

Dhaka Day by Day

The International Trade Fair

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

It is a basic law of the universe that one's gain is another's loss. This cliché may be applied to the Dhaka Book Fair and International Trade Fair that took place simultaneously in the city recently. That too, only a few blocks away from one another. So it was that while the stall owners of the book fair bemoaned the lack of customers the participants of the Trade Fair gloated over the thousands they attracted with their elaborate arrangements.

The Trade Fair has been indeed a grandiose event with 284 participants including 88 foreign and 196 local stalls showing a huge variety of products from chocolate milk to voltage regulators. Spread out over a huge area right next to the Election Commission were the huge pavilions to accommodate the large numbers of people. The seven day extension was certainly welcome to the last minute visitors who realised, almost too late, that they would be missing one of the biggest events of the year.

Apart from the few who couldn't or didn't bother to make it, literally thousands of people turned up. The ticket collectors were swamped with aggressive visitors who wouldn't even let them take a lunch break, they wanted to get in so bad.

Yet those who had dreamt of coming back from the fair loaded with unusual and exotic goods both local and foreign at cheap

turquois pendants and necklaces. Other countries that participated included Japan, Korea, Bhutan, China, Canada, UK, US and India which had a Gramophone of India pavilion selling cassettes of favourite Indian artists. This was definitely a stall worth browsing around in.

The Bangladeshi stalls certainly had an impressive range of products and demonstrated just how diverse our country's trade is. There was the Milk Vita stall where everyone seemed to congregate to get a cool chocolate milk drink or chew on a choc-bar. There were many stalls selling electronics — refrigerators, washing machines, water heaters and televisions. There were those selling machinery such as electricity transformers, water pumps and other agricultural equipment. Many of these items were actually made in Bangladesh or rather assembled in Bangladesh with mainly foreign parts. This impressed many of the visitors who were pleasantly surprised that such good quality products were being made in Bangladesh. "The response has been quite good," said Abu Tawhid an employee of MICRO electronics, "we have had many prospective buyers, more local than foreign, showing a keen interest in our products."

Infact, according to many of the local participants foreign buyers did not seem as enthusiastic as was hoped for. The present



prices were quite disappointed when they actually got to the area. The products were neither exotic nor cheap. This was especially true of some of the foreign stalls. Pakistan had a total of 45 stalls and while the crowds flocked to them like bees to honey, there was very little they actually brought. Most of the products were quite ordinary while some were even substandard. The Pakistani stalls, for example, had their shawls, khuses (khabli shoes) and fabrics — but in very common designs. Even the dried fruits failed to be hits with the visitors.

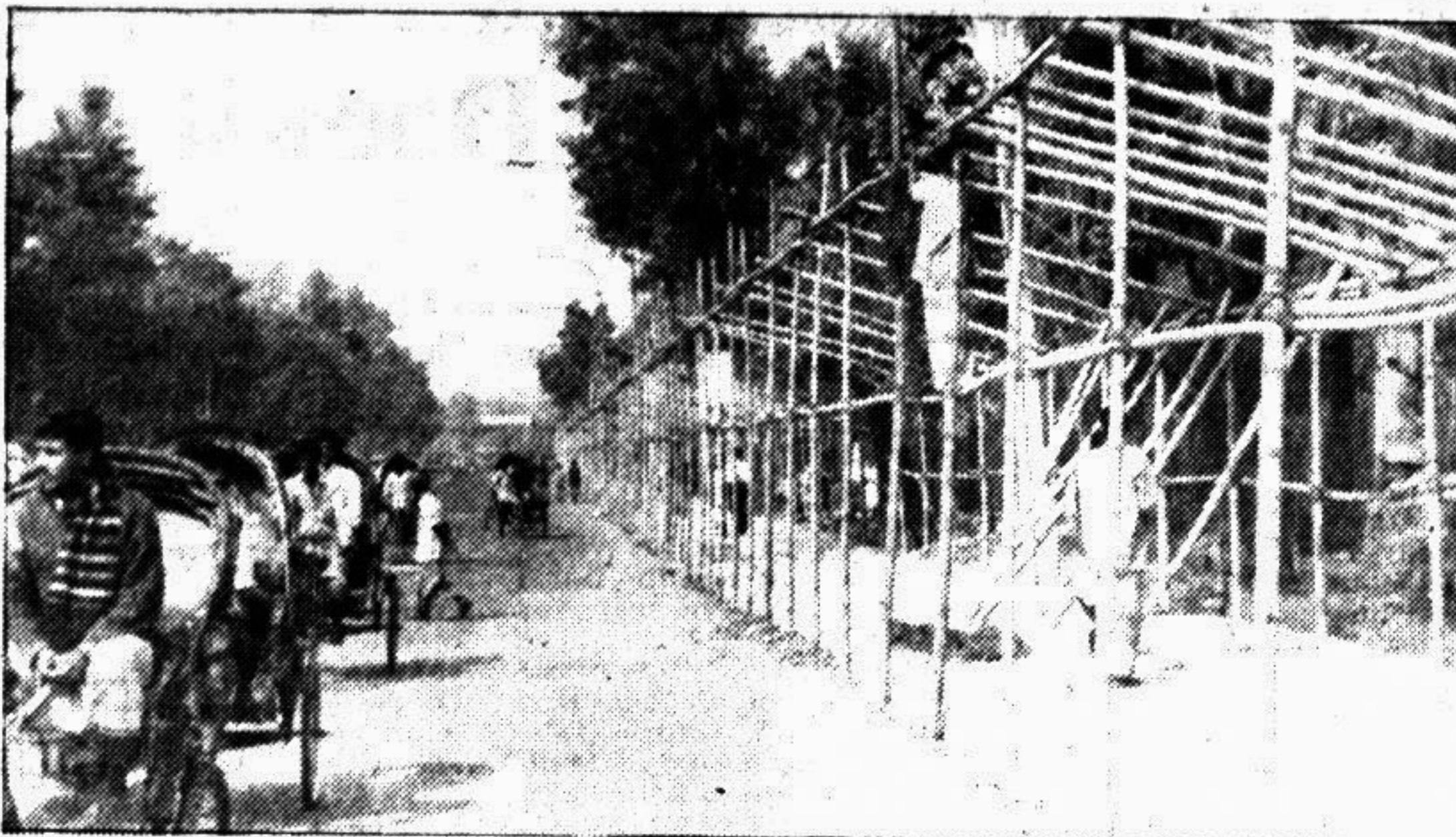
The Iranian stall — a huge pavilion cleverly styled like a mosque was like a mini super market inside and attracted the largest crowds of all — though, again, the items for sale were either too mundane (like cooking utensils) or too expensive (200 taka for a small box of Iranian sweets). The only items worth buying were the beautiful stone jewelry that included huge

political situation seemed to be the major deterrent for this lack of interest.

Leather goods, jute products and tea were also displayed by the major producers of these items.

But what seemed to attract the visitors the most, especially the women, were the Rajshahi silk and costume jewelry stalls. With the upcoming Eid, many shopaholics decided it was best to get over some of their shopping at the fair where modest discounts were given. A male visitor was overheard complaining "Why aren't there anything for men in the the silk stalls?"

Perhaps, for some, the Trade Fair proved to be a little disappointing in terms of the variety of goods worth buying. Yet for most people the fair was a place to take the family or friends to for a change from the mundane city life. Moreover, it gave the visitors the chance to get a glimpse of all the major sectors of trade in this country. In that the fair has been well worth a visit.



The Bangla Academy has begun preparations for the Amar Ekusey Boi Mela '96, which begins on February 1. — Star photo

Programme on Ekushey

The government has taken elaborate programmes to observe the Amar Ekushey in a befitting manner, reports BSS.

The programmes were approved at a co-ordination meeting held at the conference room of the Cultural Ministry with State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahar Ara Begum in the chair.

National flag will not be hoisted half-mast if the day would coincide with the Eid-ul-Fitre. District and thana authorities will organise programmes similar to the national programmes.

Some important road islands of the capital would be decorated with festoons of Bangla alphabet under the auspices of Dhaka City Corporation.

Bangla Academy will arrange a month-long book fair at the academy premises from February one. The slogan of the book fair would be "Present Book to Beloved Persons on the Eid Day." The book fair will remain open from 10 am to 5 pm every day.

Bangla Academy will hold discussion commemorating the memories of language martyrs and highlighting sig-

nificance of the day, every afternoon during the book fair. However, the discussions will be followed by cultural functions after Eid-ul-Fitre. Apart from this a book fair already began from January 22 at the Baitul Mukarram Mosque premises organised by the Islamic Foundation.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Nazrul Institute will arrange discussions and cultural functions after Eid-ul-Fitre. Bangladesh National Museum will offer an open Bangla hand writing competition for children and juveniles marking the day.

Special prayers will be offered at Azimpur graveyard, mosques and other places of worship.

Radio, television and newspapers will put up special programmes and supplements to mark the occasion.

The minister sought co-operation from all concerned for proper implementation of the programmes.

Among others, Cultural Secretary Md. Mokslesur Rahman and representatives from different ministries and institutions attended the meeting.

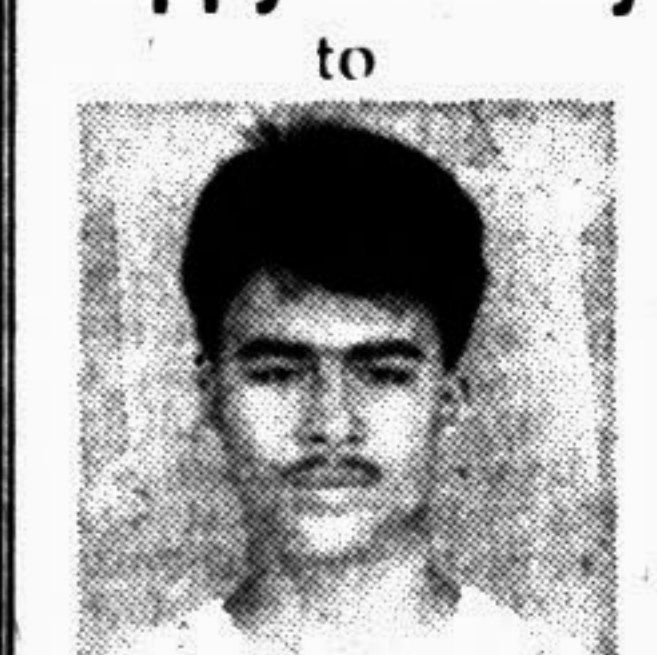
BAU admission test now on Feb 9

The written test for first year admission into Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) will now be held on February 9 from 2:30 pm to 4:30 pm instead of February 2, reports UNB.

Those who secured at least 1406 marks in SSC and HSC examinations and fulfilled other necessary conditions will be allowed to sit for the test. Minimum score of 1295 marks are needed for the reserve seats for tribal and non-tribal students.

If any admission seeker does not get his or her admit card by February 8, will be able to collect it from the Dean office of Agri Engineering Faculty from 9 am to 12 noon on February 9, the date scheduled for admission test.

Happy Birthday to



ASFAQUR Mustafizur Rahman

What's on today....

Asiatic Society of Bangladesh: The body will organise a talk on "Trends in Income Formation and Employment Pattern in Rural Bangladesh". Venue: Seminar room of society. Time: 3:30 pm.

Talk on cancer: The Bangladesh Academy of Family Physicians will organise the talk. Venue: BSU lecture room, Eastern Plaza. Time: 9 am.

Lions Club of Dhaka Pallabi: The board of directors of the club will meet. Venue: 1/C, 6/10, Mirpur. Time: 4 pm.



Devotees at Saraswati Puja mandop at Rokeya Hall in the city yesterday. — Star photo

Poetry festival Feb 1

By Staff Correspondent
The two-day tenth national poetry festival begins at the Dhaka University premises on February 1.

Poet Sufia Kamal will inaugurate the festival to be participated by over 300 poets from across the country and some 10 poets from Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, Maldives, Costa Rica and Mauritius.

Jatiya Kabita Parishad organising the festival every year since 1987. The slogan of the festival this year is "poetry in defence of humanism".

Poet Shamsur Rahman will preside over the inaugural session of the festival.



Traders of Shantinagar Bazar brought out a procession in the city yesterday protesting the murder of a fellow businessman. — Star photo



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- (ক) কর্মসূচী সংগঠক (মহিলা) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা কৃষি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে মাস্টার্স ডিগ্রী বা সমমানের ৩০ বছর। বেতন ৩৮০০ টাকা।
- (খ) কর্মসূচী সংগঠক (পুরুষ) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা কৃষি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে পদার্থবিদ্যা ডিগ্রী বা সমমানের ৩০ বছর। বেতন ৩৮০০ টাকা।
- (গ) কর্মসূচী সংগঠক (মহিলা) শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা কৃষি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ডিপ্লোমা। বয়স সর্বোচ্চ ৩০ বছর। বেতন ৩৮০০ টাকা।
- (ঘ) কর্মসূচী সংগঠক (কৃষি)। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা কৃষি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় হতে ডিপ্লোমা। বয়স সর্বোচ্চ ৩০ বছর। বেতন ৩৮০০ টাকা।
- (ঙ) কর্মসূচী সংগঠক (হিসাব)। শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা বি.কম। বয়স সর্বোচ্চ ৩০ বছর। বেতন ৩১৭৫ টাকা।

গ্র্যাজুয়াটদের সব প্রকল্পে কর্মীদের জন্য নিম্নলিখিত আকারের যাবতীয় রয়েছে। নির্দিষ্ট প্রার্থীদের অবশ্যই সাইকোলজিক্যাল, মেডিক্যাল, স্ট্রাকচারাল বাবতার করতে হবে। চাকরিতে হারী হলে গ্র্যাজুয়াট প্রভিডেন্ট ফান্ড ও ইন্সিওরেন্সের সুবিধা পাবেন।

আগামী ১৩ ফেব্রুয়ারী ১৯৯৬-এর মধ্যে পূর্ণাঙ্গ জীবনবৃত্তান্ত ও এক কপি হসিহ কর্মী ব্যবস্থাপক বিভাগ, গ্র্যাজুয়াট মহাবিদ্যালয়, ঢাকা ১২১২ এই ঠিকানায় আবেদন করুন। আবেদনপত্র ও বাইরের উপর আবেদনপত্র পদের নাম উল্লেখ থাকতে হবে।



New Lions dist for Ctg

The fifth Lions Club district of the country will be formed soon in Chittagong under the auspices of Lions Club International District 315B-2, Bangladesh, reports UNB.

In this regard, a special conference of Lions representatives will be held at Chittagong Club on February 9.

Lions International is presently operating 20 general hospitals, three maternity centres, four eye hospitals and two blood banks in the country.

Meanwhile, the construction works of two general hospitals — one each in Chittagong and Narsingdi — have begun at a cost of Tk 1.5 crore.

Dhaka City Mayor Mohammad Hanif and the Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation A B M Mohiuddin Chowdhury assured about co-operation with Lions district 315B-2 to implement its joint venture project.

ASCE executives

Dr H R Khan and Q I Siddique have been elected president and vice-president of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), Bangladesh International Section, for the 1996 term recently, says a press release

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