

Dhaka Day by Day

AGM — the Picnic Way!

by Gemini Wahhaj



The tales of Motijheel are dingy hangouts. Dusty patrons mull on fried jilapisi and paratas, dipped in lentil soup. On the road, cars, minibuses, rickshaws and scooter fling some more dust in the air. Meanwhile on the top floor of a Motijheel highrise, some businessmen sit around in an air-conditioned room. It is the annual general meeting of a company, and the executive board is meeting with the share-holders.

"Mr Chairman can you explain why we lost so much money last year?" demands one share-holder as he thumps the table with his fist. At this, the rest of the assembly gets excited.

"Yes, yes, we demand an explanation!" Share-holders get a chance to ask questions and inquire into the activities of the company. Everyone carries an annual report of the company, with a detailed balance sheet and an explanation of any profits or losses incurred.

"We hope to do much better next year, Insha Allah," an annual report might say.

Not all the share-holders look alike. Some are smartly dressed young men, there are one or two old men with long beards, a few serious-looking women, and even a precocious child or two. They might look bored or worried, or angry, as occasion demands. They refer very frequently to the annual report, which seems to be a very important document — sort of a medical report of a patient.

"Look at page 8," someone says, and there is a rustling of pages.

"Item No. 5," More rustling of pages.

Discussion is not limited to facts and figures only. Sometimes a share-holder will wax poetic.

"Tell me, honourable chairman of the company," he says, "when shall I see a light at the end of this eternal tunnel?"

"It is all in the hands of the Almighty Allah!" the chairman replies.

Everyone is very eloquent and skilful in the use of metaphor, but metaphors tend to get very mixed up in the exchange of reports.

Suddenly the Azan is heard, and everyone stops shouting. The very people who were fighting moments ago line up in an amicable row to pray. Once prayers are over, the chairman tells a joke. Everyone laughs. The chairman speaks about rosy plans for the future and everyone looks happy. But then someone asks a serious question, and the pleasant atmosphere vanishes.

The child sits through all this with studied patience. She makes faces at the adults to entertain herself. Relief arrives in the form of refreshments and hopes are entertained that all shall meet again at next annual meeting of their beloved company. The annual general meeting is almost like a company picnic, but not quite.



A procession on the inaugural day of the week-long drama festival organised by the Dhaka Sarak in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Call to upgrade status of Bangla Academy

By Staff Correspondent

The Bangla Academy should be given the status of an institute capable of awarding degree certificates in order to turn it into a true research institution, Director General of the academy said yesterday.

DU English Deptt alumni reception

By Staff Correspondent

The ninth annual get-together of the ex-students of the Department of English, University of Dhaka, was held at the British Council in the city yesterday afternoon.

The widely-attended gathering was rounded off with a cultural function and reminiscences from the students of yesterday.

Mohd Mokshed Ali, one of the oldest alumni of the department distributed prizes among the students for their outstanding performance.

A provisional committee was announced at the reception to run the affairs of the society.

Former minister Azizul Huq, Professor Kabir Chowdhury, Dr Khan Sarwar Mursheed, Professor Zillur Rahman Siddique, Dr Ahsanul Haque, Executive Director, JMBA Muhammad Ali, Commerce Secretary A H Mofazzal Karim were among the luminaries who attended the function.

Then, it would be possible to conduct research under some specialised professors. "DG Harun-ur-Rashid told the annual general meeting (AGM) of the academy.

The meeting, presided over by academy president Gazi Shamsur Rahman said that during 1993-94, the academy had published 83 text and reference books at the cost of Tk 80 lakh as part of a project introduced in 1991-92.

Some 107 books and 14 magazines were published at a cost of Tk 75 lakh as part of a project on development and research on the Bangla literature and language.

DATA members assume office today

By Staff Correspondent

The newly-elected executive committee members of the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DATA) will assume its official responsibilities today.

President of the outgoing executive council Prof Md Shahadat Ali and general secretary Dr AAMS Arefin Siddique will formally hand over the office to the newly-elected president Prof ATM Zahurul Haq and general secretary Prof SM Imamul Huq.

Clarification on delayed text book publication

The National Curriculum & Text Book Board (NCTB) issued the following rejoinder related to the item "Publication of text books delayed" appearing in the December 26 issue of The Daily Star.

Their points in the letter are reproduced below along with our reply:

1. The publication and marketing of Secondary books is the responsibility of the publishers, NCTB controls quality and price; 2. For timely production of books, NCTB and the concerned ministries extend their co-operation to the publishers to procure paper for the purpose; 3. At the best of the NCTB Chairman two joint meetings of MOE, NCTB, BCIC and Publisher Samity were held in the MOE under the chairmanship of secretary, MOE and the secretary has so far sent two DO's to the chairman, BCIC to ensure timely supply of printing papers; 4. In spite of paper crisis in the country Pustak Prokashaka and Bicreta Samity committed that Secondary books will be available in the market on time; 5. The increase of price of paper may result in a slight rise in the price of Textbooks.

The rejoinder does not contradict our story, except in No. 4, where we stand by our story, that the secondary books will not be available on time. — Editor

Call for regeneration of Muslim Ummah

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday called for regeneration of the Muslim Ummah to free the Muslims across the globe from their present state of misery as well as to ensure world peace, reports BSS.

"The world situation demands that now is the time for reawakening and strengthening the Muslim Ummah," he said and urged all concerned to make intensive research and find out the right solution from the "Quran and Sunnah" for speedy regeneration of the ummah.

The President made this call while inaugurating international Islamic conference at Hotel Sheraton in the city in the morning. Organised by International Islamic Philosophical Association (IIPA) the two-day conference's theme is regeneration of the Muslim Ummah, problems and prospects.

Religious Affairs Minister Mohammad Keramat Ali and noted philosopher and National Professor Dewan Mohammad Azraf attended the function as the special guests.

It was also addressed by president of IIPA and former vice-chancellor of Chittagong University Prof Abdul Aziz Khan, general secretary Prof A N M Wahidur Rahman and Prof Monsur Uddin Ahmed.

The President quoted from the Holy Quran and said Islam and the Muslims have survived many challenges in the past and inshallah it can meet the challenges of the new century as well.

The President said the Holy Quran enshrines Almighty Allah's directives to mankind through Prophet Mohammad (SM) which are universal and all pervasive. Therefore it would be futile to look for the cure of the prevailing degenerating symptoms outside the principles of the Quran, he said.

Keramat Ali said the global changeover particularly after the fall of communist world has created a number of problems. Islamic philosophy which preaches humanism and universal brotherhood could only solve the problems, he added.

Certificate awarding ceremony

The certificate awarding ceremony of No 43 junior command and staff course of Bangladesh Air Force Command and Staff Training Institute was held at BAF Academy auditorium, BAF Base Mafur Rahman here on Thursday, reports BSS.

Assistant Chief of Air Staff Air Commodore Jamal Uddin Ahmed attended the ceremony as chief guest and distributed certificates among the successful student-officers.

Speaking on the occasion Air Commodore Jamal Uddin Ahmed said that each officer had to acquire the knowledge of management and administration to become an effective commander. Sincerity in the accomplishment of job, sense of discipline and patriotism were necessary for them to lead the men and utilise the equipment properly under their command, he added.

Dwelling on the technological advancement in the modern warfare with particular reference to airpower, he advised them to ensure best utilisation of our costly aircraft and equipment by improving the quality and standard of our training at all level.

Among others, base commander Group Captain M Khusrul Alam and officers of the base were present.

Ctg Press Club biennial confce opens

CHITTAGONG, Dec 30: The biennial conference of the Chittagong Press Club was held at its Jamal Khan under construction bhaban here today reports BSS.

The advisory editor of the Daily Janakanta Towab Khan inaugurated the conference as the chief guest.

The inaugural session was held with Press Club president Obaidul Haq in the chair. It was addressed, among others, by president of Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) Aktherun-Nabi, general secretary of the club Abu Suliyan, general secretary of Chittagong Newspaper Council Mainuddin Kaderi Swakat, Prof Abdul Mannan and joint secretary of the club Helaluddin Chowdhury.

Towab Khan in his speech called for greater unity of the journalists community to ensure the freedom of press and uphold the professional dignity.

Khan said that disunity among the journalists had been hampering flourishing and advancement of the profession.

Happy Birthday to darling Farhat
—Saleha & Fayza Haq



A 15-member body to run the affairs of the Dhaka University English Department Alumni Society at a reception in the city yesterday. — Star photo

3rd Int'l Quirat Competition ends

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday called for spreading the message of the Holy Quran across the world through its melodious recitation for the welfare of mankind, reports BSS.

He made this call while addressing the closing session and prize distribution ceremony of the Third International Quirat Competition at the Institution of Engineers in the city arranged by Al Quran Foundation, Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Qasem Reze-e of Iran secured the first position in the competition and was awarded Taka 20,000. Hefez Qari Mohammad Saifullah of Bangladesh, Qari Al-Shaikh Gumah Mukhtar of Egypt and Daud Bin Chemor of Malaysia won the second, third and fourth places respectively.

Shipping Minister M K Anwar, State Minister for Shipping Zahidul Haq, president of the foundation A K Zaimul

Abden and secretary general Golam Mostafa also spoke.

Quoting from the Holy Quran, President Biswas said its first message is the call for "reading." Therefore, the recitation of the Holy Quran should be correct and melodious," he said.

The President said proper recitation of the Quran can significantly contribute to develop one's character and lead him toward the right path.



Saturday

- 4-30 Opening announcement
- Recitation from the Holy Quran
- Programme summary
- Recitation from the Geeta
- Kallol
- 5-10 Sangbad
- 5-40 Musical programme: Kids Songs
- 6-00 Education programme: Shikhangyan
- 6-30 Samachar
- 7-00 Folk songs: Bansharee
- 7-25 Film: Major Dad/Mr Bin
- 8-00 News in Bangla
- 8-30 Maati O Manush
- 9-00 Boipatra
- 10-00 News in English
- 10-30 Film show: Dynasty
- 11-30 Khabar/The news
- 11-40 Tomorrow's programme summary
- Closing announcement
- 11-45 Close down

Weather

Dry weather likely

Dry weather is likely to prevail across the country during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office says night temperature may fall by 1 to 2 degree Celsius over the country.

In its outlook for subsequent two days Met office predicted further fall in night temperature. Giving extended outlook for another five days weathermen says that there would be little change.

Country's lowest temperature 9.6 degree Celsius was recorded at Srimangal and the highest 28.8 degrees at Teknaf.

The sun sets today at 5:22 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:42 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	27.2	11.2	77	62
Chittagong	26.5	14.0	85	85
Rajshahi	25.6	10.1	91	68
Khulna	25.6	11.5	89	80
Barisal	27.5	10.4	-	68
Sylhet	26.4	13.4	79	64
Cox's Bazar	27.0	15.5	73	66

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