

Dhaka Day by Day

Simple pleasures

by Farah Ghuznavi

As most people grow up, or grow older, there is a natural tendency to look back on the days of one's childhood with a kind of fond nostalgia, as a simpler time, when things were happier and life was a lot less complicated!

However, for some of us, childhood was indeed simpler, not just relative to our current lifestyles, but also relative to the kind of children we have today. With their exposure to satellite television, urban lifestyles and adult company, most children today are, in fact, considerably more sophisticated than we were at their age. As a brief conversation with some of them is more than enough to indicate!

Children today often seem to relate to adults as larger versions of themselves, and have little hesitation in getting a message across when they feel, for example that an adult is asking a silly question. An eight-year old niece of mine, recently brought her sketch-book for me to take a look at. After admiring her artwork, I said (since there were a number of sketches in the book) "Have you been doing a lot of drawing lately?" She gave me a strange look, and replied composedly, "No, not really. The same as any normal child would do!" How do you respond to a comment like that?

A colleague of mine recently mentioned to me that upto the age of about twelve, she was utterly convinced that her mother was like God. "Why?" I asked. "Because she always seemed to know what I had been up to, particularly when I had been doing something naughty," she replied. It took her years to realise that, rather than a hot line to the Almighty, it was the vast body of experience gained as a result of bringing up five other children, along with clues like the purple stains on her dress (which gave away secrets such as the fact that she had been indulging in forbidden raids on the 'jaam' tree), which enabled her mother to get a very good idea of what she had been up to!

I doubt that most children today would worry so much about adults finding out what they are up to. I think that they are fairly confident that they can pull the wool over our eyes, regardles of whether or not they are, when my niece accidentally slipped up, and admitted that she'd been monkeying about and playing on the stairs (which she'd been told not to do, by me), she stemmed my mother's reprimand by saying, "well, yes, but you can't change the future, so let's not talk about it anymore." When my mother

pointed out that the little one meant the past, not the future, and called her "silly" for making that mistake, she said, very seriously, "Hey, come on! Nobody's perfect, you know!"

This sense of sophistication extends to these children's tastes, as well as their ideas, in terms not only of the toys that they play with, but even the games that they play. Kids today watch a lot of TV, and play with fairly sophisticated toys and board games, as well as, in some cases, electronic games and computers.

Yet although we were certainly not deprived in the material sense, and had plenty of toys, I think we did enjoy some fairly simple pastimes. I can recall going through a phase when I was about ten, when the great thrill for our neighbourhood gang of seven kids was to go fishing in the nearby 'pool' that had been built in order to provide water for house construction, with empty Coca-Cola bottles. What did we fish for? I blush to admit it, but it was to see how many tadpoles we could catch (with our hands, naturally!), and the one with the greatest number in their coke bottle at the end of the game was, of course, the winner!

If you think that that game was strange, you should hear one of the stories mentioned by one of my colleagues. She said that she and a group of other girls would go around collecting pretty stones (she wasn't sure what aesthetic standards were used to determine which stones were 'pretty'), and eventually built up quite a collection. They used to put these stones in a jar, add salt and chilli powder, shake them around and then take them out and suck them! She said that they would pick up all of these stones from God alone knows where, and would then go through this ritual.

At one point, they were joined by another miscreant who assured them that tender mango leaves, which smell so nice, tasted lovely when added to the mixture in the jar. In fact, they would go black when they were crushed with the stones and, as my colleague admitted, tasted horribly bitter, but as a matter of macho pride, none of the girls would admit it, and went on manfully gnawing on the stones!

It is hard to imagine any of the children I know today doing things like that, but then I'm sure they have their own equivalent of such rituals of childhood. I just hope it's not competing as to how many episodes of 'Santa Barbara' they can watch without their parents finding out.



SHAME! 95



A brief but heavy downpour came as a welcome relief yesterday amidst scorching heat of past few days. And without exception it rendered city's Kakrail area submerged. — Star photo

Australian Prof visits DU Journalism dept

Prof Lawrence Apps of the School of Communication and Cultural Studies at Curtin University of Technology, Western Australia, yesterday visited the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism of Dhaka University, reports UNB.

Prof Apps showed keen interest in different academic programmes of the department and expressed willingness to undertake collaborative research and training programmes with the department.

Art Arena's show in Japan from tomorrow

By Staff Correspondent

Art Arena Bangladesh, a local art group, will hold an exhibition in Japan from September 11-16. Works by twelve leading Bangladeshi artists including M Kibria, Rafiqun Nabi, Munirul Islam, Bulbul Osman, Hamiduzzaman Khan, Mahmudul Haq, Ranjit Das, M Yunus, Rokeya Sultana, Kanak C Chakma, SH Mahmud and Khalid Mahmud will be put on display at Tokyo's Gallery Centre Point, says a press release.

Artist Syed Hasan Mahmud, a member of Art Arena, will represent the group at the show. Mahmud, accompanied by Mohammad Yunus, Arena's convener, left for Japan August 17.

What's on today . . .

Reception for Sumita, Rahman: Commitment, a voluntary organisation, has organised a reception for film artists Sumita Devi and Rahman. A cultural function will follow. Venue: Russian Cultural Centre. Time: 5 pm.

Publication ceremony: The publication ceremony of the documentary book 'Fanshir Manche Terajon' by Anwar Kabir will be held. Venue: VIP lounge, Jatiya Press Club. Time: 5 pm. The book is based on the trial of 13 army officers in connection with the murder of President Ziaur Rahman in Chittagong in 1981.

Tagore songs: Bashasthan Unnayan Ltd will present the solo concert by Shama Rahman. Venue: WVA auditorium, Dhanmondi. Time: 7:30 pm.

CCHRB meet, polls: The general meeting and polls for the executive council of the Coordination Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB) will be held. Venue: House 5/4, Block F, Lalmatia. Time: From 9 am to 5 pm.

Ceramic art exhibition: A week-long ceramic art exhibition by Akhtarun Nahar Ivy will begin. Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy gallery. Time: 5 pm. Chief guest: Artist Quayyum Chowdhury.

and tomorrow

French film show: The film *Loeil du Matin* will be screened. Venue: Alliance Francaise auditorium. Time: 8:30 pm. Film-maker: Claude Chabrol.

Workshop on disaster management: Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Centre and PACT/PRIP have jointly organised a day-long workshop titled 'empowerment of the poor in disaster management'. Venue: BARC auditorium, Farmgate. Time: 10 am. Chief guest: Harun-al-Rashid, state minister of Disaster Management and Relief.

Weather

Rain, gusty wind likely

Moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by seasonal gusty wind may occur at many places over Chittagong, Sylhet, Barisal and Dhaka Divisions with moderately heavy rainfall at places over Khulna and Rajshahi Divisions during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office forecast that slight fall in day temperature is expected throughout the country.

Rainfall is likely to continue in the next two days.

The country's highest temperature was recorded 34.8 degrees Celsius at Sathkira and the lowest 24.6 degrees at Feni.

The sun sets today at 6:08 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:43 am.

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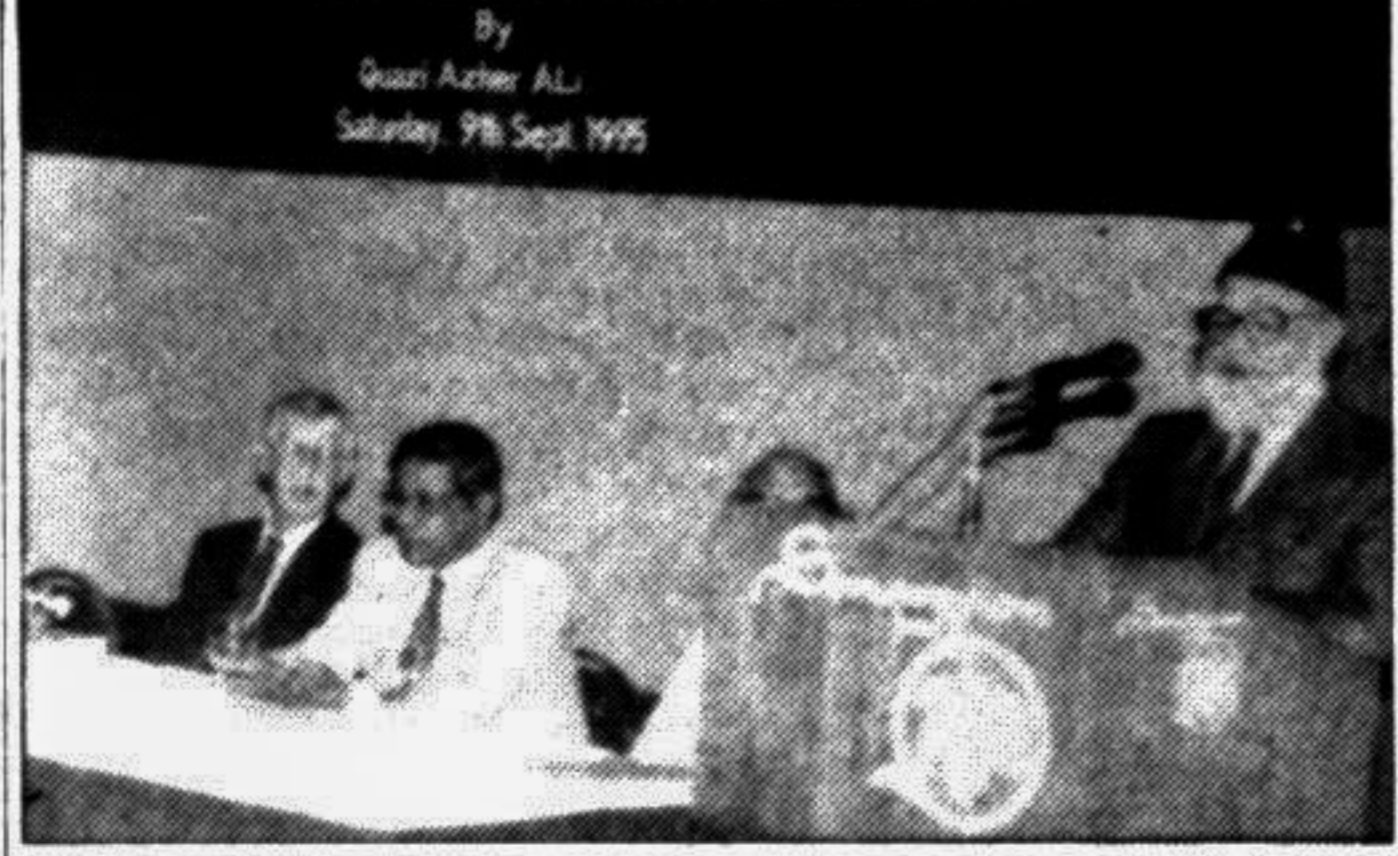
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Proshika Manobik Unnayan Kendra invites sealed quotation from bonafied and reputed Dealers / Agents to procure Video Shooting and Editing Equipment (Betacam Hi-8 SVHS Camera , Light & Tripod , Production Audio Equipment , Tape etc.). Tender schedule with detail specifications can be collected from Accounts Section on payment of (non refundable) Tk. 1000/= (Taka one thousand) only. Tender schedule will be available from 12/09/95 to 24/09/95 between 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Quotation should be dropped in the Tender Box kept at Reception of the undernoted address latest by 2:30 p.m. on or before 25/09/95 which will be opened at 3:00 p.m. on the same day.

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DECENTRALISED ADMINISTRATION IN BANGLADESH



Justice Mustafa Kamal speaking at a review session of the book 'Decentralised Administration in Bangladesh' by Quazi Azhar Ali at a city hotel yesterday. — Star photo

Call for elected local govt system

Speakers at a book review session yesterday laid emphasis on effective local government system for the sake of development as well as democracy, reports BSS.

The review session was arranged in connection with the launching of a book titled 'Decentralised Administration in Bangladesh' by former secretary Quazi Azhar Ali at a city hotel.

Justice Mustafa Kamal attended the function as chief guest while former minister M Mahbubuzzaman, Secretary

of Education M Irshadul Haq, chief of World Bank resident mission Pierre Landell Mills, Secretary of Industries Dr AMM Shawkat Ali, Secretary of Local Government Division Sved Alamgir Faruk Choudhury, Prof at Public Administration Department of Dhaka University Dr Syed Giasuddin Ahmed and publisher of the book Mohiuddin Ahmed of UPL took part in the discussion.

Justice Kamal said, in every country local government is the product of a historical evolution. He said so long local government system has been seen as a mixture of 'bureaucracy, selectocracy and democracy.'

'But today the need for an elected local government system is being felt widely, he said. Mahbubuzzaman stressed decentralisation of political system for decentralised administration. He suggested creation of provincial system for a strong local government system and to ensure its accountability.

Irshadul Haq said although there are several local government bodies, the government of Bangladesh is one of the most centralised system across the world.

Azhar Ali, in his book, said that a new tier of administration at state, regional and provincial levels may be organised. Local government, primary education, health, labour, social welfare, population planning, roads and local transport may be brought under this government.

মংলা বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষ
মংলা, বাপেরহাট
সংক্ষিপ্ত দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি
নং-মবক/নিঃপ্রঃ/কারঃ/১১১/৯৫ (২য় খণ্ড)
নিম্নবর্ণিত কাজের জন্য স্বনামধন্য পূর্বপ্রকল্পসম্পন্ন গণিত মেয়ামতকারী প্রতিষ্ঠান/ওয়ার্কসপ আবেদন প্রিকাদারদের নিকট হইতে বাংলাদেশ স্বয়ং নং-২১১১ এ সীলমোহরকৃত সর্বক্ষর নমুনা আহবান করা যাইতেছে।
ক্রমিক নং কাজের বিবরণ দরপত্র দাখিলের মূল্য (অক্ষরহযোগ্য) কার্যালয়

১।	টিউবপাইপ-৪-২৫২৪	নং গণিত ইঞ্জিন টাকা ১০০/=	একশত উদ্ধৃত দরের ২% (দুই) ১৫ (পনের) দিন।
	প্রকার ইঞ্জিন ও ডেভিসিং পেনিং এর কাজ।	টাকা মাত্র।	শতাংশ হারে।

ইং ২৪-৯-৯৫/বালু ০৯-৬-১৪০২ তারিখ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে পূর্ব অনুমতি সাপেক্ষে নিম্নবর্ণিতকারীর মসলাহ অফিস, নির্বাহী প্রকৌশলী (সিঃ) বিজ্ঞাপন-৪, মবক, মুলানা-এর অফিস হইতে দরপত্র দাখিল করা যাইবে।
ইং ২৫-৯-৯৫/বালু ১০-৬-১৪০২ তারিখ বেলা ১২-০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত দরপত্র দাখিল উপরোক্ত দরপত্রমূলে গ্রহণ করা হইবে। ইং ২৬-৯-৯৫/বালু ১১-৬-১৪০২ তারিখ বেলা ১২-১৫ মিনিট-এর সময় দরপত্রদাখিলের সময়ে যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন। নিম্নবর্ণিতকারীর দরপত্র দাখিল খোলা হইবে। মসলা বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের অনুমতি ব্যতীত ডাকট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে যে কোন সিডিটিং ব্যাংক হইতে উদ্ধৃত ব্যানার টাকা দরপত্র দাখিলের সহিত জমা দিতে হইবে। অন্যথায় দরপত্র দাখিল ব্যতীল বলিয়া বিবেচিত হইবে। অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী ও নিয়মাবলী দরপত্র দাখিলের সহিত পাওয়া যাইবে।
অত্র কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্ত মোতাবেক কর্মকর্তা/কর্মচারীদের ক্যান্সা তহবিলে ০.২৫% শতাংশ টাকা কর্তন করে রাখা হইবে (যেহা অফেব্রেশ্যন)। দরপত্র কর্তার প্রকালে মূল্য সংযোজন কর নিবন্ধনকার দাখিল করিতে হইবে। অন্যথায় তাহাদের নিকট দরপত্র দাখিল বিজ্ঞান করা হইবে না এবং সম্পাদিত কাজের বিল হইতে সরকারী বিধি মোতাবেক মূল্য সংযোজন কর কর্তন করা হইবে।
কোন কারণ পর্যালোচনা ব্যতিরেকেই যে কোন দরপত্র গ্রহণ বা ব্যতিল অবধা সকল দরপত্র ব্যতিল করার অধিকার মসলা বন্দর কর্তৃপক্ষের সংরক্ষিত থাকিবে।
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