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Down to Earth

Sartorial trends in men's wear

By ASM Nurunnabi

Lately new trends in men's attire seem to be in evidence in the city. Normally in our country, there are no distinctive features in dress, formal or informal, for our males. In a country where the climate is hot and humid for most of the year, the general preference is for a dress that is light and loose, allowing ventilation of air in the body. This requirement is fully met in the present trends in male attire. The notable thing is that these trends are getting highly popular in the field of casual wear. This relates to the males' sturdy preference for punjabi (kurta) and pajama in the summer.

Gone are the days when men used to wear *sherwani* and *choot* pajama for formal occasions with, of course, some exceptions. Now their place appears to have been taken by the knee-length kurta during religious festivals particularly. This new trend is noticeable almost everywhere.

Indication of the present popularity of kurta is available in almost all city shops dealing in ready-made garments for males. When a big religious festival arrives, the buying spree for this item of dress is set in motion. Lately there is such a big variety of designs on the shoulder and front portion of the dress that making a selection for purchase is not an easy thing. Lately a number of fashion houses have come up displaying attractive varieties of this wear. They are made from various kinds of dress materials: cotton, silk, *grameen* check with embroidery work of eye-catching designs. The carry price tags ranging from hundred taka to several thousand

taka. *Punjabis* with special designs were lately seen in the market. Such newly designed *punjabis* are known as *Pathan punjabi*, *Nawabi punjabi*, *Zamindar punjabi*. There is a variant of this dress known as *Peshwari* or *Kabuli* suit with loose flowing shirt reaching down below the knee and loose shalwar. Although this dress is sometimes worn for formal occasions, it doesn't enjoy much popularity because it is more expensive than the embroidered kurta.

The over-all impact of this dress with elaborate embroidery work is that it is now elevated almost to the status of a formal dress. We find evidence of this in gatherings where Western dress is taboo. For some religious functions particularly this dress enjoys predominant preference.

It is a pleasant development that this new trends in casual wear offer vast scope for colourful designs and styles, free from the straight jacket of convention within affordable financial limits for most of the male consumers.

The kurta for the males, however, stands behind in comparison with the so-called three-piece for the females, which is more variegated and gorgeous in colour and design and more expensive. This kind of female dress is also getting very popular because of its greater functional facility.

The main shopping centres for the male *punjabi* and *pajama* are located among other places, at *Bangabazar* and *Mirpur-New Elephant Road* junction and the shopping complex opposite *Dhaka College*.

A change has come over in the wedding dress for the males. Previously for such occasions, *sherwani* and *choot* pajama used to be worn by the groom. Nowadays 'prince coat' is more in fashion, because this can be worn for formal occasions in subsequent period, as against *sherwani*, which after use on the wedding day, is rarely made use of subsequently.

A status symbol implication is involved in the use of suit and tie for the males, though these are not suitable to our hot and humid climate. Yet in order to maintain formal decorum in dress, bankers, bureaucrats and multi-national company executives wear suit and tie. The younger generation, however, prefer casual wear in the form of jeans trousers and sports shirts. The brand names of such clothes fascinate them nonetheless. The fascination with brand names goes to such an extent that unscrupulous businessmen cash in on almost exact replicas of the imported clothes and their labels and sell them as originals with a big margin of profit. The original brand items face stiff competition from designer items. *Levi's* and *Wrangler* jeans are generally in great demand. But anyone with an eye for fashion and a wish to establish sartorial superiority buys designer jeans at exorbitant prices.

The sartorial changes, as noted above, are the result of the fast changing outlook in a developing society and help in the burgeoning consumer market. Their economic implications seem, on the whole, to be favourable in the free market economy.

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A fine balance
Workers busy themselves with preparations for the Biswa Ijtema on the bank of the Turag River in Tongi.

6 S Asian countries meet today to float stock exchange fed

From Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 14: About 15 delegates from six South Asian countries are expected to arrive in the port city to attend a two-day conference beginning tomorrow to work out modalities for floating South Asian Stock Exchange Federation (SASEF).

Chittagong Stock Exchange (CSE) is hosting the conference to be participated by delegates from major bourses in India, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Addressing a press conference today, President of CSE Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury MP, said such an economic forum is a necessity for development of regional capital market under private initiative.

It is the need of the countries, need of capital market in the process of rapid globalisation of economic activities," he said. CSE took the initiative to hold such a conference being imbued with the spirit of privatisation and to form the Federation, Khosru said. "We want to come out of bureaucratic in the field of development of regional cooperation," he added.

The CSE president mentioned some objectives of the proposed Federation. These include encouraging mutual cooperation among the Federation members to expedite development of share markets, concerned to project the members in international capital market, development of coordinated international share trading system in the region and creation of scope for listing and trading of shares issued in the region and giving importance to subjects of identical interest.

Besides, the Federation members will extend mutual cooperation in commercial research, exchange of information and technology, organising subjectwise seminar and development of human resource. The Federation of International Stock Exchange welcomed the initiative and its Secretary General Gerrit De Mares Oyens will attend the conference, Khosru said.

Mastaans assault woman in city

By Staff Correspondent

A woman was assaulted by two mastaans Thursday evening at her Eskaton Garden residence in the city while she was boarding the family car.

Ramma police arrested Sukon and Mohsin in connection with the attack. They are allegedly linked with a Jubo League leader of Eskaton area. Police declined to give details.

They were produced in court yesterday.

Combining Operation 20 maunds of sulphur seized

A total of 1042 people were arrested and 11 illegal weapons, 25 bullets and 28 maunds of sulphur seized on the 267th day of the countrywide combining operation by police. Bangladesh Rifles and Ansar, reports BSS.

The combined forces arrested 508 people on different charges from across the country including four metropolitan areas and seized the arms, ammunition and sulphur. They also arrested 533 wanted accused during the operation.

Thirteen persons were arrested from Khulna Metropolitan area with two arms and three bullets while one person was held from Rajshahi Metropolitan area.

A total of 276 persons including 153 wanted accused were arrested from Dhaka Range with 28 maunds of sulphur while 180 people including 128 wanted persons were arrested from Chittagong range with two arms and six bullets.

Abu Nidal group leader arrested

VIENNA, Jan 14: A leading female member of the Abu Nidal extremist Palestinian guerrilla group, Nimer Halima, has been arrested in Vienna, police said Friday, reports AFP.

Police said Halima was detained on Thursday.

Saul Bellow father again at 84

WASHINGTON, Jan 14: Saul Bellow, 1976 Nobel Prize for Literature winner, has become a father again at age 84. The Boston Globe daily said, reports AFP.

Bellow's wife, Janis Freedman, 41, gave birth to a baby girl on December 23, the paper reported in its Friday edition, quoting sources close to the family.

The name of the girl, Bellow's first child with Freedman, was not given.

Bellow, who also won the Pulitzer Prize in 1976, has three sons from previous marriages and several grandchildren.

Suspension of coal import Brick fields in Sylhet badly affected

From Staff Correspondent

SYLHET, Jan 14: Burning of bricks in the brick fields in Sylhet region has been badly affected due to suspension of coal import through Tamabil land customs station in Sylhet and Barchhara and Chargaon land customs stations in Sunamganj for the last few weeks.

Coal prices have also gone up in the local markets. It may result in fall in the production and rise in the price of bricks in this region. About eight lakh tonnes of coal is imported every year. Of this seven lakh tonnes are imported from India alone. Besides, about 80 per cent of the coal is imported through the Tamabil land customs station.

Officials said the daily demand of coal for burning bricks is about 2000 tonnes. Brick manufacturers use Indian coal imported from Meghalaya state. About 20,000 tonnes of coal is imported through Tamabil and Barchhara and Chargaon customs stations, one official informed. Coal import was suspended on September 30 last year after resuming for two months during the season.

Conflict between the BSF and BDR also caused suspension in import through the Barchhara and Chargaon customs stations. After resolving the problem, it was resumed in late October. But it was suspended again only after three days on November 1, as the BDR and BSF exchanged fire. The BDR and BSF resolved the matter after a week. After this, the border trade remained unhindered for about a month. But the import was suspended from the beginning of December through the Barchhara and Chargaon borders. Recently, import through the Tamabil border had also been suspended. Presently, import is only through the Sutarkandi customs.

The change in the system of weighing of coal by the Indian exporters had mainly caused the crisis, sources alleged. The importers did not accept the change and immediately stopped business. Due to suspension of import, the price has gone up. It is now being sold at Tk 2,100 to Tk 2,400 per ton at Barchhara and Chargaon borders against a price of Tk 1,400 to Tk 1,700 the same time last year, sources said.

The price has risen from Tk 1,800 to Tk 2,000 to Tk 2,200 to Tk 2,600 at Tamabil border. Kalandar Ali, general secretary of the Coal Importers Association, Sylhet, said there should be immediate steps to resume coal import through Tamabil which handles about 80 per cent of the total coal import.

"We have already contacted the Indian High Commission officials and they have assured of taking necessary measures immediately," he said last night. The stalemate began on September 30, 1999 when the Indian authorities introduced 'weigh bridge' at Dauki customs station, opposite the Tamabil border, without ensuring necessary arrangements here. It caused a lot of troubles for the importers, he alleged.

Some brick manufacturers said, if the situation remains the same for a few weeks more, there will be no alternative but to close down the brick manufacturing units.

14 alleged terrorists held in Ctg

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 14: Fourteen alleged terrorists were arrested from different areas in Panchlaish thana in the city today. A joint force of police raided Kasaipara, Purana Colony, Shantinagar and Mohammad Nagar and arrested Md. Abul Hossain, 22, Aminullah alias Fakir, 23, Nurul Haq alias Nurul Amin, 25, Md. Jahangir, 25, Md. Shah Alam, 29, Md. Alauddin, 22, Md. Mizanur Rahman, 20, Md. Mostafa, 23, Md. Ali alias Halim Bihari, 40, Md. Hossen, 35, Md. Shahjahan, 30, Hamida Begum, 32, Hafej Rokon, 30 and Golam Sharif.

Police said they were arrested on charges of dacoity, snatching and extortion. A joint force of police raided Kasaipara, Purana Colony, Shantinagar and Mohammad Nagar and arrested Md. Abul Hossain, 22, Aminullah alias Fakir, 23, Nurul Haq alias Nurul Amin, 25, Md. Jahangir, 25, Md. Shah Alam, 29, Md. Alauddin, 22, Md. Mizanur Rahman, 20, Md. Mostafa, 23, Md. Ali alias Halim Bihari, 40, Md. Hossen, 35, Md. Shahjahan, 30, Hamida Begum, 32, Hafej Rokon, 30 and Golam Sharif.

CU classes resume tomorrow amid siege programme

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 14: Classes at the Chittagong University (CU) will resume on January 16 after a month-long vacation for holy Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr amid an indefinite siege programme enforced by Islamic Chhatra Shibir (ICS).

The Jamaat-backed Shibir enforced the siege programme on the campus protesting killing of its two leaders in a gunbattle with the activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) on the campus on December 19.

The dormitories of the university will reopen at 10 am tomorrow for the resident students amidst tight police security.

Official sources said a total of 3,000 additional security forces were deployed on the campus to avert further violence.

The CU authorities vacated the dormitories and postponed all scheduled examinations of the university till January 13 following the gunbattle.

Cricket

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land on January 16 and if New Zealand, meanwhile, go down against India by a big margin. "You have a better chance to qualify in the Super Eight because New Zealand have no run-rate at this moment although they have got three points from two games," said Labroy, after calling off the match. "What you need to do is beat Holland comprehensively and wait for the outcome of the India and New Zealand match," he said. But easier said than done. Having a sorry run-rate of 2.44 following their heavy defeat against India, Bangladesh need to beat Holland flat out at the Moratuwa Stadium on Sunday. This is the ground where they were bundled out for a meagre 113 chasing India's 235. But New Zealand, who finished runners-up in South Africa two years back, can put the issue beyond any doubt if they beat India. Bangladesh need to get a point at the courtesy of rain. Rain is however always on the cards in this part of the world. Bangladesh team, being led by Hannan Sarkar, will be leaving for Colombo tomorrow morning. (More Stories on Star Sport)

Deposition in Jainal murder case Noor-e-Alam firm in his stand against Shikder

From Staff Correspondent

KHULNA, Jan 14: Notorious criminal Ershad Shikder's chief bodyguard Noor-e-Alam deposed against his former master in the Jainal murder case in the court of Additional District and Sessions Judge Hasan Imam yesterday as a government approver.

Alam said only three persons including Shikder killed Jainal Khan by firing shots from a close range at Skid Ghat on April 22 in 1995. "But I was not aware of the murder plan although I witnessed it from a distance of about 40 yards," he said.

Ershad Shikder and three others accused in the case — Li-aquat Lashkar, Idris 'Jamaal', Nazem Sarder and Tunda' Haroon — were present in the court during Alam's 150-minute cross-examination by defence

Transport workers block Dhaka-Aricha road for 2 hours

From Staff Correspondent

SAVAR, Jan 14: Transport workers clashed with local 'community police' over extortion and blocked Dhaka-Aricha highway in Gabtali-Amin Bazar area, disrupting traffic for two hours today, reports UNB.

Witnesses said transport workers kept their buses and trucks haphazardly on the highway creating five-kilometer-long traffic congestion in the afternoon to protest assault on a transport owner and a worker.

A local group, known as community police, who control traffic in the area, beat up a transport owner and a worker earlier in the day apparently for toll, leading to the clash. Police from Savar thana appeared in the scene after two hours at 6 pm and dispersed the clashing groups to clear the traffic jam.

Attack on Zilla Parishad office: 20 BCL men sued at Barguna

From Staff Correspondent

BARGUNA, Jan 14: Twenty leaders and workers of the district unit of Chhatra League, including its president and general secretary, have been sued for their alleged involvement in the attack on Zilla Parishad office, reports UNB.

Zilla Parishad Administrative Officer Parimal Chandra Duan filed the case with Sadar police after the attack on January 4.

According to the case, 20 BCL leaders and workers attacked and ransacked the office as they failed to get a work order in lottery.

Chhatra League leaders and workers brought out a procession in the town on Thursday demanding withdrawal of the 'false case' filed against BCL leaders and workers.

Bomb blasts at proposed venue for CCC Mayor's reception

From Our Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Jan 14: Petrol bomb explosions rocked a community centre in the city today. Unidentified miscreants hurled at least 12 bombs at Rima Community Centre on Jamal Khan Road under Kotwali thana at around 7 pm.

A reception for the newly elected CCC Mayor and Ward Commissioners is scheduled to be held there tomorrow.

Talks with US Senators Musharraf promises to restore democracy

From Staff Correspondent

ISLAMABAD, Jan 14: Pakistani military ruler General Pervez Musharraf today told four visiting US senators he was committed to restoring democracy, reports Reuters.

"They were apprised in detail about the measures for economic revival and social development," a government statement issued after the meeting said. "The government is committed to restoration of democratic institutions on the basis of devolution of power and to hold district level elections during the current year."

The senators' three-day trip, ending tomorrow, is the highest-level American visit to Pakistan since the October 12 military coup that toppled prime minister Nawaz Sharif and installed army chief Musharraf as chief executive.

Move tomorrow

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The four are Lt Col (ret'd) Syed Faruqur Rahman, Lt col (ret'd) Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Lt col (ret'd) Muhiuddin Ahmed and Maj (ret'd) Bazul Huda. Huda was flown back to Dhaka only two hours after the verdict was pronounced on November 8.



Post-Eid frowns all around

From Staff Correspondent

Dhaka should return to its noisy, congested self shortly. No wonder everybody at Kamalapur Railway Station seems less than thrilled to be back after their long Eid vacation.

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