

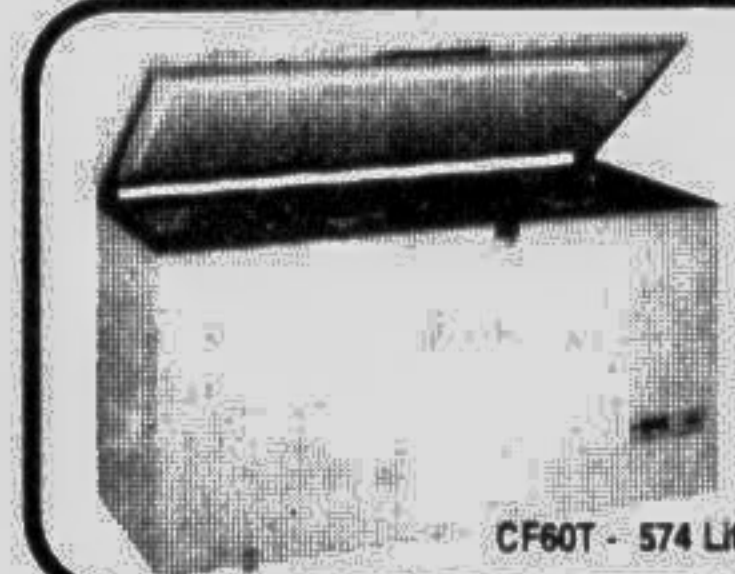
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Down to Earth

Unclaimed Death Casualties in City

By ASM Nurunnabi

Every big city has some chaotic problems. Dhaka city has one such problem - unclaimed death casualties. Everyday from the four corners of the country, numerous people come to the metropolitan city on various businesses. If any of them meets sudden unnatural death in the city, he is liable to become an unclaimed corpse if he does not have any identification papers. It has been seen that in such cases where no identification of the victims of accidents is available, they are buried as unclaimed bodies.

It is alleged that due to faulty systems at hospital morgues and city graveyards, which preclude effective enquiries by concerned relatives, the number of unclaimed corpses has been on the increase day by day in the city. According to Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam sources, their statistics for the last few years show that they received eight to nine unclaimed bodies everyday on the average. The authorities that are associated with the tasks of recovering and burying unclaimed bodies are the police administration, Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam and the Azampur and Jurain graveyards which are controlled by the Dhaka City Corporation.

The police normally get information about unnatural deaths through the people present at the places of occurrence. Besides, unidentified bodies recovered as a result of accidents from buses, trains, launches or on roads are first recovered by the police of the concerned police stations and then made over to hospital morgues. After the preparation of post-mortem and other necessary reports, the police hand over the unidentified bodies to Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam. As a matter of formality, the Detective Branch of the police also take photographs of the dead bodies, but in case the bodies are mutilated or badly disfigured, no photographs are taken. Unidentified bodies from railway acci-

dents are recovered by the railway police of the concerned area and thereafter the usual formalities are followed.

Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam is a well-known social service organisation. For a long time since its inception, the organisation along with its other social welfare services, has been associated with the work of carrying and supplying shrouds for the unclaimed dead bodies. Previously, the organisation used to recover such dead bodies when informed by local people and then carried them to the graveyards for burial after necessary formalities. It was, however, subsequently understood that due to some legal complications, Anjuman withdrew from such work. At present the unclaimed dead bodies are received by Anjuman for burial through the police.

As regards corpses belonging to other religions, say Hindu, the Hindu Cremation Society is approached which on receipt of payment of certain amount as cremation charges performs the ritual of cremation. In many cases it was seen that, since neither the police nor the morgue was able to provide the required fund, such cases are disposed of on the basis of death certificate showing the deceased as a Muslim.

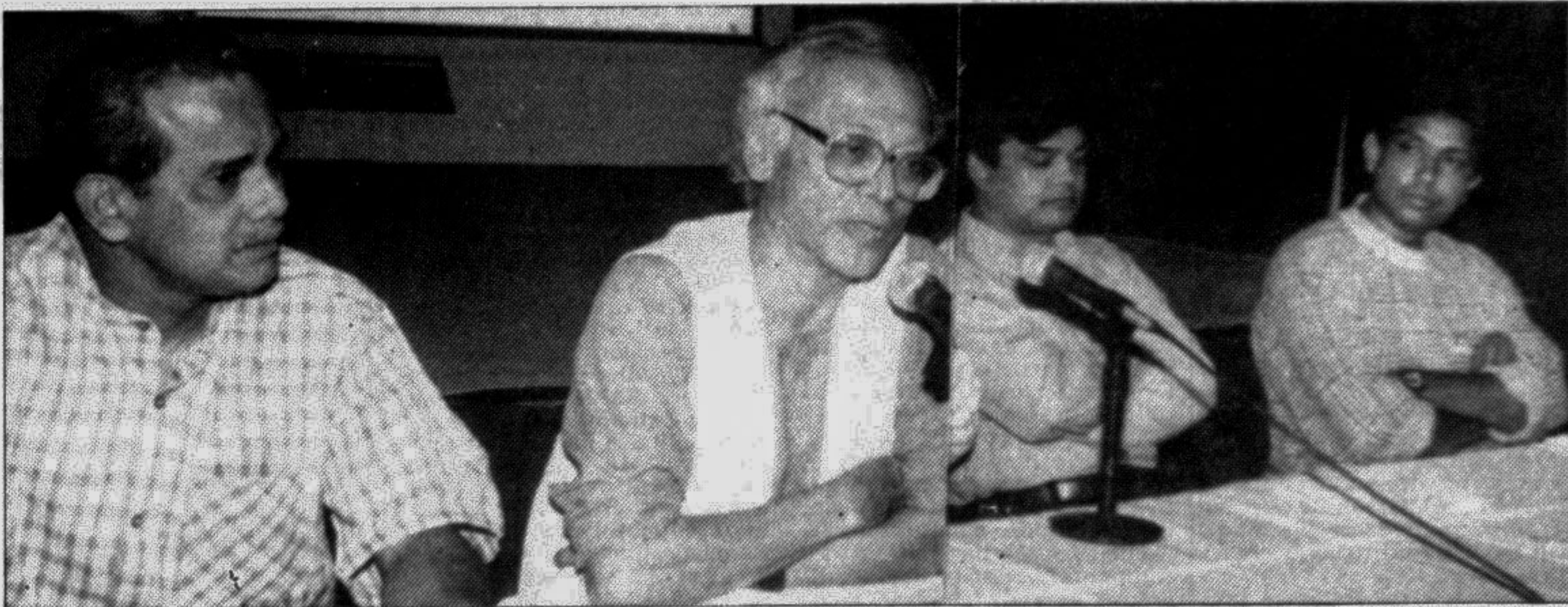
Out of the six graveyards under the management of the Dhaka City Corporation, only in two graveyards, namely, the Azampur graveyard and the Jurain graveyard, the unclaimed corpses are allowed to be buried. The costs of burial including cost of shroud, bamboo materials and other incidental cost such as registration fee at graveyard gate are borne by the Anjuman. Such costs are understood to range between Tk 750 to Tk 800 in total for each dead body buried under the auspices of the Anjuman. It was understood from Anjuman sources that last year Anjuman carried out burials of a total of 2,284 in the city.

The issue of unclaimed deadbodies has been raised

from time to time in newspapers. Recently in a couple of accidental deaths, the unclaimed bodies were buried under circumstances not quite intelligible to others. In one case the man who met accidental death was a retired old man out for a morning walk. None of his relatives initially made any enquiry, as they supposed he might be staying with some of his relatives.

After two or three days when the body was already made over to the Anjuman, the relatives came to know about the accidental death from the records of the Dhaka Medical College and of the Police. By this time, two weeks had passed. In another case, a retired Corporation officer proceeded towards Pagla to buy bricks for his under-construction house. On the way the baby taxi he was travelling in was crushed by a truck killing him on the spot. His identity could not be traced out immediately as his money bag containing money for the intended purchase of bricks and even his identity card were snatched away from his body after the accident. Some few hours later, the dead body could be identified and recovered with the help of police.

There are some human implications in the issue. Since deaths from accidents frequently take place in the city and in order to avoid being labelled as unclaimed corpses, some observers suggest that city dwellers should always carry with them particulars of their own name and address so that relatives of the victims of accidents can be promptly contacted. Where such particulars are wanting especially in cases of illiterate persons, the unclaimed corpses might be kept in cold storage of mortuaries for a couple of days and publicity of such deaths given through news media. If after some days, no response is received, such unclaimed bodies might be buried through Anjuman-e-Mafidul Islam.



Participants in the seminar on New Horizon in the Tele-Media: 'Impacts, Trends and Direction' at the British Council auditorium yesterday. Photo shows from left are: Mohammad Jahangir, Anisur Rahman, Jewel Aich and Afzal Hossain.

BNP may propose

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mass movement has resorted to repression. Referring to the killing of two people including Akbar Hossain by terrorists and police during the hartal, the meeting warned that the current movement could not be stopped by repressive measures.

The meeting alleged that the government has pushed the police towards a confrontation with the people.

The situation has turned serious following police atrocities since the hartal called to protest the death of Rubel in police custody.

The meeting asked the government to shun the path of killing and repression.

Otherwise, it warned, befitting reply to the killings will be given by turning the on-going movement into the oust government movement.

The meeting congratulated Begum Khaleda Zia for being re-elected the party chairperson. It hoped people's aspiration will be fulfilled through reactivating the party under the dynamic leadership of Begum Zia.

Prof AQM Badruddoza Chowdhury, Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, Khandokar Delwar Hossain, Salam Talukdar, Khondokar Moharrar Hossain, Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Chowdhury Tanvir Ahmed Siddiqi, Khondokar Mahabubuddin Ahmed, Nazmul Huda, M Shamsul Islam, MK Anwar and Moïn Khan, among others, attended the meeting.

Agreement

From Page 1

and said the CIA's involvement in guaranteeing security "cannot erase Hamas."

Jewish settler leader Aharon Domb said Netanyahu had negotiated an "agreement of surrender" and he warned of "the gravest consequences."

"An agreement has been reached between the two parties," Lockhart said this morning as the president left the Wye Plantation after 21 hours of almost nonstop talks with Netanyahu and Arafat and their top aides.

AFF from Ramallah adds: The Palestinian delegation to the Wye River talks has given Israel until this evening to sign an agreement and said they are not willing to wait until Sunday.

"We are not ready to wait until Sunday," Palestinian Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo told the official Voice of Palestine Radio.

"If there is an agreement, it must be signed before this evening because it's the Sabbath after that and the Israelis are not going to work during the Sabbath," which begins at sundown Friday and ends at sundown Saturday, he said.

Another report says, the United States has agreed to free convicted spy Jonathan Pollard tomorrow and he will leave on a plane with the Israeli delegation, a senior Palestinian official said today.

Cricket carnival

From Page 1

which was unveiled in the city yesterday.

The tournament is being held under the aegis of the International Cricket Council (ICC), the game's ruling body.

The government has reportedly incurred an expenditure of about Taka 16 crore to upgrade the Bangabandhu Stadium, whose new floodlights and latest electronic scoreboard have already been dubbed as one of the best in the world by some of the visiting players and experts.

The ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya, former ICC president and ICC cricket committee chairman Sir Clyde Walcott and ICC chief executive David Richards arrived in the city yesterday.

The tournament is a sell-out and tickets have been hard to get. Fans, men and women, young and old, queued at the thirteen IFIC branches for hours in a bid to get the elusive tickets after they were put on sale on October 20. The BCB released thirty thousand gallery tickets for each match and seven thousand of various other grades. Thousands waited in vain from dawn to late afternoon.

Later, the newsmen visited different demonstration fields of BCCI, and Gene Bank and saw rice samples and hybridisation process.

Meanwhile, a scandal is surfacing regarding the forty hospitality boxes, costing two to

VGF card distribution yet to be completed in Sylhet

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Oct 24: Distribution of wheat and rice under the VGF programme for the current month in Sylhet Division could not be completed yet, even three days after expiry of the deadline set for the third time.

In many areas, cards were also not distributed yet. However, official sources said it would be completed within a week.

The government sanctioned a total of 2,78,500 VGF cards for the four districts in the division. Against these cards, 44 lakh 56 thousand kg of rice and wheat would be distributed among the poor. Last year, 1,04,400 cards were sanctioned for the division.

The sources said that the districtwise break-up of the cards were given in the first week of this month. So, there was not enough time for preparing the lists of VGF card holders. Besides,

"We had to face a lot of problems while preparing the lists of beneficiaries, said an official. Normally UP chairmen are to prepare the lists, with advice from the MP concerned. Then the lists are to reach the district administration through the TNOs. The minister-in-charge of the district is also to approve the lists. Approval of lists was delayed due to the absence of the ministers, the official added.

The number of VGF cards sanctioned for Sylhet district is 80,300. The authorities started distribution of wheat and rice on Saturday last in a few unions only. Sylhet pourashabha authorities lifted the foodgrains yesterday and would distribute those on Sunday, sources concerned said.

When contacted, an official in Sunamganj district said that lists could not be prepared yet in six unions. Besides, there were allegations of irregularities in Affabnagar and Shimulbagh unions last month. However, the authorities have started distribution of VGF Cards among 84,600 people in 83 unions of the district, he added.

An official in Moulvibazar said that lists of 40,000 VGF cardholders were made ready within the government-set deadline of October 12. But these could not be approved due to absence of the person in charge of the district. At last, temporary arrangements were made to start distribution of the foodgrains.

2 DU staff

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A four-member inquiry committee was formed headed by Prof A T M Zahurul Haq to investigate the certificate stealing incident. Other members of the committee are Prof Shahadat Ali of Zoology Department, Prof Khandkar Bazul Haq, Member, Public Service Commission and Shah Mohammad Habibur Rahman, Controller of Examinations, Dhaka University.

The Vice-Chancellor asked the committee to submit its report with recommendations within 15 days.

The boy was later identified as Akbar Hossain, son of Bacchu Miah of Dholaikhal. DMCH sources said. The victim's family members identified him at the DMCH morgue yesterday morning.

Akbar had left house at about 2:00 pm on Thursday, telling his parents that he was going to a grocery, hospital sources said quoting his brother.

The youngest of three sons and four daughters of Bacchu Miah, Akbar was a student of class seven.

Akbar buried

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with the boy's death. Police, however, denied the allegation. Khoka said the programme is to be observed at local level because of the Wills International Cup cricket tournament. "It would have been quite justified to go for a tougher programme after what the ruling party and the police had done during the hartal," he added.

Local people said earlier that police kicked and trampled him as he suddenly swooped on a crowd at Nayabazar during a clash between pro-and-anti-hartal activists.

Police denied this saying the boy fell from a roof and received injuries. They said that they took the boy to Dhaka Medical College Hospital in an unconscious state.

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Bangladesh Tablig Jamaat chief dead

Hazrat Maulana Md Abdul Aziz, chief of Bangladesh Tablig Jamaat died in Dhaka yesterday morning of old age complications. He was 90, reports BSS. He left behind his wife, eight sons and a number of admirers to mourn his death.

Maulana Aziz was buried at the site of Blaswa Tablig Jitama at Tongi after Asr prayers. Earlier, namaj-e-janaza for Maulana Aziz was held at the Kakrail Mosque after Jum'a prayers.

Bus link

From Page 1

Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Communications while the Indian side will be led by K R Bhatti, Joint Secretary of the Surface Ministry. The two sides, led by Hasan and Bhatti, had met in Dhaka in September last year during initial and formal negotiations to sort out the details of the new inter-country travel arrangement.

Initially, the government mooted the idea of direct bus links between the two countries by connecting Dhaka with Delhi and Ajmeer to facilitate movement of large number of pilgrims to the dargahs of famous Muslim saints Hazrat Khwaja Mainuddin Chisti, Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya and Hazrat Bakhtiar Kaki. Later, the idea was scaled down to road links between Dhaka and Calcutta only for what the authorities termed 'realistic first steps'. They feel that pilgrims could take the train from Calcutta onwards to Delhi and Ajmeer as 'rail communication was speedier and easier and less costly' on the Indian side.

An inter-ministerial meeting will be held on Sunday to review change of the originally planned Dhaka-Delhi-Ajmeer route only. The meeting may insist on transport owners using the road to find 'easy' railway facilities for travellers to Delhi and Ajmeer, officials said.

The Communications ministry has already drawn up the policy papers for operation of the route.

According to the draft, a fare ceiling would be fixed for bus travel between Dhaka and Calcutta. The fare for one-way travel between will be a maximum of Tk 550.

The ministry has also suggested that only buses which are not more than four-year old, equipped with air conditioners, a mini toilet and the capacity to accommodate 25 kg of luggage per passenger will be permitted to operate. Fifty-seater buses will be allowed to ply with a maximum of 42 passengers to ensure more comfort and safety.

Customs and immigration procedures are also likely to be simplified so that travellers can use the route with minimum hassles. Special immigration booths are to be set at the border points, the officials added.

According to an estimate by the Communications Ministry, nearly half a million passengers will use the bus route in the first year. The route will enable around 1,50,000 students, 1,00,000 patients, 2,00,000 pilgrims and 50,000 others to visit India.

BTU

From Page 1

more creative if BTV's guidelines and censorship laws were modern. BTV guidelines were formulated in the Pakistani period and censorship laws were reinforced during military rule, he added.

Jewel Aich said that the whole world was moving towards a new kind of unification where passports would become 'identity cards'. In that new era, the TV media will become more important and powerful, he said.

Syedul Anam Tutul maintained that satellite channels had a tendency to air poor quality programmes which should be controlled. "Our channels should be controlled to a certain level so that they maintain some standard," he said.

Golam Mostafa said that the BTU had produced a number of good programmes in the past because its staff had commitment to work. "But due to government policy, poor management and lack of accountability of the employees, BTU is now dying. It should now be scrapped and a new setup should be made to make it work," he added.

A director of an advertising agency pointed out that a number of satellite channels including the Star TV and Zee TV would soon start Bangla-programmes because there is good business prospects in Bangladesh.

Khulna

From Page 1

The arrest of Litu triggered violence as hundreds of Jubo Dal activists went on rampage at several places under Kotwali and Sonadanga thanas. They damaged several cars and roadside shops. Police lobbed tear-gas shells and opened fire to bring the situation under control. In retaliation, the Jubo Dal activists exploded crackers and hurled stones at the police.

According to witnesses, police fired 20 shots and lobbed at least 25 teargas shells during clashes.

Of the injured, five were admitted to Khulna Sadar Hospital with bullet injuries. They are Nawab Ali, 60, Babu 20, Sarwar, 18, Shankar, 26, and Laechu, 25.

Police arrested eight Jubo League activists on charge of exploding crackers and hurling stones at policemen during clashes.

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Noted singers Shuvra Dev and Shakila Zafar performing at the Wills Cup handing over ceremony at Bangabandhu Stadium in the city yesterday.

A View from Gully

From Page 1 match tournament for all the teams. The prospects are as bright or as bleak for every team and in a game of this variety anything bizarre can happen.

New Zealand is no stranger to this ground. I am not talking about this team. They first came here in November 1955 and played an official Test match on a matting wicket. In a low-scoring match they almost lost to Pakistan but were saved by untimely rain. Two of the world's best opening batsmen of the time, Bert Sutcliffe and John Reid, graced the dressing room, but hardly could offer anything in the form of cricket.

They again visited this land of ours in 1969. This time matches were played on turf, nay clay. The wicket was so shiny that one could see himself on it. It was a November again, but this time it was pleasant and profitable for the tourists. New Zealand's one of the all time greats, Glenn Turner, delighted the knowledgeable Dhaka crowd with his maiden Test hundred. In the second innings the burly Peter Burgess produced a dour unbeaten innings of 119 out of a total of 200 runs. It was a tremendous effort that saved the match for his side.

Since the official ODIs started at Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on 5 January, 1971, New Zealand had produced some good results off and on but they had not been very consistent. The Kiwis have impressive record in the World Cup of 1975, 1979 and 1992 as they reached the semifinals only to be beaten by West Indies, England and Pakistan respectively.

Since Flemming took over the reins of the team the Kiwis are having a mixed fortune. In Australia last season they had a torrid time but won a series against Zimbabwe (4-1). But the absence of a very powerful all-rounder, Chris Cairns, must be

telling upon the strength of the team. They will be looking for runs from Astle, Parore, Flemming and young McMillan and Simon Doull and Chris Harris for the wickets.

But I strongly feel that a delightful left-hander as he is, Flemming should promote himself in the batting order. This unassuming youngman is a treat to watch when he is in command. I think he is doing disservice to his side as well as to himself by coming at no 7 or 8 position.

The newest addition to the exclusive club of 9, Zimbabwe, can not be written off. They are a fine team and capable of producing a couple of surprises in the tournament on their maiden appearance in Dhaka. Whatever may be the result of the exhibition match at BKSP, Zimbabwe is flying high after their recent showing against the mighty Indians. It is no mean achievement for the Africans to wrest a one-day match and then turn the table on Azhar's men in the only Test match. The Flower brothers, skipper Alistair Campbell, Goodwin are in good nick and the Zimbabweans will be naturally expecting them to provide with respectable scores.

Though bowling is not the forte of the African outfit, nonetheless Heath Streak and Paul Strang should be watched very carefully.

But if we go by the words of Phil Russell, the 'pitch pundit', the turf at Dhaka 'will behave like a young lady'. Russell, however, did not say about the nationality of the 'lady' but we take it that his subsequent remarks about the pitch indicate the bounce may be low and wicket generally slow. Dhaka wicket is notorious for its low and uneven bounce and traditional slowness, hence medioccrumpacers should do well on this track.

We should expect an absorbing contest today.

Agronomists

From Page 1

Asked about the import of one Chinese and three Indian varieties of hybrid seeds, an official said the government decided to go for it as "a temporary measure. Agriculture Extension Department is also likely to test these varieties.

Director General of BRR Dr Muhammad Abdul Hamid Miah said that the institute was yet to develop a single hybrid seed in the country. He stressed the need for locally developed hybrid varieties which would suit the soil and weather condition in the country.

"We are in the process and hopeful of developing one in the near future. Besides, at least six more HYVs are in pipeline, waiting for immediate release to the market," he said while briefing the newsmen about the overall activities of BRR.

The new BRR varieties 'on the block' include -- two deep-water Aman varieties, two saline water surviving varieties and two aromatic varieties. On the other hand, BR-11, so far a popular HYV developed by BRR, is now being replaced by BR-31, BR-32 and BR-33 as it became disease-prone these days.

In another development, responding to BADC's call for meeting emergency requirement of seeds, a plan is underway to produce another 7,000 tonnes of seeds for the next Aman season. Local HYVs -- BR-30, BR-31 and BR-32 -- would be cultivated for seed production during the Boro season.

BADC meets only five per cent of the country's annual paddy seed requirement of 3.5 lakh tonnes while the rest is the farmers' own production.

Dr Miah, flanked by senior BRR scientists, further said that HYVs have now covered 56 per cent of the cultivable lands and accounts for 74 per cent of the country's total rice production.

Later, the newsmen visited different demonstration fields of BRR, and Gene Bank and saw rice samples and hybridisation process.