

Dhaka Day by Day

The Changing Modern Babies

by A S M Nurunnabi

All things change and the spirit of change affects all — young and old, babies and adults alike. The strange thing about babies is that they sometimes pick up new things more quickly and in queer ways. There is, however, a gulf of difference between a child of the past and that of the present. In the past, a baby used to crawl, in due time, on the floor. Nowadays babies move from side to side in hanging cribs listening to Hindi songs. Previously babies used to suck at the breast of their mothers like yearlings. At present babies suck at coca-cola from feeding bottles in the back seat of a car. These are not uncommon sights in the streets of Dhaka. In the traffic jams and in crowded parking areas, mothers are seen feeding their babies with soft drinks in feeding bottles. This considerably lessens the burden of the mothers in preparing milk formula for their sophisticated babies.

There are other indications that modern babies are a fastidious lot. They show other dimensions of change in their food habits. Any mother will tell you that the more she bothers with her child's food habits the greater is the resistance by the tiny thing who prefers to go its own ways. All mothers more or less, particularly the new ones, get terribly upset over such problems and consult the doctor frequently to solve such food problems. The assurance of the doctor that there is nothing wrong with such babies and that it is part of their developing individualism does not help the mothers much. The mothers seem to be at a loss to understand why a baby instead of milk and baby foods cares more for soft drinks, tea or icecream. Of course this is an urban attitude and by and large does not affect babies in the rural areas. This places an urban mother in a difficult position. The mother does not seem to care much about the commonsense view that a child will take its food when hungry and that there is no cause for worry if the child develops an individual pattern in its likes and dislikes about food. The result is that the mother worries and suffers a lot.



Of late urban babies show a new dimension of change in their approach to food consumption. It has been observed that some children of 4-5 age groups are strangely attracted to TV commercials. When these programmes are on the air, these children become more pliable and accommodating in their acceptance of food. This is definitely a stroke of good luck for those whose children are generally recalcitrant. Previously this spell of good luck was available in the afternoon. This facility extended when the CNN began its morning telecast. Now the situation has changed more. In the changed circumstances, BBC/CNN/Satellite TV programmes are run almost throughout the whole day. During these periods, mothers find an easy way of feeding their babies. Some mothers find an additional way of distracting their babies at feeding time. Some children are equally attracted by cartoon films. So for reasons of variety, the mothers play on the VCR/VCP/Satellite TV as situations demand, at feeding times. Those who have no satellite TV, play cartoons with the help of VCR/VCP when the BBC/CNN programmes are off. The cartoon films are also very helpful in keeping babies otherwise busy and out of harm's way. The strategies of the parents to feed their babies this way go away when there is load shedding. At such times the parents become helpless.

The problems of feeding the young get intensified if the young ones happen to belong to nuclear families where the mothers always remain worried about the dietary habits of their small children. The mothers' insistence make the babies more obstinate. But it is strange that irrespective of age, children are fond of soft drinks, sipping them from bottles or glass containers. Some are even addicted to tea like adults. So some mothers find no alternative but to mix some tea with milk when feeding their children. Indeed the pattern of diets of children sometimes become strange in modern times, thanks to soft drinks, tea, CNN/BBC/Satellite TV advertisements and cartoon films.

Eid reception at Bangabhaban

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Begum Biswas hosted a reception on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr for the diplomats at Bangabhaban on Friday, reports UNB.

missioners and representatives of foreign missions and UN bodies in Bangladesh attended the reception. Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman was present.

President Biswas and Begum Biswas exchanged Eid greetings with the diplomats.

Later, President Biswas and Begum Biswas hosted a separate reception at Bangabhaban.

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Secretary

Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated

CHITTAGONG, Mar 5: Eid-ul-Fitr, one of the greatest religious festivals of the Muslims was celebrated here Friday with due religious fervour and traditional enthusiasm, reports BSS.

The main Eid congregation under the auspices of Chittagong City Corporation was held at Jamiatul Falah Complex at 8:00 am. Khatib of the complex Maulana Jalauddin-al-Kaderi led the prayer.

Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Abdullah-al-Noman who is now in Chittagong and City Mayor Ahaj A B M Mahiuddin Chowdhury were among others, who offered their prayer at Jamiatul Falah Complex.

Rajshahi

The holy Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated in Rajshahi on Friday with due solemnity and religious fervour.

National flag was hoisted atop all public and private buildings.

Improved diet was served to the patients in hospitals and inmates in jail and orphanages.

The main Eid-ul-Fitr congregation was held at Shah Mahdum Central Eidgah Maidan. City Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu, divisional commissioner, deputy commissioner and other elite and officials offered their prayers at the Central Eidgah Maidan.

Khulna

The holy Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated in Khulna with due solemnity and religious fervour.

The main Eid Jamaat was held this morning at the Circuit House Maidan.

People of all walks of life, young and old alike, attired in their best, attended the main Eid Jamaat at the Circuit House Maidan.

Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Sheikh Tavebur Rahman along with the elite of the city and high government officials attended the main Eid Jamaat.

Jatiya Sangsad Whip Md Ashraf Hossain attended the Eid Jamaat held at the Khulna Newsprint Mills Maidan.

Narayanganj

The holy Eid-ul-Fitr was celebrated in Narayanganj Friday with due religious fervour and gaiety.

The national flag was hoisted atop all the public and private buildings.

The biggest Eid congregation of the town was held at Masdar Eidgah Maidan at 9:00 am under the auspices of Narayanganj Pourashabha.

Eid congregations were also held in different parts of the town including BIWTC Jame Masjid at Netaiganj, Fakir Tola Jame Masjid at Sirajuddowla Road, Court Jame Masjid and Kadam Rasul Dargah Sharif at Nabiganj Bandar.

Weather

Dry weather likely

Weather may remain mainly dry over the country and partly cloudy sky likely to prevail over Barisal division and the regions of Khulna and Noakhali during the next 12 hours, reports UNB.

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

No appreciable change is likely in the subsequent 2 days and little change is expected in the week ahead, weather-men said.

The country's highest temperature 33.6 degrees Celsius is recorded at Rangamati and the lowest 11.2 degrees at Srirangam.

The sun sets today (Monday) at 6:03 pm and rises tomorrow (Tuesday) at 6:16 am.

Temperature readings and humidity percentage recorded in the major cities of the country yesterday were:

City	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	30.0	14.8	41	47
Chittagong	30.5	18.5	68	43
Cox's Bazar	32.0	19.4	69	40
Sylhet	29.1	14.2	70	51
Rajshahi	29.5	13.5	44	38
Dinajpur	29.5	12.4	59	35
Barisal	29.5	17.0	54	54

Biswas, Khaleda greet President of Ghana

President Abdur Rahman Biswas and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia felicitated Lt. (Retd) Jerry John Rawlings, President of Ghana, on the occasion of National Day of his country today, reports UNB.

President Biswas in a message said, 'On the happy occasion of the independence day of the Republic of Ghana, I have great pleasure in extending to your excellency on behalf of the government and the people of Bangladesh and on my own behalf our warm greetings and felicitations.'

In a similar message, Prime Minister Begum Zia also conveyed greetings and felicitations to the President of Ghana and the people that country.

She hoped that the friendly relations between the two countries would further strengthen to the mutual benefit of the two peoples.

Begum Zia also wished Jerry John Rawlings good health, happiness and long life and continued peace, progress and prosperity of the friendly people of the republic of Ghana.

VOA introduces call-in-programme

Voice of America (VOA) has introduced a regularly scheduled international radio call-in programme, 'Talk to America,' on its worldwide English frequencies, reports UNB.

Five days a week, Monday through Friday at 11:00 pm (Bangladesh time) millions of listeners through Europe, Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, East Asia, Oceania, and the Caribbean have the opportunity to ask questions of guests via telephone, fax, and the internet computer network.

Frequencies to Bangladesh/South Asia are: 6.11, 7.125, 7.215, 9.645, 9.7, 15.295 and 15.395 mega hertz in the 49, 41 and 19 metre bands shortwave.

The telephone number for 'Talk to America' is (202) 619-3111. The internet address is talk followed by VOA.GOV and fax number is 202-260-8572.

From US foreign policy to the environment, from health and nutrition to the implications of American movies and sports, the programme addresses the widest international audience to engage in a daily dialogue with variety of American decision makers and experts.



President Abdur Rahman Biswas exchanging Eid greetings with the diplomats at Bangabhaban on Eid-ul-Fitr day. — PID photo



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia exchanging Eid greetings with the diplomats at her Hare Road office on Eid-ul-Fitr day. — PID photo

International Women's Day Wednesday

International Women's Day will be observed in the country on March 8 as elsewhere in the world.

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has planned an elaborate programme to mark the day in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

On the day a discussion meeting will be held at the

Osmany Memorial Hall in the city at 11:00 am.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas will attend it as the chief guest.

Special supplements will be published in the national dailies highlighting the significance of the day.

A special discussion meet-

ing will be telecast in Bangladesh Television.

Posters and stickers will be distributed and main road islands will be decorated with festoons on the day.

A women's rally will be held on Wednesday morning in the city under the auspices of Jatiya Mohila Sangstha.

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