

# Dhaka Day by Day

## The Nightqueen Scam

by Samia Islam

For some years now a particular news in the paper invokes a caustic distaste in my mouth whenever I come across it. And I come across it often enough as do almost all of Dhaka's newspaper reading populace. Picture this: a smiling face (any face aged between forty and four, but always female) peering out from behind a droopy, indistinguishable but never-the-less white flower on a blurred potted plant (as seen in news print). Sound familiar? Of course, like the solar eclipse or Haley's comet, the blossoming of the Night Queen is made out to be a rare occurrence worthy of having one's boxed picture published on newspapers across the country if one is fortunate enough to experience or witness it first hand! A flower, so divine that it blooms only once in a hundred years (it started out with this myth) or once every year (this is the most recent corollary of the initial myth). Sometimes we see preschoolers smiling jubilantly at us from the news print hall of fame, some times adults who have persevered to be blessed by the blossom. The whole idea wreaks of some half baked chicanery but it is hard to pinpoint what exactly sounds so fishy for is it flowery about this news item?



lead the rest of the city into believing in the existence of some utterly unsubstantiated phenomenon. The stories that accompany each grinning countenance border on the bizarre and get progressively more implausible. The actual name of this famed flower is the Star of Bethlehem. It was so named because legend has it that it first blossomed in Jerusalem on the night Jesus Christ was born. This truly exotic flower, now commonly known as the Night Queen, is one of the most divine of God's creations no doubt. But the mystery surrounding it ends in the fact that it comes to bloom exactly at midnight. All day the flower droops on its stem as if without life, closed up like a bud, depriving all eyes from enjoying its true splendour until the right time. At the stroke of midnight it spreads its petals and lets out a scent so sweet that it's intoxicating. You don't even need any bulbs or seeds to grow a Night Queen plant. Just take a section of its leaf, plant it in a pot, take proper care and Voila! Get a good photo taken by a professional, next it's your turn with the picture, but provided you have a green thumb. With that natural attribute any Tom, Dick and Harry can cultivate Night Queens in

their backyard. At a time as many as six flowers have been known to grow and blossom on one plant and flowers appear at least two or three times a year. And if this sounds too easy to be true then my plant is worthy of more attention than those other ones that come into bloom once every year, isn't it? The way it goes on producing Sorry to burst your bubble. Dhaka but if you are looking for a miracle to appear in your dreary, monotonous, lunatic and suffocatingly fruitless life, don't go looking at this flower. Because the Night Queen's fifteen minutes of fame is over.



President Abdur Rahman Biswas speaking at the 21st founding anniversary of the President's Guard Regiment at its headquarters at the Dhaka cantonment yesterday. — PID photo

### Gonosahajjo Sangstha seminar

A two-day annual seminar organised by Association for Legal Aid and Legal Education of Gonosahajjo Sangstha begins at the Planning and Development Academy in the city today, reports UNB. Chairman of the Department of Government and Politics, Jahangirnagar University, Dr Dilara Chowdhury will present a paper on "democracy, state, government and political party" at the first session of the seminar.

Dr F R Mahmud Hassan will present a paper on "code of conduct of the political parties and responsibilities to the society", says a press release. Prof Anisur Rahman, Barrister Shaikat Ali Khan, Barrister Amir-ul-Islam, Prof Anisuzzaman, Advocate Khandker Mahbubuddin Ahmed and Suranjit Sen Gupta will participate in the seminar.

### Malaysian gov't urged to review laws on migrant workers

Naripakkha, a women's organisation, described as "inhuman" the condition of migrant workers in Malaysia and demanded both Bangladesh and Malaysian governments ensure their basic human rights, reports UNB. Addressing a press conference at the Jatiya Press Club, its leaders demanded that the Malaysian government review laws and procedures relating to migrant workers, particularly in detention camps, to ensure internationally recognised human rights.

The workers go to Malaysia with temporary jobs and after some time, they become illegal after losing their jobs and are forced to go into police custody or detention camps, the report said. In the detention camps, it said, 400 people were kept in one place with only one bathroom. They received only two small glasses of water a day and did not get any treatment during illnesses and were tortured on various pretext. "Many Bangladeshi workers died in the detention camps of various diseases and of torture," the report claimed, demanding enforcement of human rights for the detainees and migrant workers.

### 3 arms recovered, 237 held in city

Police recovered three illegal fire arms and arrested six persons for possession from different areas of the city yesterday, reports UNB. The recovered arms included one foreign-made sawn-off rifle, one revolver and one pistol, said a DMP press release. Police also arrested 237 people from various parts of the city in the past 24 hours.

## Weather

### Moderate rainfall likely

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

Met office says moderately heavy to heavy falls may occur over Chittagong, Barisal and Sylhet divisions. Day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged across the country.

Sylhet experienced the highest 87 mm rain in the last 36 hours till 6 pm today. Teknaf had 76 mm rain, Sitakund 50, Dinajpur 31, Barisal 25, Rajshahi 24, Faridpur 23, Khulna 19, Kutubdia 18, Mymensingh 17, Cox's Bazar 16, Comilla 15 and Dhaka 2 mm shower in the period.

Country's highest temperature 33.2 degrees Celsius was recorded at Dhaka and the lowest 23.5 degrees at Dinajpur and Sylhet.

The sun sets today at 6.50 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.17 am.

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	morning	evening
Dhaka	33.2	27.1	76	88
Chittagong	29.8	26.0	82	85
Rajshahi	29.6	25.3	92	92
Khulna	30.2	24.3	88	98
Barisal	30.3	26.0	82	100

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## What's on today....

**Lokonaty Dal anniversary:** On the occasion of its 15th founding anniversary, the theatre group has organised a discussion meeting, to be followed by a cultural function and staging of the play 'Sonai Madhav'. Venue: Mahila Samity Auditorium. Time: 5 pm.

A reunion programme will also be held. Venue: Guide House Auditorium. Time: 5 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhanmondi:** The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka:** The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:15 pm. Guest speaker: Gazi Shamsur Rahman.

## ..... and tomorrow

**Padma Setu Bastabayan Parishad:** A convening committee meeting of the Faridpur Bibhag O Padma Bastabayan Samannaya Parishad, Dhaka will be held. Venue: House 98, Road 9/A, Dhanmondi. Time 7 pm.

### Matia visits flood-hit areas

Agriculture, Food, Disaster Management and Relief Minister Begum Matia Chowdhury yesterday assured more relief for the flood-hit people, reports UNB.

She said this while visiting different flood-affected areas of Sariakandi in Bogra district. Addressing a huge gathering at Sariakandi the minister said that adequate relief materials have already been sanctioned for the flood affected people and more relief will be sanctioned if needed.

Matia called upon the people to face the flood situation with courage and endurance. During the visit, the minister was informed that four unions of Sariakandi thana have been heavily damaged while ten damaged partially by the flood water.

Besides, 700 houses, 6 kilometre *kuccha* road and standing crops on vast tracts of land has been damaged by the flooding.

The minister distributed relief materials including rice, cash money, saree and lungis among the flood-hit people at Kalitola and Debdanga villages. Begum Matia Chowdhury presided over a meeting of district-level officials at the Bogra circuit house Thursday night and asked the officials to stand by the people in such natural calamities with honesty and dedication.

### Robbery at JCD president's house

Cash and valuables worth about Tk 50 thousand were stolen from the city residence of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) president Fazlul Haq Milon early yesterday, reports UNB.

Family sources said thieves entered the first floor of 10 South Malibagh residence of Milon in the dark of the night while all the inmates of the house were asleep.

According to them, thieves also took the license of a firearm, owned by the Chhatra Dal president. A case has been filed with Ramna thana in this connection.

### Stolen car recovered

By Staff Correspondent  
A private car which was stolen by an unidentified gang during a robbery in a house at Sector No. 4, Uttara Saturday last, has been recovered from the Purana Paltan area of the city.

Detective branch police found the car yesterday at about 10 am. However, none has been arrested in this connection, police said. A gang of dacoits raided the house at Uttara June 29, killed the gatekeeper Md Akhter Hossain and took away a car, a colour TV and VCP and other valuables, police said.

## Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

### Office of the Executive Engineer

#### Public Works E/M Division-4, Dhaka.

Memo No-3353 Dated 29-6-96 15-3-140385

## Tender Corrigendum Notice No. 157(1995-96)

Under unavoidable circumstances, some amendments have been made to the tenders invited vide this office Memo No 3082 and 3083 dated 8-6-96 and Memo No 3091 dated 9-6-96. For the undermentioned works, the last date of selling tender was 29-6-96 and the date of receiving & opening tender was 30-6-96. Now changing & extending the last date of selling tender is fixed on 20-7-96 and the date of receiving & opening tender on 21-7-96. All other terms & conditions of the tender remain unchanged. The tender corrigendum notice should be attached with the tender and be considered as part of the tender.

- Name of work :
- Yearly maintenance & servicing during 1996-97 of 3 Nos 20-stop (6/1, 6/2 & 6/3) & 2 Nos 15-stop Schindler passenger lifts of Building No 6 inside Bangladesh Secretariat.
  - do -do- 6 Nos 9-stop Schindler passenger lifts of Building No 4 & 7 -do -do-
  - do -do- 4 Nos 4-stop Mariat & Scott lifts of Building Nos 1, 3, 5 & 8.
  - Yearly maintenance & servicing during 1996-97 of 2 Nos 8-stop Schindler bed lifts of Sir Salimullah Medical College & Mitford Hospital.
  - Yearly maintenance & servicing during 1996-97 of 1 No 4-stop lift of Sir Salimullah Medical College Building, 1 No 8-stop lift of New Hospital Building & 1 No 3-stop lift of King Edward Building.

A M Shafiqul Alam

Executive Engineer  
Public Works E/M Division-4, Dhaka  
Phone: 9333865

DFP-14731-1/7  
G-821



Prof M Shahjahan, vice-chancellor, BUET, delivering his speech as chief guest at the inaugural ceremony of 'Bhorer Kagaj Inter-university Debate Competition '96', organised by BUET Debating Club, at the BUET central auditorium Thursday. — BUET photo

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