

TANGENTS

BY IHTISHAM KABIR



Left: Mr. Zahed
Centre: Pori outfit
Right: Mr. Nasir uddin

Dressmaker to Royalty

It was a hot afternoon on Lalbagh Road. The imposing wall of the Lalbagh Kella (Moghul Fort) runs on one side of this road; the opposite side, along which I was walking, is a row of shops and homes punctuated by alleys which always curved out of sight.

Camera in hand, I was searching for photo opportunities. Near the block's end I started crossing the road towards the Kella's ticket booth. That's when the shimmer of colour appeared against the wall, like a mirage in the distance.

I squinted, trying to identify the fast-moving orange and blue object. As it came closer, I discerned a bearded man wearing a bright satin gown. I approached him and reflexively took two quick pictures before resuming my walk towards the booth.

In five seconds my heat-addled brain kicked into gear. "Whoa!" it said, "What was that all about?" I turned and saw the man entering an alley. I followed him. Presently he stopped in front of a small shop.

I coughed. "Erm, unusual

outfit....," I said.

"Oh, we make them in this shop here." Peeking in, I saw several sewing machines. Sparkling costumes of bright colours hung on the walls.

A younger man stepped out of the shop. He saw my puzzled face.

"We make clothes for royalty," he announced.

"You don't say!" I replied.

He introduced himself as Mohammed Zahed, the owner. The other man was Mr. Nasir Uddin, who helped out and modelled the clothes occasionally.

But I was still baffled. "How does this business run? Who buys your clothes?"

"Jatra," said Mr. Zahed.

"Ah, now I see," I said. Jatra is a form of Folk theatre sprinkled with songs and dance. I was under the impression it had been wiped out by the influence of Bollywood.

"Oh no, there are many, many performances. Most are in winter, when I get most orders," said Mr. Zahed, dispelling my doubts.

He showed me an outfit he was

working on. It was for a fairy in a Jatra to be performed in Narayanganj. The wings were worn separately.

Mr. Zahed had trained as a movie costume maker. His passion is making fantastic outfits. For several years, he apprenticed under an Ustad in Dhaliwood (where Dhaka's movies are made.) Three years ago he started this business, employing two other tailors.

I asked him about his memorable costumes.

"Last Victory Day we had a Fancy Dress competition in Lalbagh. I made costumes for Radha, Anarkali, Raja (King), Ujir (Minister) and a Freedom Fighter. My King costume won first prize."

Can he make costumes for others? Of course, he said. He needs a picture or a sample, and can work with the customer's material or get his own.

Hmmm. Perhaps now would be a good time to order that Batman costume I always wanted. Or maybe I should try my hand at Nawab Sirajuddowla instead!

(Mr. Zahed's shop is in Lalbagh Lane No. 8, near the Kella entrance.)

Ensure Dalit's rights in constitution

Demand speakers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a press conference yesterday demanded inclusion of a special provision in the constitution to ensure social security, citizen's rights and human dignity of the Dalit community.

They said Dalits are considered as the isolated community in the country and are victims of immense discrimination due to the absence of such a provision.

The provision is needed to ensure an end to all sorts of prejudice, they added.

The press conference was jointly organised by the Bangladesh Dalit and Excluded Rights Movement (BDERM) and Nagorik Uddyog at the Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU).

Addressing the press conference, Justice Gholam Rabbani stressed the need for inclusion of a special rule in the code of procedure to punish people behaving in a discriminatory manner with Dalit communities.

Rabbani suggested introduction of the rule with the provision of awarding 6 months

to 3 years imprisonment to anyone putting impediments to Dalits from receiving education, treatment and other fundamental rights.

Reading out a written statement, BDERM President Mukul Sikder categorically demanded an end to social discrimination on grounds of caste and professions.

BDERM General Secretary Bodhanaki Shalomon said the Dalits are falling far behind in development because of social discrimination and deprivation.

Inclusion of the special provision and formulation of a necessary law is very essential to protect the just rights of Dalits, he added.

Their other demands include a constitutional declaration terming social discrimination against Dalits as a crime and to ensure equal opportunity for them in different government, non-government and autonomous institutions.

Nagorik Uddyog Chief Executive Jakir Hossain and Dalit Nari Forum President Moni Rani Das were present at the press conference.

3 killed in road crash

A CORRESPONDENT, Narayanganj

Three people were killed and two others injured in a road accident on Dhaka-Adamjee-Demra Highway at Godnail in Sadar upazila yesterday.

The dead were identified as Mohammad Hossain, 35, son of Rahmatullah, Alamgir Hossain, 27, son of Kashem Mia, and Ramzan Ali, 25, son of Abdur Rashid Mia of Khanpur area of the town.

Officer-in-Charge SM Badrul Alam of Siddhirganj Police Station said the accident occurred around 9:00am when a bus hit a Shimrail-bound auto rickshaw carrying four members of a band party from behind, leaving Alamgir dead on the spot and injuring four others.

Off the injured, Mohammad Hossain and Ramzan died on the way to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH), while Riaz was shifted to Pangu Hospital from DMCH.

Hearing the news, the agitating people barricaded the highway for an hour.



Change in temperature unlikely

UNB, Dhaka

Weather may remain mainly dry with partly cloudy sky over the country in next 24 hours till 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, said Met Office.

The sun sets in the capital today at 5:21pm and rises tomorrow at 6:04am.

Country's highest temperature 33.7 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Sylhet and lowest 18.0 degrees at Srimongal.

Highest and lowest 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	31.2	21.7	58	65
Chittagong	30.7	22.8	81	64
Rajshahi	30.6	18.8	79	77
Rangpur	30.4	20.2	71	81
Khulna	31.2	22.0	72	77
Barisal	31.0	22.0	75	91
Sylhet	33.7	20.0	70	72
Cox's Bazar	32.0	25.0	75	68

Obituary

METRO DESK



Miratul Fatema (Benu), wife of late AFM Mannan, passed away early on October

17 at a city hospital. She was 72, says a press release.

Miratul is survived by her son, two daughters, many relatives and well-wishers to mourn her death.

A doa mahfil was held at her Mirpur residence after Juma prayers yesterday.

Death anniversary

METRO DESK



Today is the 11th death anniversary of freedom fighter Iqbal Ansari Khan, says a press

release.

He was also involved actively in the Language Movement. Popularly known as "Henry", Khan authored three books, two of which are The Third Eye and The Babri Mosque.

Nicole Sherin Rahim

METRO DESK



Today is the first death anniversary of Nicole Sherin Rahim, only daughter of

Late Abdur Rahim, former joint secretary.

To mark the occasion, special prayers were offered at the family ancestral mosque in Feni on October 17, which was followed by feeding of children and destitute in the village home.

Sherin was buried in Singapore. Her family requested her near and dear ones to pray for the departed soul.

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Cloud 9

All work and no play is no way to spend a day. Kick back and relax. Enter your cloud 9.