

Dhaka Day by Day

Troublesome Visa

by Lamis Hossain

HMM...LUCKY SEVEN!
GIVE HIM A VISA!



SHARIF '95

Nothing tests your patriotic fervour more than lining up at a foreign visa office with a Bangladeshi passport. Whether you're tall, short, rich or poor, as far as the dour visa official is concerned, you have "ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT" branded all across your forehead.

Whereas a US passport is the key to the world, a Bangladeshi one gets doors slammed in front of your face. Entering a foreign country is hard enough, but some of us may not even make it into the embassy/high commission. At "Fort Knox" (easy guess) you get frisked and made to feel as if you're already trespassing on foreign land.

At the visa office, you may fall prey to a false sense of security. After all, you are an educated, decent person with tolerable English skills and no intention of immigrating. Surely they could not dare refuse you. But be warned. Don't feel sorry for the skinny bearded man and his wife covered in a black burkha with heavy gold bangles peeking through her sleeves. Their desperation to immigrate may ooze out of every pore, but who knows how this visa roulette works?

Filling up the forms is in itself a daunting task. You might think that the white populated Western world would be the hardest to get into, but it is not. Our immediate neighbours are no better. The Indian visa form is six sides long — you may as well be writing your memoirs.

There are serious inquiries to be made: Have you ever been deported/refused entry? Have you been arrested or involved with narcotics? Who in their right minds would actually confess, "Um, actually, I've been kicked out three times from your esteemed nation while I was, under the heavy influence of/carrying/selling/stealing certain illicit substances." This is not the appropriate place to detail your "experimentation" history.

What you say on the visa form and your passport can come back to haunt you. Does your passport state "student" because you

know you've only taken a year off from your studies and your Tk 21,000 a month job is only a temporary stint to pass your time and besides this way you needn't pay income tax? Tough luck. The official in question will not fail to detect the discrepancy between your passport status and the trip you're making to represent your company/NGO at a conference. But bluffing your way through may help as an acquaintance did recently. By lying about his status, his job, and the required permission from the government, he managed to smooth talk his way out of the country.

But whether you go abroad or not can depend on the mood of a single consular official. You may just be too brown, too rich, too arrogant, too poor, too educated or too ugly to be given a visa. People come back with horror stories of 'so and so' in visa booth number X. It's amazing to discover (and this has really happened) that your good-for-nothing friend who wants to be a cab driver/bell-boy/bar man in New York, has been given a visa on the first attempt. On the other hand, your brilliant SAT score cousin with admission and a full scholarship to a prestigious liberal arts college gets refused leave to entry not once, but twice. So much for the rhetoric about encouraging professionals to immigrate because unskilled workers displace the poor minority in developed nations.

Sometimes you have absolutely no idea why your visa was refused. Two young women waiting for an interview were denied permission to enter the US without even being seen.

Getting the visa, of course is a great relief. You have gone through all the trouble of getting into the embassy, lining up, filling up the visa form, facing the visa official and feeling as small as an amoeba, just to get a little stamp emblazoned on your passport.

Maybe, you should immigrate after all. It would serve them right for giving you such a hard time.

60000 patients benefit from N-medicine

By SSMCH Correspondent

Fifty to sixty thousand patients benefit annually from the ten nuclear medicine centres in different medical colleges in the country.

This was disclosed by M A Quyum, chairman of Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission at the opening function of the 7th national conference of Bangladesh Society of Ultrasonography yesterday in the city.

Dr. Haider Ali Khan, general secretary of the society said that USG is a new dimension in the method of diagnosis of various diseases.

Dr. Khan said, "The society is now trying to integrate USG course in a university curriculum". He said the services offered by the local USG centres are as good as those anywhere in the subcontinent.

Presided over by Dr. Fauzia Moslem, the seminar was addressed, among others, by Dr. M A Karim, Dr. Kanu Bala, Dr. Feroz Ahmed and others.

A 17-member executive committee was formed with Dr M A Karim, Dr Kanu Gopal Bala and Dr Almas Begum as president, general secretary and treasurer respectively.

Speaker opens tree plantation campaign

KHULNA, June 23: Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali inaugurated a fortnight-long tree plantation drive here today, reports UNB.

The drive was undertaken jointly by Khulna City Corporation (KCC), district administration and Forest Department.

Addressing a function on the occasion, the Speaker called for the preservation of trees as well as plantation.

He also called upon law enforcing agencies to remain vigilant and be more active to stop illegal felling of trees in the country.

The Speaker, later distributed saplings among some school children at the function held at Zia Hall premises in the city.

KCC Mayor Sheikh Taveb Rahman and Deputy Commissioner Kazi Riazul Haq also spoke on the occasion.

Later, at another function, the Speaker handed over an ambulance to Vice-Chancellor of Khulna University. The ambulance was donated by the Ministry of Health.

DU student dies at DMCH

By DU Correspondent

Muniruzzaman, a third year student of Mathematics department of Dhaka University (DU) died yesterday at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). The deceased was a resident of Fazlul Haq Hall of the university.

Sources said he became critically ill on Thursday night and was removed to the DMCH at 2 am yesterday.

Doctors on duty visited him at 9 am and he died an hour later.

Students complained that Muniruzzaman died due to the negligence of the hospital authorities and the doctors on duty.

They demanded proper investigation and punishment of those responsible.

DUDS launches cleanliness drive

Dhaka University Debating Society (DUDS) began a year-long cleanliness and tree plantation programme on the campus yesterday, reports UNB.

Associate Professor of the Institute of Business Administration and DUDS advisor Iqbal Ahmed inaugurated the programme yesterday morning at the transport depot area.

A large number of DUDS member participated in the programme.

DUDS president Shoyeb Ahmed told UNB that they have selected five locations, including Science Faculty and Commerce Faculty areas on the campus, for cleaning and converting them into gardens.

The members of the society will clean the areas one day in every month. They will also appoint five gardeners to look after the gardens, he added.



Sanjida Chowdhury presenting Tagore songs at a function organised by Shurbani at the Russian Cultural Centre in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Theatre festival begins

By Staff Correspondent

A three-day drama festival, organised by the theatre company, Nattiyadhara, to mark its second founding anniversary, began in the city yesterday.

Poet Shamsur Rahman inaugurated the festival by lighting 'pradeeps' (clay lamps) to the accompaniment of traditional drums, at the Mahila Samity auditorium.

On the occasion, Nattiyadhara also honoured the actor Aly Zaker and the playwright Selim Al Din by according them a reception, attended by noted theatre personalities, including Asaduzzaman Noor, Tarik Anam Khan, Khaled Khan, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Biplob Bala and the chief guest, Shamsur Rahman.

Convenor of the festival committee, Tarikul Alam Chowdhury presided over the function, which was conducted by Alock Basu.

The first day of celebrations rounded off with a performance of the play 'Hamlet Uho Hamlet' — a Nattiyadhara production based on Shakespeare's 'Hamlet'.

The festival continues this morning with a rally and a street play in front of the Jatiya Press Club.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka Theatre will stage the play 'Hat Hodai' at the Mahila Samity auditorium this evening at seven as part of the festival, while Nagorik Natya Sampraday will stage their play 'Mukhosh' tomorrow at the same time.

What's on today...

Theatre Centre: As part of the centre's 13th founding anniversary programme, the drama 'Kannyadan' will be staged. The drama will be presented by Nandan. Venue: 4, Green Square. Time: 7 pm.

Talk on planning: A day-long open dialogue on the draft of "Participatory Perspective Planning for Bangladesh: 1995-2010" will be held. Venue: NEC conference room of Planning Commission. Time: 10 am. State Minister for Planning Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan will preside.

German film show: The documentary "Directed by... Reinhard Hauff" by Peter Buchka and the feature film "Line 1" by Reinhard Hauff will be shown on the concluding day of Reinhard Hauff Retrospective. Venue: German cultural centre, Road #9, Dhanmondi. Time: 5 and 6 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhanmondi: The regular meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhaka Capital: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Officers' Club, Bailey Road. Time: 5:30 pm.

Nattiyadhara anniversary: As part of its 2nd founding anniversary programme, the theatre group has organised a rally and street theatre. The rally will start at 11:00 am from the Mahila Samity, Bailey Road and end at the National Press Club. The drama 'Haat Hadai' will be staged in the evening.

Bangladesh Assoc for the Aged: Jointly organised by the association and the Institute of Geriatric Medicine, a national-level workshop on the welfare of the aged will begin. Venue: Probin Bhaban, Agargaon.

Weather

Heavy rainfall likely

Under the influence of active monsoon over the country, moderate to moderately heavy rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at most places over Chittagong, Barisal, Khulna, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions during the next 12 hours, reports UNB.

Met Office says heavy fall is likely at places over Chittagong, Dhaka, Rajshahi divisions and the regions of Jessore, Khulna, Barisal and Patuakhali during the period. Day temperature may fall by 1.3 degree Celsius over the country.

Meantime, Teknaf experienced the highest 65 mm rain during the last 12 hours till 6 pm today. Kutubdia and Madaripur each had 23 mm rain, Maidicourt 21, Patuakhali 20, Chittagong and Mymensingh 19 each, Ishurdi 17, Bhola 16, Sylhet 14, Barisal 12, Chuadanga 11, Faridpur 10 and Dhaka 6 mm shower during the period.

In its outlook for subsequent two days Met Office predicted that weather may improve. Giving extended outlook for another five days weathermen says that rainfall activity is likely to increase.

Book launching

The publication ceremony of a book "Supremacy of Destiny" by Mashiar Rahman was held on Sunday last at a city hotel, reports BSS.

Minister of State for Finance Mojibur Rahman was the chief guest at the function which was also addressed by L K Siddiqui MP, Dr A T M Shamsul Huda, secretary, banking division, Prof Kabir Chowdhury and Prof Salahuddin Ahmed.

It was presided by Justice K M Sobhan.

Speakers said the book 'Supremacy of Destiny' dwelt about the life of some illustrious personalities of the sub-continent.

3 killed in city

By DMCH Correspondent

Three persons were killed in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

One Hazrat Ali, 28, a truck driver, was killed when another truck ran over him at Dhania under Demra thana at about 11 am. Ali was repairing his truck parked on the road.

Another incident Asgar Ali, 50, of Shanir Akra, who was injured when a heavy sack fell on him at the national stadium market succumbed to his injuries at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday morning.

Meanwhile, one Babul, 8, of R K Mission Road was electrocuted at his residence.

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Playwright Sayeed Ahmed speaking at the Theatre Centre Honour Award ceremony in the city Thursday.



'Create wealth to remove poverty'

Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia yesterday called for putting in united efforts to create wealth in order to eradicate poverty from society, reports BSS.

Speaking at a seminar on "Poverty Alleviation: Issues and Challenges" at the National Press Club he said Islam had shown the clear path towards alleviating poverty through distribution of wealth after meeting one's requirements.

There is no scope of accumulating wealth in Islam, he told the seminar organised by Social Science Institute, Bangladesh.

Two papers on poverty alleviation were presented at the seminar by Dr Abdul Hasan M Sadeq, Dean, Research Centre of the International Islamic University of Malaysia and journalist Lutful Kabir Sadi.

Presided over by Dr M A Mannan, chairman of the institute the seminar was also addressed by Shah Abdul Hannan, Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank.

Rafiqul Islam Mia said in the present day world the nations which had been controlling the technology for means of production were, in fact, exploiting the developing countries.

He said almighty Allah has stated time and again in the holy Quran the rights of the poor people including the orphans. He said the teaching of Islam is to establish a society based on justice where everyone should be ensured of minimum basic needs.

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