

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Incorrigible Telephone Lines

by Farah Ghuznavi

In the last couple of years, the standards of efficiency in Dhaka's telephone system appear to have been affected by a mysterious virus that makes it virtually impossible to get any number on the first try (or even the second, and sometimes third try, for that matter). Now when you dial a number, you have to brace yourself for a wide range of possibilities: that you will reach the wrong number (one so wrong, in fact, that it only has one digit in common with the number you dialed), that you will have a cross connection which makes it hard to make out a word that the other person is saying (so that it takes a while to figure out whether you are even speaking to the person you think you are conversing with), that your line will be free of cross-connections, but beset with so much static that you still can't figure out who you are talking to and finally, that you will reach the correct number, only to find that you keep getting cut off every couple of minutes.

Is this an attempt on the T and T board's part to make us more efficient in our conversations, or to drive up revenues? I am certainly paying heavier phone bills than I care to, because of all these wrong numbers and "two-minute automatic cut-off point" lines! It reminds me of a cartoon I saw a few

dinner for me. My first friend, Saira, got my second friend Nisha's number from me, and proceeded to ring her up. Nisha (who for some reason assumed that it was me making some kind of prank call to her — perhaps because Saira's name and mine sound similar over the telephone) proceeded to address her in the eccentric and rather rude fashion in which she usually addresses her nearest and dearest (i.e. using a list of insults as endearments!). It was even harder for her to recognise that the voice on the line was not mine, because the line was, as usual, somewhat unclear.

When Nisha realised (after a cool five minutes) that the person she had been addressing far too familiarly was not in fact me, she was so horrified that she called me up and begged me to reassure her that I had in fact called her five minutes ago. When I told her that it was Saira who had called to invite her to dinner, she almost died of mortification! Luckily for her, for once the unclear line helped, in that Saira couldn't understand most of what she had been saying!

On another occasion, a friend of mine who was planning to get married the following month, was "privileged", due to an unfortunate cross connection, to hear her fiancé romancing someone else. I won't go



Bangladesh Samajtantrik Dal brought out a procession in the city yesterday calling for the protection of Chandpur town and Haimchar from erosion. —Star photo

## Nepal's role vital in water sharing: Biswas

President Abdur Rahman Biswas said Nepal, being an upper-riparian country, could play a vital role in sharing the waters of common rivers in the region, reports UNB.

He made the observation when the visiting Nepalese Minister for Finance and Civil Supplies, Bharat Mohan Adhikari, called on him at Bangabhaban yesterday.

Welcoming the Nepalese Minister, the President hoped the existing excellent relations between the two countries would expand further in the years to come.

There is wide scope for further expansion of economic cooperation for the benefit of both the countries, Biswas said laying stress on exporting non-traditional items from Bangladesh to Nepal. There is much scope for setting up various industries in joint venture as well, he added.

Biswas said the volume of trade between the two coun-

tries would substantially increase with the functioning of SAPTA. He hoped that the 9th meeting of Bangladesh-Nepal Joint Economic Commission would succeed in adopting fruitful measures for ensuring greater economic cooperation between Dhaka and Kathmandu.

Speaking on the occasion, the Nepalese Minister also emphasised the need for bolstering bilateral relations to the mutual benefit of the two nations.

President Biswas requested the Nepalese Minister to convey his greetings and good wishes to the King, the Prime Minister and the people of Nepal.

Among others, Secretary to the President Ataul Huq, Military Secretary to the President Maj Gen Sardar Md Ali Hasan, Bangladesh Ambassador to Nepal Syed Muhammad Hossain and Nepalese Ambassador in Bangladesh LB Shreshtha were present.

## Reception to Prof Sufia

Islamic History and Culture Department of Dhaka University accorded a reception to Prof Sufia Ahmed at TSC auditorium yesterday on her appointment as a National Professor, reports UNB.

Vice Chancellor Prof Emajuddin Ahmed attended the function as chief guest.

Presided over by the Chairman of the Department, AK Idris Ali, the function was also addressed, by Arts Faculty Dean Prof Aminul Islam, Dr Ibrahim and Prof MR Tarafdar.

Addressing the function, Prof Emajuddin Ahmed said we should pay due respect to scholars of the country following the instances of the civilised nations.

Sufia Ahmed in her speech said, the respect, that has been shown to her, would encourage the women community to play a key role in developing the nation.

## Employees body meeting

Convention of the greater Mymensingh unit of Bangladesh City and Municipal Employees Federation will be held at Mymensingh Town Hall auditorium today, reports BSS.

Jute Minister ASM Hanif Shah will attend the convention as chief guest.

## 'Unregulated market ignores externalities'

By Staff Correspondent

Both intellectually and in practice, the unregulated market ignores externalities and is blind to poverty, a noted British development economist now on a visit here said yesterday.

"The first is of particular concern as issues of the environment and technological change loom larger while the second was revealed as a major fault-line by the growing poverty in many adjusting countries in the '80s," said Dr Frances Stewart, Director, International Development Centre, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford.

She was delivering the 11th biennial conference address of the Bangladesh Economic Association (BEA) on "Why We Need a Structured Market" at the Engineers' Institution auditorium. The address was chaired by the former president of the BEA and present executive committee member of the International Economic Association, Prof Rehman Sobhan.

"What is needed is a structured market where the state provides a structure for the market to guide it towards the achievement of economic and social goals," argued Stewart, an Oxford-trained economist.

According to her, a structured market is a market which operates within a structure imposed by the government and within this structure the market operates freely.

"The objective of structuring the market is to avoid some of the market failures while retaining the market as

the main mechanism for allocating resources," she said.

She found four practical deficiencies of the unregulated market: the failure systematically to meet social needs; the special failure to meet social needs during stabilisation and adjustment; the failure to promote appropriate technology; and issues related to growth and learning.

Refuting the point of the open and market-oriented economies as model of success, she said, "in this shift the serious deficiency of the market in economic and social terms were ignored, as was the fact the 'success' stories involved a strong element of government regulation."

The Malaysian New Economic Policy was devised in the direction of, what she called, a structured market-orientation.

"The success of the structured market in Malaysia in meeting its own objectives — narrowing gaps between Malays and others — was achieved without undermining growth of equity," she added.

According to Stewart, structuring the market involves four elements: defining the goals; deriving targets from these goals; identification of instruments to achieve the targets; and continuous monitoring.

However, she said three possible difficulties with proposal to promote structured markets are apparent. They include: difficulties related to setting targets; a possible conflict with efficiency; and opposition from political and bureaucratic interests.

## Merill praises Dhaka's economic growth

US Ambassador in Dhaka David N Merrill yesterday said the overall economic growth of Bangladesh has increased significantly due to its export-led strategy, reports UNB.

"This strategy has been proved useful for the country and the trend of economic growth is going upward gradually," he said at a meeting of Rotarians in the city yesterday.

The US Ambassador was speaking on "Competitive Economic Role of Bangladesh" at the meeting of Rotary Club of Dhaka at Sonargaon Hotel.

Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni also addressed the function, presided over by president of Rotary Club of Dhaka Sultan M Rahman.

To maintain the present trend of economic growth and capture the international

market, Merrill suggested steps, like maintaining the quality of products and international standard, investment in proper sector and advertisement of the products.

Merrill stressed the need for concerted efforts of the business institutions and NGOs to carry forward the development activities. A good number of NGOs are interested in working with business firms, he added.

He said mutually beneficial partnership between business firms and NGOs will help augment the economic activities in the country.

The meeting was told that the Club had collected a Tk 57 thousand to distribute relief materials among the flood-affected people in different places of the country.



years ago, depicting how the myriad possibilities of getting "misconnected" on the Calcutta telephone system meant that the chances of reaching the correct person were twenty-five to one!

I don't think that the Dhaka system has reached those levels yet (though there are some very frustrated people who might disagree with me), but certainly the current situation is less than satisfactory. Quite apart from spiralling phone bills, it can give rise to quite embarrassing situations. A few months ago, a friend of mine was planning to ring another friend of mine (whom she didn't know very well) to invited her to a

into the painful details of what followed. Suffice it to say, it was bound to end in tears, and that it certainly did!

Since telephone romances are perhaps the most popular mating ritual in Dhaka, the incident was perhaps not such a remarkable coincidence. But the fact remains that one clearly has to be very careful about what one says on the Dhaka lines. You just don't know who might be listening! For the sake of forlorn lovers, smugglers and those engaged in espionage (who run the strongest risk of being adversely affected by these glitches in the system), I urge the concerned authorities to take action quickly.



## NSC lottery draw tomorrow

The 9th draw of National Sports Council Lottery will be held at Krira Bhavan in the city at 5 pm tomorrow, reports UNB.

Fisheries and Livestock Minister Abdullah Al Noman is expected to attend the function as chief guest. State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain will be present as special guest on the occasion.

## Office-bearers of Diabetic assoc

Kabirul Alam and Sheikh Abdus Satter have been elected president and general secretary of the employees welfare union of the Dhaka Diabetic Association, reports UNB.

Twelve other office bearers and 19 executive members of the union have also been elected from Kabir-Satter parishad which swept the election of Friday, in a triangular fight.

Shamsul Haque has been elected senior vice president, Nuruzzaman Sarder and Abu Taher vice-presidents, Khorshed Alam and Nurul Haque joint secretaries, Abdur Rashid treasurer, Humayun Kabir assistant treasurer, Muhammad Ali Siddiqui organising secretary, Kazi Abdul Haque publicity secretary, Nur Muhammad sports and cultural secretary, Sankari Rani Paroi secretary for women affairs and Mustafizur Rahman office secretary.

## Leasing out of ferries proposed

The 33rd meeting of the parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Communications was held yesterday in the Sangsad Bhavan with Communications Minister Oli Ahmad in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting was told that the government could save the cost of fuel and lubricant of the ferries by leasing out those to the private sector.

The meeting also discussed various activities and programmes of Roads and Highways Department, Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) and Jamuna Bridge Authority.

Bangladesh Islamic Front brought out a procession in the city yesterday in connection with the observance of Eid-e-Miladunabi. —Star photo

### STUDY IN THE USA

If you are planning to study in the USA you can get professional advice and counselling from a

- Professor working in the USA
- Having experience in advising for 10 years in the USA and
- Licensed (USA) academic counsellor working in the USA

Contact: Immediately 817080 or 329193 S-379

### MITSUBI O.S.K. LINES LTD, JAPAN

#### NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES

The Containerised cargo ex. M. V. TYNE V-2265 from Le-havre and Rotterdam have been relayed to M. V. IRINI VOY - 205 Import Rotation No. 678/95 Which is due to arrive Chittagong on or about 30-07-1995 from Singapore.

Consignees are requested to take delivery of their cargo from FCL containers within 5 days free time from the date of landing. If the cargo is not cleared within 45 days from landing then the disposal of the cargo will be governed by the relevant Customs Act.

Agents: BIRDS BANGLADESH AGENCIES LTD.

103, AGRABAD COMMERCIAL AREA, CHITTAGONG.

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### KAWASAKI KISEN KAISHA LTD.

#### NOTICE TO CONSIGNEES

THE CONTAINERISED CARGO EX. VIRA BHUM VOY-136N FROM JAKARTA, EX. LEWARD VOY-526S FROM BUSAN HAVE BEEN RELAYED TO FEEDER VESSEL M. V. FONG SHIN VOY -9521 IMPORT ROT. NO. 667/95 IS DUE TO ARRIVE CHITTAGONG ON OR ABOUT 30-07-1995.

CONSIGNEES ARE REQUESTED TO TAKE DELIVERY OF THEIR CARGO FROM FCL CONTAINERS WITHIN 5 (FIVE) DAYS FREE TIME FROM THE DATE OF LANDING. IF THE CARGO IS NOT CLEARED WITHIN 45 DAYS FROM LANDING THEN THE CARGO WILL BE GOVERNED BY THE RELEVANT CUSTOMS ACT.

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236, NEW CIRCULAR ROAD, MOGHBAZAR, DHAKA-1217. TEL: 416631 / 416662 / 836860-1 FAX: (880-2) 836886

## WANTED CONSULTING FIRM

An experienced Engineering Consulting firm for a proposed 50 storied commercial Building in Motijheel Area, Dhaka is urgently required. Consulting firm will be responsible for SOIL TEST, STRUCTURAL DESIGN & ESTIMATE. Please Contact : (Between 1:00 to 3:00 P.M.) REZA SHAH JAMAL BRICKS LTD. 63 PURANA PALTAN, DHAKA (OPPOSITE TO BANGLADESH TIMES)

### Bangladesh Open University Project

Board Bazar, Gazipur

## Re-Tender Notice for Photocopier Machine

Memo No : BOU/Admn-37(48)/2/95/6743 Date: 27-07-95  
Tender No : 2 (Procurement)/95-96  
Loan No : 1173 (BAN) (SF)

1. The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank in various currencies towards the cost of the Bangladesh Open University Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for the procurement of Photocopier Machine.
2. Bangladesh Open University Project now invites sealed bids from eligible manufacturer, agent, dealer for the supply of Photocopier Machine.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information on the bid and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the Deputy Director (Procurement), Bangladesh Open University, BOU Campus, Board Bazar, Gazipur.
4. A complete set of the bidding documents may be purchased by any interested eligible bidder on submission of a written application and upon payment of fee of Tk 500.00 (five hundred) per set (non-refundable) from the office of the Director (Finance & Accounts), Bangladesh Open University, BOU Campus, Board Bazar, Gazipur up to 09-08-95 during office hours.
5. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security money @ 2.0% of the quoted amount and must be delivered in accordance with the instructions to bidders on or before 12-00 Noon on 10-08-95 in the tender box kept in the office of the Director (Administration), Bangladesh Open University, BOU Campus (South block), 1st floor, Board Bazar, Gazipur.
6. BOU authority will not be responsible for any costs or expenses incurred by bidders in connection with the preparation or delivery of bids, including costs and expenses related to visits to the site of the installation of the goods.
7. Validity of tender: 91 (ninety one) days from the date of bid closing.
8. The order may be awarded among the different bidders (more than one) for different items on the basis of lowest quoted rates by the respective bidders or to a single bidder on total lowest basis.
9. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reasons whatsoever.
10. Manufacturers, suppliers or their agents having proven experience and after sales service facilities of similar works are eligible to bid.

Vice-Chancellor/Project Director  
Bangladesh Open University

### SEEKING RESEARCH PROPOSALS

**GRAMREEN TRUST**  
PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION

The Programme for Research on Poverty Alleviation, Gramreen Trust, seeks proposals from individuals or institutions, for research on poverty alleviation and the poor. Research could be in any discipline (including the social sciences, natural sciences, physical sciences and appropriate technology). Proposals should however be designed on the basis of consultation with the poor or with those directly working at the grassroots. The research should result in immediate value or use either to the poor or policy makers.

Researchers are invited to send in a seven to eight page (typed double space) proposal including, a statement of the problem, its relevance for the poor, the specific research question (s), the methodology, a tentative budget, a time schedule, and names and affiliations and experience of the research personnel. Projects with budgets of around Taka 50,000 will be given greater priority. However, projects with higher budgets will be funded provided they are appropriate and promising.

Proposals and inquiries regarding the Programme should be addressed to:

The Project Director  
Programme for Research on Poverty Alleviation  
Gramreen Trust  
Gramreen Bank Bhaban  
Mirpur-2, Dhaka-1216  
Phone: 805422, Fax No: 880-2-806319

## কুইজ

### সেতের প্রশ্ন - ফ্যালকন

আনুষ্ঠানিক কুইজ প্রতিযোগিতা

এতে আছে সাধারণ জ্ঞানের ৩০টি প্রশ্ন  
আর পুরস্কার আছে আকর্ষণীয়, অনেকগুলো -

প্রথম পুরস্কার : রবিন টেলিভিশন ১টি বা ২০ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড  
দ্বিতীয় পুরস্কার : রেডিওর ১টি বা ১৫ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড  
তৃতীয় পুরস্কার : সাদা-কালো টেলিভিশন ১টি বা ১০ হাজার টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড  
চতুর্থ পুরস্কার : ২০টি, প্রতিটি ৫০০ টাকার প্রাইজবন্ড

প্রতিযোগিতা সবার জন্য উন্মুক্ত  
একজন একাধিক কুপন পূরণ করতে পারবেন

ডোবের কাগজ-ফ্যালকন কুইজ প্রতিযোগিতায় অংশ নিই  
জিতে নিই ৫৫ হাজার টাকার আকর্ষণীয় পুরস্কার

কুইজ  
সেতের প্রশ্ন - এ প্রশ্ন উত্তর দিয়ে কুইজ জিতে  
আজই ডোবের কাগজ দেখুন

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