

Dhaka Day by Day

When it Rains

by Schrezad Joya Monami Latif

The windows banged against each other in unison and the wind howled in delight. The trees outside the three-storey building swayed to and fro, their size no match for the wind's passion. The cigarette vendor on the pavement quickly put his wares in his 10 by 12 box, hitching up his lungi to his thighs as he hoisted his box of cancerous sticks and *paan* (betel leaf) on his stooping shoulders. He hurried into the building almost tripping over the debris lying around the green-blue gate.

Inside the building the lights flickered, once, twice then went out 'poof' just like that. Groans and oaths could be heard all around the building, most people had not saved their work on their computers. The rain came down in torrents, it gushed down like a dam that just gave in. Rain poured and poured for over an hour, showing no signs of letting up. It was a fast and furious rain, unlike the rain and dance sequences popular among ZTV and ATN viewers. This was not the kind of rain when one could wear a white saree and sway about to. It had started hailing as well, you see.

The little beggar girl who lived on the streets, could not find refuge. She had nowhere to go, a street corner is nowhere to be when it hails and storms, after all. She ran and ran down the road, afraid the balls of white would hit her and kill her. All the gates to the homes lining the street were shut, no access there. She came across the three storey building, the gate to which was partially open and came, haltingly, inside the compound, soaked to the skin. She wore nothing more than a ragged dress that came up to her mid thighs

and was torn at the left shoulder. Her hair was stringy, and the colour of burnt wheat, the result of marasmus (malnutrition) and not colouring. Her little, painfully thin body could not take the cold or the wetness and she started shivering, quaking up to the bottoms of her bare feet. The people standing around the bottom floor of the building, did not say anything to her, so she hastened her steps and stood with them under the portico as she shivered and quaked. No one spoke to her, no one said a word. She leaned against the brick wall and slowly slid to the floor. Wondering if the hail was actually snow. She stared at the dirty white balls and all the while she shivered. One bit of hail hit the window pane on the bottom floor. "CRASH!" the sound was muffled by the angry roaring of the rain. The people standing around the ground floor awakened from their stupefied awe of the weather and were galvanized into action. They went inside the building, trying to rectify the situation created by the shattered windowpane. The little girl sat on floor alone, forgotten by the others.

Then it stopped raining and hailing and all was quiet. A few cars started moving around the street and soon, it was bursting with activity of beeping horns and tutting baby taxis, again. The cigarette vendor was back on his pavement domain. Inside the building, everyone went back to their work as soon as the lights came back on. The little girl slowly walked out of the compound and disappeared among the sea of little girls in the streets. No one gave her a second thought. She had come and gone with the Monsoon.



A delegation of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) and Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ) called on Information and Commerce Minister M Shamsul Islam at the Information Ministry yesterday. — PID photo

Scope for expansion of trade with Italy exists: Biswas

President Abdur Rahman Biswas said, there is enough scope for further expansion of trade and commerce between Bangladesh and Italy for mutual benefit of the people, reports UNB.

He was talking to the outgoing Ambassador of Italy Dr Claudio Pacifico when he made a farewell call on him at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Appreciating Italy's assistance as development partner of Bangladesh, President Biswas said that Bangladesh attaches great importance to her relationship with Italy and hoped that this support would continue in coming years.

He said that through our liberalised economic policy, Bangladesh had provided various incentives for encouraging direct foreign investment and joint venture projects.

President Biswas conveyed his best regards to his counterpart Oscar Luigi Scalfaro. The outgoing ambassador said that Italy was a sincere development partner of Bangladesh and hoped that this relationship would further strengthen in the future.

Appreciating the economic progress of the country, Claudio hoped that the growth rate will further go up.

What's on today

Seminar on session jam: Medicine Club of the Sir Salimullah Medical College (SSMC) has organised a seminar on session jam in medical colleges. Venue: Lecture Gallery 1. Time: 9:30 am. Chief Guest: Prof AK Shamsuddin Siddiqui, DG, Health Directorate.

Fed of Film Societies: The film 'Kanchanjanga' will be screened as part of the ongoing centenary celebration of cinema. Bangladesh Federation of Film Societies has arranged the five-day Satyajit retrospective. Venue: Indian High Commission auditorium. Time: 6 pm.

Discussion: Discussion of the Faridpur Division and Padma Bridge Implementation Coordination Council will be held. Venue: House 98, Road 9/A (New), Dhanmondi. Time: 6:00 pm.

What's on tomorrow

Environmental seminar: A seminar on environmental impact assessment (EIA) methodologies used in Bangladesh will be held. Venue: Purbani Hotel. Time: 9 am. Environmental Study (FAP 16) has organised the seminar. Chief guest: Syed ANM Wahed, DG, Department of Environment, Ministry of Environment and Forest.

Weather

Hot-spell to continue

The prevailing hot-spell and the dry weather is likely to continue over the country during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office said day temperature may rise by 1-2 degrees Celsius throughout the country.

Yesterday's maximum temperature of the country was recorded 41 degrees Celsius at Ishwardi and the lowest 20.4 at Dinajpur.

The sun sets today at 6:24 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:29 am.

Yesterday's maximum temperature (in degree Celsius) and humidity (in percentage) were recorded in some major cities and towns are as follows:

	Temperature in degrees Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	min	morn	even
Dhaka	37.8	26.4	63	50
Chittagong	34	26	79	75
Cox's Bazar	34	24.5	75	78
Khulna	38	25	74	11
Barisal	37.2	25.5	70	57
Rajshahi	40	22.6	33	...
Jessore	38.8	25.5	70	57

Indian team performs surgery

An eight-member cardiologist team from Madras Medical Mission of India performed surgery at Dhaka Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (ICVD) from April 14 to 21, reports BSS.

Led by Dr KM Cherian, the team performed coronary artery bypass surgery on five patients using new technique and balloon angioplasty on four more persons. All the operations were successful.

Director of ICVD, Dr Akhtaruzzaman and other cardiologists were with the team during the operations.

Two of the patients operated upon are poor young girls from Cox's Bazar who received financial assistance from World Vision, an NGO.

Dr Cherian and his team also conducted nine sessions on cardiology for the ICVD doctors in Dhaka explaining some new technique in the field of cardiac surgery.

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 Prof. Dr. M. Umulhassan, Vice-Chancellor

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Dated: 23.4.95

International Re-Tender Notice

(3rd Time)

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