

Dhaka Day by Day

A Case for Comfortable Buses

by Tanya Mahnaz Huq

For the so-called class-conscious people, once a bus journey was not an exciting proposition. If there was a need for traveling from Dhaka to Chittagong, it was either by train or by air. Traveling by road meant only in the comfort of one's own car. Most people, even if they did not belong to the elite class, looked down their noses when it came to the question of traveling by bus.

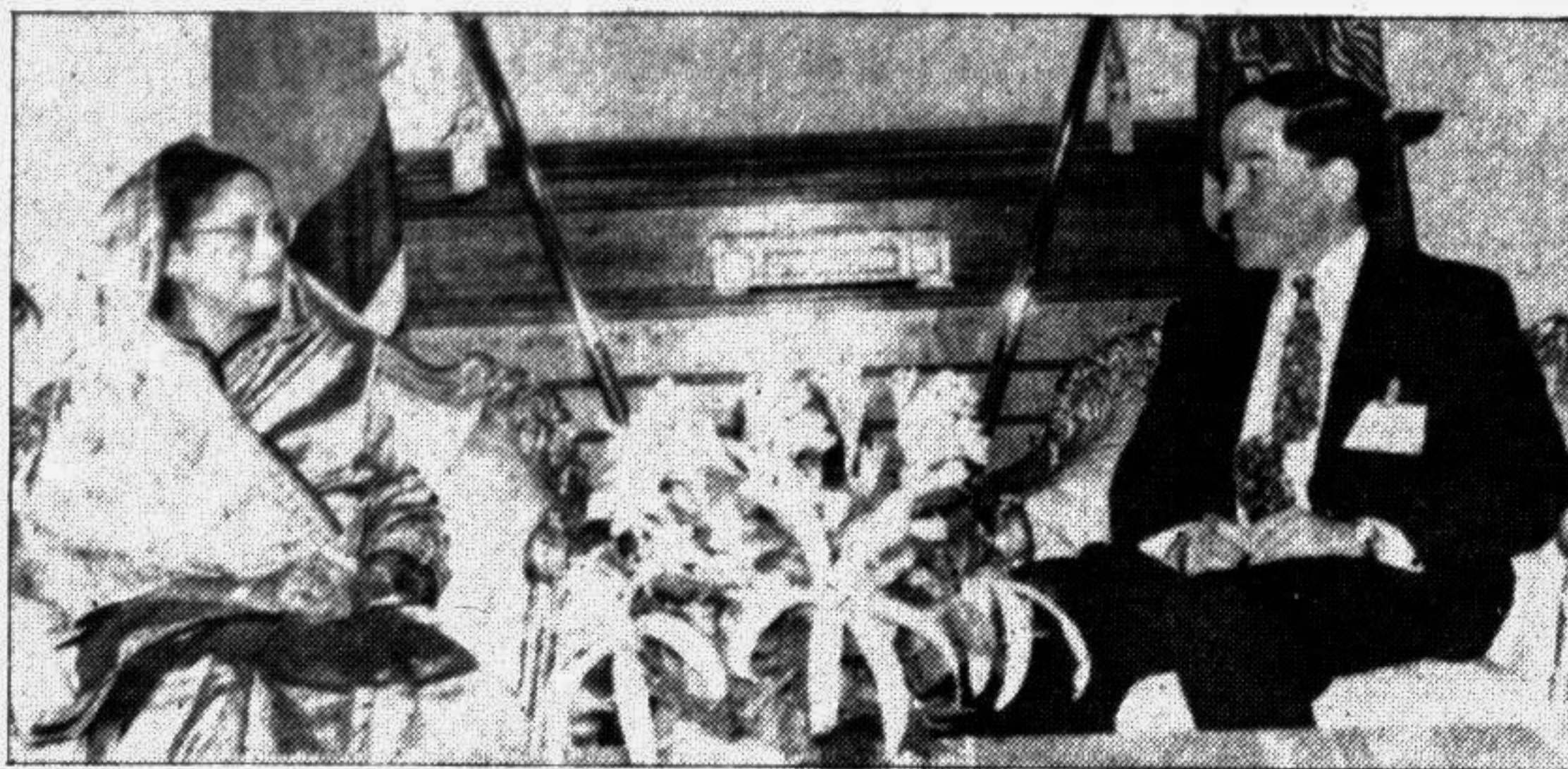
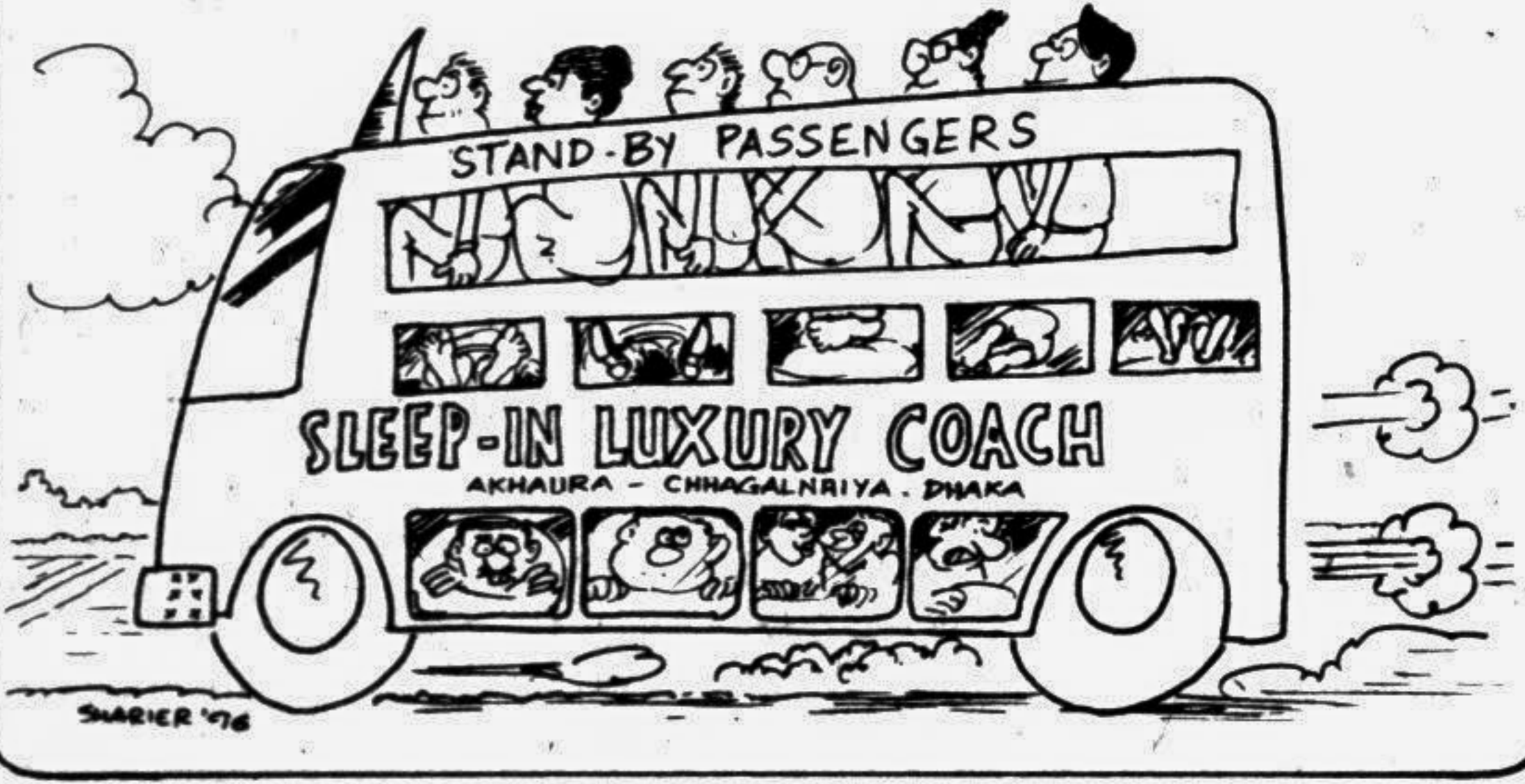
Now some enterprising private companies, by introducing some wonderful new air-conditioned buses, have managed to change this view entirely. These new and smart air-conditioned buses each has a good mannered and soft-spoken attendant to look after your needs. Light refreshments and drinks are served along with reading materials and you can even listen to music with your very own pair of headphones.

The buses also stop in the middle of the journey at a very nice little highway restaurant in Comilla. And almost too good to be true, the ticket prices are very reasonable. Of course, once or twice accidents have occurred due to reckless driving on the highway, but most of the time the drivers are careful. These journeys can often turn out to be pleasant and comfortable, so much so that even Bangladeshis living abroad (and foreigners, too), when in the country for a holiday, prefer these bus journeys to Chittagong, rather than sitting for hours in the airport when

the flights are delayed or for a long, slow and often dusty train journey.

Let's hope such buses will soon be traveling all over the country to make the journeys more comfortable and pleasant. Though this sounds like an easy on buses, there's a point here somewhere. In most major cities of the world, buses are the cheapest and most common mode of transport. But (without wanting to sound snobbish) the buses in our beloved metropolis are in such a condition that it is impossible for people, especially women, to take a nice and comfortable bus ride here.

Why can't some better buses be introduced on the city roads, perhaps with a slightly higher rate of ticket fare than for the common ones? Only then people can travel about comfortably without falling over one another or pressed together like sardines in a car! Maybe, the buses will be straight instead of leaning at a 45 degree angle. The fact that the buses are packed to double or triple their capacity is beyond anyone's wildest imaginations. Why can't we take a bus ride in the city in a civilized manner and stop thinking about it as a sort of nightmare? Can't somebody step forward and introduce a system like the Dhaka-Chittagong buses and make life a lot easier for us?



Chairman of the Hong Kong-based Peregrine group Philip Tose called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office yesterday. —PID photo

Peregrine chief calls on Hasina

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said her government had taken business-friendly measures enabling local and foreign private investors to invest in the country, reports UNB.

She was talking to Phillip Tose, Chairman of Peregrine Investment Holdings Ltd, a Hong Kong-based private investment firm, when he called on the Prime Minister at her office Monday morning.

Hasina said the government had decided to allow setting-up of private export-processing zones and develop industrial parks for increase private investment in different sectors.

The government is determined to remove all bottlenecks in land requisition for private EPZ and industrial park with a view to giving a boost to investment.

The Prime Minister also invited the entrepreneurs to make private investment, specially in the power sector.

Tose said they had made long-term investment in a number of Asian countries.

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What's on today . . .

- Discussion on Nazrul:** Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts has arranged a discussion meeting in observance of the 20th anniversary of death of National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. A cultural function will follow. Venue: Shilpakala Academy auditorium. Time: 7 pm.
- CEDAW Forum discussion:** On the 15th anniversary of the declaration of the UN charter to eliminate all discrimination against women, the CEDAW Forum has organised a discussion meeting. Venue: UNIC hall, UNDP House (near Mohila Sports Complex). Time: 4:30 pm-6:30 pm.
- Health symposium:** Beximco Pharmaceuticals Ltd and Obstetrical and Gynaecological Society of Bangladesh have jointly organised a symposium on 'Endoscopic Surgery in Gynaecology'. Venue: BCP's auditorium. Time: 9:30 am.
- Rotary Club of Ramna:** The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.
- Rotary Club of Dhaka New City:** The regular weekly meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Sonargaon Hotel. Time: 5:30 pm.

Weather

Moderate rainfall likely

Light to moderate rain is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka and Sylhet divisions and northern parts of Chittagong division during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office said rain is likely at one or two places elsewhere over the country.

Day temperature may rise by 1 degree Celsius across the country.

Weathermen predicted a little change in the next two days. In an extended outlook, they said that rainfall activities may increase at the end of this week.

Country's highest temperature was recorded yesterday 35.6 degree Celsius at Khulna and the lowest 23 degrees at Dinajpur.

Meantime, Dinajpur experienced the country's highest 93 mm rainfall followed by Rajshahi with 67 mm rain.

The sun sets today at 6:15 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:42 am.

Tk 4808.54 cr earned from fish exports in 5 yrs

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Satish Chandra Roy told the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday that the production of fish had increased in the country by 2,91,921 lakh metric tons during the last five years (1991-96), reports BSS.

Replying to a question from Mashur Rahman (BNP-Jhenidah), the minister said the country earned Tk 4808.54 crore by exporting fish during the same five-year period.

The state minister also told the House that the number of private poultry farms in the country is 61,673 (each farm having more than 200 birds) while the number of government farms is 33.

Replying to a question from A B M Abul Kashem (AL-Chittagong), he said poultry feed is imported at private level.

Replying to another question from Dr Dewah M. Salauddin (BNP-Dhaka), the minister said the total number of private fish farms is 1915 while there are 118 in the public sector.

The state minister further said that powder milk worth Tk 207.78 crore was imported till May of the fiscal 1995-96, as against Tk 276.82 crore in 1990-91 fiscal.



Birth anniversary of Abul Mansur Ahmad today

The 98th anniversary of birth of late Abul Mansur Ahmad, renowned journalist, politician and litterateur of the subcontinent will be observed today with due solemnity, says a press release.

In observance of the day Abul Mansur Ahmad Memorial Committee has organised religious functions at Dhaka and Mymensingh in addition to distribution of alms to the destitutes, the release added.

The British Council

The British Council Chittagong: Temporary Closure

The British Council, Chittagong will remain closed from **1st to 30th September 1996** due to renovation work.

However, arrangements have been made to continue GCE registration at the British Council from **2nd to 15th September** between 11am and 5 pm. In January 1997, for the first time GCE 'O' & 'A' level examinations will be held in Chittagong under the direct supervision of the British Council.

The film shows this month will take place at the Chittagong Club on **10, 11 & 12 September**.

For further information on GCE registration & film shows, please contact

Sutapa Barua
Manager, The British Council
Laldighi, Chittagong. Tel: 223632

LEXCO LIMITED

REGISTERED OFFICE: 146, HAZARIBAGH, DHAKA-1209

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 16th Annual General Meeting of the shareholders of Lexco Limited will be held on **Thursday 26th September, 1996 at 11:00 AM** at Prianka Community Centre, House No 50, Road-6/A, Dhanmondi R/A, (Near Eidgah Mosque), Dhaka-1209, to transact the following business:

AGENDA

- To confirm the minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting held on 6th August, 1995.
- To receive, consider and adopt the Directors' Report and the Audited Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1995 together with the report of the Auditors thereon.
- To declare dividend for the year ended 31st December, 1995.
- To elect Directors.
- To appoint auditors for the year 1996 and to fix their remuneration.
- To transact any other business which may be transacted at an ordinary general meeting with the permission of the chair.

Dhaka
Dated: 1st September, 1996

By Order of the Board
Ahmed Reza Chowdhury
Company Secretary

Notes:

- The Register of the members and the Share Transfer Book of the Company will remain closed from **16-09-1996 to 26-09-1996** (both days inclusive). During that period no share transfer will be effected.
- A member entitled to attend and vote at the general meeting may appoint a proxy to attend and vote in his/her stead. Such a proxy shall be a member of the company. The proxy form duly stamped, should be deposited at the Registered Office of the company not later than 48 hours before the time fixed for the meeting.
- Members are requested to notify change of address, if any, to the company.
- Duly completed attendance slip sent with this notice will be required to be deposited at the entrance of the meeting hall.

Kibria urges tax officials to achieve target

Finance Minister Shah AMS Kibria yesterday called upon the tax-officials to work with dedication to achieve the target of tax-collection of Tk 13040 crore fixed for the current fiscal year (1996-97), reports BSS.

The amount is Tk 1740 crore higher than that of the previous year (1995-96), he said.

The finance minister was addressing the officials of National Board of Revenue (NBR) at its conference room in the city.

Finance minister said it is a challenge for the government as well as the tax-administration to achieve this target of tax collection, a PID handout said.

The finance minister said, increased internal resource mobilization is a must for greater investment, and also to minimise dependency on foreign aid to continue development programmes.

The finance minister said, the government have undertaken different measures to attract foreign investment in order to increase economic growth which would help achieve the target of tax collection.

He mentioned steps taken to reorganise the Board of Investment, simplify investment procedures and work on establishment of private export processing zones. The process of expansion of Dhaka Export Processing Zone has already begun.

The finance minister reminded the tax officials to see that during the tax-collection, the tax-payers who contribute a lot to the nation building are not harassed.

The present government's main object is not to behave like a ruler but to serve the people. Kibria said. He said all programmes have been taken by the new government for fulfillment of hopes and aspiration of the common people.

Finance minister laid stress on increasing efficiency in tax-administration and removal of corruption in tax-collection.

MUSICAL MOMENTS DELIGHTFUL DAYS

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PERSPECTIVE FOR THE MICROCREDIT SUMMIT

A two-day workshop on "Financing the Poor: Defining the South Asia Perspective for the Microcredit Summit," jointly organised by Credit and Development Forum and Action Aid-Bangladesh, opened at a city hotel yesterday. The managing director of Grameen Trust, Prof H I Latifee inaugurated the workshop, which is being attended by some fifty participants from the South Asia region including Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.