

Dhaka Day by Day

Service with a Scowl

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

Rudeness may be one of the inconveniences Dhakaites have to live with but there is so much humiliation one only finds too hard to endure. Especially when it comes from sales people of enterprises that boast so much about their outstanding customer service.

The store in question was the marketing outfit of the largest national NGO about which this very daily has written glowing reports (including this writer) in past issues. Until last Thursday, I was like many others an incorrigible shopper at this particular store dropping in every few days to buy gifts for friends and family. I was thus thoroughly shocked by the treatment I received from two sales women and a manager of the first floor of the departmental store's main outlet at Asad Gate.

I had gone to change a saree I had bought only the day before and had not even opened because I realized when I got home that the colour was too dull. All I wanted was

"This saree is now 'spotted'," he announced pointing to the dot that was already evaporating. With a curt "We cannot take back damaged goods" he walked away. Damaged? The saree was in perfect condition!

Outraged, I just gathered up the saree and was about to leave the floor when I 'spotted' the manager sitting at the cash counter and something stopped me. I told him that I would never again buy anything from that store to which he gave me that same pathetic excuse — 'the spot' which by now seemed to have reached the status of the Ebola virus. Exasperated and utterly disgusted by his tactlessness I threw the by now repugnant saree into the cash counter and left.

Later, when I related the story to colleagues and friends I realized that I was not the only victim of this store's sales persons' rudeness. Many of them complained about the unobliging attitude of the sales girls with their sullen faces and irritated looks if one asked to see more than one item.



to get the same saree in a different colour. What could be more simple? Incidentally, while I was putting the saree into my quite large shoulder bag the front got a little creased. A touch of ironing was all that would have been needed to smoothen it out.

When I took the same to the counter, however, the two sales women who had been there the day before, made a huge fuss about the crease. "How can anyone try to return a saree in this condition?" demanded one of them loudly. "Would you buy something that looked like this?"

They went on and on about how impossible it would be for them to resell it while I watched dumfounded at their uncalled for rudeness and contempt. Then suddenly one of the women while unfolding the saree found what any reasonable person would consider a tiny dot caused by a drop of rain water that had probably fallen while I was walking into the store. It was still wet as one of the women pointed out and I told them my theory. The floor manager was called to inspect the dreaded 'spot' who promptly came and treated it like the beginning of a small pox outbreak.

To those who may rationalize this attitude by saying that it's not their fault, that's the way they are, just watch them when they are attending to expatriates. Suddenly these sour faced malcontents transform into smiling, solicitous angels who will go out of their way to be helpful. This, no doubt will put off even the most forgiving of local customers.

The shop in question, no doubt, is a unique store offering a wide variety of quality handicrafts, clothes and household ware. The convenience of having so many types of things in one place is definitely what attracts customers. The store's soaring sales and new outlets abroad show that it is certainly doing well. But the 'we are doing you a favour' attitude of the sales girls and cash counter people hardly makes good business sense. Perhaps the management should consider giving its staff some basic customer service training such as how to say thank you when giving the customer the receipt or smiling a little once in a while instead of the usual stand-offishness and unwelcoming scowls. Otherwise customers will leave the store with only one thing. A bad aftertaste.



Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia went round different stalls after inaugurating the week-long Tree Fair organised as part of Tree Plantation Campaign '95 in the city yesterday. (story on Page one) — PID photo

Help ensure fair polls: CEC

By Staff Correspondent

Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Justice AKM Sadeque yesterday sought active cooperation of the political parties to ensure free, fair and neutral elections.

Justice Sadeque was talking to the leaders of the Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (Aref-Inu) who met him and submitted a memorandum containing a 16-point proposal.

The proposals included the keeping of elections free from the influence of money, arms and hoodlomanism, the obstruction of defaulters from contesting the polls and the bringing of the state-run electronic media under the control of Election Commission 90 days ahead of the elections.

During the meeting, the CEC was assisted by Election Commissioner Justice MA Jalil and Additional Secretary SM Zakaria, while the JSD was represented by Kazi Aref Ahmed, Hasanul Haq Inu, Sharif Nurul Ambia and Azizur Rahman.

Meanwhile, a delegation of the National Teachers Federation also met the CEC at his office and discussed different issues relating to the smooth holding of elections.

Justice Sadeque asked the teachers to carry out their duties during the elections with sincerity and create awareness among the people about free and fair elections.

Federation leaders Prof M Shariful Islam, Nazrul Islam, Sakhawat Hossain Mallik and Prof M Yunus Mollah were present on the occasion.

B'baria Pressmen meet Biswas

A delegation of the Brahmanbaria Press Club called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban yesterday, reports UNB.

President of the club Mohammad Musa led the delegation.

President Biswas called upon them to be more objective in their reports and comments.

He told them to write more on the historical role played by the local musicians of Brahmanbaria.

Among others, members of the club and district representatives of various national dailies Monsur Kamal, Shirajul Islam, Sadequr Rahman, Qazi Mujibur Rahman, Rashidul Islam, Nurul Hossain were present on the occasion.

Death anniversary

The death anniversary of Dr Abdul Matin Chaudhury, former vice-chancellor of Dhaka University will be observed on June 24.

Friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend a milad mahfil to be held at 66B, Road 18, Banani at 7 pm on the day.

Seminar on TV, radio June 27

A three-day seminar on the "Future of Bangladesh's Electronic Media" will begin at the auditorium of the German Cultural Centre in the city on June 27, reports UNB.

Organised by Ganamadhyan Kendra, the Mass Media Centre, the seminar will discuss solutions of the problems faced by the country's television and radio.

Arefin Badal will present the keynote paper on the problems and prospects of package programmes on Bangladesh Television on the first day.

Abdullah Al Mamun, Hedayet Hossain Morshed, Jamaluddin Hossain, Nawajish Ali Khan and Shahidul Haq Khan will take part in the discussion to be presided over by Abdullah Abu Sayeed.

On June 28, Muhammad Jahangir will present a paper on 'Private TV-Radio Channel in the Light of Free Market Economy'. Mahbub Jamil will preside while Ataus Samad, Sakhawat Ali Khan, Anu Jaidar, Iqbal Ahmed and Shahjahan Majumder will take part in the discussion.

Muhammad Ibrahim will present the keynote paper on 'Development Concept and Electronic Media of Bangladesh on the concluding day of the seminar on June 29.

5 top officials to monitor relief

The government yesterday deputed two joint secretaries and three directors in five flood-affected districts to monitor relief activities there, reports UNB.

The affected districts and the deputed officers are as follows: Sylhet — Shahriar Z R Iqbal, joint secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief.

Sunamganj — Golam Mur-taza, joint secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Moulvibazar — Asadul Huq, Director, Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation.

Sirajganj — D N Bepari, Director, Disaster Management Bureau and Gaibandha — AFM Sirajul Huq, director at the Bureau.

The government yesterday sanctioned 50 metric tons of wheat and Taka 50,000 for flood-affected Gaibandha district, says a PID handout.

97 held in city

Police rounded up 97 people, including 15 wanted criminals, from different parts of the city in last 24 hours on various charges yesterday, reports UNB.

All the arrested people were produced before court.

DU to have computerised library Four-year honours course to be introduced

By DU Correspondent

Professor Emaj Uddin Ahmed, the Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University said yesterday that the university will introduce an integrated course system in Honours and Masters courses to achieve international standard.

Under new system the Honours courses will be extended to four years from three years, or the Masters courses will be of two years instead of one year. The new system will be implemented from the coming academic session, the VC said.

He was addressing a teachers' meeting at the TSC auditorium of the DU.

The VC also said the DU will introduce a 'University Award' for the teachers from the coming session.

At least 10 teachers will be sent abroad for higher education every year, the VC added.

He also disclosed that the university library will be computerised by the end of this month and the library will be brought under air conditioning by July this year.

Referring to the various problems of DU, the VC said "we are now facing two major problems — terrorism and session jam."

The terrorist activities on the campus have already been minimised, and session jam is also expected to be decrease with the introduction of the

academic calendar." About student politics, the VC said "we are not against student politics, but must condemn that politics which disturbs improve the academic atmosphere of the campus."

The VC urged the people to help university authorities improve the academic atmosphere at Dhaka University.

Biswas visits ailing MP Muraduzzaman

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday visited Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) to see Mirza Muraduzzaman MP, now under treatment there, reports UNB.

President Biswas stayed with the ailing member of parliament for sometime and enquired about his condition. He advised the attending physicians to provide him with the best possible treatment available.

Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain, Deputy Minister for Health and Family Welfare Sirajul Haq, Principal of DMCC Professor MA Hadi and Director of DMCC Brig. Zahiruddin Ahmed were present.

BDRCS relief for 7 dists

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) yesterday sent a large quantity of relief materials to the people of seven flood affected districts, a BDRCS press release in the city said, reports BSS.

Yesterday's consignment was for the districts of Gaibandha, Pabna, Sirajganj, Kurigram, Nilphamari, Manikganj and Jamalpur.

The relief includes rice, pulses, old sarees, lungis and other foodstuff.

The chairman of the BDRCS Syed Shahidul Haque Jamal MP directed the members and leaders of the executive committees of the local units, and volunteers of the youth Red Crescent Society to participate in the relief operation.

RECEIVED FROM BY HONOUR OF MR JUSTICE T. H. KHAN ON HIS ELECTION AS JUDGE OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA CONSTITUTED BY THE U.N.O. SUPREME COURT BAR ASSOCIATION 21ST JUNE 1995.



Guest of Honour Justice T H Khan, president of the Supreme Court Bar Association, speaking at a reception accorded him by the Supreme Court Bar on his election as a judge of the United Nations International Tribunal for Rwanda at the Bar premises yesterday. Also seen, from left, are former SC Bar presidents Kazi Golam Mahub and Sirajul Huq, Senior Vice President of the association Syed Zillul Huq and Secretary S M Munir. — Star photo

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PID condole death

Officers and members of the staff of Press Information Department (PID) at a meeting yesterday condoled the death of Amir Hossain, a despatch rider of the Chittagong regional office of the department, reports BSS.

Amir Hossain died in Chittagong on June 12. He worked in the regional office for long 27 years.

Speaking on the occasion, principal information officer Abdur Rahim recalled the dedication, devotion and dutifulness of the deceased.

Weather

Rain, gusty wind likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a number of places over Chittagong, Barisal divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Khulna and Rajshahi divisions with moderately heavy falls at places over Chittagong and Barisal divisions during the 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Day temperatures are likely to rise by 1-2 degrees Celsius over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions but no appreciable change is expected over Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions.

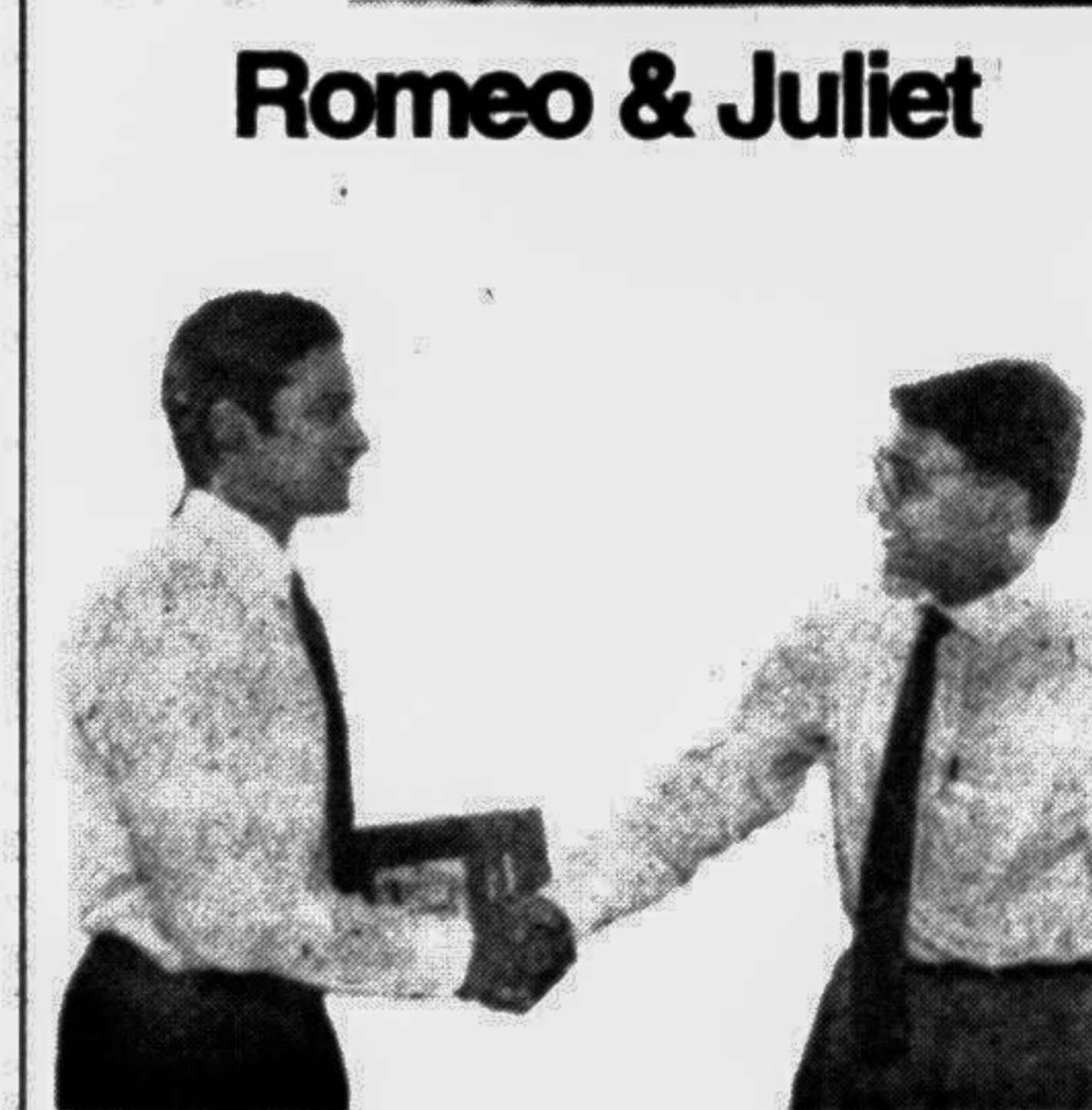
Meanwhile, Cox's Bazar experienced the highest 99 millimetres of rain during the 24 hours till 6 am yesterday. Chittagong had 79 millimetres of rain, Barisal 52, Rajshahi 50, Rangpur 47, Sylhet 32, Comilla 8, and Dinajpur and Khulna 4 each.

The country's highest temperature yesterday was 34 degrees Celsius recorded at Jessore and the lowest was 22.4 degrees at Kutubdia.

The sun sets today at 6:49 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:12 am.



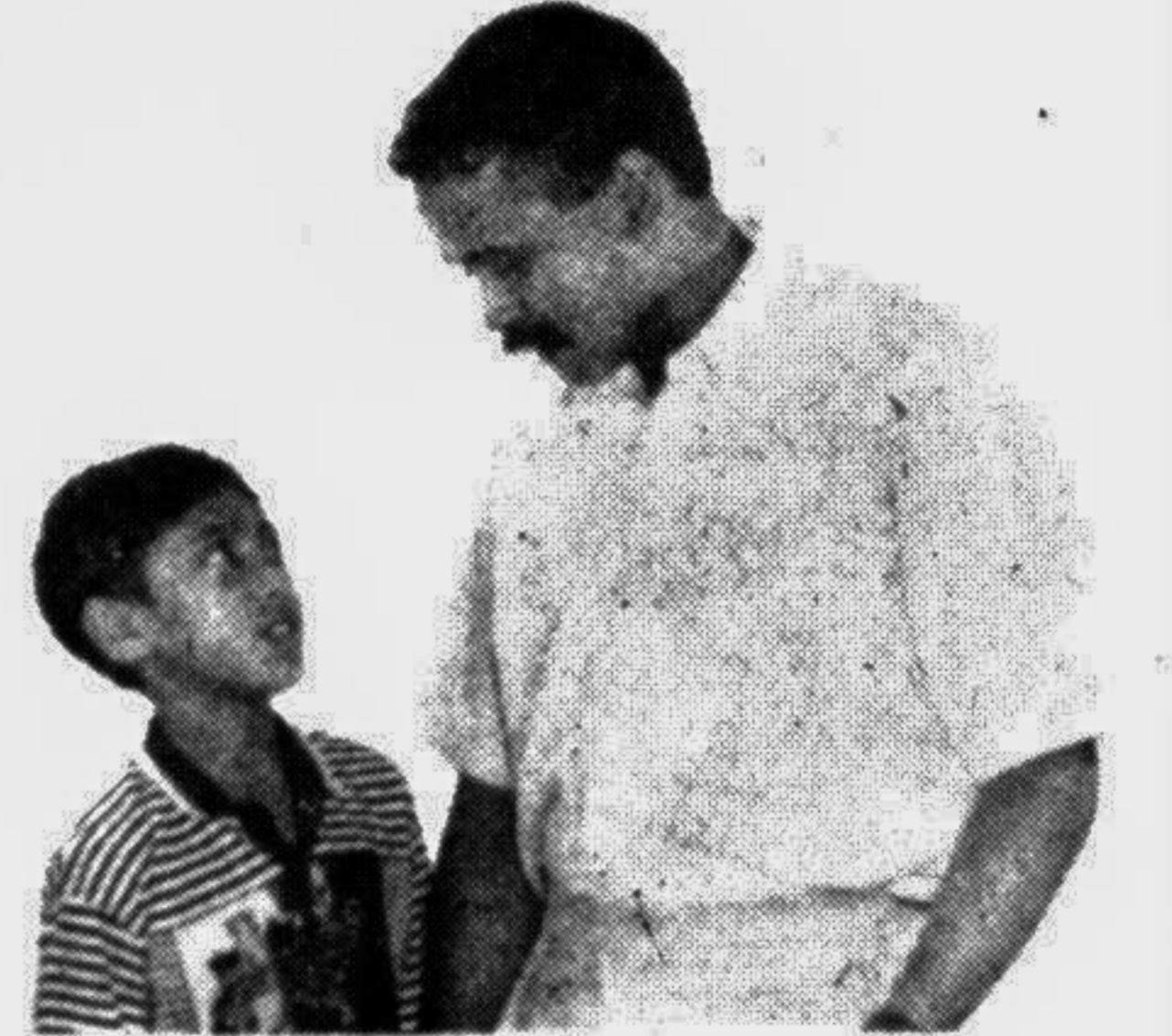
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