

Dhaka Day by Day

Dhaka's Ubiquitous Vagabonds

by Neil Ray

Everyday on my way to the office I see him on the footpath in front of the arboriculture garden on the west side of the Jatiya Sangsad. Either he is lying on a polythene sheet or sitting on the concrete footpath — his legs bestride. A middle aged man of a frail frame with black and white hairs, he seems to be an integral part of the place. Whether it rains or shines, he is there.

The interesting thing is that the man never wears a lungi or keeps his body bare. He always wears a pant and a half shirt, which in his position look quite tidy. He does not carry a bundle or a bag still he maintains a level of passable cleanliness. Seldom does he beg or if he does, nobody is likely to give him a single taka. For example, he is very tactless. He would not move out of the footpath and makes a few gestures by extending his hands to the passing rickshaws. He is not very insisting and no rickshaw passenger has the time and will to stop for him.

The question is, what does the man eat, how and where does he respond to nature's calls? Does he have more than one shirt or pant and clothes to change, bathe and serve various other purposes of a man? Where does he take shelter or sleep when it rains? Apparently he leads a life that is avowedly committed to the minimum requirements for a human. He appears to me as a 'symbol of protest' to the contaminating

influences of consumerism. As if he wants to show us with how little a man can survive — a modern Diogenes.

Then, of course, he may be none of it. He is a vagabond in the true sense of the term. We do not know, nor do we care to know. Vagabonds and do-nothing-dandies may be a dying species but not yet extinct. You will come across a few of them somewhere in this sprawling city. They give the impression of facing no struggle for their survival. Yet the life they have opted for can never occur in the common people's wildest dream. At times their style of care-free and worryless life appears to be quite fascinating; at other even a bit enviable. But not many can think of a life so uncertain and unloved. Either you have to downgrade yourself to the peripheral role of social parasites or rise beyond pettiness and material concerns. No pretension of a saint and yet committed to a secret cult of saintliness perhaps.

We however know little of it. What we really know is that many among us are vagabonds without really being one like the man on the footpath near the arboriculture garden. Otherwise, how come that a mountebank or a monkeyman instantly pull a large avid crowd around him in this city!



Appointment

Ehsanul Kabir has been made Information and Research Secretary of the central executive committee of BNP, reports UNB.

BNP Chairperson and Leader of the opposition Begum Khaleda Zia has made the appointment, said a press release.

One of the founding leaders of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD), Kabir held different posts in the office of BNP for a long time. He also worked as coordinator of press to the BNP chief.

Ehsanul Kabir was the special assistant to Begum Khaleda Zia during her anti-autocracy movement.

He also served as a junior administrator in King Abdul Aziz Military Academy in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia for several years. Kabir was also the Managing Editor of daily New Nation and weekly Robbar. He did his MA in English from the University of Dhaka.

US missile attack on Iraq condemned

Bangladesh Peace Council (BPC) yesterday strongly condemned the US missile attack on Iraq causing indiscriminate death and destruction of civilians, reports UNB.

In a statement, Ali Aksad, secretary General of Bangladesh Peace Council and World Peace Council Regional Coordinator in Asia said all peace-loving people are shocked and concerned at the murderous cruise missile attack by the US armed forces against Iraq.

He said the unilateral missile attack, defying public opinion and international law is a blatant violation of sovereignty and territorial integrity of the independent state of Iraq.

Meanwhile, the Jatiya Ganantrik Front has also condemned the US attack, terming it as a naked American aggression against Iraq.

In a joint statement, Front president Dr MA Karim and general secretary Pratapuddin Ahmed said that America had launched the heinous attack as part of its imperialistic attitude and aggression.

USIA launches new Internet page on women's issues

The United States Information Agency (USIA) has launched a new Internet page 'Resources for Women' on its international home page, reports UNB.

The availability of 'Resources for Women' commemorates the first anniversary of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing a year ago.

The Beijing conference developed a platform for action outlining 12 issues which are considered important to women around the world. Some of these issues are women and poverty, women and education, and violence against women.

The new USIA Internet page addresses each issue mentioned in the platform and provides links to organisations involved in a particular subjects, said a USIS press release yesterday.

'Resources for Women' now has annotated links concerning the first six topics raised by the Platform for Action. Gradually, the remaining six issues related to the Platform for Action would be added to the page.



Death anniversary of Nizamuddin BU today

The 25th anniversary of death of Khawja Nizamuddin Bhuyyan Bir Uttam will be observed today, says a press release.

Nizamuddin, sub-sector commander of Sector 4 during the War of Liberation, was killed in a battle at Kanaighat of Sylhet district on this day.

Nizamuddin was the son of late Abdul Latif Bhuiyan of Comilla. Nizamuddin Memorial Committee has taken up elaborate programmes in Dhaka and Comilla to commemorate the day.

Besides, a day-long programme will be held at House 153, Road 03, Mohammadia Housing Society, Mohammadpur in the city in observance of the day.

Friends, relations and admirers have been requested to attend.



Dr Ibrahim's death anniversary tomorrow

The eighth death anniversary of former National Professor Dr Mohammad Ibrahim will be observed tomorrow in a befitting manner, reports UNB.

Different organisations, including Diabetic Association of Bangladesh, BIRDEM Officers' Club and Employees Welfare Association, have chalked out various programmes to observe the day.

The Diabetic Association will place wreath at the mazar of Dr Ibrahim at Banani graveyard at 8 am, and hold seminar memorial meeting and milad mahfil on the day.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will attend as chief guest the memorial meeting at 5 pm at the outdoor of the Diabetic Hospital.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salahuddin Yusuf, State Minister for Social Welfare and Women Affairs Dr Mozammel Haq and Mrs Sakina Ibrahim will also be present.

At 10 in the morning, a seminar titled 'Diabetes Mellitus and Eye Diseases' will be held at the BIRDEM auditorium.

On the occasion, BIRDEM Officers' club has arranged a lecture on 'The Future of Science and Technology in Bangladesh' on September 13.

2 students stabbed in city

By Staff Correspondent

Two college students were stabbed reportedly by a group of extortionists in North Gofan area under Shabujbagh thana in the city yesterday evening.

Monir Hossain, 20, a BA second year student of Siddheswari College, and his friend Romel, 19, a first year B Com student of Suhrawardy College, were stabbed when they were in their video games shop in the area at about 7:30 pm. They were admitted to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), hospital sources said.

Locals who took the injured to the DMCH said that the gang of extortionists in the area stabbed the young men as they refused to give them toll.

However, Shabujbagh police said that they did not receive any complaint in this regard till last night.

Classes resume Sept 7 Islamic varsity teachers call off strike

The Islamic University Teachers Association withdrew their indefinite strike Tuesday and the university will resume its classes on September 7 after Janmastami holidays from Sept 4 to 6, according to a press release of the university, reports BSS.

The association, in another press release, said a delegation of the association met the Education Minister Sept 1 and after detailed discussions, the minister assured them of implementation of rotation system to the post of departmental chairman. Following this assurance, the association decided to withdraw the strike.

YSDO awards 13

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Zillur Rahman yesterday called for national consensus for eradication of poverty and unemployment from the country, reports BSS.

The minister said this while distributing awards among noted personalities for significant contributions in their respective fields.

Youth and Social Development Organisation (YSDO), a socio-cultural organisation, arranged the function at Public Library auditorium in the city yesterday.

The minister said, after the killing of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the anti-independence forces tried to lead the country towards a 'reverse journey' over the last 21 years.

He called upon the country's intelligentsia to put in their efforts to fulfil the dream of the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, by foiling the conspiracy of the evil forces.

He said, unless economic freedom is ensured, political freedom would be meaningless.

Those who were awarded are: Rabeya Khatun (Education), Lutfar Rahman Sarkar (Banking), Mohammad Emdadul Haq (Literature), Dewar Hossain (Film), Salman Shah (acting), Maushumi (acting), LRB (Band Music), Zahid Hassan (TV acting), Bibi Russel (Fashion designing and modeling), Afsana Mimi (TV acting), K M Akhtaruzzaman (social service), Mozammel Hossain Bhuiyan (social organiser) and S M Masum (dance direction).



A delegation of bank employees presenting a bouquet to Leader of the Opposition and BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia during a meet to exchange views at her official Minto Road residence yesterday. — Star photo

What's on today . . .

Seminar on Bangladesh economy: A day-long seminar on "Bangladesh Economy: Current State and Future Options," jointly organised by the Bangladesh Economic Association and the Centre for Policy Dialogue, will be held. Minister for Finance S A M S Kibria, Minister for Industries and Commerce Tofael Ahmed and Minister for Agriculture, Food, and Disaster Management and Relief Matia Chowdhury are scheduled to attend as guests. Venue: Academy for Planning and Development, Nilkhet. Time: 9:30 am.

USIS Worldnet dialogue: The United States Information Service has arranged a Worldnet Dialogue on "Competitive Strategy and Competition in an Open Economy" with Richard Crawford, author of the 'Era of Human Capital', president, New Vision Financial, Principal, Madison Financial Group. Venue: USIS auditorium. Time: 5:30 pm.

Discussion on Abdul Alim, Kanail: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has organised a discussion in observance of the death anniversaries of Abdul Alim and Kanail Shil. A musical function will follow. Chief guest: A K Fayyaz Haq, State Minister for Jute & Textile. Venue: Academy auditorium. Time: 7 pm.

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

Lions Club of Dhaka Pallabi: The Board of Directors' and regular meeting of the club will be held. Venue: Kayinshi Chinese Restaurant, Mirpur. Time: 7 pm.

AUB inaugural ceremony: The inaugural ceremony of Asian University of Bangladesh will be held. Chief guest: Water Resources Minister Abdur Razzak. Venue: BCIC auditorium. Time: 3 pm.

Weather

Moderate rain likely

Light to moderate rain may occur at many places over Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions and at a few places over Dhaka, Rajshahi and Sylhet divisions during the next 12 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

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

The sun sets today at 6:13 pm and rises tomorrow at 5:42 am. The country's highest temperature 34.2 degree Celsius was recorded at Mymensingh and the lowest 23.1 degrees at Barisal.

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

City/Town	Temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	33.2	24.5	92	74
Chittagong	32.6	24.5	83	83
Rajshahi	31.6	27.5	98	88
Khulna	31.5	26.4	92	96
Barisal	31.5	23.2	78	—
Sylhet	33.5	24.7	82	77
Cox's Bazar	31.5	24.2	73	80

4 lakh people have invested in stock market so far

Over four lakh people have so far invested in the country's stock market and the number is increasing by 25 per cent annually. Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) Chairman Iratiyaz Husain said in the city yesterday.

He told BSS that the government should fix its priority in allowing more bigger economic sectors to enter into the country's capital market to enable the growing investors to take part in the mainstream economic development.

He said "at present the companies which are listed with the stock exchanges are smaller. We want big companies to enter into the stock market which will represent the bigger sectors like energy or fertiliser."

He said when an investor will buy a share of such big companies, he would buy his share of the national economy in real term, he said.

The DSE chairman said such steps would help the government create job opportunities and improve the quality of life.

The DSE chairman said priority for privatisation of different sectors was the answer to the problems of alleviating poverty and establishing social justice. In this connection, he welcomed the governments decision to set up private export processing zone.

Husain said with the growing number of investors the demand for shares had already surpassed the supply of shares.

This has mainly created a buoyancy in the market. Moreover, the political stability and favourable budgetary measures by the new government had encouraged the people to make investments in the capital market, he said.

The DSE chairman said the size of investors was growing also because of the wider media coverage and inherent challenging image of stock trading. "It is indeed very challenging for a person become a business man without going through difficult process of conventional business," he said.

Husain, however, said that there were some deliberate speculation in the market which is pushing up prices of some shares and they would come down through price correction.

Other leading brokers of the stock exchange said the depth of the market had to be increased to maintain the healthy growth of the country's capital market.

166 arrested

Police arrested 166 people on various charges from different parts of the city in 24 hours till 8 am yesterday, reports UNB.

Of them, 29 were arrested under warrant of arrest.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Office of the Executive Engineer
Public Works E/M Division-4, Dhaka

Memo No. 486 Dated: 28-8-96/13-5-1403 BS.

Short Tender Notice

No. 12(1996-97)

Tenders in Bangladesh Form No. 2911 under sealed cover are invited on item rate basis for the undermentioned work from Public Works Directorate enlisted special first class & first class (E/M) contractor firms/tender stated items manufacturing firms or their local agents or manufacturer approved local representatives who must possess valid ABC/Electrical contractor's licence with past experience of satisfactory completion of supplying, installing or repairing HT switch gear of minimum one 500 KVA Indoor Electric Sub-Station under a single work order and VAT registration certificate of National Board of Revenue.

Group No.	Name of work	Estimated cost	Earnest money	Time allowed
1.	Replacing out of order HT switch gear of electric sub-station for Building No. 4 of Bangladesh Secretariat (1996-97 financial year)	Tk quoted amount	2% (two per cent) of total quoted value	60 (sixty) days

Tenders can be dropped in the tender box kept at the office of Executive Engineer, Public Works Eden Building Division/Mechanical Workshop Division/Wooden Workshop Division as well as E/M Division No. 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8 Dhaka up to 12-00 Noon of 15-9-96 and the tenders will be opened on the same day at 12-00 Noon before the participating contractors/their nominated representatives willing to be present. Interested firms with required experience shall have to obtain written permission to purchase tender by application in prescribed form (available free of cost from this office) with experience certificate from the authority concerned (officer of minimum Executive Engineer's status), VAT registration certificate, agency certificate/enlistment register etc. (where applicable) to the Superintending Engineer, Public Works E/M Circle-2, Dhaka through this Division minimum 5 (five) days prior to the last date of selling tender. Firms obtaining permission can purchase the tender form on payment of Tk 775/= (seven hundred seventy-five) only (non-refundable) latest up to 14-9-96 during office hours from Executive Engineer, Public Works Eden Building Division/Mechanical Workshop Division/Wooden Workshop Division as well as Public Works E/M Division No. 1/2/3/4/5/6/7/8, Dhaka.

Earnest money at the rate 2% (two per cent) of the total quoted amount in the form of BD/CD/PD/SDR from any scheduled bank approved by Bangladesh Bank in favour of Executive Engineer, Public Works E/M Division-4, Dhaka should be deposited with the tender.

The undersigned reserves the right to accept any tender or reject all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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

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