



SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Hal Khata (accounts books) on sale

Common spirit for Pahela Baishakh

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

The Bangla New Year will be celebrated in true community spirit this year with both the Muslims and Hindus preparing to observe the 'Pahela Baishakh' on the same day, April 14.

Last year the Hindu community in Bangladesh and India celebrated the New Year on April 15 according to the Loknath Panjika, the religious calendar of the Hindus.

The Muslims however follow the Dr. Qudrat-e-Khuda calendar for Bangla months which differs a little with the Loknath calendar in the cases of certain months.

Usually Pahela Baishakh falls on April 14 every year following adjustments made in the Bangla calendar in consultation with the Qudrat-e-

Khuda calendar.

As the 1410 Loknath Panjika counted 30 days for the month of Chaitra it matched the Qudrat-e-Khuda calendar.

"Because of undisputed Chaitra counting this time all Bangalees irrespective of Hindu and Muslim will celebrate Pahela Baishakh on the same day," said Shukumar of Jatin and Company in Dhaka.

Although Pahela Baishakh is a public holiday, all the markets and shopping centres in the city will remain open because of the 'Hal Khata'. Hal Khata is the traditional Bengali way of updating the accounts book by businessman.

"We close down the accounts book of the previous year and open a new register on Pahela Baishakh. That's Hal Khata," said Alam, a trader of Old Dhaka.

The business community believes in the myth that Hal Khata is a symbol of good relationship between the sellers and customers on which every business thrives.

On Hal Khata a new ledger covered in red cloth is unwrapped. Shopkeepers in many stores treat customers to sweets.

The festive mood of the Hal Khata is felt everywhere in the city especially at reputed shopping centres. There is special seating arrangement for customers at Baitul Mukarram market.

"Hal Khata is a marketing policy," said a gold shop owner of Baitul Mukarram.

Sales increase on Pahela Baishakh as regular clients and customers are invited to the shop for sweets and business of course.

TRAFFIC JAM AT THE FOOT OF MOHAKHALI FLYOVER

Now comes the plan for diversion roads

SULTANA RAHMAN

Dhaka Transport Coordination Board (DTCB) plans to construct a number of diversion roads as a contingency measure to minimise possible traffic congestion once the Mohakhali flyover is opened later this year.

DTCB sources said vehicles would move faster on the flyover as there will be no congestion but once they get down, there could be jams at the foot of the flyover due to the absence of adequate diversion roads.

It could also directly affect traffic flow on some major thoroughfares like Bijoy Sarani, Mohakhali and Tongi Diversion Road.

"Constructing some diversion roads is our priority at this stage. Otherwise, people will not get the benefit from the flyover," a DTCB official said.

It was learnt that the DTCB was considering diversion roads

at Bijoy Sarani, Mohakhali, Tongi, Progati Sarani and from Dhaka Gate point to Mirpur through the Cantonment.

The 1.01 kilometre Mohakhali flyover is expected to reduce the notorious traffic snarl-ups on the Airport Road.

The Tk. 130 crore project was scheduled to be completed by June 2004 but now it appears that it will not meet the deadline. DTCB sources say the flyover could be opened to traffic in September.

The flyover construction work is seriously hampering traffic movement in Mohakhali and adjacent areas. During peak hours, long traffic jams have become a common feature.

"We have had talks with the Cantonment authorities and they have assured us that they would consider giving permission to the proposed diversion road through the

military area, which is very encouraging," said DTCB's executive director Quamrul Islam Siddique said.

Nearly 78.25 percent of the construction work of the country's first flyover has been completed. Two approach ramps and

railings were yet to be built. Work began on December 6, 2001.



SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

Mohakhali flyover: Set to miss deadline again?

Eviction fear haunts 27,000 'Sattala' slum dwellers

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

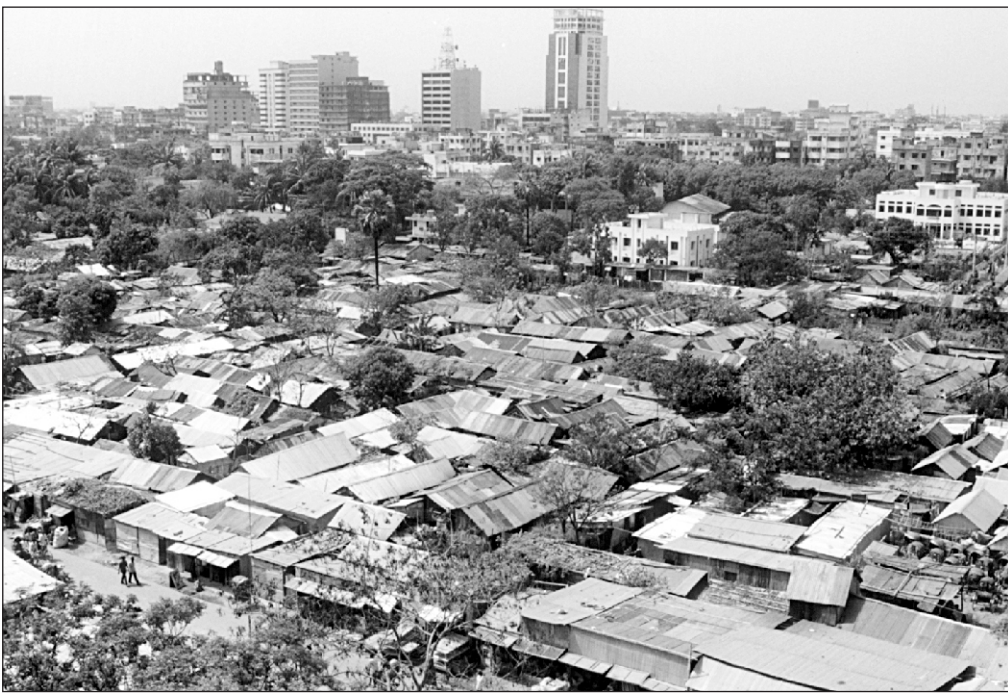
Some 27,000 slum dwellers at Sattala Baste are living in uncertainty, threatened by eviction by the Ministry of Health.

"We dread to think what will happen to us after April 22," said Tamijuddin Master, an inhabitant of the slum who along with three others had filed a writ petition with the High Court on behalf of the slum dwellers following an eviction drive in July last year. The court issued a stay order against the eviction until October 22, 2003. It was later extended to April 22, 2004.

Ankurunnesa, a woman in her 50s looked devastated. "I have been living here for the last 40 years. Where will I go if they evict us?" she asked.

The Sattala slum is situated near the Infectious Disease Hospital (IDH) and has been named after its six-storeys, popularly known as the 'Sattala (7-floor) Hospital'. Sprawled over 25 acres, the slum is one of the largest on government land, housing some 4915 families.

Drivers, domestic help, garment factory workers, cart pullers, tailors, grocers, hawkers and others belonging to the



SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

A partial view of the Sattala slum

low-income live in the area, originally designated for hospital staff.

"We have heard rumours that the government would construct a 'health complex' to provide accommodation to hospital staff here," said Shah Nawaz Gazi, a

hospital employee. "However, the plan never saw light and we went on to build houses on our own following a verbal order from the hospital authorities," he said.

Most hospital staff have allegedly erected more rooms than required and rented them out to

common people. According to a survey done by a private research company, only 445 out of the 4915 families in the slum are hospital employees. The report showed that at least Tk 21 lakh is collected a month as rents from different blocks of the slum -

- Uttar Chowdhury Para Purbopara and Kustho Baste, Dakkhin Chowdhury Para, Purbo Para, Staff Baste and Dakkhin Para Baste.

The slum dwellers said that they were not going to defy any government order of eviction but demanded rehabilitation within the area prior to the drive.

They said that it would be extremely difficult for them to leave the location as most of them work nearby.

"I am a ward boy at the IDH. How can I maintain my family with my meagre monthly salary of Tk. 4000 if I am compelled to leave this place for a distant location? Half the salary would be spent on commuting alone," said one dweller.

"All our children study in schools and colleges close to the Baste. We even buried our near ones here," said Habibur Rahman, another slum dweller.

The slum people suggested that a small portion of land be used to build a multistoried apartment for them here.

"It won't cost much and we can pay for the apartments in monthly instalments," said Tamijuddin Master.

healthouting,taxicab&traintiming

HEALTH



Hospitals

Heart

National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59

Burn

Dhaka Medical College Hospital
Burn Unit-8626812-6

Cancer

National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4, 861455-9

Diabetes

Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5, 8616641-50

Mother & Child Care

Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62
Azampur Mother & Child Health

Eye

Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980
Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794, 9119315
National Eye Hospital- 8117202, 8114807

Dental

Dental College -9002035

Orthopaedics

National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150

General

Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6
Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819
Holy Family Hospital- 83111731-25
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9
Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202,

Blood Bank

Red Crescent Centre- 9116563
Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040
Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061, 7319002-6
Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9
Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135

Eye Bank

Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040

Ambulances For Dead Body

Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166,
Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

MARKET CLOSED



Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday
Elephant Road-Friday
Bishal Center-Friday
Baitul Mukarram Market-Friday
Polwell Market-Friday
BCS Computer City-Friday
Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.
Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday
Stadium Market-Friday
Bangabazar Market-Friday
National Museum-Thursdays
Ahsan Manzil--Thursdays.
New Market-Tuesday
Gausia Market-Tuesday
Mouchak Market-Sunday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday
Eastern Plaza-Sunday
Farmview Super Market-Sunday
Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday
Dhaka Zoo-Sunday
Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

TAXI CAB



Yellow Cab

Navana 9558065
Salida 9344477, 0171620881
Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191
Cab One 7113282-3
Nihon 8624741-2
Orion 9347277
Anudip 8125285 and 8127611
Capital 9352847

Union

8130485
Kool 0171826731
Black Cab
Cab Ex 9358401
Cabline 8321162
JBS Cab 019364575
Sajan 018126036
Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611
Cab One 7113282-3

Palki

0171052500
Cab I 7113282
Jatri 0171540074
Nipun 9572277
R-Cab 8914782
Star Cab 9571919
Shihab 018202477 & 018228675
KGN 8620011

TRAIN TIMING



Subarna Express
Mahanagar Prabhati
Mahanagar Godhuli
Turna
Parabat Express
Joyantika Express
Upaban Express
Tista Express
Ekata Express
Upakul Express
Padma Express

Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 7-30 am
Leaves Dhaka at 3-05 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 6-30 am
Leaves Dhaka at 12-30 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 9-30 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am
Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm
Leaves Dhaka at 6-00 am
Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:15 pm
Reaches Chittagong at 2-55 pm
Reaches Chittagong at 9-11 pm
Reaches Chittagong at 7-05 am
Reaches Sylhet at 2-30 pm
Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm
Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am
Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm
Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-55
Reaches Noakhali at 1-35 pm
Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm

LIBRARY & INFO-



Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers

Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128
Shilpakala Academy- 8614673
Bangla Academy- 8619550
Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9554007
Nazrul Institute- 9114602
Ford Foundation- 8116133
Alliance Francaise- 8611557
British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7
Community Development Library- 8113769, 8113604
Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka- 9126525-6
Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library- 8615096
The Russian Cultural Centre- 9116314, 9118531, 9118314
Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125, 8112954, 8123412