during the signing of the accord on Thursday.

The British grant will contribute to Proshika's five year plan, and will also be used to strengthen its operations in impact assessment, fisheries, social forestry, urban development, education, health and management, read the press release.

The grant to Proshika will be funded by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), the British government's aid ministry.



Recipients of the Sher-e-Bangla National Award '94 at the mazar premises of A K Fazlul Haq yesterday.



Saturday

- 4:30 Opening announcement
- Programme summary
- 4:45 Parashmoni
- 5:10 Sangbad
- 5:25 Children's programme: Kid Songs
- 6:00 Programme for the youths: Tarunnya
- 6:30 Angkar
- 7:00 Folk songs: Bansharee
- 7:25 Film show: Major Dad/Mr Ben.
- 8:00 News in Bangla
- 8:25 Janmabhumii
- 8:30 Maati o Manush
- 9:00 Magazine: Anantodhara
- 10:00 News in English
- 10:30 Drama Serial: Dynasty
- 11:30 Khabar/The News
- 11:40 Tomorrow's programme summary, closing announcement
- 11:45 Close Down

Weather Dry weather likely

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

The Met Office says night temperature is likely to rise by 1-2 degree Celsius over Barisal division and the regions of Dhaka, Faridpur, Khulna, Noakhali and Chittagong.

Temperature may, however, remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country.

In its outlook for subsequent two days, the Met Office says that there would be no marked change. Giving extended outlook for another four days weathermen forecast fall in night temperature at the end period.

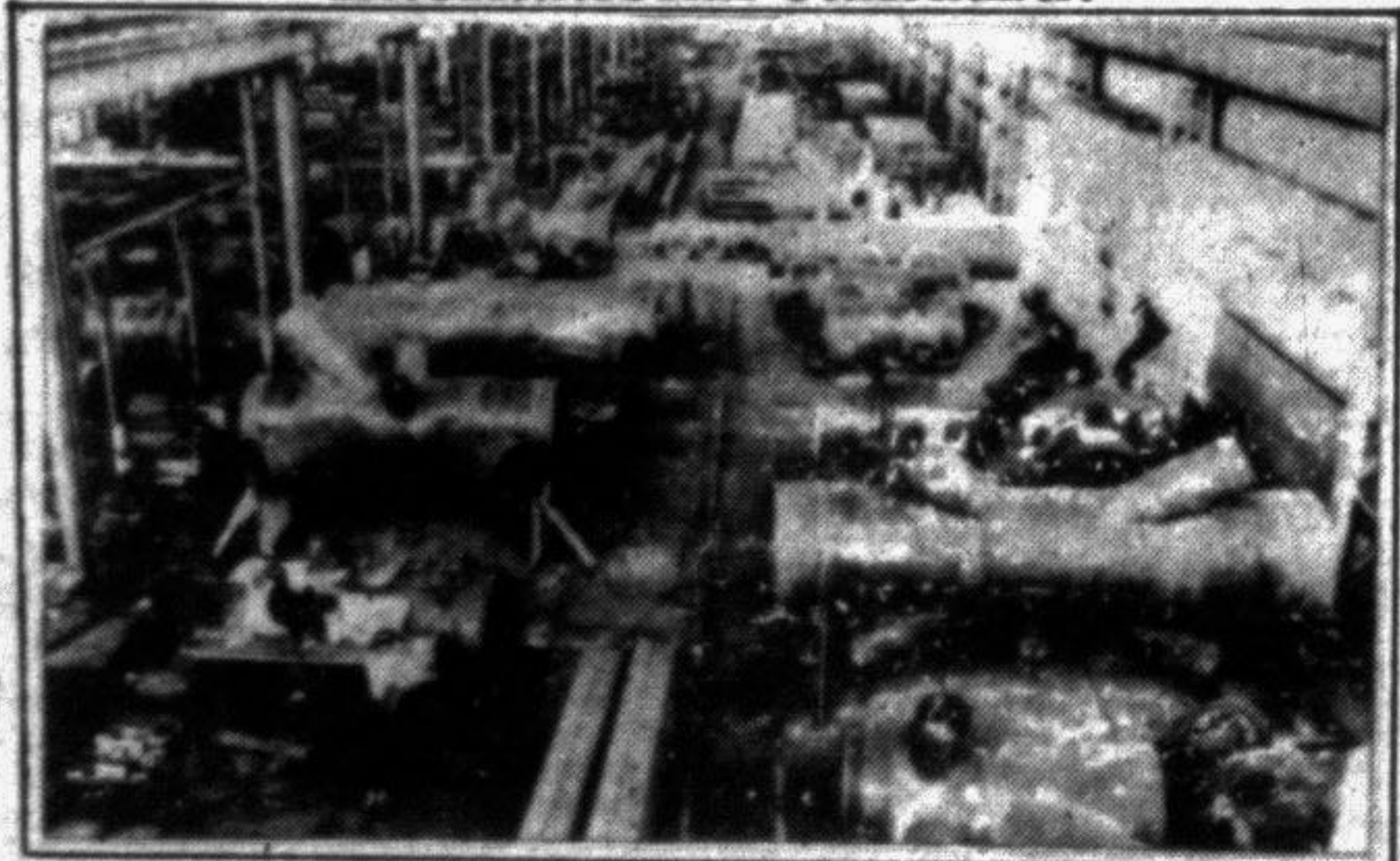
Country's lowest temperature 8.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Comilla and the highest 28.5 degrees at Sylhet.

The sunsets today at 5:18 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:39 pm.

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	27.0	10.8	77	71
Chittagong	26.1	13.0	77	61
Rajshahi	25.2	10.5	77	66
Khulna	25.8	11.0	79	69
Barisal	26.0	10.0	92	86
Sylhet	28.5	13.5	72	58
Cox's Bazar	27.0	15.2	67	73

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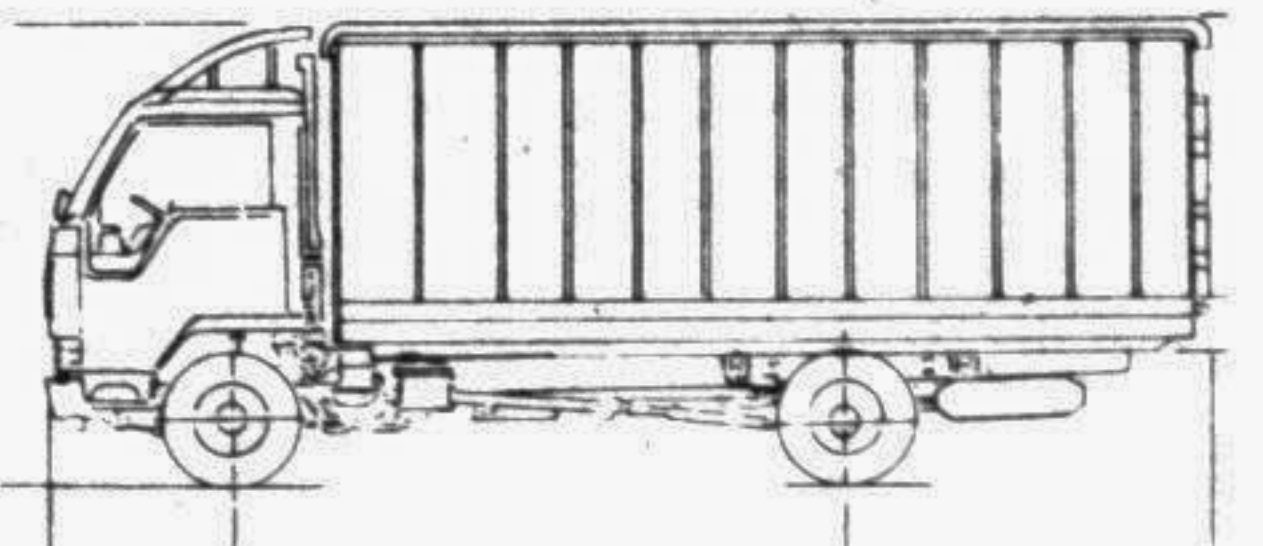
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