

# DOWN TO EARTH

## Conservation of city monuments

By A S M Nurunnabi

Tourism ranks among the leading sources of foreign currency income in most countries in South and South-east Asia, and thus the competition is very serious among some countries in these regions. Tourism in Bangladesh has not been very remarkable in comparison with these countries.

Ancient archaeological remnants and architectural shrines play an important role in the development of tourism of a country. The architecture of the historical shrines of Dhaka has an essence of its own and very much prone to the attraction of tourists. Dhaka's spectacular expansion in area and population began since 1947. It was then the appropriate time to conserve the old plan of the city in the new one with its architectural and cultural wealth. It was remarked that this could have been easily done with some restrictions in the old areas with little obstruction to modern planning. Unfortunately this was not done.

The protected monuments of Dhaka city which are under the Department of Archaeology, can be suitably developed as spots for tourist attraction. They are as follows:

- Lalbagh Fort including its fortification walls, gateways, Diwani Am, Hammam, Pari Bibi's tomb, Masjid, Masnooni Tank, and Garden.
- Khan Muhammad Mirdha's Masjid.

- Haji Khawaja Shahbaz's Masjid and Mazar
- Satmasjid
- Idgah
- Pagla Pul

The following monuments, yet to be included in the protection list of the Deptt of Archaeology, as far as understood, have ample potentialities for tourist attractions, if properly conserved and maintained:

- Bara Katra
- Chotta Katra
- North Brooke Hall
- Ruplal House
- Rose Garden
- Sutrapur Zamindar Bari
- Shankha Nidhi Bhaban
- Radha Krishna Mandir
- Bhaja Hari Lodge

In this connection, it has been suggested that monuments like Ruplal House, Sutrapur Zamindar Bari, Bhaja Hari Lodge, Rose Garden, North Brooke Hall and Shankha Nidhi Bhaban can, like the Ahsan Manzil, also be successfully preserved and developed into national monuments or city museums.

In this context, it has also been suggested that we may consider adoption laws and regulations entrusting our local bodies to enlist and preserve the monuments of local importance and let the government to concentrate more on the monuments of national importance and also on those for which local interest can't be

inspired.

To emphasise the importance of conservation and restoration of old monuments of Dhaka, it has been observed by scholars that no nation's glory can be built on the self-destruction of the past. Hence, protection measures are necessary to implement for the decaying, destruction and abuse of architectural monuments in and around Dhaka. Protecting the architectural heritage of Dhaka would help protect their future at the same time contribute to the multiplication of tourism in Dhaka and elsewhere in the country.

At the international seminar on future of archaeological heritage of Dhaka held last January under the auspices of the Department of Architecture, BUET, the significance of conservation of architectural heritage of Dhaka in the promotion of tourism among other things was highlighted. It was underscored at the seminar that Dhaka is very famous for its ancient historical heritage. The historical place of Sonargaon, the shrines of the Nawabs and Sultans in and around Dhaka still carry the sound and sights of ancient Bengal. Hence the great significance of exploitation, preservation, management and planning of the architectural value of Dhaka in the development of tourism.



Police arrest members of India's opposition parties during an anti-government demonstration in New Delhi yesterday. — APP/UNB photo

## Indian political parties want to raise fund for polls by cheque

NEW DELHI, Mar 22: Stung by the country's worst corruption scandal, India's political parties are turning over a new leaf and want to raise funds for the first general elections in five years only by cheque, reports AFP.

With two dozen politicians in the dock on charges of accepting huge bribes, the leading contenders for the April May elections now want industrial houses to make their contributions in a manner that can be accounted for.

And that's posing enormous problems.

"We have decided to accept only cheques," said spokeswoman Shushma Swaraj of the main opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party).

"We do not want to fight elections with black money. We want transparency. Unfortunately not many industrialists have come forward to give us cheques," she moaned in an interview. "Not because they do not believe in white money."

"But they fear they may get into trouble for funding us if the Congress (the party of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao) comes back to power," Swaraj said. "We are wondering what to do."

On Thursday, the Congress, in a major departure from the past, shot off letters to 200 business houses asking them to contribute generously by cheques which would be duly and gratefully acknowledged by official receipt.

The unprecedented appeal, by party treasurer Sitaram Keari, has once again focussed attention on the growing clout of money power in the conduct of Indian parliamentary polls — a monumental exercise repeated every five years.

Indian businessmen are shy of legal funding.

"In principle it's okay to fund parties by cheques, but who will get into this?" asked an executive of a top petrochemical firm. "You tell me one company who will pay by cheque, and we will also pay."

Thousands of candidates are

in the fray for the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament. An estimated 600 million voters living across the country have to be reached and the exercise involves huge amounts of money.

Candidates and parties print millions of posters and cloth banners, hire dozens of vehicles and loudspeakers, and pay scores of young campaign workers in constituencies as large as many small countries.

According to estimates, the Congress and BJP, the big brothers of Indian politics, will each spend more than 750 million rupees (20 million dollars) in one month of electioneering — a colossal amount for a poor country.

Many rich candidates distribute cash or good such as clothes, bicycle and watches to seek votes. They are eagerly lapped up by the poor in shanties that dot every town.

"The Indian voter is shrewd," said Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil. "He will take money if it is given and later vote for the candidate of his choice."

## Two murdered, 6 hurt in city incidents

By DMCH Correspondent

Two persons, including a woman, were murdered and six others injured in separate incidents in the city yesterday.

An armed gang shot dead Jalaluddin Khan alias Rumi, 18, near Janata Bakery at KB Road under Sutrapur thana at around 1 am, police sources said.

Rumi, son of Afzaluddin Khan of Nabadweep Basak Lane, Lakshibazar, sustained fatal bullet wounds in his head and died on the spot.

The reasons behind the killing could not be known immediately. Rumi's brother, Shamsuddin, filed a case with Sutrapur thana.

Rahima, 26, who sustained bullet injuries in her abdomen at Shahjahanpur railway colony Thursday night died at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) at around 2 am, medical sources said.

Rahima, wife of one Mozammel, was shot reportedly by a young man identified as Babu at around 8 pm. She was a maid in a house at the colony, police said. The reason of the killing could not be known.

None was arrested in this connection till last night.

In another incident, Md Felu Miah, 18, was injured when a group of unidentified

miscreants cut the tendons of his hands and legs at a glass factory at Faridabad yesterday morning.

He was admitted to the DMCH.

Two persons, including an Army man were injured when a group of muggers stabbed them in front of the Banglar Baani office at Motijheel at about 12:30 am Friday.

The victims identified as Kazi Shahjahan Siraj 40, an employee of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Army man as Abdul Jabbar, 38, were admitted to the DMCH.

Meanwhile, a group of extortionists assaulted three persons at Fakirerpool yesterday afternoon.

The victims — Rafik 35, Mohammad Alam, 30, and Shahe Ali, 25, were admitted to the DMCH.

## Human chain across country today

A human chain will be formed across the country today demanding immediate solution of the current political deadlock, reports UNB.

Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB) and Treenomul Jano-Sangathan (grass roots people's organisation) will organise the one-hour human chain from 11 am, said a press release.

The organisers also demand cancellation of the February 15 polls, fully participatory election within 90 days under a non-party, neutral caretaker government, restoration of democracy and establishment of human rights and the people's voting rights.

They expect about 20 lakh people of all strata to join the human chain along 1,000 kilometer roads across the country, including the capital.

As part of its countrywide programme, the organisers decided to form the human chain centrally from Aricha to Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka via Jatya Smriti Shoudha, Amin Bazar, Mirpur section 10, section 1, Technical, Asad Gate, Science Laboratory, New Market, Azimpur and Palassey.

## Train attacked

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position activists when it reached Gachhihata station at about 12:25 pm. The train was stranded there for several hours and left for Dhaka at 5:25 pm.

Another mail train from Dhaka, Isha Khan Express, was halted by pickets at Bhairob station at 3:25 pm. It returned to Dhaka in the evening.

Train service between Dhaka and Mymensingh was suspended for more than six hours from 4 am as pickets uprooted rail tracks in between Tongi and Dhirasram.

Opposition activists also beat up two railway security men — Tajuddin and Naimuddin — at the scene. They were admitted to Railway Hospital in Dhaka.

The rail track was repaired at 10:30 am with the help of army personnel posted at Tongi junction.

Trains could not ply between Laksham and Chandpur as pickets set ablaze sleepers of Chitayshi railway bridge.

There was no sign of improvement in rail communication in the railway's western zone. Trains are, however, running between Khulna and Pundralaho.

## Ctg cargo

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duty inside the port to ensure safety and security.

UNB adds: Two goods trains left Chittagong station while another goods train and a container train were scheduled to depart from the port city for Dhaka.

A joint rally of All-Party Action Committee and Bandar Sangjukta Srinik Karmachari Sangram Parishad, meanwhile, said the port authority did not respond to their request for a joint meeting with all parties.

Speakers at the rally said they had earlier announced that they would allow partial port activities if the Chittagong Port Authority convened an all-party meeting.

The deadlock in the port will not end unless normalcy is restored in the whole country, they said.

Sources said the state minister for shipping today telephoned Jatiya Party leader Mahmudul Islam Chowdhury for a meeting on port issues, but Chowdhury declined to meet him, saying he would prefer an all-party discussion.

## Hasina

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Recalling the glorious contribution of the armed forces to the war of liberation, peace, keeping force, disaster management and the mass upsurge in 1990, Hasina said the people do want that the image of the army be tarnished in protecting the power of the 'illegal' government.

## JCD leader

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groups.

Office secretaries of the Narayanjanj town Awami League and Jatiya Party Alauddin Al Azad and Khokan Shaha respectively in a joint statement later at night alleged that the BNP-backed armed gang attacked on their morning procession when it reached President Road area. BNP office secretary Tofazzel Hossen in another statement alleged that the clash started when AL backed Chhatra League workers attacked the house of local JCD leader Saidduzzaman Sayed at noon.

A dawn-to-dusk hartal was observed in Chashara area today at a joint call of the opposition political parties to protest the killing of Munir on Thursday.

The hartal was followed by a joint rally at Chashara rail gate with former JP MP Nasim Osman in the chair. It was addressed by among others AL leader Shamim Osman, and Wazed Ali Khokan.

A tense situation is prevailing in the town. Additional police forces and BDR have been deployed in the town.

## Nor wester

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The country's maximum temperature of 35.5 degrees Celsius was recorded in Dinajpur and the minimum of 16.6 degrees in Rangamati.

The Met office in its weather bulletin for the next 24 hours commencing from 6 am today (Saturday), said, light rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind may occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions and the region of Comilla.

Weather is likely to remain dry elsewhere in the country. The day temperature is likely to remain unchanged.

## Houses of three DU teachers attacked

By DU Correspondent

A group of unidentified youths attacked the residences of three teachers of Dhaka University early yesterday.

The three teachers are: Professor M Anwar Hossain, Department of Bio-Chemistry, Dr Anwar Hossain, a syndicate member and associate professor of Bio-Chemistry and Tofael Ahmed Chowdhury, associate professor of Chemistry.

The teachers alleged that the youths threw bombs at about 1:30 am which damaged the windowpanes of their houses.

According to the teachers, the attackers threatened them that they would be killed if they did not leave the university campus within 24 hours. The miscreants attacked them as the supporters of the non-cooperation movement, the teachers added.

Prof. Anwar Hossain submitted a memorandum to the Vice Chancellor and sent a copy of it to the Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) demanding security of their life and property.

Sources say the three teachers belong to the pro-Awami League 'Blue Panel'.

Meanwhile, the Dhaka University Teachers' Association yesterday strongly condemned the armed attack on the houses of the teachers.

In a statement, Prof Zahurul Haq and Dr A M S Arefin Siddique, the president and the general secretary of DUTA respectively, expressed their deep concern over the terrorist activities on the campus.

The DUTA urged the government and the university authorities to take necessary measures for the security of the teachers and demanded exemplary punishment of the miscreants.

Twenty-five senators of Dhaka University in a statement also expressed deep concern over the incident and demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of those responsible.

The signatories to the statement include Dr A M S Arefin Siddique, Prof Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Dr Harun Rashid, Ramendu Mazumdar, Dr Sayed Modasser Ali, A A Ismat Kader Gama, Mahfuz Khanam, A K M Shamsuzzaman Khan, Dr Enamul Haq and Dr M Akteruzzaman.

The Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL), the student wing of the Awami League, at a rally yesterday evening in front of the Dhaka University Snacks (DUS) held the BNP-backed Jatiyatadabi Chhatra Dal (JCD) responsible for the attacks on the houses of the Dhaka University teachers.

## Top hotels incur

From Page 1

rooms are not used then the hotel incurs losses. They said, Sonargaon was incurring a loss of Tk 5 to 6 lakh everyday.

A senior official of the Hotel Sheraton said the room occupancy of the hotel has dwindled to about 15 per cent. The services of the hotel such as arranging seminars and banquets, and other functions are also being affected badly.

The owning company of the hotel, asked Dhaka Sheraton to report on the current situation of the hotel.

The hotel's business, including its restaurant and bar at Zia International Airport, is currently around 23 per cent, according to a senior hotel official.

Talking to The Daily Star, an employee of Hotel Abokash said, it was incurring a daily loss of Tk 50,000.

Of the 40 rooms, there are guests in only 3 rooms, said the employee adding Abokash's various services were about to be closed. A regular training course on hotel and tour management remains closed since February.

Talking to this correspondent, an executive of the Hotel Purbani said, occupancy was far below the break-even point.

The food supplied in lunch and dinners at our hotel are popular in the Motijheel area. These are also closed since long," he added.

Some officials of Hotel Rajmoni Ishakha and Hotel

Sundarban also opined that these were facing serious economic burden due to the political stalemate.

An employee of Ishakha said, there would be no alternative but to close down the hotel, with some 150 employees, if the situation does not improve within 10 days.

## Intellectuals condemn army deployment

As many as 205 artistes, litterateurs, teachers, journalists, lawyers, physicians, engineers, social workers and cultural activists yesterday condemned the deployment of the army in different parts of the country, reports UNB.

In a joint statement, they said by deploying armed forces in the name of aiding the civil administration for restoring law and order, the government of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia has virtually declared a war against the people.

They said the government had so far killed over 100 people, wounded thousands others by letting loose the police, BDR and BNP's terrorists against the agitated people who have been waging a movement against the 'farical' February 15 polls and demanding step down of the 'illegal' government.

The intellectuals demanded cancellation of February 15 election and urged the army to refrain from helping the 'illegal' government.

The signatories, among others, included Begum Sufia Kamal, Sawkat Osman, Justice Debesh Bhattacharya, Prof Kabir Chowdhury, Prof Khan Sarwar Murshid, Architect Mazaharul Islam, Dr Nileema Ibrahim, Kalim Sarafi, Shamsur Rahman, Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, Sayed Hasan Imam, Santosh Gupta, Rokumuzzaman Khan, MR Akhtar Mukul, and Shahriar Kabir.

## The Midnight File

France, US, UK to sign treaty for N-free zone

PARIS, Mar 22: France, the United States and Britain will sign next Monday the treaty of Rarotonga turning the South Pacific into a nuclear-free zone, the French foreign ministry said today, reports Reuter.

## Huge urea stockpiled at Sirajganj ghat

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 22: Some 19,500 metric tons of urea, destined for the eight northern districts, are now stockpiled in different godowns at the Sirajganj ghat due to disrupted road communication following the Opposition's non-cooperation programme, reports UNB.

The stock of urea, an essential agri-input for the ongoing Irri-Boro season, were delivered from the Jamuna Fertiliser Factory at Tarakandi

in Jamalpur, across the Jamuna river.

These stockpiled urea fertiliser are for 300 dealers in the districts of Natore, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Nilphamari, Bogra, Naogaon, Thakurgaon and Kurigram. Each of the dealers got an allotment of 65 metric tons.

Local sources said the truckers here have refused to carry these urea towards their destinations apprehending security threat even though the Opposition relaxed their non-cooperation for the movement of fertilisers.

Meanwhile cultivation of Irri-Boro, the main rice crop of the region, has been threatened because of the fertiliser scarcity. The price of a 50-kg bag of urea doubles after reaching the remote farming areas.

The price situation remains the same in nine thanas of Sirajganj district, where most of the 136 dealers are alleged to have been selling their allotted quota of fertiliser in the black market.

## Bomb attack on fertiliser-laden truck

CHITTAGONG, Mar 22: A fertiliser-laden truck came under bomb attack near Barik building in Double Mooring thana in the port city this evening, reports UNB.

Police said some unidentified people hurled several crude bombs at the truck coming from Strand Road at about 7:30 pm.

The truck driver Deen Mohammad, 35, and helper Helal, 15, sustained injuries. They were admitted to Chittagong Medical College Hospital.

Several crude bombs were also went off near the Army post at GEC crossing at about 7:45 pm. However, nobody was injured. Army personnel picked up 4 to 5 suspected people from the area immediately after the incident.

## One killed in blast while making bomb

FENI, Mar 22: A young man was killed in the explosion of a crude bomb he was making at Braupathar in Parshuram thana here today, police said, reports UNB.

Abu Taher, 22, was allegedly involved in manufacturing bombs for the use by opposition activists. He died on the spot.

In another incident, more than six people were injured in a clash between ruling BNP's student wing JCD and pro-Awami League Chhatra League at south Karimpur of Dagonbhuyan thana.

## Ctg clashes

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10 pm. Following the exemption given to them by the opposition.

Some trucks were also seen in the long distance routes. Railway sources said, train service to and from Chittagong was as usual today.

UNB adds: Some buses of Bangladesh Road Transport Corporation (BRTC) plied on the city roads being escorted by army personnel.

A group of unidentified people hurled four bombs at the Chandanpura residence of Awami League central leader Ataur Rahman Kaiser at about 9:15 pm.

His wife Nilufar Kaiser told UNB that the miscreants fled in an autorickshaw after exploding the bombs when a guard of their house chased them. Nobody was hurt.

Opposition sources said plainclothes police arrested Jubo League leader Mohammad Ishag from Bahaddarhat area at about 1:30 pm. Two other opposition activists were picked up from Amin Jute Mill area.

## Food price

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price, traders said.

**Sugar, Powder Milk, Palm Oil**

Traders at Maulavibazar wholesale market said that they were now selling sugar for Tk 38, per kg. The price rose from Tk 28 per kg in the last two weeks. Retailers were selling sugar at Tk 42 per kg.

Prices of tinned powder milk such as DANO have risen to Tk 3000 from Tk 2,600 per carton (6 tins of 2 kg each). Wholesalers at Maulavibazar said. But retailers were charging between Tk 500 and 550 for each tin.

Prices of skimmed milk, wholesalers said, have risen to Tk 3800 from Tk 3,300 per bag of 25 kg.

Price of palm oil in the wholesale market rose to Tk 1,750 from Tk 1,580 per drum.

Md Alauddin, a wholesaler at the Maulavibazar market said that both wholesalers and retailers were charging prices for their commodities as they wished. "There is no control nor there is any protest from any quarter of the society, so the businessmen are taking advantage of this," he added.

## Mad cow

From Page 1

"It is an overreaction to the facts. I believe British beef can be eaten with confidence," said Douglas Hogg.

The dispute is the latest clash between Britain and its European partners. Over the years, Britain has been isolated on a range of issues including fishing rights and the choice of a European Commission president. This one could prove the most financially damaging.

The British beef industry is worth two billion pounds (3 billion dollar) a year and employs about 350,000 people directly and indirectly. Britain exported some 240,000 tonnes of beef last year, including nearly 100,000 tonnes to France.

British scientists have warned that up to one million people could be infected with CJD, which destroys nerve cells in the brain causing dementia, incapacity and then death.

## Flour

The price of flour has gone up Tk 1,000 from Tk 850 per maund in the wholesale market of Maulavibazar.

Pan (betel leaf), Biri and Cigarettes

Prices of all brands of cigarette and bidi have gone up by 50 to 80 per cent in the retail markets while price of pan has risen by about 70 per cent.

**বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি**

**রপ্তানীমুখী পোশাক শিল্প মালিকদের আহ্বানে অবস্থান ধর্মঘট**

রাজনৈতিক অচলাবস্থার কারণে ধ্বংসোন্মুখ পোশাক শিল্পসহ সকল রপ্তানীমুখী শিল্পকে রক্ষার দাবিতে মালিক-শ্রমিক কর্মচারীদের অবস্থান ধর্মঘটঃ

- \* নিজ নিজ কারখানা সংলগ্ন রাজপথে নীরব অবস্থান ধর্মঘট।
- \* তারিখ ও সময়ঃ ২৪শে মার্চ রবিবার সকাল ৮ ঘটিকা হইতে ১০ ঘটিকা।
- \* স্ব স্ব কারখানার মালিক কর্মকর্তা ও কর্মচারীগণ উপরোক্তিত কর্মসূচী বাস্তবায়ন করার প্রয়োজনীয় পদক্ষেপ গ্রহণ করবেন।
- \* চট্টগ্রাম সমুদ্র বন্দর ও বেনাপোল স্থল বন্দরে স্ট্রট জটিলতার জন্য আমদানীকৃত কাঁচামালের অভাবে যে সকল পোশাক শিল্প কারখানা বন্ধ আছে সে সকল কারখানার মালিক, কর্মচারী ও শ্রমিকগণ একই নিয়মে অবস্থান ধর্মঘটে অংশগ্রহণ করবেন।

বিজিএমইএ

Editor : Mahfuz Anam

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