

Enjoying rain in Dhaka is a privilege



TABASSUM ZAMAN

Dr Tabassum Zaman is an associate professor at the Department of English and Humanities of the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB).

THERE are all sorts of rain – light, flaky ones that lick your skin just enough to pass on the freshness and without intruding on the business of your life. Then, there’s the overly zealous, needle sharp rain blades, piercing the earth, pitting the puddles of Dhaka city, hitting the windows relentlessly. You cannot but step back and take a pause in the face of such unswerving resolve. Sometimes it buckets down whenever, wherever. It gulps down all other sounds of the city, leaving just this monotone – the best of its kind that prevails as long as the rain lasts. Then, there are those heavy, plump drops that hit your skin with a rounded weight; you almost feel as if you can hold them separately on your palms and play with them, but there they go, lazily clattering around with a splash. The weirdest of them all is the short-lived sun shower that we jokingly celebrate as an occasion for fox weddings, which I remember would get me excited as a child. Only there are no foxes to be wed, yet it’s one of those quirks of nature that one just loves.

I have always considered myself as a rain lover, for I love to watch it fall, its rhythmic sound, and its smell. Count this as my confession of a guilty pleasure. What’s there to confess, you wonder? Let me explain.

Every time I voiced my love for rainy days or the rain, my brother would smirk that I could only enjoy the sights and sounds of the rain because I was sheltered from it. Only the other day, a colleague of mine wrote something about the inconveniences caused by rain to the general urbanites in a social media post. He claimed that our undying love for the rain was a part of our “collective nostalgia,” and the beauty of it all, a magic realist discourse, was found in and passed on from the great Sanskrit poet Kalidas and our very own Tagore.

What this means is that the paean of the rainy season in the context of Dhaka



is nothing less than anachronistic and exclusionary, to say the least. It is ridden with inequality, erasures and muted struggles that the rain brings along for most of the people living in the city. In fact, I probably won’t be too wrong in saying, there is nothing likeable about the rainy season if you happen to be a Dhaka resident who have to be out and about, rain or shine.

While I love the downpour from the shelter of my home, I don’t really want to head out and get drenched while walking, waiting for a rickshaw or a CNG-run autorickshaw eternally, and being splashed on that dirty, foul water from the road. Even worse, I don’t want to wade through the waterlogged roads of Dhaka to get to my destination. God forbid if you are a woman and have to walk in sopping (read body-hugging) wet clothes on the streets. You have just attracted an onslaught of ogles; even if they are in the same situation as you, you become a display of the contours of a woman’s body and hence, the pleasure cannot be forsaken.

To tell the truth, the rain, or anything

▲
With all the inconveniences it presents to the regular commuter, there are occasions when one does get to enjoy the rain in Dhaka.

FILE PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

that comes from nature that you think is a great equaliser, is a pleasure for the privileged alone. It comes with a price.

Why just the rain? The lush greenery, lakes, canals, and rivers that the city is losing fast under the madness called development only help estrange us further from nature. Making nature a commodity, it only serves to reserve it for the wealthy. Having a yard to do gardening, living near a park, or a water body with all civic amenities is not for the poor or even the vast middle class. Living near nature, amid nature, is a status marker, because nature has a material value and is not free for all anymore.

Hence, to spend time close to nature, we have to go outside of Dhaka or at least to the outskirts. The growing number of resorts that offer day trips to these pockets of freshness is only making the city more

antithetical to nature. It doesn’t have to be so. Nature is a boon that is the most flexible and easy to be integrated into whatever development we are doing in the name of progress. You don’t really have to “go back” to nature, in its wild sense of the term; you bring it in, carry it along, make it part of your living, not just for the mere aesthetics, but also for fostering a quality life that a city can and should offer to its citizens.

What can a city do to mitigate this difference in experiencing nature? Everything! I was fortunate to spend a long period of time in Singapore for my higher studies. It was the same me, loving the rain the same way. Moreover, as a graduate student, public transport was my only option to go about the city. On many occasions, I was on the road when I was caught off guard by the rain. I never had to ask for a taxi to save myself a walk to the bus or train station or to prevent myself from getting wet. I could still appreciate the sights and sounds of the rain, while taking that walk, without an iota of guilt. What was the big difference? The city is planned in a way that you can reach the bus or train station from wherever you are via a shaded walkway. By shades, I don’t mean fancy, underground tunnels. Often, they were just corrugated tin shades over the sidewalks and that would be enough. A rainy day was no different than any other days and was never an inconvenience. I’d see the torrents of rainwater gushing through the roads. Before you know it, it would run off the road to the drain and away from your sight! No matter where you live, you experience the rain the same way if you want to. The overhead walkways, shaded of course, are all lined with flowering plants and creepers that make the walk more inviting, and before you know it, you are engaged with the city in the most pleasurable manner, and most importantly, without being away from nature.

All I’m saying is, you don’t have to miss out on nature or feel guilty about having access to it just because you live in a city. Is it too much to ask for?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send us your letters to letters@thedailystar.net

Spend more time with children

Today’s children are the craftsmen who will build the country of tomorrow. They will lead the nation one day. What role are we playing in shaping and developing the lives of our future leaders? The number of parents busy making money is rising day by day. As a result, these parents are hardly left with any time to spare for their children.

This trend is visible especially in the urban areas, where people are all racing to earn more and more money. Unable to care for their children because of their jobs, many parents hire help to look after their children. This is likely to create a distance between parents and children. Moreover, in some cases, the hired help for childcare does more harm than good. There have been several

incidents of children getting abused in the hands of their nannies. As the number of nuclear families are rising day by day, it is only natural that children feel lonely.

It is a sad situation. Children are vulnerable and delicate. They need dedicated care so that they have healthy minds as well as healthy bodies. While earning money is necessary, working parents should also keep in mind that being present in the lives of their children is equally important. And they should be their children’s friends to build a relationship based on trust and love. Only then will we have good, kind leaders to take us to the future.

Mohammad Nader Hossain Bhuiyan
Feni Government College

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**

1 Speedy

5 Says further

9 “Divine Comedy” writer

10 Transparent gemstone

12 More mature

13 Stockholm native

14 Shines

16 Termite’s cousin

17 Lunch or dinner

18 London river

21 Writer Beattie

22 Formal

23 Docking spots

24 Sacred

Egyptian beetle

26 Workout unit
- 29 Apollo

Theater setting

30 Volcano shape

31 Had lunch

32 Prepares

34 Cache

37 Let on

38 Knight’s wear

39 Convenes

40 “Got it”

41 Vortex
- 9 Church doctrine

11 “Why don’t we!”

15 Brooks

19 Thyme or tarragon

20 Donkey

22 Dreadful

23 Chum

24 Zen enlightenment

25 Defeats decisively

26 Wandered

27 Hatred

28 Nuisances

29 “Very funny!”

30 Handed over

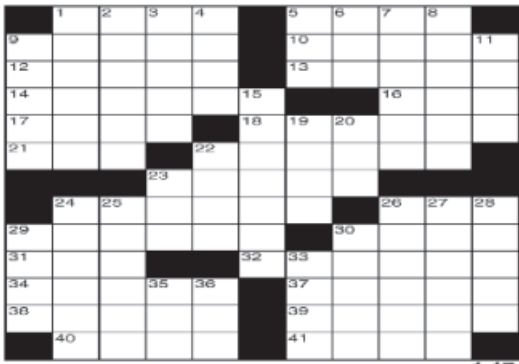
33 Not wild

35 Fish eggs

36 Rap’s Dr. —

DOWN

- 1 Collapsed
- 2 Like llamas
- 3 Filch
- 4 Time in office
- 5 Crunch targets
- 6 Grass coating
- 7 Reveries
- 8 Australian port



YESTERDAY’S ANSWERS



GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF BANGLADESH Office of the Director National Institute of ENT Tejgaon, Dhaka



Memo No: NIENT/Admin/Tender(Diet & Washing) /2022-2023/663

Date: 14/06/2022

Invitation for Tender

KEY INFORMATION				
1.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Health and Family welfare		
2.	Agency	Department of Health Services		
3.	Procuring Entity Name	Director, National Institute of ENT		
4.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka		
5.	Invitation for	Procurement of Goods (Diet for Patient & Washing of Linen Cloths)		
6.	Invitation Ref No	NIENT/Admin/Tender(Diet & Washing)/2022-2023/663		
7.	Date	14/06/2022		
8.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)		
FUNDING INFORMATION				
9.	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB (Revenue)		
PARTICULAR INFORMATION				
10.	Organization Code	1270208		
11.	Organization Name	National Institute of ENT Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.		
12.	Tender Publication Date	15/06/2022		
13.	Tender Last Selling Date and Time	16/07/2022 during office hours		
		Date	Time	
14.	Tender Closing Date and Time	17/07/2022	11.00 AM	
15.	Tender Opening Date and Time	17/07/2022	12.00 PM	
16.	Name & Address of the office (s)			
	(a) Selling Tender Document	Office of the Director, National Institute of ENT, Tejgaon, Dhaka		
	(b) Receiving Tender Document	Office of the Director National Institute of ENT Tejgaon, Dhaka & Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner (North), Tejgaon Division (North) Shamoly, Dhaka (west to shamoly shishu park)		
	(c) Opening Tender Document	Office of the Director, National Institute of ENT, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1208.		
INFORMATION FOR TENDERER				
17.	Eligibility of Tenderer		The Tenderer shall have a minimum of last 3 years of general/overall experience in the supply of similar goods to the Govt./semi govt./autonomous Institute/Hospital under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Certificate Must be submitted along with supplying document The Tenderer shall have a minimum of last 2 years of specific experience in the supply of related services to the Govt./semi govt./autonomous Institute/Hospital under Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Certificate Must be submitted along with supplying document Other requirement described in the Tender document	
18.	Brief Description of Goods		Diet for Patient & Washing of Linen Cloths ites	
19	Pkg. No	Identification of Pkg	Tender Security (Tk.) (refundable)	Price of Tender Document (Tk)
	GD-01	Supplying of Diet for Patient	1,50,000/-	1000/-
	GD-02	Supplying of Washing of Linen Cloths	35,000/-	1000/-
	Deposit on Code No. 1-2711-0000-2366 by treasury challan (with CTR) in favors of Director, National Institute of ENT, Tejgaon, Dhaka.			
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS				
20.	Name of Official Inviting Tender		Prof. Dr. Md. Abu Hanif	
21.	Designation of Official Inviting Tender		Director, National Institute of ENT	
22.	Address of Official Inviting Tender		Tejgaon, Industrial Area, Dhaka	
23.	Contact details of Official Inviting Tender		Tel: Phone 8878155, Fax No: 8878150	
24.	Authority is not bound to accept the lowest tender/rate. Authority may cancel the whole tender/part of the tender without assigning any reason.			
25.	Terms and conditions of the tender and other information will be available with the schedule.			
Note: If the date of selling, receiving & opening of tender is disturbed under any unavoidable circumstances, the next working day will be applicable for the same respectively.				
GD-1230				
(Prof. Dr. Md. Abu Hanif) Director Cum Professor National Institute of ENT Tejgaon, Dhaka				

WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.