

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

And then there were none...

by Samia Islam

The Agatha Christie title that reminds one of the tale of a gruesome murder mystery might seem quite improbable as the title of a Day by Day column but curiously enough this write up does deal with a murder of sorts — the cruel, callous and meaningless killing of trees. Trees do have a life, in case some of us have forgotten, and therefore the senseless destruction of trees can and should be called murder. Culturally, we must have something against trees or else how does one explain our disdainful and contemptible attitude towards them. For all they are worth they only serve the insensitive mankind and this is how mankind pays back. There has been recent additions to the statistics of trees that have fallen to make way for more pleasing and aesthetically beautiful concrete structures commemorating past glories or just plainly beautifying our city. Laudable efforts no doubt but why these magnificent construction can't be undertaken without the annihilation of trees is beyond the rational mind.



Previously, the ride from Dhaka University to the New Market or the British Council was singularly pleasant owing to the cluster of trees square in the middle of the road creating sort of an oasis for weary road goers on score. One day, even if one didn't have the time or the capacity to rest in their shade, the trees by their mere presence made the heat a little more bearable. The beauty of a full-grown tree gently swaying in the breeze can never be compared to any artificial edifice whatever its aesthetic appeal but that is beside the point. If and when it becomes necessary to build such a structure, why should it have to be conveniently placed where some unsuspecting trees have been standing for decades?

Unfortunately, we are a generation that hasn't been around to witness the most significant happenings in our country's history and we are more saddened when we realize that today, the historical Aam Tala is nothing but the stalk of the tree surrounded by a base of red cement. True nothing lasts forever in this world but what efforts, if any, were taken to preserve and prolong the tree's life? When

trees with historical significance don't get their due attention then a mere cluster of trees unexpectedly flourishing in the middle of the road will, naturally, have to face a more severe fate. Much has been said about the ecological implications of such an act, but hopefully, this generation won't be around to face the actual consequences.

The problem with us is that we know the price of everything without knowing the value of anything. A thing from another era is not an antique in this part of the world but simply old, dilapidated and, therefore, expendable. Take the Lal Bagh Fort, for instance, which is being systematically demolished to make way for new, in most cases bizarre, reproductions. Civilized (!) as we are we ought to, may be, learn a little uncivilized behavior from some nations out there who go through no end of trouble just to preserve the things from the past if for nothing else than the fact that these things give a nation a sense of heritage in a hostile world. Thank God we don't have the Taj Mahal in our country or else we would have demolished it at the first appearance of a crack in its dome and built a whole new one in its place. Of course, it would be painted a curious shade of white so as to keep its original design intact.

While the world is losing its sleep over things like global warming, the rate and effects of deforestation in the Third World countries, the Third World is busy building new and modern sculptures, fountains, palatial residences for the heads of state and what not in an effort at beautifying their cities. At the rate we are going with a little help from our intelligence, we can safely say that by the year 2000 we will have done away with most of the trees in our little city and replaced them with superb, though somewhat useless, works of art more pleasing to the eye than ever imagined possible by many skeptics but whether many will survive to see the day is a different question altogether. Perhaps our planners ought to be reminded of the invincible dinosaurs that ruled the earth for so many years but along came the ice-age and then there were none.

Biswas opens World Health Day programmes
Coordinated efforts to ensure health for all stressed

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday stressed on coordinated efforts to ensure health for all and eradicate polio by the year 2000, reports UNB.

"It will be possible to get the desired results if the people could be involved in implementation process of the health care programmes", he said while opening a programme organised on the occasion of the World Health Day at Osmani Memorial Hall in the city.

The World Health Day was being observed in the country as elsewhere in the world yesterday with "Target 2000 — A World Without Polio" as the theme for this year.

Referring to the theme, President Biswas said polio is still one of the main health problems in many developing countries as well as the Bangladesh. A large number of children are being disabled by the polio scourge and passing the whole life depending on others, he said.

"It is our united responsibility to make the children free from polio and ensure a congenial environment for them," Biswas said adding that the government with the assistance of the World Health Organisation (WHO) has undertaken steps to eradicate polio.

Citing the success story of the Extended Immunisation Programme (EPI) for eradication of five major diseases, Biswas said the government has given priority to vaccination of the children. To continue the effort national Vaccination Day will be observed every year, he said.

A healthy and able population is a pre-requisite for overall development of the country. But, a large segment of our population is affected with various diseases hindering social and economic development, Biswas told the function.

Mother and children are the worst victims of any diseases as they are not aware about sanitation. Malnutrition and congenital diseases also affect them, he said.

The President said number of doctors, nurses and hospital beds are being increased day by day to ensure health care facilities for all.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Chowdhury Kamal ibne Yusuf, Deputy Minister for Health Serajul Haq, Health Secretary Sayed Ahmed, Director General of Health Services Prof A K Shamsuddin Siddiqi and WHO Representative Dr W Hardjotanojo also addressed the function.

Diplomats and senior officials of the ministry were present.

Int'l confce on iodine deficiency begins tomorrow

A three-day international conference on "Partnership to End Hidden Hunger: Sustaining Elimination of Iodine Deficiency Disorders" begins in the city tomorrow, reports UNB.

Commerce and Information Minister M Shamsul Islam will inaugurate the conference at Hotel Sheraton Hotel.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to address the concluding session at 10:30 am on Tuesday.

The conference has been organised jointly by the International Council for Control of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (ICCID), UNICEF, WHO, CIDA, Micronutrient Initiative and the Government of Bangladesh.

The conference is aimed at working out a combined strategy for sustaining elimination of IDD over the next decade and to ensure that it be subscribed by all concerned for smooth operation.

Obituary

M Nazimuddin, private secretary to Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman died of cerebral haemorrhage at the PG Hospital yesterday morning. He was 54, reports BSS.

His *namaz-e-janaza* was held at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque yesterday afternoon. He was buried at Azimpur graveyard later.

Nazimuddin left behind his wife, one son and one daughter.

Earlier, President Biswas distributed certificates among the winners of essay and painting competition.

The health minister said the whole team of the health ministry with the help of the people have been engaged to inoculate all children under 5 with oral polio vaccine to eradicate polio by the year 2000.

Many diseases like diabetes, cancer, heart diseases and blood pressure have been matters of great concern to many of us, the minister said stressing the need for coordinated efforts to achieve the target of health for all by the year 2000.

Earlier a walkathen led by Director General of Health Services Prof A K Shamsuddin Siddiqi paraded the streets from Shisu Academy to Press Club.

Another UNB report says: Deputy Leader of the Parliament Prof A Q M Badruddoza Chowdhury called upon all to work unitedly to eradicate polio from the country by the year 2000, reports UNB.

He was addressing a rally organised by Sir Sallimullah Medical College unit of Rortaract Club in observance of World Health Day in the city yesterday.

Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury said, being the victims of polio, many children of the country become disabled and dependent on others.

"It is our responsibility of all to save the future generation from the curse of this disease," he added.

Prof Chowdhury urged all to come forward for making the vaccination drive a success with an aim to make the country polio-free.



A procession was brought out in the city yesterday to mark the World Health Day. — Star photo

Training course concludes

A four-day training course on social forestry ended at the Forest Extension Department in the city yesterday.

Sixty participants of the social forestry project took part in the course organised jointly by the 12-village development project of Sabujbagh thana and the Forest Extension Department.

137 arrested

Police rounded up 137 criminals, including 16 wanted criminals, from different parts of the city in last 24 hours, a DMP press release said yesterday, reports UNB.

The other arrested include five for dacoity, three on charge of robbery, one under Explosive Act and five for stealing.

SOYA DALMOOT

- Use Soy pulse in preparation of commercial snacks
- Use Soy pulse commercially to make the food protein-rich and profitable

Ingredients	Quantity
Soybeans	2 cups
For seasoning :	
Black Pepper powder	1/2 tea spoon
Roasted cumin seed powder	1/2 tea spoon
Tartaric acid (powdered)	a pinch
Black salt (powdered)	a pinch
Red Chillies (powdered)	to taste
Salt	to taste

Method of Preparation

- ◆ Soak the soybeans for 5 hours and strain it.
- ◆ Boil soaked soybeans for 20 minutes (they should not become tender at all).
- ◆ Strain again and spread on a cloth to drain off the moisture.
- ◆ Deep fry in shortening on medium heat until crispy.
- ◆ Season with powdered spices and mix up well.

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Muzahidul Islam Selim, general secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) addressing the sixth national convention of the party at the Ramna green in the city yesterday. — Star photo

SPGRC's appeal

The Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) has expressed concern over what it said the deteriorating law and order situation at Mirpur Section 11, reports UNB.

SPGRC chief patron M Hasim Khan, in a statement yesterday, appealed to the law enforcing agencies to ensure security for the stranded Pakistanis living at the D block camp in the area.

In the statement, he alleged that vested quarters, anti-social elements and local musclemen have threatened to evacuate the camp forcibly to grab the land.

Khan urged the authorities to save the poor camp-dwellers from the threat of criminals and anti-social elements.

'Build united resistance against hartal'

Shipping Minister M K Anwar yesterday called upon the people to build united resistance against the politics of hartal and blockade, reports BSS.

He was addressing a public meeting at the Dagair High School ground under Demra thana. Organised by Demra Thana BNP, the meeting was addressed, among others, by Salahuddin Ahmed MP and BNP leader Mansur Ali Khan.

BOU signs agreement

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) on Thursday signed a package agreement with a local firm for construction of its printing, publishing and distribution buildings at Gazipur campus, reports UNB.

The construction work, involving an expenditure of Tk 4.77 crore will have to be completed in 15 months as per agreement.

EUCSU polls demanded

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) unit Thursday demanded immediate announcement of EUCSU election withdrawing the ban on politics in the campus, reports UNB.

They also call for stopping the alleged harassment on JCD activists by the authorities.

Weather

Rain, gusty wind likely

Rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Chittagong division, at one or two places over Dhaka division and the regions of Pabna, Bogra during the next 12 hours till 6:00 pm today, reports UNB.

The Met Office says weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky elsewhere across the country.

Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country.

The country's highest temperature 39.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Rajshahi and the lowest 18.6 degrees at Srirangal.

The sun sets today at 6:17 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:44 am.

The 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	37.0	24.0	71	49
Chittagong	31.5	24.3	80	77
Rajshahi	39.2	23.4	77	43
Khulna	36.7	25.4	75	37
Barisal	36.4	24.6	77	65
Sylhet	31.2	19.6	74	77
Cox's Bazar	32.0	23.0	77	73

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