

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Apartment-based Communities

by Muneera Parbeen

Multistoried buildings are no longer an uncommon sight in Dhaka. Our metropolis has seen more than its fair share of 'tall' buildings in the past decade. The main reason for so many new multistoried buildings coming up is the overpopulation of the city and lack of space.

The rise of multi-story buildings in the city, gives rise to a new kind of community, that of people living in the same building, or apartment-complex, or whatever we choose to call it.

Usually the families that end up together in a single apartment complex are all from different backgrounds and parts of the country. Their coming together usually is not an affair of total harmony though open fights are not the rule of the day either. The basic problem that arises here is our over-threshold kind of curiosity. We keep ourselves terribly lousy

with literally trying to know 'whats being cooked in a neighbours pot' (Forer harir khobor rakhyo - a traditional Bengali saying). Living together in the same building obviously leads to normal interactions between all. Man after all is a social being.

But we are not satisfied with the usual tea-gatherings or coffee mornings. People leap a few steps forward and keep an eye on whose son returns at which hour and whose daughter goes out in what type of clothes. One thing leads to another and very soon the tenants all divide into two groups, the basis of division being anything from political affinity to the date of paying rent, or the simple dislike of one another.

Busybodies are found everywhere and mainly because some people have nothing better to do, their time is whittled away in flat

after flat, carrying gossips forward and spreading unkind rumours in the way.

The pattern of living is not too different among flat-dwellers in a cheap area or in a posh one. But then, tenants don't spend all their time fighting against each other. They unite against the landlord for extra facilities, or the unreasonable rises in rent (so common to this metropolitan tenants) or inadequate supply of water. They have their own picnics in winter, Eid gatherings and iftar parties.

At times of humane need, they do forget enmity and come forward with open arms to help.

Life is nevertheless never boring and so often quite interesting as well. Almost all buildings have a few unusual tenants, be they eccentric, 'bad' or unusually good! For example, my friend has a neighbour who has not paid her rent in the past 13 months. She argues, fights and somehow coaxes her landlord and still manages to stay on. Then there is another building where a tenant borrows money from everyone all the time. His neighbours live in great anxiety for him and no longer lends him any, as he never returns what he borrows. Then there is the lady who is neighbour of another friend. She pays a rent of Tk 20,000 every month but borrows a shil-pata (traditional grinding assemble of stones) from different families everyday for her day-to-day cooking. Somehow it has been going on for the past 7 months! These kind of people then provide food-for-talk to the rest of the tenants!

One may like this kind of living, others may not and some may have no other way but to bear through this type. But these new kind of apartment-based communities are here to stay.



President Abdur Rahman Biswas planting a sapling at the Bangabhaban premises yesterday in observance of the countrywide National Tree Plantation programmes. — Star photo

## PM urges agronomists to help attain food autarky

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday called upon the agronomists to extend their dedicated services and make meaningful contributions in attaining food autarky in the country, reports BSS.

Addressing the members of a delegation of Bangladesh Krishibid Institution, who called on the Prime Minister at her office yesterday evening, Sheikh Hasina said that her government would extend all-out cooperation and assistance for the expansion of agriculture in the country.

The Prime Minister underscored the need for introduction of modern cultivation system and utilisation of advanced agrotechnology for attaining food sufficiency.

She announced her government's decision to allot a piece of land for the Krishibid Institution. Institute president Abdus Sultan, secretary-general Dr. A. Razzak, agronomists Mirza Abdur Jalil and Abdur Mannan also spoke on the occasion.

The institution leaders, while speaking on the occasion, said that in 1973 Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman upgraded the

agronomists to the status of first class gazetted officers and increased their salaries and remunerations accordingly. After the tragic assassination of Bangabandhu, the country's agronomists became successive victims of disparity and deprivation in terms of their status, dignity, salary and remunerations, they added.

The leaders pointed out that highest allocation in agriculture was made in the budget during the administration of Bangabandhu's government.

They raised the issue of a series of irregularities and corrupt practices committed during the last five years in the agro-sector. In this connection, they pointed out that during the rule of BNP government, peasants were killed for even demanding fertilisers at fair prices.

They said, because of utter mismanagement in agricultural sector by the BNP government, the country was at the verge of a food crisis.

In our yesterday's issue the Bangla calendar date was inadvertently printed as Shrawan 2, instead of Shrawan 1.

## UNDP to assist in strategy to empower the poor

The government and UNDP have agreed to cooperate in a strategy that builds capacity to empower the poor linking them to the mainstream of development, reports UNB.

This will eventually lead to sustainable and productive livelihood and to development, says a UN country cooperation framework for Bangladesh.

UN resident coordinator and UNDP resident representative Eimi Watanabe called on State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Abdul Matin Khasru at his office in the city yesterday and submitted to him the country cooperation framework of Bangladesh.

They discussed bilateral issues and various legal matters, strengthening parliamentary system and rights of women in Bangladesh.

The UNDP representative appreciated the steps taken so far by the government for strengthening the parliament with a view to establishing transparency of government and people's rights.

The minister emphasised the need for creating awareness among local public representatives like Union Parishad chairmen regarding the legal

aspects. He also opined for more legal power to UP chairmen for resolving local problems, including problems regarding rights of women in rural areas.

Submitting the country cooperation framework the UN representative said at community level the aim is to build capacity of communities, with emphasis on the poor and especially women, to identify, plan, implement and monitor development activities through mobilization, organisation, training and other support.

On human rights of women the minister emphasised the need for women's consciousness and urged the UNDP to work in this respect like many other NGOs.

The UNDP representative, summing up his discussion regarding the establishment of human rights, including women rights and eradication of poverty, strongly viewed that political will is the main factor to resolve these.

Secretary of the Ministry Mohammad Habibullah, Justice Naymuddin Ahmed and deputy resident representative of UNDP Michael Constable were also present on the occasion.

## Ministers condole Rahman's death

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister and general secretary of Bangladesh Awami League Zillur Rahman has expressed deep shock at the death of Jhenidah district Awami League general secretary and freedom fighter, Mohammad Mattur Rahman, reports BSS.

In a condolence message yesterday Zillur Rahman conveyed his heartfelt sympathy to the members of the bereaved family and prayed for salvation of the departed soul.

UNB adds: Commerce and Industries Minister Tofael Ahmed expressed deep shock at the death of Mattur Rahman, general secretary of Jhenidah district Awami League.

In a condolence message, he said the country had lost an honest, sincere and patriotic politician who worked throughout his life to establish the ideals of the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

He will be remembered by the nation for his contributions in socio-cultural and academic fields, the Minister said.

## Turkish envoy meets Hanif

Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Kemal Ozcan Davaz yesterday called on Dhaka City Corporation Mayor M Hanif at his office at Nagar Bhaban in the city, according to a press release, reports BSS.

The ambassador congratulated Hanif as the first elected mayor of Dhaka City Corporation. They discussed matters of mutual interest.

## BOU SSC annual exams in Sept

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) SSC Programme Annual Examinations will be held in September '96, says a press release.

English first paper examination will be held September 13, Bangla first paper September 16, Social Science September 20, Mathematics September 27 and Science September 30.

All the examinations will be held between 2:30 and 5:30 pm.

## Accord with Denmark to avoid double taxation

A convention for avoidance of double taxation between Bangladesh and Denmark was signed in Dhaka yesterday at the conference room of the National Board of Revenue (NBR), reports BSS.

AFM Tayerur Rahman, member, NBR and Knud Kjaer Nielsen, Charge d'Affaires of the Royal Danish embassy in Dhaka signed the convention on behalf of their respective governments.

With the signing of this convention Bangladesh has so far signed such agreements with 17 countries.

A convention with Poland for avoidance of double taxation is expected to be signed shortly in Warsaw.

The convention signed between Bangladesh and Denmark will create favourable conditions for investment by Danish entrepreneurs in Bangladesh.

At present there is a sizeable investment by Danish citizens in Bangladesh in the field of water supply and sanitation, agriculture, fisheries and livestock and other allied fields.

## Call to take up urban transport project in city

To ensure stake holder participation in the Dhaka Urban Transport Project, a discussion meeting on the project was held in the BRTA head office in the city yesterday with the chairman, says a press release.

The meeting was attended by Thimpal Pankaj, task manager of the Dhaka Urban Transport Project (DUTP) from the World Bank, Maqbul Hossain, MP, and editor, Dainik Al Amin, Shahjahan Khan, MP, editors of The Daily Star, The Morning Sun, the Janakanta, presidents of Bangladesh Sarak Pribahan Samity, Bus Truck Owners Association, Motor Vehicle Assemblers Association and officials of the BRTA and DMP.

All the discussants opined that it was very important to take in hand a urban transport project and implement the project immediately to ease the suffering of the residents of Dhaka due to traffic congestion. BRTA Chairman and Pankaj stressed the need for starting good, reliable and organise bus service for Dhaka in the city.

The representatives of the bus owners associations pointed out that to have a successful bus service there has to be political will and government shall have to provide all-out support to the operators of the bus services.

They expressed satisfaction that the fare for the premium bus has been deregulated but at the same time they wanted the government to make import duty and VAT on bus zero.

## New private hospital opens

State Minister for information Prof. Abu Sayeed said yesterday that the present government would take appropriate steps to set up at least one medical complex in each union of the country, reports BSS.

The Minister was inaugurating a newly constructed private general hospital in the city. The hospital has been set up at a cost of Taka four crore.

The inaugural function was also addressed by former deputy minister Fakhru Islam Munshi, former member of parliament Manjur Rahman Biswas and chairman of the hospital Shujat Hussain Jahangir.

## Weather

### Light rainfall likely

Light to moderate rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind may occur at many places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Chittagong and Sylhet divisions during the next 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

It may also occur at many places over Barisal and Khulna divisions.

Met Office said day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country during the period.

In its outlook for subsequent two days, Met Office forecast that little change may occur during the two days while rainfall may increase all over the country during the next five days.

The country's highest temperature 34.4 degrees Celsius was recorded yesterday at Chittagong and the lowest 24.6 degrees in Sylhet.

The sun sets today at 6:48 pm and rises Thursday at 5:22 am.

**University of Dhaka**  
**75th Founding Anniversary**  
**Celebration**  
**Friday, July 19, 1996**

Under the auspices of the Residential Halls of the University, a daylong colourful function will be held on Friday, July 19, 1996. The inaugural function will start at 9-30 AM, at the Mall area, adjacent to the Arts Building.

All teachers, students, officials, employees of the University, all former Provosts & House Tutors of all Halls, former Vice-Presidents and General Secretaries, other officials of DUCSU and Hall Unions, all former students have been invited to attend the function.

**Registrar**  
 University of Dhaka

**রপ্তানী উন্নয়ন বুরো**  
**তথ্যবিভাগ**  
 ১২২-১২৪, মতিঝিল বাণিজ্যিক এলাকা  
 ঢাকা

**দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি**

৭০,০০০ (সেভেন হাজার) কপি কমার্শিয়াল ইন্ডাস্ট্রিস কোটা আইটেম। ফর্ম এক ৩০,০০০ (থি হাজার) কপি কমার্শিয়াল ইন্ডাস্ট্রিস নন-কোটা আইটেম। ফর্ম দুইয়ের জন্য খাত নামা অফসেট মুদ্রণকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হইতে আশামী ২৮/০৭/৯৬ তারিখ বেলো ১২.০০ টার মধ্যে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাইতেছে। দরপত্রের সিডিকল প্রতিদিন অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে বুরোর প্রধান কার্যালয়ের হিসাব শাখা থেকে আগাম ২৭/০৭/৯৬ তারিখ পর্যন্ত ৪০০/- (চারশত) টাকা (অফসেটব্যেপা) মূল্যে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে।

ডিএকপি-১৫৭৫৬-১৫/৭  
 সূফিয়া আবতাব খাতুন  
 জি-৮৫৬  
 উপ-পরিচালক (প্রকা)

**Wanted**

A National Non-Governmental Organisation based at Dhaka is looking for Chief of its Clinical and Community Division.

**Requirements:**

- MBBS with post-graduate degree in the field of nutrition, MCH or public health.
- Able to plan,organise,manage clinical and preventive health programme and also community and center-based nutrition rehabilitation programme.
- Minimum 5 years experience on the relevant field, experience in teaching and/or research in the field of health and nutrition will be preferred.

Application with detail CV, contact telephone (if any) and one recent photograph (no certificates or testimonials are required) expected gross salary should reach Box No. D-746, "The Daily Star, House # 11, Road # 3, Dhanmondi by 25 July, 1996.

**Bangladesh Postal Department**  
**Office of the Post Master General, Northern Zone, Rajshahi**  
**Service Appointment Notice**

Self-written applications from Bangladesh nationals under Rajshahi Division are invited for filling in the undermentioned vacancies through competitive examination under direct quota appointment of PMG office, Rajshahi.

Serial No.	Name of Post	Number	Pay (New National Scale)	Educational Qualification
1.	Senior Assistant	4 Nos.	1375-7x80-1935-EB-11x85-2870/-	Graduate
2.	Steno-Typist	7 Nos.	-do-	HSC passed in 2nd Division and holding Shorthand course degree with Bengali/English Typing. Shorthand speed—English 80, Bengali 60 & Typing Speed—English 40, Bengali 35 words.

**Terms & conditions**

1. Age of candidate should be between 18 and 30 years on 16/7/96.
2. The following certificates along with two copies attested photographs & postal order etc. should be attached with the application.
  - A) Character certificate issued by 1st class gazetted officer.
  - B) Nationality certificate from Union Parishad/Pourashabha Chairman/City Corporation Commissioner.
  - C) 2 copies recent passport size photographs attested by 1st class gazetted officer.
  - D) Copies of certificates in favour of educational qualification.
  - E) Crossed postal order for Tk 20 (twenty) only (Non-refundable) in favour of PMG, Rajshahi.
3. Candidates in service should send their applications through proper channel.
4. Govt prescribed quota (Freedom Fighters, women, disabled, district etc) will be maintained.
5. No TADA will be admissible for taking part in the written test.
6. Referring this notice, name, father's name, permanent & present address, date of birth, educational qualification, division/class of passing, district, nationality etc. should be stated in the application. Last time limit for submitting the application is up to 31-7-96. No application will be received after the prescribed time.
7. Successful Stenotypists will be appointed to Rajshahi/Bogra/Pabna offices respectively.
8. The syllabus for written test for the post of Senior Assistant is as follows:

	Time	Full Marks
A) English (Essay, comprehension, drafting, correction)	2 1/2 hours	100
B) General Knowledge	-do-	100
C) General Mathematics (SSC standard)	-do-	100

DFP-15517-11/7  
 G-860  
**Addl. Post-Master General**  
 Northern Zone, Rajshahi

## PSC annual report reveals/ Persons from low-income background marginalised in govt jobs

Children of parents with comparatively low incomes are getting marginalised in government cadre jobs, according to statistics of Bangladesh Public Service Commission, reports UNB.

In 1988-89, some 32 per cent posts of different government cadre service — regarded as the first class government jobs — went to the children whose guardians had annual income of Tk 25,000 or less.

The percentage declined to 28 in 1989-90, 25.6 in 1990-91, 18.8 in 1991-92 and a meagre 11 in 1993-94, revealed the 1995 annual report of the PSC, the officials recruiting agency, placed in parliament Sunday.

According to the report, the same thing also happened to the posts of lecturer under the education cadre of the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations.

Children with parents earning Tk 25,000 or less, occupied 18.3 per cent of total posts in 1992, but the figure dropped to 11.7 in the 1994 Special BSC Examination for Education cadre.

The report, however, pointed out the children whose parents are serviceholders were getting more and more jobs while the percentage of successful candidates coming from farming stock was on the decline.

Percentage of children having serviceholder parents rose to 46.8 in 1993-94 from 40.4 in 1988-89. About 25.8 per cent BCS posts went to children of families having farming background in 1988-89, but only 19.1 per cent post went to such candidates in 1993-94.

Though the report didn't cite any reasons for the poor showing by the children of low-income families, it apparently happened wing to lack of proper schooling in quality educational institutions.

A constitutional body, the Public Service Commission also suggested that the quota system for the freedom fighters, now 30 per cent of all BCS posts, be abolished because such candidates are not available.

The maximum age for a freedom fighter candidate is 32, and if such a candidate

could be found within the age limit, he or she must be maximum of seven years of age during the War of Liberation.

The PSC also observed that the existing district quota, which is calculated on the basis of population of a district, is contradictory to merit.

Considering the situation, the commission suggested that the freedom fighter quota be abolished and merged with the merit and female quotas to encourage merit and the women-folk in the nation building activities.

At the same time, it suggested, the district quota be dismantled gradually maintaining the importance of tribal and female quotas in the government employments.

The report pointed out that the candidates of Rajshahi division are mostly beneficiary of the existing merit and district quotas, followed by the candidates of Chittagong and Sylhet divisions.

Candidates of Dhaka, Khulna and Barisal could get more posts if all the posts were distributed on the basis of only merit.

## What's on today . . .

**Film show:** "Cream in my coffee." A TV play by Dennis Potter, will be screened. Venue: British Council auditorium, 5 Fuller Road. Time: 5 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka South:** The regular weekly meeting and fellowship gathering of the club will be held. Prof Jalal U Ahmad will speak on 'Ann's role in Rotary'. Venue: Hotel Purbani International. Time: 5:30 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka North West:** The regular weekly meeting will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 6pm.

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

**Rotary Club of Shyamoli-Dhaka:** The weekly meeting will be held. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 5:30 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka Midtown:** The weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: White Castle Restaurant, 20 Kemal Ataturk Avenue, Banani. Time: 5:15 pm.

## Biswas, Hasina felicitate Saddam Hussein

President Abdur Rahman Biswas yesterday felicitated Saddam Hussein, president of the Republic of Iraq on the occasion of his country's national day today, reports BSS.

In his message President Biswas hoped that the friendly relations between the two countries will be further strengthened in the coming days.

In a separate message Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also greeted the Iraqi president on the occasion.

The Prime Minister expressed her firm belief that the historic ties of cooperation and friendship between Iraq and Bangladesh would further develop in the coming years.



State Minister for Housing and Public Works Afsaruddin Ahmed addressing the Rajuk officials at the conference room of Rajuk Bhaban in the city yesterday. — PID photo