

Dhaka Day by Day

Sideglance at a Sideshow

by Shamsad Mortuza

Go Kal Naginee! Bless the one who has paid for your milk and banana. Bless....

The command of the lady snake-charmer had little effect on the dark, slender snake wriggling through the fingers of her mistress. It seemed least bothered about the nodding head of a girl who expected a serpentine blessing.

Go Kal Naginee! These are good folks, they mean no harm. The tone of the woman had now become more persuasive and smooth only to gain a sudden crescendo. 'Go'. The last outcry of the street-performer managed to divert the attention of the audience as she craftily lead the head of the snake to that of the devotee.

Gratified, the face rose up. A young girl in her late teens: she had her money's worth from the near 14 inches long cold-blooded reptile, one of the species that Satan made good use of to deceive Eve in the garden of Eden, precipitating the fall of man.

By now there was another girl on the order of being blessed. She knelt down after paying two taka to the snake bearer. The snake, however, kept on struggling in the right hand of the lady and was forced to crawl downwards to a sleeping child.

With her left hand placed on the forehead of the child, the lady, for the first time appeared to be a mother instead of a professional fraud. A mother who resorts to all kinds of tricks for rice, if not for milk and banana, for her child, for her family.

In case of the second client, the lady skillful as she was put the head of the snake in such a position that the creature had no option left but to touch the hair of its 'blessing seeker. Go Kal Naginee, bless her for a sutor....

After the bestowing of blessing by the forked tongue, the lady explained that cass like this required a little more than snake-touch. A golden *tabiz* (talisman) got out of her bundle. It was a priceless piece containing the charm of the hilly snakes. And she was giving it only for taka 21. The client

complied and the lady put the *tabiz* on her palm and asked the snake to seal it with a kiss. Visibly, the snake obliged and there was yet another client to appear for the precious *tabiz*. But this time the snake was tired of playing the same old game. It wriggled away.

"Sister, think twice, whether you should take this *tabiz* or not. The snake has refused to approve it. Remember when you buy a snake *tabiz*, make sure that it is approved by a Kal Nag." The lanky woman in her mid-thirty gave her sermon. She took another *tabiz* and requested the snake to kiss it, and chanted, "Kal Nagine, they have given you one lakh taka, kiss it." Then she whispered to the audience that the snake was angry to learn that the million-take *tabiz* was being given away for the price of water.

The tonal rise and fall continued and the *tabiz* at the hand of the lady flashed in the day light to attract the snake for yet another kiss.

Thanks heaven! At least the snake will not starve in the jungle of men. It will get its share of milk and banana. Wait a second, milk is not a favourite dish of snake. The legend says that snakes wrap around the hind legs of milch cows to suck milk. That is just tale! The mechanism of a snake's mouth is not fit for sucking milk. Banana should not also be on the menu because snakes cannot peel.

Not doubt, this snake-charmer is milking the superstition of the audience who live in a nearby slum. When the show was about to end, the child on her lap got up only to find the snake swinging above his face, just like any other child of his age would find musical toys in his baby-cot. The only difference is this living toy has the charm to earn. This charm, however, is not potent enough to change the fate of the poor performing mother and her son, let alone the whole audience dipped in illiteracy, poverty and superstition.



The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus yesterday demanding a ban on the politics of Jamaat Shibir. — Star photo



The pro-Awami League Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus yesterday condemning Shibir activities at the Bangladesh Agri University. — Star photo

APSU blames Shibir for BAU Killings

By DU Correspondent

The All Party Students Unity (APSU), Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) unit, has held the Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS) responsible for the violence at BAU on December 16 that left three students dead and about 50 injured.

The three — killed in clashes between APSU and ICS — were identified as activists of the ICS.

APSU also demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to those responsible for the incident.

Addressing a press conference yesterday at Madhu's canteen in the Dhaka University campus, the APSU leaders said that the ICS activists attacked the Victory Day processions of APSU,

teachers and employees when they were going to place wreaths at the memorial for the martyrs.

The ICS activists hurled cocktails on the procession and "chanted slogans against the martyrs and the independence," APSU alleged.

At one stage some outsiders belonging to ICS entered the campus, firing shots. Then shots were also heard from Jamal Hossain and Shajalal halls, APSU leaders said.

The further said that because of poor visibility due to the thick fog, Shibir activists of the BAU and those from outside exchanged fire killing three 'terrorists'.

Some APSU activists were also injured when they fired indiscriminately, they alleged.

They urged the BAU authorities to reopen the uni-

Nominated for Who's Who

HQ Chowdhury, chief executive officer of Plasma Plus, a Pharmaceutical laboratory has been nominated for inclusion in the 14th edition of Marquis's Who's Who in the World, says a press release.

Physicist Chowdhury is a consultant of medical instrumental technology. He is a member of the American Association of Physicist in Medicine, and a member of the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation, USA.

Engr M A K Azad, Director, Bangladesh Power Development Board and vice president (Academic and International Affairs) Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh has been nominated for inclusion in the latest edition of Marquis Who's Who in the world, says a press release.

Engr M A K Azad is deeply involved in the activities of engineering Profession and the Institution of Engineers.

Azad is a member of World Federation of Engineering Organisation, Commonwealth Engineers Council, Federation of Engineering Institution of South and Central Asia and Islamic countries.

DUTA condemns attack

By DU Correspondent

The Dhaka University Teacher's Association (DUTA) yesterday condemned the attack on Nuban Ahmed, a teacher of the department of Economics of the Dhaka University, by some unidentified persons on December 17.

In a joint statement, Prof ATM Zahurul Haq and Prof SM Emamul Haq, president and general secretary of DUTA respectively, demanded proper treatment of Nuban Ahmed and immediate action against the attackers.

They urged the law enforcing agencies to ensure security for Nuban Ahmed.

Ban on communal politics demanded

By Staff Correspondent

The National Coordination Committee for Implementation of the Spirit of Liberation War and annihilation of Killers and Collaborators of 1971, in a statement, demanded a ban on the politics of all communal and fundamentalist forces including Jamaat and Shibir.

"The activists of Jamaat and Shibir are trying to make a room in national politics by capitalising the students killed in Agricultural University incident which they plotted and was resisted by students," said the statement, signed by its convenor Syed Hasan Imam.

"We urged the people of different strata to resist the half-day hartal called by Jamaat-Shibir alliance in six divisional headquarters," added the statement.

UNAB seminar on human rights

Rights to food, health and other basic necessities constitute fundamentals of human rights and the society must ensure accomplishment of these needs, a seminar was told in the city Sunday reports BSS.

Organised by the United Nations Association of Bangladesh (UNAB) in observance of the "International Human Rights Day," the seminar at the Engineers Institute was presided over by former Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University and chairman of University Grants Commission Prof M Shamsul Huq.

Weather

Dry weather forecast

Dry weather may continue over the country during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB. Met Office said night temperature is likely to remain unchanged over the country.

The maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday are:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	26.8	12.0	78	72
Chittagong	26.2	14.8	80	66
Rajshahi	26.3	11.0	79	73
Khulna	28.3	12.4	83	67
Barisal	26.7	12.4	96	83

TANIMA

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Seminar on edn at JU

Politicians urged to help root out campus violence

By JU Correspondent

Teachers at a seminar urged the politicians to make united efforts to eliminate existing violence from student politics for the sake of higher education in the country.

The seminar organised by the Jahangirnagar University Teachers' Association (JUTA) on "Problems and Prospects of Higher Education: Bangladesh Perspective" was held at the Social Science Gallery in the Jahangirnagar University and was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor of the JU Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury at 10:30 Wednesday.

A number of teachers took part in the discussions on four key papers presented in the seminar into two different sessions.

Prof Syed Shafiqullah and Prof Mesbahuddin Ahmed of the JU presided over the two sessions respectively.

Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui of English Department, Shamsul Islam of (Government and Politics Department), Prof Anu Mohammad of Economics and A T M Atiqur Rahman of History Department presented the papers.

Among others, Prof Nurul Islam and Shafi Ahmed of English Department, Prof

Mustahidur Rahman of Economics Department, Prof A K M Azizul Haq of Government and Politics Department and Prof Syed Shafiqullah of Chemistry Department discussed on various matters related to higher education and the system of university governance.

APSU for reducing JU winter vacation

By JU Correspondent

The All Party Students Unity (APSU) of the Jahangirnagar University (JU) unit submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury recently to curtail the winter vacation for the sake of smooth academic progress.

The APSU leaders in the memo urged the VC to reduce the vacation to seven days from 20 days as scheduled earlier.

The 20 day long winter vacation is scheduled to be on December 26.

The vacation should be reduced as the university is now behind the academic session by 18 months, the leaders said. Referring to the Ramadan vacation begins in February next, the APSU leaders said if the winter vacation is not curtailed the university will suffer a serious set back in academic progress due to the long closure of the university.

Politicians urged to boycott Jamaat

By JU Correspondent

Speakers at a discussion meeting urged the political leaders not to associate themselves with the anti-liberation force to save the country from serious consequences.

"A civil war is likely if the main political parties of the country continue their political deal with the anti-liberation force as they are doing now," they said.

In observance of the Martyred Intellectuals' Day Al-Beruni Hall (Extension) organised the discussion which was attended by the JU VC Prof Amirul Islam Chowdhury as chief guest. Proctor Alsar Ahmed Prof Alauddin Ahmed and prof Bazlur Rahman Khan also spoke on the occasion while provost of the Al-Beruni Hall Dr Swapan Kumar Dhar presided.

VC Amirul Islam said that democracy will not survive if the attitude to mutualise with the anti-liberation force is continued. "It is a matter of great regret that, after 25 years of independence, we are to feel now that we are in the same situation as we were in prior to the independence," Prof Islam said.

Awarded

Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) has awarded PhD degree to Md Feroz Alam Khan, an assistant professor of the University in the Department of Physics, for his thesis on magnetic materials, reports BSS.

EVERGREEN

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