

Dhaka Day by Day

Plastic Potted Plants

by Lavina Ambreen Ahmed

Right from the start, New Market's annex wing was a big hit with shoppers. Popularly known as Singapore, Dubai or which ever country — you may call it market, the extension part alone, attracts numerous customers everyday on the lookout for household products and gifts. The whole place literally overflows with imported things like — micro-oven safe dishes, non-stick pans, nifty porcelain figurines and other pricey stuff. In addition to all that, the shopkeepers have introduced a new item. It's potted plants and they are available in plenty at the thriving shopping centre in question.

Those who crave for long-lasting flowers to adorn their homes can take their pick from the market's diverse collections. Yes, you're right, we are talking about artificial plants. Fake plastic replicas that are just a little too vibrant to be the real things. But even without the sweet or intoxicating floral fragrance the beautiful unnatural botanical duplicates have attracted many a buyer. And mind you, les fleurs in the market are absolutely 100 per cent bideshi and the salesmen will promptly, proudly disclose their lands of origin: China and Thailand to be precise. Dazzling yellow sunflowers, fiery roses, fuchsias, crimson dahlias chrysanthemums, tulips, gardenias or simply leafy plants — a botany buff can simply test his/her knowledge by guessing the names correctly. The man-made flowers do have advantages over the natural ones. They don't fade away and need to be replaced every other day and what more, they are washable. The orientals being experts when it comes to flower arrangements paid at

attention to every minute detail. By deliberately keeping the pots simple and inconspicuous, they maintained the perfect balance with the bright hues of the flowers. Some of the flower petals have been made out of cloth and the leaves from plastic, while the others are totally plastic finished. Pebbles are added to give the pots a more natural look. From a distance the plants look genuine enough.

However, if you're an interested buyer, here is an information for you. The delightful, durable plant imitations don't come too cheap. The prices vary a great deal depending on size and texture. The cloth made flowers are more expensive than the plastic ones. The small potted plants cost Tk 180 Tk 500. Some of them come in quaint, decorative shapes and designs, perfect for your living room centre piece. The bigger pots are available at Tk 600 to 1,500.

One can also purchase separate sticks of flowers, each at around Tk 100 to 200. But don't worry, the sellers assure, the prices are quite negotiable.

It might be mentioned here, that if you don't intend to buy, don't hang around the flower shops. There is an unwritten law against it. In any case, if you ask any question about the precious plants and spend just two minutes looking at them, the men will drive you crazy with their 'which one do you won't' queries. A lot can be said about poor salesmanship, but what good would it do anyway.

Meanwhile buying potted plants seem to be the latest trend in Dhaka or so the sales staff would like you to believe. And why not? They aren't locally made and don't we love everything foreign?



Look real!

— Star photo



Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) brought out a procession in the city yesterday in observance of World Environment Day. — Star photo

Foreign expert suggests at seminar

Regional water resources should be used efficiently

By Staff Correspondent

A renowned economist of Yale University, Prof TN Srinivasan yesterday stressed the need for an understanding between Bangladesh, India and Nepal for efficient use of water resources of the region.

"I hope my country India will give a much more positive support to the issue," said Prof Srinivasan at a seminar on 'Water Resources Management' organised by the World Bank (WB) in the city. The seminar was presided over by the Chief of the Bank's resident mission, Pierre Landell-Mills.

Prof Srinivasan said there has to be a quantitative trade-off between the various objectives of water reservoirs built for dry season supply of water.

These reservoirs may have conflicting objectives regarding different sectors like fisheries, agriculture and forestry which have to be taken into consideration, he added.

Srinivasan underscored the

need for conjunctive use of surface and ground water for integrated water and land-use planning in Bangladesh.

"Availability of water affects the use of high yielding seeds in agriculture, industry and urbanisation for which it is not sensible to isolate water management from these sectors," he said.

He also said research should be done on alternative ways of using water since the traditional system does not ensure equitable pricing of water and added that the political economy of pricing of water should be looked at critically.

Rashid Faruque, Principal Economist of the WB, highlighting the major issues for the water sector said management of cross-border flows, international cooperation with riparian countries to share flow of common rivers and information, and integrated surface and ground water devel-

opment are important exogenous issues for Bangladesh.

Talking on endogenous issues, he said assessment of demand, and social costs are needed to be ascertained and an intersectoral balance is necessary.

Dr QM Ahmed of Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad said alleviation of poverty is needed for sustainable development of water resources.

Dr Atiar Rahman of BIDS, said the community's sovereignty over water resource management system should be incorporated in plans and local wisdom should be valued in planning.

Maritta RV Bieberstein Koch-Weser, Division Chief of WB's Environment and Natural Resources Division, Asia Technical Department, said a long term system of joint administration of the water basin by all parties is required for efficient water management.

What's on today

Bangla Academy debate: Bangla Academy has organised a debate on 'Fair and neutral polls precondition to human rights' on the occasion of ensuing Jatiya Sangsad polls. Bangla Academy president Gazi Shamsur Rahman will act as coordinator. Venue: Academy seminar room. Time: 11:30 am.

Certificate award ceremony: Prof Shahid Uddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Dhaka University will distribute certificates among the participants of the courses on 'Personal Management and Office Administration, Marketing Management and Competitive Strategy, Accounting and Finance.' Venue: CTA training room, House 46, Road 9A, Dhanmondi. Time: 7 pm.

Film show: Rainbow Film Society in cooperation with Goethe-Institut Dhaka has organised screening of German films of the nineties. *No More Mr Nice Guy* by Detlev Buck will be screened today. Venue: Gefman Cultural Centre, House 10, Road 9 (New) Dhanmondi. Time: 6 pm.

. and tomorrow

Bar Council workshop: The Bangladesh Bar Council has organised a workshop on election monitoring 'Role Election in Establishing Peoples' Power.' Adviser of the caretaker govt Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed will be present as chief guest. Venue: Central Public Library auditorium. Time: 3 pm.

Citizens for Democracy: The organisation has urged all citizens having faith in tolerance and peace, to join a procession to begin from the Jatiya Press Club. The procession is aimed at maintaining peace in the next week's parliamentary election. Venue: Jatiya Press Club. Time: 9 am.

Training childhood edn: World-wide Institute of Childhood Education (WICE) has organised a training programme for the teachers and personalities involved in pre-primary level of education including kindergartens. Adviser of the caretaker govt Prof M Shamsul Haq will attend the inaugural session as chief guest. Venue: WICE, House 76 A, Road 12 A, Dhanmondi. Time: 9 am.

Get-together: The University of Strathelyde Alumni Association Bangladesh branch will hold its annual get-together to be followed by dinner. Venue: BUET auditorium. Time: 6:30 pm.

Cultural soiree: Shri Shishu Sahitya Kendra, a juvenile literary and cultural organisation, has arranged a literary and cultural soiree on the occasion of its 4th founding anniversary. Venue: 55, Central Road. Time: 4:30 pm.



City unit of Awami League held a rally in front of the Election Commission (EC) office protesting the murder of DCC commissioner Shahabuddin. — Star photo

Weather

Thundershower likely

Rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at many places over Dhaka, Barisal, Sylhet and Chittagong divisions and at a few places over Khulna and Rajshahi divisions in the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met Office says day temperature may remain nearly unchanged across the country.

In its outlook for subsequent two days Met Office says that south-west monsoon may advance upto central part of the country. Giving extended outlook for another five days weathermen forecast decrease in rainfall activities.

Meantime, Rajshahi experienced the highest 51 mm rain yesterday. Rangpur had 49 mm, Sylhet 40, Chittagong 28, Cox's Bazar 25, Faridpur 23, Mymensingh 17, Dhaka 16 and Dinajpur 15 mm shower during the period.

Country's highest temperature 34.7 degree Celsius was recorded at Khulna and the lowest 19.2 degrees at Kutubdia.

The sun sets today at 6:45 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:10 am.

Maximum and minimum temperatures and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	32.0	21.5	92	78
Chittagong	32.0	23.8	67	81
Rajshahi	31.4	22.4	95	87
Khulna	34.7	24.3	71	81
Barisal	33.7	23.8	92	92
Sylhet	25.5	22.0	100	93
Cox's Bazar	30.5	22.0	85	80

Liberty Int'l to monitor polls

The Liberty International (LI) has formed a number of observer teams headed by its President Advocate M A Muteleb, to oversee the ensuing Jatiya Sangsad election, says a press release.

The Liberty International, a Bangladesh-based international human rights organisation will evaluate the whole election process objectively and prepare a report to be distributed nationally and internationally.

The Liberty International having the experience of overseeing the parliamentary elections of 1988, 1991, 1996 including the Upside elections of 1990 will disperse poll observers across various urban and rural areas of the districts of Mymensingh, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Netrokona, Kishoreganj and Tangail during the polls.

Polls observers urged to visit Geneva camp

Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC-Ejaz) has appealed to foreign election observers to visit the stranded Pakistanis camps in Dhaka, reports UNB.

The appeal was made at a meeting of the SPGRC held at its office in the city yesterday with its chief patron SMA Hassan in the chair.

The meeting urged the foreign observers who would be monitoring next week's election to see for themselves the plight of stranded Pakistanis who have been awaiting their repatriation for the last 25 years.

SPGRC threatened to organise a self-immolation programme in front of Pakistan High Commission here on the Independence Day of Pakistan on August 14 to press for their repatriation.

ACTIONAID official now in city

Dr John Batten, Executive Director of ACTIONAID for UK and Ireland, arrived in the city Tuesday on a 8-day first-ever visit to Bangladesh, reports UNB.

During his stay, he will have an in-depth field trip to Bhola island where ACTIONAID, an international NGO, implements an integrated development programme with poor and vulnerable women since 1983.

He will also visit Netrokona to get informed about the progress made with Sabalambay Unnayan Samity (SUS), a local NGO, with which the international NGO has started a long-term partnership agreement.

In the capital, Dr Batten will familiarise himself with the work of ACTIONAID in the slum areas of Tikkapara at Mohammadpur and new initiatives in the field of adult literacy, disability and adolescent girls, says a press release.



Visitors at a photography exhibition on 'Women' by Mahmud at the National Museum. — Star photo

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