

Dhaka Day by Day

City of Rudeness

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



Along with the air pollution, overflowing garbage and eternal water supply shortages, the Dhaka city has also another evil to tolerate. This is Dhaka's rudeness. While the foreign tourist may be treated with deference, even servility, the local city dweller is constantly confronted with scowls, growls and offensive remarks, at every stage of living. A certain amount of curtness may be expected of any big city where even family members do not see each other for months, but Dhaka, or rather its inhabitants, seem to specialise in the art of being unpleasant.

It all begins early in the morning when one is unceremoniously woken by obnoxious honking of the next door neighbour's child's ride. So what if it's seven in the morning (dawn for some people) and it's a residential area? As long as there is no minister or MP living on that road, who cares?

This 'who cares' attitude is even more apparent out on the streets where rudeness and discourtesy reaches unbelievable heights. If you happen to be a polite person, and therefore, a misfit in this city, your misery will know no bounds. You will be shoved out of the bus by the person who was behind in the queue, you will be scolded by the rickshaw walah for not paying what he thinks is the right fare, and honked at for being unable to start the car within two and a half seconds since the signal lights went green. The beggars will curse you for not giving their due, ogles will glare at you for being a female and passengers of buses will strategically spit right on your shoulder if you happen to pass them.

A visit to the doctor is also another occasion to be exposed to unpleasantness. The receptionist seems to have gone through a special training on how to be insensitive and 'unhelpful'. He will never look you in the eyes, pretend to be deaf to all your queries of when the doctor will arrive or whether it will be possible to see him in the next eight hours, and generally be as amicable as a bull dog. Similarly, going to some of those shops where 'only foreign goods are sold' can be

quite a traumatic experience. If you don't look as if you are about to spend a few thousand takas on something foreign and useless, the salesperson will make it a point to make you feel as small as an ant. Products will be shown with extreme reluctance and boredom and prices quoted with a tinge of contempt. It is as if the shopkeeper is doing you a big favour for condescending to show you his unreachable goods. So much for salesmanship!

At the embassies or cultural centres of certain big shot nations, the same kind of cool reception can be expected especially from the local staff who think they have royalty status just by brushing shoulders with their expatriate employers. "It's so funny," says an exasperated student, "people are so unhelpful and cold. I just asked if I could get some information and was curtly told - 'No you can't, come another day.'" "People just don't smile any more," she adds, "it doesn't hurt you know."

A trip to the bank, hospital or any other place of business ensures more of such unpleasantness. But perhaps nothing is more annoying than being faced with the rudeness of telephone operators and information givers. If you call the airport inquiry number to know when a certain flight will come in, or whether it is on time etc, the person at the other end will growl the answer to the first question and abruptly hang up without even waiting to hear the second one. If you call again the line will be busy because the person has decided to keep the phone off the hook. Same is the case with calls to the overseas operator, the Electricity Board, the municipality office, the WASA office and so on.

After an exhausting day of battling with the rudeness of the city one lives in, one may have a great sigh of relief to be back in the comfort of one's home. Then, just as one is dozing off and about to enter into a dreamland, someone begins to sing himself hoarse on the loudspeaker, at one o'clock in the morning. Just a little reminder of where one is. Good old Dhaka city.



National Professor Sufia Ahmed speaking at a memorial meeting in observance of the 7th death anniversary of renowned artist Patua Quamrul Hasan at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city yesterday. - Star photo

Balance Buffalo exercise continues

Officers and paracommandos of Bangladesh Army continue combined exercise with the US Army to prepare themselves for the next cyclone, reports UNB.

As many as 37 American soldiers from four teams of the 1st Special Forces Group travelled from Okinawa in Japan, and Fort Lewis in Washington to Bangladesh for the 'Balance Buffalo' exercise in Jessore, according to a USIS news feature.

The Americans, including two reserve medics of the Special Forces from Washington National Guards and three Army civil affairs specialists from Fort Bragg of North Carolina, trained with units of Bangladesh Army and Air Force.

Summing up the value of the military-to-military cooperation between the two nations, US Ambassador to Bangladesh David Merrill said: "The Balance Buffalo exercise, through training, improve Bangladesh's own capacity to handle a disaster. Strengthening Bangladesh's self-reliance is in the interest of both our countries."

"On the training grounds, in

the briefing rooms, and the field clinic, all felt the shadow of 1991," writes Donald M Bishop of USIS.

Since the fateful April 1991 cyclone that claimed 139,000 lives, Bangladesh government has worked with international donors to increase its own ability to respond to disasters and its armed forces, in partnership with American Military commands, train for the day when they will look a great tragedy face to face.

In 1991, an American naval force returning from the Gulf war, steamed for the Bangladesh coast for immediate food and medical aid to the survivors of the remote areas.

US sailors and Marines involved in Operation Sea Angel reached the stranded villagers while US helicopters lifted the country's own stores of food and relief to the millions in need. Its radios and vehicles helped the government organise and direct its own relief efforts.

Twice a year, US military teams come to Bangladesh to share their experience and their methods, helping the Bangladeshi armed forces prepare for future disasters.

Discussion on Quamrul Hasan

A discussion on "Quamrul Hasan and His Art Works" in observance of his 7th death anniversary was held at Shilpakala Academy in the city yesterday, reports UNB.

The celebrated artist, popularly known as 'Patua Quamrul Hasan', died of a massive heart attack while presiding over a session of Jatiya Kabita Utshab, the national poem festival, on February 2, 1988.

Director General of the Shilpakala Academy, Mobarak Hossain Khan chaired the meeting while National Professor Dr Sufia Ahmed was present as chief guest.

Dr Ajoy Roy, Dr Nawajesh Ahmed, journalist Rahat Khan, artists Hashem Khan and Mottulub Ali and director of fine arts of the academy Subir Chowdhury took part in the discussion on the life and works of Quamrul Hasan.

Earlier, officials, artists and employees of the Shilpakala Academy plied wreath and offered *Jaticha* at the *majar*, of the late artist.

Digital phones in every thana soon

Post and Telecommunication Minister Tariqul Islam yesterday informed the Jatiya Sangsad that the government had taken realistic steps for introduction of digital telephones soon in all the thanas of the country, reports UNB.

The minister was making a statement on the private member's resolution moved by Treasury Bench member M. Niamat Ullah (Savar) that digital telephones be introduced in every thana of the country.

The minister said that recently the government had signed contracts with two private companies for introducing digital telephones in 300 thanas of the country.

He said digital telephones have already been introduced in 17 thanas and 71 more thanas would be brought under the system in this year.

Niamat Ullah withdrew his resolution at the assurance of the minister that digital telephones system would be introduced in each thana very soon.

Sufia Kamal, Abul Hossain honoured

By Staff Correspondent

The National Poetry Council (NPC) yesterday honoured poets Begum Sufia Kamal and Abul Hossain for their contributions to Bengali language.

On the concluding day of the 9th National Poetry Festival '95 in the city yesterday, council President Syed Shamsul Haq presented the NPC Honourary Award to Sufia Kamal for her contribution to the society.

Poet Abul Hossain was awarded the National Poetry Award, which includes Taka 30 thousand.

In her speech, Sufia Kamal dedicated her award to the mothers of the martyrs of the language movement and hoped that poetry would help bring peace and harmony in the world.

The function, held at the TSC road crossing was attended by Mazharul Islam, Prof Anisuzzaman, Hasan Imam, Shamudra Gupta, Mohan Raihan, Asad Chowdhury, Shamarendro Sen Gupta and others.

The award-giving ceremony was followed by recitations of self-composed poems by visiting Indian poets.

Meanwhile, the new 45-member executive committee of the council was announced with Syed Shamsul Haq and Mohan Raihan as president and general secretary respectively.

Earlier, seminars and recitations were held throughout the day.

Short film festival from Feb 14

An international short film festival will begin here February 14 with a view to promoting fair trend of film-culture in the country, reports UNB.

Organisers said about 150 short films from 20 countries as well as from host Bangladesh will be screened in the 8-day Fourth International Short Film Festival Dhaka 1995.

A number of retrospectives and special screenings comprising remarkable films by noted directors of the world, seminars and 'Alamgir Kabir Memorial Lecture' are also included in the festival programme.

A large number of filmmakers and critics from home and abroad are expected to attend the festival.

Children's art competition

By Staff Correspondent

A juvenile art competition on the theme of *Baishakhi Mela* was held on the premises of the Bangla Academy yesterday morning, says a press release.

Prof Mohammad Kibria attended the function as chief guest while Bangla Academy's Director General Prof Mohammad Harun-ur-Rashid delivered the address of welcome.

Besides, a discussion on a book titled 'Muslim Banglar Uthash O Oitija' by Abdul Karim and published by the academy, was also held at the Bangla Academy *Batumul* yesterday afternoon.



A sequence of the drama 'Shakuner Dim' staged by the Anannya group theatre at the central Shaheed Minar in the city yesterday. The drama was staged as part of the ongoing national street drama festival. - Star photo

ATTENTION - ATTENTION

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Classical Music Concert
by AUDACE Wind Trio from Germany
with works by Haydn, Mozart,
Steve Reich and others
takes place on
Monday, February 13, 1995 at 7 p.m.

LAST TIME IN THE AUDITORIUM OF OLD GERMAN CULTURAL CENTRE

GOETHE-INSTITUTE DHAKA

23, Dhanmondi R/A, Rd. No.2
Tel. 501879, 507325
Free tickets are available from
Tuesday, Febr. 7,
between 10.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m.
at the Reception GCC, except Friday/Saturday.

LIMITED SEATS!

Paramedic Training Instt opens

A Paramedic Training Institute was inaugurated in Sreepur under Gazipur district Wednesday by local authorities and members of the Italian embassy in Dhaka, says a press release.

The institute, constructed with funds received by the Italian Technical Cooperation and the Italian Non-Governmental Association AIFO (Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau), has been donated to the Gonoshasthya Kendra and will function as training institute for women as paramedic experts.

The center is partially self-sufficient for food.

The 18-month-long first course of the programme has started with 25 girls.

The girls, recruited from all over the country, will receive free board and lodging, a monthly allowance, and free training.

The courses will be directed by doctors and two senior paramedic women.

The girls will be working in the villages around Sreepur in the field of health, nutrition and hygiene during the day, and will attend the classes in the evening.

Weather

Dry spell likely

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

The Met Office forecasts no appreciable change in night temperature is expected over the country.

In its outlook for subsequent two days the Met Office predicts there will be no appreciable change. Giving further extended outlook for another five days weathermen forecasts rise in night temperature.

Yesterday's lowest temperature of the country 9 degrees Celsius was recorded at Faridpur and the highest 27.3 degrees at Cox's Bazar.

The sun sets today at 5:46 pm and rises tomorrow at 6:38 am.

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

| City/Town | Temperatures in degrees Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|------|------------------------|-----|
| | Min | Max | 6am | 6pm |
| Dhaka | 14.5 | 27.2 | 69 | 53 |
| Chittagong | 11.7 | 25.8 | 82 | 64 |
| Rajshahi | 10.3 | 26.2 | 76 | 61 |
| Khulna | 11.4 | 24.6 | 87 | 61 |
| Barisal | 10.2 | 25.4 | 85 | 55 |
| Sylhet | 13.2 | 26.6 | 74 | 54 |
| Cox's Bazar | 13.0 | 27.3 | 47 | 69 |

TO-LET

A 2350 sq feet three-storeyed (one unit) modern sophisticated and aesthetically pleasing house is ready to be let at Lalmatia, a place in the heart of city's one of the plush areas. Call 319789 between 8 to 10 AM weekdays and on Friday between 10 AM to 8 PM.

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WANTED

Applications are invited for the post of **Junior Officer** for the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

Pay Scale: **Tk. 2300-115-3105-EB-125-4480** plus other approved benefits.

Qualifications: Minimum second class Master degree and proficiency in English. Preference will be given to candidates having computer skill.

Age limit: 25-35 years of age.

Requirements: CV, two copies of recent passport size photographs and experience certificates.

Last date of Application: 15 February 1995.

Apply to: General Secretary, **Asiatic Society of Bangladesh**, 5 Old Secretariat Road (Nimtali), Ramna, Dhaka-1000.

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WORLD BANK VACANCY

Position : Manager, Administration

Duties and Responsibilities: Under the direct guidance of the Chief of Mission, the Manager (Administration) is responsible for the administration of the Resident Mission. The Resident Mission is a relatively large operation involving some 84 staff of whom about 29 are local or headquarter professionals. The Mission in housed in a dedicated building and operates its own fleet of vehicles. The administration of the Mission includes supervising the staff responsible for budgeting and accounting, communications and transportation, maintenance of the Mission's assets, operation and maintenance of a central air conditioning system and emergency power generators, supply and procurement, staff housing and custom clearance, office technology, library and disbursement. The Manager (Administration) is responsible for submitting and monitoring the annual budget and generally for advising the Chief of Mission on administrative matters in accordance with World Bank rules and regulations which he/she will have to learn. In addition, an important function of the position is to formulate and manage the Bank's public relation strategy.

Qualifications: The successful candidate will be a Bangladeshi national about 35-45 years old, holding an MBA or equivalent degree and having a strong command of spoken and written English, and an up-to-date knowledge of office technology and procedures. He/she will have at least 10 years administrative experience -- preferably in a multinational company or international organization -- of which at least the last 5 involving managerial duties similar to those required in the position sought.

Remuneration: The World Bank pay competitive salaries commensurate with the training and experience of its staff. It provides medical benefits for the staff and dependents and offers attractive separation benefits.

Availability: Preferably the successful candidate should be available about April 1, 1995.

How to Apply: Application should be addressed to:

The World Bank
Resident Mission in Bangladesh
(Ref. Manager, Administration)
3A Paribagh, Dhaka

Applications should include the name of 3 work related references.

Deadline: Applications will be received no later than February 21, 1995.

STAR MOVIES

From your Local STAR-TV distributor: **RALEX**

Ph: 503960, 503891, 866497.

Wanted

Gazi Fish Culture Limited

(A project managed by SABINCO)

The Company is looking for suitable persons to fill up the following vacancies for its head office at Khulna and project office at Kailashganj, Dacope, Khulna:

- Manager (Finance)** - 1 (one)
Will have a degree of Master of Commerce and must have completed successfully course in CA. Must have at least five years experience in an industrial/business enterprise in a similar position.
- Manager (Admin)** - 1 (one)
Will have a Master degree in any discipline and must have at least seven years experience in an industrial/business enterprise in a similar position.
- Deputy Manager (Facilities & Services)** - 1 (one)
Will have a Master degree in any discipline and must have at least five years experience in an industrial/business enterprise in a similar position.
- Accounts Officer** - 1 (one)
Will have a degree of Master of Commerce and must have completed successfully course in CA. Must have at least two years experience in an industrial/business enterprise in a similar position.
- Administrative Officer** - 5 (five)
Will have a Master degree in any discipline and must have at least three years experience in an industrial/business enterprise in a similar position.
- Accounts Assistant** - 3 (three)
Will have a Bachelor degree in Commerce and must have at least two years experience in an industrial/business enterprise.
- Store Assistant** - 3 (three)
Will have a Bachelor degree in Commerce and must have at least two years experience in an industrial/business enterprise.

Handsome salary will be offered after negotiation.

Candidates meeting the requirements are advised to apply to SABINCO, BSEC Bhaban (5th Floor), 102, Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, Dhaka-1215 with detailed CV mentioning the names of two references and contact telephone number by 15 February, 1995.

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