

Dhaka Day by Day

A Culture of Waste

by Samia Islam

Do you need to know the programmes or agenda of any seemingly ordinary day in Dhaka and don't have the slightest clue as to what they are? Then take a leisurely rickshaw ride around town to get a prompt briefing on the day's highlighted events — be it some political meeting or even religious festivities most people in Dhaka learn about what's happening or what to expect in the near future through the tell-tale, rickety bamboo structures

sprawled across busy roads and avenues. The pseudo gateways are rudely erected square in the middle of the street. These days you keep track of most things through these bamboo gateways that straddle the narrowest and busiest of roads. You sweat and curse in the scorching heat and suffocating smog while stuck in traffic congestions that are worsened by their overzealous presence. Nobody gives a damn about ruining recently carpeted roads, digging holes for the bamboo pillars to go in. When the gates are dismantled, the holes remain shoddily covered with a handful of sand or dirt to tell their story. 'Wastage aside, if I am missing the aesthetics, pray tell where to look.'

Another common form of waste are illuminations. Suppose someone is getting married in your family and luckily you have money to burn, so what do you? You make a miniature gateway in front of your humble abode fifteen days before schedule and sprinkle strings of tiny light bulbs on and around it. The tiny bulbs blink round the clock and drive everybody in the neighbourhood crazy with all that synchro-nize blinking! But people's sanity is not the only thing at stake here much larger issues arise out of the seemingly harmless flaunting of wealth. Like energy conservation. But who cares about the future, we are obsessed with the present. The current trend in wedding euphoria is to celebrate for fortnights and even months. Perhaps it's an attempt to reminisce

and relive the glorious, illustrious Moghul days. But how do we have anything to do with the Moghuls?

The Dhaka people have case of mistaken identity alright! Because if we are not pretending to be the Moghuls, we are definitely playing the roles of the Hindi filmwallahs. We have got a handful of acquired rituals for our weddings already but following the footsteps of the Bollywood bigwigs now we have started to arrange more rituals like Sangetas (know what that is?). So there is more scope to throw money around and let other people squirm with jealousy. How wonderful! There are people in the country who have so many acquaintances that they have to arrange for their child's wedding in stadiums. At one wedding the groom came on horseback in typical filmi style but to outdo that somebody else's Dulharaja made an entry on an elephant. Now that is what I call

style! Next I guess some other groom would have to fly in on a Roc to out shine his peers but that crazy bird's gone extinct! And the world thinks that we are a poor little country with a per capita income of \$ 220. The estimation had a few flaws no doubt!

It's not only wedding or other family events that call for illuminations in our little metropolis. There are weirder people around. Like some store owners who celebrate year round with illuminations. Honestly, what does a confectionery store have to celebrate so much about? And all the blinking lights in the world wouldn't do much good if people weren't interested, would it? Problem is, people are interested and hence, in an effort to outdo, outperform and out manoeuvre the Jones's, the result is pure and absolute waste. So if and when we stop nosing into other people's affairs, perhaps we can get rid of this new and bizarre aspect of our culture.



Abdur Razzak, Minister for Water Resources, handing over the Rotary Club of Metropolitan Dhaka Foundation (RCMD) award to Prof. Muhammad Shafiqullah, founding-director of Institute of Business Administration for his contribution in the field of country's economic development. — Rotary photo

Parjatan Service Week begins Aug 13

The first-ever Parjatan Service Week will be observed in the country from August 13 aiming to make tourism attractive for the growth of the industry, reports UNB.

The campaign aims at rendering better service to the guests and helping them enjoy the tourist facilities provided by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation avoiding the in-season rush.

It also aims at ensuring efficiency and quality of service of the corporation's professionals to render best possible service to the guests. Special discount of BPC services includes 10 per cent discount on meal at all its restaurants throughout the country, and 15 per cent discount on accommodation except in Cox's Bazar and Rangamati.

Parjatan's hotel and motel accommodation is already offering 20 to 30 per cent discount in Cox's Bazar and Rangamati and it will continue till September 30. BPC's Rent-a-Car service will give 15 per cent rebate during the week.

To mark the occasion, special menu will be offered to local and foreign guests on demand at the restaurants of the corporation.

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Recruitment of 20000 police personnel likely: JS told

The strength of the country's police force will be increased and a proposal to recruit more personnel is under active consideration of the government, reports UNB.

The proposal to recruit 17,893 personnel for the police force has already been submitted to the government. Home Minister Rafiqul Islam said in parliament yesterday in reply to a starred question by Kazi Keramat Ali (Rajbari-1).

Besides, the minister said, the government is considering to equip the police force with modern weapons for its proper modernisation and the plan will be implemented with availability of resources.

Replying to a starred question of Dr M. Rustam Ali Farazi (Pirojpur-3), the Home Minister said the government was thinking of creating a rapid action force equipped with helicopter and dog-squad for the modernisation of the police force.

He said police officers, including the offices of Police Super, would soon be provided with computers. The government was also considering to instal 'close circuit television' in the metropolitan areas, including Dhaka.

DU IR dept study reveals Kick-back culture most popular in admin

By Staff Correspondent

Maximum bribery occurs in those sectors where public interaction with government offices is predominant, reveals a recent study conducted by the students of International Relations of the Dhaka University (DU).

Bribe is now offered directly and the officials accept it with great delight, the research paper observed, adding that donation in cash for various institutions is also a form of bribe.

The study, 'Bribery: Reasons and Remedies', was chaired under the supervision of Dr Imtiaz Ahmed, an associate professor of the department, and was conducted by 14 second-year students as part of their course curricula.

The study, on the other hand, called for formation of an investigative board parallel to that of the Anti-Corruption Bureau as, according to their report, bribery was rampant there.

During the study a total of 188 officials from various professions were interviewed while 'many' were found reluctant to talking about a sensitive issue-like bribery. The study was confined to a number of offices located in Dhaka.

According to the study, 21.28 per cent said that incident of bribery is highest in the civil administration, followed by Customs and Excise with 19.68 per cent, court building 5.32 per cent and banks with 3.72 per cent.

A total of 25.53 per cent of the respondents, on the other hand, said that it has become a common practice, more or less, in every sector while 5.85 per cent declined to reply.

Of the respondents, 52.13 per cent said that bribery had severely affected national development, while 37.23 per cent thought that its impact was rather insignificant and 10.64 per cent believed that it had no impact at all.

According to the study 32.45 per cent of the sample identified moral degradation as the primary reason behind bribery while 29.25 per cent put the blame on economic hardship.

Besides, 20.74 per cent blamed insufficient monthly earning, 7.98 per cent family pressure, 3.19 per cent economic rat race, 2.66 per cent price spiral and 1.06 per cent identified corruption in the society as factors behind bribery among the officials.

At least 66 per cent of the sample considered bribery as a common practice among over 50 per cent of the government officials while 10 per cent among them considered that 100 per cent of the govern-

JU admission test begins today

By JU Correspondent

Written tests for admission to the honours classes in the Jahangirnagar University (JU) under the session 1995-96 began today.

Tests of the subjects under 'Gha' unit will be held today while those of the 'Ka' (Science), 'Kha' (Social Science) and 'Ga' (Arts) units will be held August 6, 7, and 8 respectively.

Each student this time will get 45 minutes to write, answers for each paper as per to the new admission rules effective from this year.

About 33,300 candidates are vying for some 800 seats in 20 departments under three faculties and the lone institute of the university.

WB official, Manju talk Bank-aided projects

World Bank Director of South Asian Region Meiko Nishimijo called on Communications Minister Anwar Hossain Manju at his Secretariat office here yesterday, reports UNB.

They discussed important issues relating to World Bank financed infrastructures and road projects.

Chief of the WB Mission in Bangladesh Pierre Landell-Mills was present.

The Communications Minister apprised the World Bank Director that sufficient allocation has been given to road maintenance sector in the present budget.

Nishimijo stressed on the road safety, erosion of the Bangali and Jamuna rivers in Siraganj which may pose threat to the Jamuna Multipurpose Bridge Project.

The minister assured that the government will take necessary steps in this regard.

What's on today....

BSES symposium: The Bangladesh solar energy society will hold a symposium on 'National Efforts for the Utilisation of Solar Energy'. Prof P H Garg of Indian Institute of Technology will present two research papers. Venue: Atomic Energy Centre auditorium. Time: 9:00 am.

Seminar on women's right: Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and Women and Law South Asia Network have jointly arranged a seminar on 'Muslim Women's Right to maintenance'. Dr Naima Huq and Dr Taslima Manjoor will present papers. Chief guest: Justice Mohammad Ghulam Rabbani. Justice Naimuddin Ahmed will preside. Venue: WVA auditorium, Road 27, Dhanmondi. Time: 4:30 pm.

SGAM closing ceremony: The closing ceremony of Gender Awareness Training for the Cultural Activist under the project of Social Gender Analysis and Media (SGAM) will be held. Venue: Kendriyo Kochi Kachar auditorium, Segunbagicha. Time: 5:00 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhaka Central: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Dhaka Club. Time: 1:30 pm.

Rotary Club of Dhaka North: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

Rotary Club of Dilkusha: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Purbani hotel. Time: 5:00 pm.

Rotary Club of Gulshan: The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sajna restaurant. Time: 5:00 pm.

MRK CONSULTANTS Executive Search

SALES MANAGER - CONSUMER BRANDS

A well established and widely diversified national Company, successor to a world renowned transnational, wishes to appoint a Sales Manager for its Consumer Brands division.

Candidates must have a degree in Business Administration, Marketing or any allied discipline with computer literacy. They should have minimum five years of experience in marketing and sales functions, preferably of consumer products. Hands on involvement in field activities is a must.

The job responsibilities of the incumbent will include preparation of sales forecasts and strategies and implementation of marketing plans. Self driven, he will lead, train and motivate a sales team which will strive hard to achieve ever increasing sales targets. He will be required to develop appropriate distribution channels so that the Company's products are available all over the country.

The selected candidate will also be responsible for planning and monitoring promotional programmes which will be run by agencies. In addition, he will liaise with authorities and external bodies for complying with legal and regulatory requirements applicable to consumer products business.

This is a challenging position meant for a dynamic and energetic person in his early thirties. The job involves extensive travelling.

An attractive compensation package matching qualifications and experiences will be offered. Opportunities for training, development and career advancement exist.

Interested candidates are requested to send their complete CV by 15th August, 1996 to MRK Consultants, Bilquis Tower (3rd floor), 6 Gulshan North C.A., Dhaka - 1212. Tel :885100, 885074 Fax : 880-02-885086.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Third Fisheries Project

Department of Fisheries, Matshya Bhaban, Park Avenue, Ramna, Dhaka

Memo No: TFP (Pro) 6202

Dated: 28 July, 1996

Invitation for Local Tenders

Lot No 19F: Office Furniture (Wooden) Group-B

The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit from the International Development Association (IDA) in various currencies towards the cost of the Third Fisheries Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this credit will be applied to eligible payments under the contract(s) for which this invitation for local tenders is issued.

1. Sealed tenders are hereby invited from eligible tenderers in Bangladesh for the supply and delivery of office furniture (Wooden) to Matshya Bhaban, Park Avenue, Ramna, Dhaka.

2. Interested eligible tenderers may obtain further information in detail from and inspect the tender documents at Room 612, Matshya Bhaban.

3. A complete set of tender documents can be obtained by any interested eligible tenderer on the submission of a written application to the undersigned for a non-refundable cash payment of Tk 550/- (Taka five hundred fifty) only from Room 612, Matshya Bhaban, Dhaka during normal working hours up to 24 August 1996.

4. Complete tenders must be accompanied by a tender security of not less than 2.5% (two and half per cent) of total tender price in the form of a Bank Draft or Pay Order and must be delivered to the office of the Project Director on or before 12.00 Noon on 25 August 1996.

5. Tenders will be opened immediately after the deadline for closing in the presence of tenderer's representatives who choose to attend the office of the Project Director.

6. The Department of Fisheries does not bind itself to accepting the lowest tender or any tender submitted in response to this invitation for Local Tenders.

Md SI Khan

Project Director
Third Fisheries Project

DFF-16922-31/7
G-912

Siraj Miah's wife meets FM

Wife of the late Siraj Miah and a visiting ten-member Bangladeshi team from the UK along with Barrister Emily Thornberry met Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad at the Foreign Office yesterday, reports BSS.

While expressing serious concern over the death of Siraj Miah, the Foreign Minister assured them that the government was pursuing the case vigorously and had entrusted CID to complete the investigation and make charge sheet against the persons responsible for the crime.

He said that the government was determined to remove harassment faced by the passengers at the Zia International Airport and reiterated government's commitment to uphold the human rights in the country.

Newsman beaten up

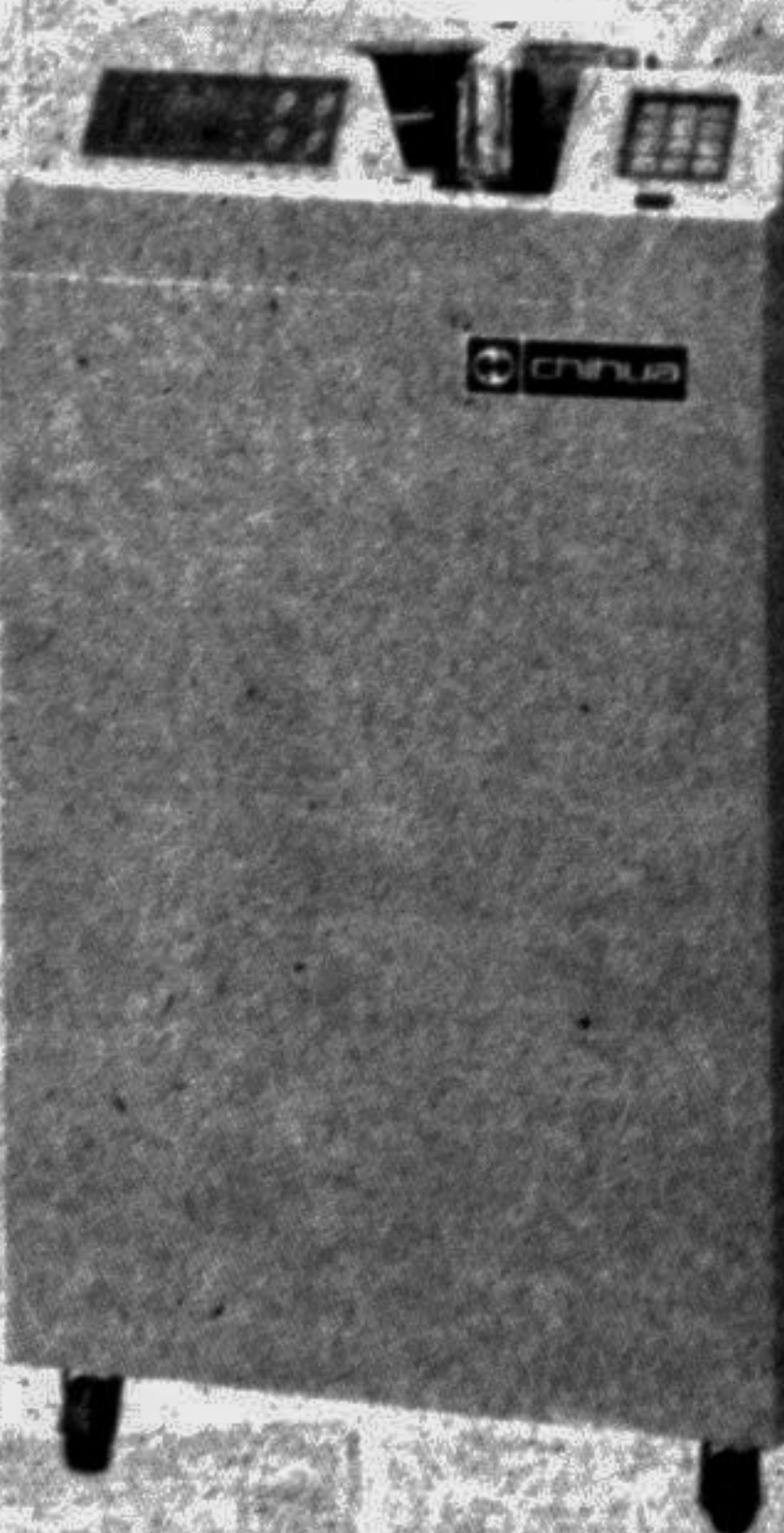
CHITTAGONG, Aug 4: Hasan Akbar, correspondent of the Daily Azadi was beaten up by a group of miscreants from a procession near Sitakunda College Road here yesterday, reports BSS.

According to police and eyewitnesses, when Hasan Akbar was riding by a rickshaw, suddenly a group of miscreants from a procession of a student organisation forced him to get down from the rickshaw, they started beating him mercilessly.

The seriously injured Azadi correspondent was admitted to local health centre, he remained unconscious till filing of this report. Police said he came under attack by the miscreants from a procession of Islami Chhatra Shibir, the sources added.



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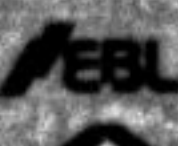
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