

# Communication development and human rights - Bangladesh : a case study

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**Communication Development And Human Rights -  
Bangladesh : A Case Study**

**By**

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## BANGLADESH

### THE CONTEXT

Human rights, comparatively a new concept, are directly dependent on the socio-economic development of a country. A population for whom even physical survival is a continuous struggle, the finer aspects of survival have virtually no meaning.

Bangladesh is a country where eighty-five per cent of the population live below poverty level. Though the economy is still pre-capitalistic, the ingredients of feudalism control the existing value-system of a highly personalized society.

The coverage of human rights in the Bangladesh media is not a journalistic exercise in the sense that political abuses of human rights cannot always be covered in a straight forward manner. An analysis of the news items appearing in newspapers will reveal a very interesting pattern of coverage. Issues involved are presented indirectly. For example, deprivation of natural justice, the rights of women and personal oppression by an anonymous social system are not covered in a straight forward manner. The underlying reality is that the issues which do not directly affect the Government of today or the various pressure groups, can be safely covered. When it comes to brasstacks, the journalists have to pause and do it in a round about way.

Human rights are violated in Bangladesh society in various ways. The human dignity is yet to be fully recognized and established. The state, because it touches a man's life in all its facets, is the greatest

oppressor, the worst violator of human rights. On the other hand, the society ruled by a privileged few is not a lesser menace. The laws of the land, which include such preventive acts as Special Powers Act 1974, do not allow much scope for challenging the infringements of the rights of the people.

The political issues or the issues involving the fundamental rights of the people, have frequently gone undetected in our media coverage, often times viewed as fringe elements. The factors that determine or limit the coverage of human rights issues are: lack of social consciousness especially the different aspects of human rights, existence of several restrictive laws and the pressure exerted by influential groups in society.

The issue of human rights is yet to percolate down to the bottom level in a society riddled with poverty, mass illiteracy and expediency of the people who run the media. The long absence of democracy in this country or the infrequent visitation of democracy has made us oblivious to basic human rights, which is so important in the establishing of human dignity. A rickshaw puller in a Dhaka street may be beaten by a police sergeant with impunity, because human rights are not properly understood either by the victim or the violator. Such examples are numerous.

The restrictive laws are many. The government is equipped with many legal weapons and other means to suppress news concerning human rights issues. The issues may range from press freedom to the voting rights of the citizen. Moreover, the various pressure groups flex their muscle whenever violations of human rights are exposed by the media. They have the means and power to silence not only the police, but also the media. Often the media are themselves partners in an unholy alliance with the state. After all, the media are business, money and influence in the society.



It is against the backdrop of the socio-economic and political reality that the media's role in covering human rights should be evaluated.

### **The Socio Economic Reality**

The country, named People's Republic of Bangladesh, emerged as an independent state after a nine-month long war of independence in 1971. The war adversely affected the socio-dynamics of the country, which was once a part of Pakistan. Establishment of a state based on institutional democracy inspired the people of Bangladesh to have a state of their own.

The country inherited and maintains a predominantly agricultural economy. The average ownership of land and resources per household is low. The people living in the rural areas are mainly farmers, marginal farmers, landless cultivators, share-croppers and wage labourer. The economy has problems of low productivity, inefficient management, very high rate of inflation, low literacy and technological know-how, unemployment and under-employment, high growth rate and density of population, high dependence on foreign aid, low rates of saving etc. Planning without people's participation has aggravated these problems. The problems are so pervasive that "Bangladesh is a syndrome of poverty" according to the Planning Commission.

Since emergence, the growth rate of the country has not been able to cope with the population growth. There has been no surplus to meet the demands of an increasing population and statistics reveal a dismal picture. During the twenty years from 1949-50 to 1969-70, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at 1959-60 constant factor cost, increased at the rate of 3.2 per cent a year and the population increased annually at an average rate of 2.3 per cent. The economy virtually stagnated during the years preceding the birth of Bangladesh. The economy after independence went through different

stages of performance. The real per capita growth of GDP during the period 1975–76 to 1982–83 was at the rate of 1.6 per cent a year, while the population grew at an average yearly rate of 2.7 per cent. In the process, population growth rate overtook the economic growth rate. Eighty per cent of the population live in rural areas and 85 per cent of the population live below the poverty line. Officially, the average per capita income is US\$130 per annum. (1)

The census of 1974 showed that only 25.8 per cent of population over 15 years of age were literate. The 1981 census shows an increase of 3.4 per cent for the same group. But the number of illiterates has increased. The number of illiterates grew from 27 million in 1974 to 33 million in 1981. While four million people became literate, six million people were added to the total number of illiterates. (2)

### **The Political Perspective**

The country, since independence, except for about three initial years, is run by a system where the participation of people has not been effective. The system is essentially authoritarian and controlled as such. As early as 1975, democracy which was restored after a 24-year-long struggle, was crucified by the party committed to democracy. The country was brought under one-party, one-man rule. Activities of all political parties were banned and dissension by any individual or group prohibited. 222 newspapers, including 29 dailies, were closed down by a single stroke of the pen. This one party rule was brought to an end by a bloody military coup on August 15, 1975. The military rule continued till July 1978, when elections were held and political parties were allowed to function under license from the government. This brief spell of democracy with the president as the chief executive continued till March 1982, when the Army seized power. After a series of protests, martial law was lifted on November 10, 1986. Elections to the parliament and

office of the president were held earlier, results of which are still contested by the opposition. Accusing major riggings during the election, only a segment of the opposition decided to join the parliament.

Apart from the absence of participation of the people in running the state machinery and the tightening of military-bureaucratic-mercantile capital control, the two successive military regimes have ensured and broadened certain rights, which deserve special mention.

These are:

- restoration of the publication rights to the newspapers, which were  
banned in 1975.
- equality for women, to be accepted as equal partners in the process  
of development.
- drug policy, banning use of hundred of useless and harmful drugs.
- amendments to the Muslim family law extending the rights of  
women.
- regulating the marketing of breast-milk substitutes, to protect the  
interests of the mother and child.
- restoration of the rights of labourers, especially the democratic  
ones.
- rights of landless peasants to lease government lands at a token  
price.



## The Media Situation

The different means of communication have not fully developed in Bangladesh because of resource constraints and the topography of the country itself. The low level of development of mass media is accentuated by high illiteracy. At the same time, a homogeneity, in terms of language, culture, beliefs and socio-economic reality exists, which could be advantageous for communicators. A disparity of communication resources between rural and urban areas exists. The press and its marketing infrastructure is poorly developed.

There are only five daily newspaper copies per thousand people. The following table gives the number of different categories of journals having licenced by the government for publication from four major cities of the country as of 1986.

Monthly (4)	Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly	
Dhaka	21	92	19	114
Chittagong	06	06	-	03
Khulna	10	08	01	01
Rajshahi	02	03	-	02

The circulation figures of the dailies published from the major cities are given below: (4)

Dhaka	5,50,000
Chittagong	38,000
Khulna	30,000
Rajshahi	7,000

This table indicates that the newspapers are mostly urban-based or, more accurately, Dhaka-based.

Three dailies, two from Dhaka and one from Rajshahi are controlled by the Government. (5) Six dailies, including the largest circulated Bengali daily,

are owned by either Members of the Cabinet or member of the ruling party. (6) Of the two news agencies, the largest is controlled by the Government.

The background of the newspaper owners also is of importance. There are very few professional newspaper editors. Most of them launched a newspaper of sorts, then appointed themselves, their wives or near relation to be editor or other senior position in the newspaper.

The newspapers, in general, are dependent on advertisements released by different institutions, industries or offices under government control. These advertisements are centrally controlled and distributed by an office of the Ministry of Information.

A Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) study on the impact of newspapers on readers showed that 41.93 per cent of the respondents were of the opinion that the newspapers are not neutral and objective. 22.09 per cent of the respondents declined to believe in what is published in newspapers.(7)

The average price of a daily newspaper can pay for the breakfast of a common man, while the average price of a weekly can pay for two meals a day.

There is only one radio and one television network in the country, with subcentres and relay stations, under the direct control of the government. Everyone employed by the National Broadcasting Authority (NBA), either for the radio or for the television is a government employee.

Any citizen can own a radio or television set with a government license. Officially, of every 100 persons only eight own radio sets. There are reportedly 600,000 television sets in the country. The price of a single band radio is a little less than the minimum monthly wage of an industrial worker. The price of a black and white 14-inch television set assembled locally, is equivalent to six months' salary of a person at the



lowest tier of the government service. Though Bangladesh Television does not telecast black and white programmes anymore, the average price of a 14 inch colour television set assembled locally, is equivalent to nine months' salary of a person at the lowest tier of the government service.

About half of the rural women and a greater section of the rural men have access to a radio. Two rural women out of three do not listen to the radio.

Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television do not broadcast or telecast news of the opposition political parties or groups except during elections or sessions of parliament. However, television does telecast news or events from different parts of the world, through satellite network.

Radio and television have their own code of conduct, which has never been announced. A Press Council exists to settle disputes between private individuals or organizations with a newspaper, but the government has never sought any arbitration by the Press Council in any dispute. In most cases, government displeasure has led to the closure of a newspaper.

## THE COVERAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Against this background and in view of two stringent law controlling the publication of newspapers, deductions are fairly obvious about the role of the mass media in upholding or covering human rights. Also, because of pervasive poverty, the majority of the Bangladeshi population do not have any access to media. In most cases, their voices cannot be heard within their own countries, when they are suppressed or deprived of rights. A content analysis of five national dailies made by the PIB in 1987 shows only 5.46 per cent of the total space is devoted to news from rural areas. The same analysis shows, of all the news published, only 15.02 per cent represent rural areas. (8)

The never-ending struggle of the newspapers for survival and the desire to attain credibility have limited the role of the media in many respects. The struggle for freedom had a very recent expression on November 5, 1987, when all the dailies kept 4 inches of space blank on top of the eighth column on the front page to protest the closure of a daily newspaper and the increase in newsprint price. Jointly organized by the owners and journalists, the blank space has been termed 'symbolic protest against curbs on the Press.'

Radio and television cannot stage such protests, and they have lost credibility in the process. People opposed to the regime are not welcome to participate in any programme. Quite often, the contents of programmes are dictated by the Information Ministry. Even then, the intelligent manipulation by the compere can make a programme very popular and widely talked about. Two such examples are: *Jadi Kichu Mone Na Koren*. (If you don't mind) and *Ain Adalat* (Law and Judiciary) telecast by Bangladesh Television. Both these programmes covered human rights and abuses of such rights in Bangladesh. *Jadi Kichu Mone Na Koren* was stopped because of the untimely death of its compere; *Ain Adalat* is still continuing. An opinion poll of all the TV programmes conducted by the 'TV Guide', gave the programme *Ain Adalat* a rating of 94.8 per cent and 89 per cent for 1985 and 1987 respectively. (9) *Ain Adalat*, a fortnightly programme on 'law and justice', is telecast on alternate Saturdays. No programme on television, since independence, has enjoyed the popularity of these two programmes.

The other popular programme on television is the weekly drama. During the fourth quarter of 1985, October - December, 13 dramas were telecast, of which only one involved issues concerning human rights. During the same quarter of 1987, 13 dramas were recorded for telecast. Of these only 2 have references to violations of human rights. (10) But such references are not enough to leave any impression on viewers. The



producers of these dramas, who are also the directors, in their naivety and fear dare not produce anything, which may have the slightest possibility of hurting any pressure group in the society. This is applicable to any programme on television. One such example is the National Drug Policy, implemented in 1982. Bangladesh Television failed to telecast any programme justifying the policy. The other very recent example is the government decision to lease out lands to the landless poor. Television telecast the procedures by which the landless could get such land, but failed to telecast any programme on how the landed gentry had seized this land in the past or how the landless poor are continuously exploited and made victims of conspiracies by the landed gentry and influential people in the society.

Television has done very well in programmes on cruelty to women. This was, and is, possibly because of the personal interest of the president in such cases. Even then, these programmes normally do not mention or emphasize that these acts are violations of human rights and dignity.

The Third Five Year Plan (1985-90) of the Government has the objectives:

- to provide greater facilities in the production of domestic and external service programmes in order to bring the entire population of the country under radio and television coverage.
- to impart knowledge through radio and TV and other mass communication programmes about food production, planned parenthood, formal and non-formal education, nutrition, mass education etc, to make people aware of the national problems and solutions.
- to promote attitudinal change through motivation programmes and special skills to raise social

consciousness reflecting the culture and values of society.

- to disseminate knowledge to improve the quality of life.(11)

Without going into contents, the time allocated to programmes to achieve such targets on radio and television, yields a sorry picture. The Dhaka station of Radio Bangladesh daily broadcasts 35 hours on three medium wave channels, from 6.30 in the morning till 11.30 at night. On average, 0.70 per cent of all programmes broadcast daily are designed to achieve the above objectives. The television centre at Dhaka operates from 5.00 in the evening till 11.45 in the evening, except Friday. On Friday, there is a morning transmission from 8.00 am to 12.25 pm. On average, 5.87 per cent of all programmes telecast weekly are planned to achieve the above objectives.

Radio and television has one safe exit.: programme producers and policy makers attribute this failure to government control. But the formulation of the contents, taking advantage of the commitment of the government, could easily be more creative.

The print media, or the newspapers, in general are also not conscious of their role as in promoting human rights. Display of any news or space given is determined first by the policy of the paper, then by the space available (excluding, of course the space reserved for advertisements) and finally by the importance of events of the day. A photograph of a minister addressing a regular meeting would get a better display than the news of people suffering because of lack of health facilities or the violation of women. A PIB survey of four leading dailies done in 1987, shows the following average distribution of space of these newspapers:

News	44.75%
Editorial & Post-editorial	6.52%



Letters	3.30%
Photographs	7.29%
Advertisements	38.96%

Interestingly, two newspapers included in the survey allow 51 per cent of their space for advertisements.(12)

Violations of human rights or issues of human rights are reported by the print media in Bangladesh. But such presentation is not directly dependent on the ethical aspect of the issue. It is not presented with the consciousness of upholding human rights either. Both quantitatively nor qualitatively, the print media do not perform better than the broadcast media in reporting human rights issues.

A simple presentation of incidents is a regular feature, with the display having an urban bias. For example, if a girl is raped in Dhaka or in one of the important cities, there is every possibility that the incident will get a front page display with follow-up reports for days together.

When someone is crushed under the wheels of a speeding automobile violating traffic rules in Dhaka, it gets a better display. But such incidents happening outside Dhaka are usually neglected. So is the case of policeman beating passers-by or prisoners beaten by prison wardens. But when one Shafiqul Islam Arun died after three days in police custody in Dhaka, newspapers made big stories out of it. This led to the issuance of an order by the Inspector General of Police, that a police officer found torturing a detainee would risk dismissal and could also be jailed. When an employee of the Telegraph & Telephone Department was killed by police in Moheskhali, a far away place from Dhaka, the newspapers failed to make it an issue. This killing was followed by enmasse withdrawal of the police force from that police station and a general strike in that area. The employees of the telephone department even threatened to disconnect the telephone lines of the police department. But not newspaper felt the



necessity of giving the incident proper display, nor was any editorial written in any of the leading dailies.

A study of three newspapers for the purpose of this paper over a specific period gives a quantitative picture.

Newspaper %	Period	Total items published	Items related to human rights & their violations	
Daily Sangbad (Bengali daily) 8.78%	15 - 2 Sept '86	717		63
	15 - 21 Sept '87	845		71
8.40%				
Daily Ittefaq (Bengali daily) 9.07%	15 - 21 Sept '86	496		45
	15 - 21 Sept '87	648	52	8.02%
The New Nation (English daily)	15 - 21 Sept '86	702	32	4.55%
The Bangladesh Observer (English daily)	15 - 21 Sept '87	802	39	4.86%

(Items include news, features, editorials and post-editorials and letters).

A content analysis of these items would help better understand the situation. A news item was published in the largest-circulated Bengali daily *Ittefaq* on September 17, 1987 on Page 3. In short, it says that a civil case was disposed of after 20 years. The case was instituted on July 18, 1967 and 11 Sub-Judges sat over the trial, which involved a settlement of Taka six hundred thirty. Next day, the *Ittefaq* carried an editorial on the subject. The editorial blamed judicial complicity for such delay, but nowhere mentioned that it was a gross violation of human rights. The three other dailies under review did not carry any editorial comment on this incident.

The editorial comments in most of the newspapers, when such an issue arises, fails to explain this phenomenon in terms of human rights. There can be only one reason for such behaviour: the failure to understand the dimension of human rights and its implications.

For the convenience of discussion, let us select some issues, where the frequency of violations of rights is more regular, and then discuss them in the context of their presentation. In Bangladesh today, the women, the minority nationalities and the under-privileged are generally victims of violations of various rights. The issues of women and problems affecting their status are often reported in the newspapers. Between September and November 1986, four leading dailies (*Daily Ittefaq*, *Bangladesh Observer*, *Dainik Bangla* and *Daily Sangbad*) reported 43 cases of cruelty against women. These include victimisation because of rape and acid burns, dowry, family quarrels and property rights. Of this, 22 incidents were reported from rural areas and 21 incidents from urban areas. Between December 1985 - May 1986 the same newspapers reported 90 cases of cruelty against women

Following are some news items on women:

a) Zohra Begum, a housewife was raped by her neighbour, a Moslem. Mother of a child, Zohra lives in a flat of the staff quarter of Dhaka College. Her husband works for a shop. On the night of the incident, she fell asleep waiting for her husband, leaving the door open. In the meantime, Moslem entered the house and raped her. While he was fleeing away, the husband came back and identified him. Later, a case was filed against him and he has surrendered to the policy.

a) Buri, 16, a newly married housewife of village Benopur under Sadar Upazila committed suicide by taking insecticide recently. It is learnt that on the day of the incident, her husband Aby Bakr, 25, beat her mercilessly. Later on, she committed suicide by taking insecticide. A UD case has been registered with Rajbari



Police in this connection. (*The New Nation*, July 24, 1986)

c) An eight-and-a-half-year old girl was violated reportedly by a 30-year-old man here, yesterday. The victim, Nasima, daughter of rickshaw puller Ramizuddin, was admitted to Sadar Hospital in a serious condition. Nasima named a neighbour Mahbub, the rapist. He was arrested for a similar offence in 1984, police said.

According to police, when Nasima came out of her house at Naluapara at about 8 pm for going to a nearby shop, she was forcibly taken to Kumudini ground on the bank of the Sitalakhaya by the accused and unnamed accomplice. (*The New Nation*, September 15, 1986)

d) Abdur Rashid of village Baraipara under Bandar Upazila tried to kill his wife by roasting her alive. Abdur Rashid insisted his wife bring Taka five hundred from his father-in-law. As the wife failed to do so, Abdur Rashid tied his wife and tried to burn her alive. The condition of the wife is serious, according to hospital source. A case has been registered with Bandar Police (*Daily Sangbad*, August 16, 1986)

Following are some news items on the underprivileged:

a) Employees of the Dhaka Collectorate began abstention from work yesterday for an indefinite period in protest against alleged misbehaviour of the Deputy Commissioner.

They attended office yesterday as usual, but became agitated on hearing news that the DC had beaten up the District Nazir of the Toll-Sector and an old peon in his chamber at 8.30 am.

They left their offices, gathered in the premises of collectorate building and held demonstrations against the Deputy Commissioner. Some of the office rooms were also ransacked by them.

A meeting held with Bazlur Rahman, President of Dhaka District branch of Bangladesh Ministerial Employees Association in the Chair, condemned the

alleged indecent inhuman behaviour of the DC. (*Daily Ittefaq*, September 15, 1986. Deputy Commissioner is the Chief Administrator of the District and a peon is the employee at the lowest tier).

b) Recently 16 landless families were man-handled and 3 landless persons were seriously injured in an attack. These 16 families were cultivating some fallow lands. The influential person of Upaizila, Kukil Mia, organized this attack to evict them from these lands. (*Daily Inquilab*, November 7, 1987)

These items are mere statement of facts and in most cases incomplete. Moreover, these were printed in the inside pages, as they lost their immediacy as news. No follow-up reports were published, no editorial comment was offered. It is difficult for someone with respect for human dignity and rule of law to comprehend the situation.

But the situation in Bangladesh is different. Frequency of such events has made people complacent. All such incidents are not reported in the newspapers. These reports reach the newspaper offices as simple news. The correspondents do not feel the necessity of going into details, nor is there directive to treat these items as important or having significant news-value .

The responsibility is not one way. People working for these newspapers as correspondents or stringers are not treated fairly. The honorarium or payment they receive carries no incentive for them. Usually, being a reporter is only a side job.

By contrast, following is a news item published in the front page of an English daily. The report mentioned that the incident is a violation of human rights, but only when an organization dealing with these rights intervened. Unfortunately, the same newspaper carried no editorial comment on the incident.



"An 80-year old man, Osman Ali died last week following a forced sterilization at the Model Family Planning Clinic at Mymensingh town. Osman Ali is not the only victim of such family planning drive. Every day many more illiterate and poor elderly people are becoming the easy prey in the hands of government approved agents of family planning programme. These agents allure the poor overaged people to go for sterilization in the family planning clinics in exchange of money. In most cases, the agents cheat these illiterate people and draw the money from the clinics fixed for sterilization cases. They not only cheat the poor people but also inflate the number of sterilization cases with people whose sterilization are not necessary.

Recently a team led by Magsaysay Award winner Father Timm who is the Coordinator of the Coordinating Council for Human Rights in Bangladesh (CCHRB) revealed the operation of a large gang in different parts of the country, who persuade, threaten or force people at railway and bus stations, ferry ghats and bazaar areas to go with them for sterilization in hospitals and family planning clinics. Last April, Father Timm himself investigated a case of forced sterilization of an old man at Mymensingh following which the related clinic was closed temporarily. He also witnessed an attempt at Mymensingh bus station to take an elderly man for sterilization.

The body of Osman Ali was sent to his village Kalinga under Nandail Upazila of Mymensingh district by the Family Planning Office. A sum of Taka 2000 was given to the family of Osman Ali and Taka 3000 more will be given to the family according to the government provision of awarding Taka 5000 to the family of any one who dies within 40 days of sterilization.

Osman Ali who did not need vasectomy had to die of forced sterilizations but millions who require sterilization could not be motivated or persuaded under

the much publicised family planning programme of the government. It is our national pride that the country received an award for population programme, but how long Osman Ali and others will have to die in the hands of government approved family planning agents.

Not only cases of forced sterilization of old people were reported, cases of faulty vasectomy and legation are also common. It is time to form investigation committee with government officials and representatives of voluntary associations engaged in family planning programmes to probe into the abuses of population programme in different parts of the country." (*Bangladesh Observer*, July 22, 1987)

News about the situation in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) where the minority nationalities have grievances against the Government, were a taboo to the newspapers, even three or four years ago. These days, reports come from CHT, but they are mainly reports of clashes between government troops and members of the Shanti Bahini (Peace Force of tribals), attack by the members of the Shanti Bahini surrendering to government forces. This is one aspect of the situation. The other aspect involves certain violations of fundamental rights. The media do not report those violations nor discuss the origin or reasons for such armed conflicts in the area. One example in support of our statement above is as follows:

**TWO KILLED BY SHANTI BAHINI:** At least two persons were killed and three others injured by Shanti Bahini men at Thalibari area of Ramgarh Upazila in Chittagong Hill Tracts on Thursday night. According to Rangamati police, the armed Shanti Bahini men numbering about 20 raided the remote hilly village when the villagers were fast asleep at dead of night. They surrounded the 12 houses of five families and set them on fire. Shanti Bahini men shot at anybody who attempted to come out of the blazing house. The villagers on hearing a hue and cry came out of their dwelling



houses to rescue the villagers locked in a pitched battle with the Shanti Bahini and finally chased them away. The two dead villagers are Sirajul Huq (65) and Nur Mohammad (35). They died on the spot. The injured persons are Bibi Maryam, Laila Begum and Zakir Ahmed. They have been admitted to Ramgarh Upazila Hospital for treatment. (*Bangladesh Observer*, September 13, 1987 P-1)

Editorials on the situation in the CHT are rare. But when it comes to writing anything on the situation, the comments are most often elaborations of the events. An example:

THIS CONSPIRACY HAS TO BE RESISTED: An international conspiracy has been hatched about the tribal people. There are indications that, some people under the cover of non-government voluntary organisations inside the country are engaged in heinous attempts to make this international conspiracy a success. Even before, some allegations of this kind were published in different newspapers. No less has been published about the mysterious activities of local and foreign voluntary organisations. This is now an open secret that these organisations are engaged in dubious activities, especially in the tribal areas of the country. There have been numerous reports about such activities in different newspapers. But we are sorry to mention that there had been no proper investigations about the activities of these foreign voluntary organisations and their local and expatriate functionaries. Taking advantage of the situation, foreign voluntary organisations and their local agents are operating freely. They are engaged in conspiratorial activities to instigate the tribal youth against the nation, the state, in the name of help and assistance. Internationally, their principals are holding different conferences, seminars, sessions every year under different names. These conferences discuss more of the non-agenda issues. These discussions are intended to brainwash the tribal people by instigating them with the help of different confusing

information and statements. According to a report published in *Daily Inqilab*, such a conference under the name of European Campaign on tropical timber trade was held in Brussels in the first weekend of the current month. One Chakma participant from Bangladesh presented a paper on the role of the Chakmas in maintaining ecological balance of Bangladesh in this conference of timber trade. It is to be mentioned, a subject remotely linked with the main theme has been selected. Moreover, the title of the article has no reference to the context. It was said that tribal culture has been destroyed, the tribal people have been displaced from their homeland. Even so, quoting a reliable source, the report says the said writer has put forward anti-government words by saying that human rights are violated in Bangladesh on the question of tribal people. It is also known, the conference has adopted a resolution expressing concern about the policy of Bangladesh government on the Chakma issue. Such discussions and resolutions adopted in far away Brussels might seem thrilling. But, in Bangladesh it is clearly understood, how a citizen of Bangladesh is propagating sinister lies in foreign countries. No citizen of Bangladesh cannot but be astonished and concerned on a priority basis. First, is there nobody to enquire into the seditious propaganda by the foreign voluntary organisations in the tribal areas of Bangladesh. Second, does not the concerned authority feel the necessity to investigate against Bangladesh on the issue of tribal people of Bangladesh will have to be resisted at any cost. The government will have to take stern measures against such conspiracies at least in the interest of independent-sovereign existence. (Lead editorial, *The Daily Inqilab*, October 19, 1987)

## CONCLUSION

A general review of the role of the media may sound frustrating. But it does not mean that the media are inactive in projecting cases of violations of human rights. Violations of different types of human rights are



reported, not as violations but as events or incidents making news. Some of the dailies are running regular columns or have run them in the past. One such column entitled 'Chokher Arale' (Beyond your eyes) was carried on the front page for 192 days in 1985–86, by the leading Bengali daily *Dainik Bangla*. The contents were cases of violation of human rights in different areas of Bangladesh, information for which was supplied by the Human Rights Implementation Society of Bangladesh. This series won the Philips Award for Journalism. Since 1986, *Daily Inqilab*, another Bengali daily regularly carries a front page feature entitled Jiban Prabaha (As life goes). The subject matter is violation of human rights of a different nature: from losing jobs for no reason to violation of women. Professionally judging, in most cases, these reports are one-sided. The *Daily Ittefaq* runs an irregular column in the front page entitled 'Ai Nagore' (In this city), which is a report on the lack of different civic amenities. Such reports rarely mention that the topics reported or events discussed are cases of violation of human rights.

No newspapers, except a weekly, runs a regular column on the different aspects of legal rights of a citizen. *Weekly Bichitra*, a leading Bengali weekly, runs such a piece, contributed to by the Human Rights Implementation Society of Bangladesh.

The main shortcoming of the media is that, they have failed to create a demand among readers. While reporting or writing editorials, the media could place such incidents in the perspective of human rights violations and could inform that such violations are not legal and that the people have a right to voice opposition against such violations. A reason for such failure as this, could be lack of understanding of different aspects of human rights, which have been established over the years since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



Different measures could be planned and implemented to improve the role of the media in reporting and analyzing human rights situation in Bangladesh.

These are:

- Dissemination of information about human rights among the communicators at different levels.
- Workshops to improve skills and style while writing or reporting about cases of violations of human rights.
- Mobilization and strengthening of social groups to uphold human rights.
- Formation of regional and international forums of communicators to monitor the role of the media in covering human rights and sharing experiences in covering issues of human rights in respective countries.

## Footnotes

1. Statistical Year Book of Bangladesh, 1986, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Dhaka, 1986.
2. Ibid.
3. Annual report of newspapers and periodicals, 1986, Department of Films & Publications, Government of Bangladesh, 1987.
4. Ibid.
5. The three dailies are *Dainik Bangla*, *Bangladesh Times* and *Dainik Barta*.
6. The six dailies are *Dainik Janata*, *Daily Inqilab*, *Dainik Patrika*, *Dainik Desh*, *Dainik Ittefaq* and *The New Nation*.
7. Introducing mass media in Bangladesh, Press Institute of Bangladesh, Dhaka.
8. Flow of rural and urban news in newspapers, Press Institute of Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1987.
9. TV Guide, Television Programme, October - December '85 and Television Programme, October - December '87, Malancha Prakashani, Dhaka. (Published on behalf of Bangladesh Television)
10. Ibid
11. The Third Five Year Plan 1985-90, Planning Commission,

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12. Flow of rural and urban news in newspapers, Press  
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Bangladesh, Dhaka, 1987.

MAHFUZ ULLAH



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by the parents of either party or by any other person at or before or after the marriage as consideration for the marriage of said parties, which does not include "dowar or mehr."

In spite of the Dowry Prohibition Act, there are lots of case where women are being killed, tortured or divorced for dowry. It is very difficult to establish a case under Dowry Prohibition Act because of lack of evidence and lacuna in the law. The Dowry Prohibition (Amendment) Ordinance, 1982 has amended Section 4 by deleting the embargo which provided 'that no court shall take cognizance of any offence under the Act except with the previous sanction of an officer authorised by the Government.

### 3. CHILD MARRIAGE RESTRAINT (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1984

The Ordinance has amended Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 raising the marriageable age of females from 16 to 18 years and males from 18 to 21 years. Section 4 provides for punishment for male adult above twenty-one years of age for marrying a female child ( i.e. who is below 21 years of age ).

### 4. CRUELTY TO WOMEN (DETERRENT PUNISHMENT) ORDINANCE, 1983

Section 4 of the Act, has made it a punishable offence to kidnap or abduct a woman of any age for the purpose, inter alia, that such women shall be employed for the purpose of prostitution or for any unlawful or immoral purpose. It may be worth to note that keeping in view of the provisions of Article 6 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, this Act has also made it offence for trafficking in women. Section 5 has provided that whoever imports, exports, sells, lets, hires, or otherwise disposes of or obtains possession of any woman of any age with intent that such woman shall be employed or used for the purpose of prostitution or for any unlawful and immoral purpose, to be punished with transportation for life or with imprisonment which may extend to fourteen years and shall also be liable to fine. Amongst other, this Act under Section 6 has also provided for capital punishment for a husband or his relatives for causing death or attempt to cause death or grievous hurt to the wife for dowry. Causing death in committing rape

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is also punishable by death or transportation for life and also with fine.

5. THE MUSLIM FAMILY LAWS (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1982

The Ordinance has amended Section 2 of the 'Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961 by amending that "Chairman" means the Chairman of the Union Parishad or Paurashava or a person appointed by the Government in the Cantonment areas to discharge the functions of a Chairman and thereby to restore the function of the Chairman of the Arbitration Council which was made nugatory for long ten years. This Amendment Ordinance has also provided for increased punishment for non-observance of the requirements of the Ordinance in case of polygamy and talaq (discussions made earlier).

6. THE PENAL CODE (SECOND AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1984

The amendment of the Penal Code has been made to protect the people and the women in particular from attack by corrosive substance by providing capital punishment. The Ordinance has provided that whoever voluntarily causes grievous hurt in respect of both eyes, head or face by means of corrosive substance shall be punished with death or transportation for life and with fine.

7. THE MUSLIM FAMILY LAWS (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1985

The Ordinance has amended Section 2 of the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance, 1961 by amending that Chairman means "the Chairman of the Union Parishad; the Chairman of the Paurashava, the Mayor or Administrator of the Municipal Corporation where the Union Parishad, Paurashava or Municipal Corporation is suspended, the person discharging the function of such Parishad, Paurashava or Corporation or, as the case may be appointed by the Government to discharge the functions of Chairman under the Ordinance."

8. THE FAMILY COURTS ORDINANCE, 1985

The establishment of Family Courts is an epoch making step in the country's history. All Munsifs shall be the Judges of the Family Courts. The Family Court try cases relating to marriage, divorce, restitution of conjugal rights, dower,

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maintenance, guardianship and custody of children. This Ordinance provides for speedy disposal of cases at a much lesser expense which would benefit women particularly the rural poor women. Provisions are there for pre-trial reconciliation between the parties and trial in camera in cases where required. Uniform court fee of Tk.25.00 will be required for filing all kinds of cases in the Family Courts.

#### 9. THE BREAST MILK SUBSTITUTES ORDINANCE, 1984

No person shall make, exhibit, distribute, circulate display or publish any advertisement.

- a) promoting the use of any breast milk substitute or
- b) implying or designed to create the belief or impression that breast milk substitute feeding is equivalent or superior to breast milk feeding.

No breast milk substitute shall be marketed unless

- a) it is put in a sealed and hermetically closed container
- b) an easily readable and understandable message in Bangla is printed on a conspicuous part of its container to the effect that nothing is substitute for or equivalent or superior to breast milk
- c) clear instructions on the proper method of its preparation and formation regarding its composition are printed on the container or in a literature kept inside the container
- d) the dates of its manufacture and the expiry of its usefulness are printed on the container. Neither the container nor any literature kept inside the container shall have any picture of infant or such other picture or writing which may idealise the use of any breast milk substitute. Anybody violating the above provisions shall be liable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to two years, or with fine which may extend to five thousand taka or with both.



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#### OTHER MEASURES

##### 1. RIGHTS OF WORKERS 1984

1. No trade union activist of a trade union can be dismissed before registration of the union without prior clearance from the Registrar of Trade Unions.
2. No registration of any trade union can be cancelled without the prior permission from the Labour Court.
3. Dismissed workers will be entitled to all service benefits. In case of a termination, the worker will be given benefit equivalent to wages for 120 days, instead of 90 days.
4. The cases of workers employed on temporary basis for more than three years will be reviewed for permanent absorption.
5. Necessary amendments to the law will be made empowering Labour Courts in examining the justifications of allegations made and punishments given by the employers.

##### 2. BAN ON IMPORT OF IRRADIATED MILK 1987

No irradiated milk or milk powder can be imported in the interest of public health. No milk or milk powder will be allowed to be imported packed in bags, made of different materials.

##### 3. TIMETABLE FOR TRUCKS 1987

No truck will be allowed to ply in the Dhaka Metropolitan area from 6.30 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 4.30 p.m. to 8 p.m., to prevent alarmingly increasing number of road accidents and killings. These hours have marked as school, office and marketing hours.

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PROPOSED NATIONAL POLICY ON CHILDREN

1. To bring majority of the children under health programme.
2. To implement nutrition and health care programme to prevent food and nutrition deficiency of children.
3. To take up programme to educate pregnant and lactating mothers about general health, care and nutrition.
4. To introduce compulsory primary education for children upto 14 years of age.
5. To construct a minimum 2-room primary school in every village of the country
6. To introduce informal education for children, who have no access to formal education.
7. To implement programmes for physical education, sports and entertainment for children.
8. To provide special care for the underprivileged children of the society.  
To arrange orphan homes for orphans and deserted children.
9. To prohibit husbands from divorcing wives before the children attain 15 years of age.
10. To ensure the rights of mothers over children, once there is a divorce.  
To increase the subsistence allowance for children, in case of a divorcee.
11. To provide appropriate punishment for killing girl-child.
12. To protect children from cruelty and child labour.
13. To prohibit employment for any child under the age of 14.
14. To protect children on a priority-basis during the days of different natural disasters.
15. To ensure proper environment, safe drinking water and living for the children.

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ANNEX - 2

Provisions of the Special Powers Act, 1974, regulating newspapers or any printed document.

16. Prohibition of prejudicial acts, etc.

(1) No person shall—

(a) do any prejudicial act; or

(b) make, print, publish, possess or distribute any document containing, or spread by any other means whatsoever, any prejudicial report.

(2) The author, editor, printer and publisher of, and any person who otherwise makes or produces, any prejudicial report and any person who distributes or sells any report of that nature, knowing it to be of such nature, shall be deemed to have contravened the provisions of this section.

(3) If any person contravenes any of the provisions of this section, he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years, or with fine, or with both:

Provided that in any proceedings arising out of a contravention of this section—

(a) in relation to the making or printing of any document, it shall be a defence for the accused to prove that the said document was made or printed, as the case may be,—

(i) with the permission or under the authority of Government, or

(ii) as a proof intended for submission to Government or to a person or authority designated by Government in this behalf with a view to obtaining permission for its publication;



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- (b) in relation to the publication of any document, it shall be a defence for the accused to prove that the said document was published with the permission or under the authority of Government.

17. Proscription, etc., of certain documents.—

- (1) The Government, if satisfied that any document made, printed or published, whether before or after the commencement of this Act, contains any prejudicial report, may, by order,—
  - (a) require the editor, printer, publisher or person in possession of such document to inform the authority specified in the order of the name and address of any person concerned in the making of such report;
  - (b) require the delivery of such document and any copy thereof to an authority specified in the order;
  - (c) prohibit the further publication, sale or distribution of such document, of any extract therefrom or of any translation thereof, including, in the case of a newspaper or other periodical, the publication, sale or distribution of any subsequent issue thereof;
  - (d) declare such document and every copy or translation thereof or extract therefrom to be forfeited to Government;
  - (e) require the editor, printer, publisher or the keeper of the press to furnish security for such amount, not exceeding twenty-five thousand takas, as the Government thinks reasonable.
- (2) Where an order has been made under sub-section (1), the authority making the order shall, as soon as may be, communicate to the person affected thereby the grounds on which the order has been made to enable him to

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make a representation against the order, and it shall be the duty of such authority to inform such person of his right of making such representation and to afford him the earliest opportunity of doing so:

Provided that nothing in this sub-section shall require the authority to disclose the facts which it considers to be against the public interest to disclose.

- (3) Where in pursuance of sub-section (1) (b) any document is required to be delivered to a specified authority, that authority may enter upon and search any premises whereon or wherein such document or any copy thereof is or is reasonably suspected to be, but such authority shall not so enter after sunset and before sunrise.
- (4) Where in pursuance of sub-section (1) (b) any document has been declared to be forfeited to Government, any police officer may seize any copy thereof wherever found, and any Magistrate may, by warrant, authorise any police officer not below the rank of Sub-Inspector to enter upon and search any premises whereon or wherein such document or any copy thereof is or is reasonably suspected to be, but such police officer shall not so enter after sunset and before sunrise.
- (5) If any person contravenes any order made under this section, he shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.
- (6) If, after the furnishing of security under sub-section (1) (c), any document is made, printed or published containing any prejudicial report, the Government may, without prejudice to any other penalty to which the person guilty of making, printing or publishing such document is liable and after giving the person concerned an opportunity of being heard, declare such security, or any portion thereof, to be forfeited to it.

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18. Regulation of publication of certain matters.—

- (1) Where the Government is satisfied that in the interests of the security of Bangladesh, friendly relations of Bangladesh with foreign states, or public order it is necessary so to do, it may, by order addressed to a printer, publisher or editor, or printers, publishers or editors generally require that all matter relating to a particular subject or class of subjects affecting the security of Bangladesh, friendly relations of Bangladesh with foreign states, or public order shall, before being published in any document or class of documents, be submitted for scrutiny to any authority specified in the order, who shall, within seventy-two hours of its submission, either approve of or prohibit its publication; and no matter the publication whereof has been so prohibited shall be published.



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ANNEX - 3

# OBSERVER

Rabi-ul-Awal 12, 1408

8 Pages: Price 200 Paisa



Commercial Area where barricades were  
—OBSERVER

## Miladunnabi today

Eid-e-Miladunnabi, the birth and death anniversary of Prophet Hazrat Mohammad (Peace be upon him) will be celebrated throughout the country today (Thursday), reports BSS.

Different religious and socio-cultural organisations have chalked out elaborate programmes on the occasion.

President H.M. Ershad will inaugurate a fortnight-long Seeratunnabi (SM) programme organised by the Islamic Foundation at the premises of Baitul Mokarram National Mosque today at 6 p.m..

President Ershad will also inaugurate a week-long exhibition of Islamic calligraphy at the Islamic Foundation premises today at 3 p.m. and a book exhibition at 6 p.m..

Mehfil-e-Milad and discussion on the various aspects of the Prophet's life will be the main features of Miladunnabi celebration.

The day will be a public holiday,  
See Page 8 Col. 2

## Share prices fall in Tokyo, HK

UNDATED, Nov. 4:— Share prices closed sharply down in Tokyo and Hong Kong today with markets plummeting in Sydney and Wellington, reports AFP.

Tokyo's 225-issue Nikkei stock average, a 29.69 yen winner Monday, finished at 23,060.53 yen, down 298.07 yen, reflecting the yen's renewed appreciation against the U.S. dollar.

The market was closed on Tuesday for a national holiday.

The composite index for the major

Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Parishad (BSP), Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ), Bangladesh Sangbadpatra Press Sramik Federation and the Sangbadpatra Sadharan Karmachari Federation have given a joint call for keeping four inches' space on the top of the eighth column in the front page of every newspaper blank today (Thursday) in protest against ban on the publication of Banglar Bani and enhancement of newsprint price.

The blank space is a symbolic protest against curbs on the Press.

**Dhaka-Delhi**  
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Correspondent

also required to dispose of the company matters. Another division bench is constituted to hear motions, regular appeals and revisions in civil matters of certain pecuniary jurisdiction. Two

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ANNEX - 4

Programme Schedule of Bangladesh Television for October - December 1987.

Saturday

- |      |                               |                             |
|------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 5-00 | Opening Announcement          | b) APNAR SHASTHO:           |
|      | Al-Quran                      | Health & Hygiene            |
|      | Programme Summary             | (Fortnightly)               |
| 5-15 | Recitation from the Tripitaka | 9-00 a) AIN ADALOT:         |
| 5-20 | a) Educational Programme      | Programme on Law and        |
|      | (Fortnightly)                 | Justice (1st & 3rd Week)    |
|      | b) SPONDON: Teenager's        | b) UJJIBON: Islamic Ideo-   |
|      | Programme (Fortnightly)       | logy & Thoughts (2nd &      |
| 4-45 | Documentary Film: RIVERS/     | 5th Week)                   |
|      | ENCYCLOPEDIA OF WILD LIFE     | c) KATHAR KATHA:            |
| 6-15 | SANGBAD                       | Magazine (4th Week)         |
| 6-25 | BANSORI: Folk Songs           | 9-50 Tomorrow's Programmes  |
| 7-10 | a) ANWESHA: Science in        | 10-00 NEWS AT TEN: English  |
|      | Everyday Life (1st Week)      | 10-35 Mini Series: LOST     |
|      | b) DHIMAN: General            | EMPIRES/THE RULES OF        |
|      | Knowledge Competition         | MARRIAGE/THE SUN ALSO       |
|      | for the Youth                 | RISES/PRINCESS DAISY/       |
|      | (2nd & 4th Week)              | DAUGHTERS OF THE            |
|      | c) NOTUN DIGANTO:             | COUNTRY                     |
|      | Programme based on            | 11-30 KHABOR                |
|      | Science (3rd & 5th Week)      | 11-40 a) Sunday's Programme |
| 7-55 | Today's Programmes            | b) Verses from Al-Quran     |
| 8-00 | 8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla        | c) Closing Announcement     |
| 8-30 | a) MA O SHISHU: Health        | d) National Flag and        |
|      | and Family Planning           | National Anthem             |
|      | (Fortnightly)                 | 11-45 Close Down            |

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Sunday

- |      |   |       |   |
|------|---|-------|---|
| 5-00 | Opening Announcement<br>Al-Quran<br>Programme Summary             | b)    | SHILPAYONE BANGLA-<br>DESH: Documentary on<br>Industrial Activities<br>(Fortnightly)                                    |
| 5-15 | Recitation from the Bible   | 9-00  | Film: STARMAN   |
| 5-20 | KISHOLAY: Programme for<br>School Students                        | 9-50  | Tomorrow's Programmes   |
| 5-55 | Film: ADVENTURES OF<br>BLACK BEAUTY                               | 10-00 | NEWS AT TEN: English  |
| 6-15 | SANGBAD   | 10-35 | a) SRIJON: Magazine<br>(1st & 3rd Week)   |
| 6-25 | Tagore Songs  | b)    | SHAMOKAL: Magazine<br>on contemporary life<br>(2nd & 5th Week)  |
| 7-10 | a) MANCHITRA:<br>Bangladesh Problems &<br>prospects (Fortnightly) | c)    | ANTORANGO ALOKE:<br>On Personalities<br>(4th Week)  |
|      | b) MATI O MANUSH:<br>Agricultural Develop-<br>ment (Fortnightly)  | 11-30 | KHABOR  |
| 7-55 | Today's Programmes  | 11-40 | a) Monday's Programmes<br>b) Verses from Al-Quran<br>c) Closing Announcement<br>d) National Flag and<br>National Anthem |
| 8-00 | 8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla  | 11-45 | Close Down  |
| 8-30 | a) PADAKSHEP:<br>Programme on Develop-<br>ment Works              |       |   |

Monday

- |      |   |    |   |
|------|---|----|---|
| 5-00 | Opening Announcement<br>Al-Quran<br>Programme Summary | c) | BARNALI: Subject wise<br>Musical programme<br>(3rd & 5th Week)        |
| 5-15 | Recitation from the Geeta                             | d) | GANGULI MOR:<br>Modern Songs of old<br>and Modern Times<br>(4th Week) |
| 5-20 | FILM: HUCKLEBERRY FINN AND<br>HIS FRIENDS             |    |   |



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5-45	ANU-PAROMANU: Programme based on Science for boys and girls	9-50	Tomorrow's Programmes
6-15	SANGBAD	10-00	NEWS AT TEN: English
6-25	SPORTS PROGRAMME	10-30	Documentary: DWELLINGS AND LIVING IN ASIA/NOVA
7-15	GWAN GIGGASHA '87	11-30	KHABOR
7-55	Today's Programmes	11-40	a) Tuesday's Programmes
8-00	8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla		b) Verses from Al-Quran
8-30	OI TO JOAR: Serial Drama		c) Closing Announcement
9-00	a) AMAR THIKANA: Programme on Folk Music (1st Week)		d) National Flag and National Anthem
	b) EKI BRINTE: Artists from one family (2nd Week)	11-45	Close Down

#### Tuesday

5-00	Opening Announcement	b) NRITTER TALEY TALEY:
	Al-Quran	Dance Programme
	Programme Summary	(Fortnightly)
5-15	Recitation from the Geeta	7-55 Today's Programmes
5-20	SHIKSHANGAN: Educa-	8-00 8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla
	tional Programme	8-30 a) PURBORATRI PURBO-
5.45	Film: THE RETURN OF	DIN: Serial Drama
	THE ANTELOPE	(Fortnightly)
6-15	SANGBAD	b) SANGSHAPTAK: Serial
6-25	a) RAG RANG:	Drama (Fortnightly)
	(1st & 3rd Week)	9-50 Tomorrow's Programmes
	b) KALOTAN: Rising	10-00 NEWS AT TEN: English
	singers (2nd & 5th	10-35 Film : HIGHWAY TO
	Week)	HEAVEN

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|------|---|-------|--------------------------------------|
|      | c) METHO SUR: Group folk songs (4th Week)             | 11-30 | KHABOR                               |
| 7-05 | a) ABHIMAT: Opinions on family planning (Fortnightly) | 11-40 | a) Wednesday's Programmes            |
|      | b) SAMACHAR: On family planning (Fortnightly)         |       | b) Verses from Al-Quran              |
|      |   |       | c) Closing Announcement              |
| 7-20 | a) KHELADHULA: Sports Programme (Fortnightly)         |       | d) National Flag and National Anthem |
|      |   | 11-45 | Close Down                           |
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Wednesday

- |      |  |  |  |
|------|--|--|--|
| 5-00 | Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary              | b) TARUNNO: Informative programme on the Youth (2nd Week)          |  |
| 5-15 | Recitation from the Geeta                                    | c) BISWA PARIKROMA: On International News and Reporting (4th Week) |  |
| 5-20 | Cartoon Film: DEFENDERS OF THE EARTH/ROCKET ROBINHOOD        | 9-00   | Film: VOYAGERS                               |
| 5-45 | a) SHIKSHANGON: (Fortnightly)                                | 9-50   | Tomorrow's Programmes                        |
|      | b) DURSHIKSHAN: (Fortnightly)                                | 10-00  | NEWS AT TEN: English                         |
| 6-15 | SANGBAD  | 10-35  | a) CHAYA CHHANDO: Film Song (1st & 3rd Week) |
| 6-25 | MADHU CHONDA: Modern Songs                                   |  | b) HIRAMON: Folk Tales (2nd & 5th Week)      |
|      |  |  | c) JALSA: Classical Music (4th Week)         |
| 7-10 | TV DEBATE COMPETITION '87                                    | 11-30  | KHABOR                                       |
| 7-55 | Today's Programmes   | 11-40  | a) Thursday's Programmes                     |
| 8-00 | 8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla                                       |  | b) Verses from Al-Quran                      |
| 8-35 | a) PARIKROMA: Programme on News & Reporting (1st & 3rd Week) |  | c) Closing Announcement                      |
|      |  |  | d) National Flag and National Anthem         |
|      |  | 11-45  | Close Down                                   |
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# Thursday

5-00	Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary	7-55	Today's Programmes
5-15	Recitation from the Geeta	8-00	8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla
5-20	SHISHU MELA: Children's Programme	8-30	MOVIE OF THE WEEK/ BENGALI FEATURE FILM
5-45	Cartoon Film: HEATHCLIFF AND DINGBAT AND THE CREEPS	9-50	Tomorrow's Programmes
6-15	SANGBAD	10-00	NEWS AT TEN: English
6-25	Nazrul Songs	11-30	KHABOR
7-10	CIRCUS	11-40	a) Friday's Programmes b) Verses from Al-Quran c) Closing Announcement d) National Flag and National Anthem
		11-45	Close Down

# Friday

## Morning Transmission

8-00	Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary	10-05	a) GHORE BAIRE: Women's Programmes (Fortnightly)
8-10	SHARIRTAKE VALO RAKHUN: Physical Exercises	b) GEETALI: Selected Songs (Fortnightly)	
8-25	Cartoon Film : DINKY DOG/ THE INCREDIBLE HULK	10-35	Film: FAMILY TIES
8-50	ESHO GAN SHIKHI: Little Learner's Programme	11-00	EI SHOB DIN RATRI: Serial Drama/MONER MUKURE: Selected Drama Retelecasts
9-15	Film: RIPLEYS BELIEVE IT OR NOT	12-10	Programmes of Evening Transmission b) Closing Announcements c) National Flag and National Anthem
10-00	SANGBAD	12-15	Close Down



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Evening Transmission

3-00	Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary	7-00	MANZIL: Devotional Songs
3-15	Recitation from the Tripitaka	7-25	JIBONER ALO: Islam in day to day life
3-20	ALOR PATHE: Lessons from Al-Quran	8-00	8 O'CLOCK NEWS: Bangla
3-45	Cartoon Film: VOLTRON/ MIGHTY THOR	8-35	E SHOPTAHER NATOK
4-10	NIHEDON: Cultural Programme	9-50	Tomorrow's Programmes
5-15	SPORTS PROGRAMME	10-00	NEWS AT TEN: English
6-15	SANGBAD	10-30	Film: REMINGTON STEELE/ PALMERSTOWN
6-25	Film: DANGER BAY	11-30	KHABOR
6-50	KICHHUKHHAN: Documentary Programme	11-40	a) Saturday's Programmes b) Verses from Al-Quran c) Closing Announcement d) National Flag and National Anthem
		11-45	Close Down

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ANNEX - 5

TWENTY YEARS AFTER: The judgement has been delivered after twenty years. Nobody has waited to hear the judgement. The news has no information whether the complainant Anil Kunda (Mr) and the accused Rizia Khatun (MS) of Sailakupa is still surviving. But the judge, who first received the complaint, is already dead. Eleven judges have presided over the trial, till the judgement was delivered. Needless to say, such incident is not unique. There had been reports in the past about delayed judgements and sufferings of the complainant and the accused because of such delay. There are no accounts of wastage of money.

Settlement of cases of civil nature is little time consuming. Documents and pros and cons of the law are to be examined and analysed before judgements are made in these cases. Nothing can be done in a hurry as a single judgement can deprive a person for his whole life. The judiciary is also aware of this reality. So the government has decided to settle atleast six title suit a month. Considering the complicacies of the law, an excuse can be offered for delayed judgements in civil cases. That does not mean, it should take ten or twenty years. But, not only civil cases, sometimes it takes years to deliver judgement in criminal cases too. As a result, many accused stay in prisons as undertrial prisoners. The learned Judges and lawyers could think, whether such prison term, before found guilty, falls within the purview of justice. Presently, we are discussing the delayed judgement in question.

Citizens take recourse to law to settle disputes about lands and other unpleasant issues. Law is the last resort to weaker people. But such resort gives peculiar experiences. The complainant and the accused are present in the court on a day fixed for trial. Time passes on. But the case is not put up. The judge is late by few hours though the court is scheduled to sit at ten in the morning. In the afternoon, both the parties come to know that the case would not be put up that day. The hearing will be made some other day. Time passes on in this way. Normal works are hampered. Money is wasted. Because, few hundred taka are spent on every day fixed for hearing. There should be speedy trial to stop such harrasment and wastage.

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It is reported, there are two thousand cases pending trial in the Munsif Court (Assistant Judge) in a small place like Sailakupa. In addition, on an average five hundred cases are added every year. Even if 10 cases are disposed of every month, it would take 20 years to dispose of these cases. Undoubtedly, this is an unnatural situation. To solve this problem, there should be more number of Munsifs, the laws should be straightened and the judges should be relieved of extra responsibilities. Otherwise, we would be surprised but the problems will not be solved. The expectation for justice will end up in sheer frustrations. (Editorial, Daily Ittefaq, September 18 1987).



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ANNEX - 6

MINIMISING MINI MENANCE:

A minibus turned turtle on Thursday and several of its passengers were injured, one of them, a young woman, seriously. That was nothing compared to the usual fare that features at least one spot death. But there is in it more than meets the eye.

The accident occurred on the stretch that passes between the Tennis Complex and the Shishu Park. The locale of the mishap multiplies its seriousness several times over. The traffic authorities, in their wisdom as also having the best of intentions, had routed all kinds of bus service and trucks out of this area between the two parks. That judicious decision was made the more apt and useful because of the proximity of the Shishu Park. And the decision was never amended or reversed but the buses and all forms of vehicular traffic, giving a damn to the safety and environmental needs of a park and a children's complex, began using this road using as a pretext the inadvisability of the road running in front of the University Teacher-Student Centre when 'movements' make the vicinity too hot for vehicles. The minibus accident gives us an opportunity to request the authorities to strictly enforce the route that avoids the road between the parks.

How does a bus turn turtle? It must have been speeding. It must have been overloaded. The two combined to make the bus unfit to negotiate the bend in front of the Shishu Park. Speeding at this point is criminal to the power. And what about the crime of overloading?

A Dhaka minibus seems to be the worst of God-forsaken things. Nothing controls it — the conductor, the driver, the passenger, the traffic authorities, the situation on the road, the metropolitan laws, the government. There had never been any limit to its loading — no one remembers a minibus being penalised for that and no policemen has ever been seen to stop a minibus to caution against the crime. And, this is perhaps stranger, no minibus seems to have been ticked off for speeding and rash driving.

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The fact that minibuses do not hit and ram and vault more often is no proof that it has by any means a civilised presence on the road. It is quite understandable that no one, not the policeman in particular, keeps a tab on how many accidents the minibuses cause without becoming a victim themselves. But experience says the number is menacing.

Minis are not meant to have any standing room whatsoever and they must not run at any point beyond 20 mph. Is it too much of a job for the police to accomplish

And, by the way, who is it that would ensure that minis are driven by only licensed and experienced drivers and conducted by men of civilised ways and not regular ruffians ?

( Editorial, The New Nation, July 26 1986 )

#### WOMEN'S RIGHTS:

To say that Muslim personal law needs to be recodified in the light of conditions in Bangladesh is not, as some conservatives might suspect, to demand that its fundamentals should be modified or its character changed. But experience suggests that the rights conferred on women by the Islamic code in respect of marriage, inheritance and divorce are in many cases being flouted in rural society. Reports daily pour in from outlying areas of women being abandoned by their husbands, not even formally divorced, and left to fend for themselves as best they can along with the children born of the marriage which has collapsed. Formal divorce is avoided because it entails payment of alimony and other allowances. What happens is that the husband just walks away or sends the wife away back to her parents, and shrugs off all further responsibility for her or for the children he may have had.

Another type of case concerns young girls who are offered promises of marriage and somehow induced to accept temporarily the status of concubines or mistresses and then abandoned when they show signs of pregnancy. The helpless victims may at best appeal to the judgement of village elders but if the offender belongs, as is usually the case, to the upper rural strata, there is nothing that the victim can do.



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The fact is that most marriages still go unregistered. The promised payment or mahr without which no Muslim marriage would be valid is often a matter of verbal assurance, unrecorded, which naturally cannot be enforced by a court. The wicked husband is, when and if sued, able to cite a fake figure and to bring forward false witnesses to substantiate his claim. The wife is forced to accept whatever he offers. But as we have said, the husband, offers her nothing, evades a formal divorce and disappears.

It might be difficult to convince the conservative that marriage without formal registration must be declared invalid. But we are afraid that unless this is done poorer people would not care to have marriages registered. They need to be persuaded in their own interest that registration, far from being a violation of religious law, would strengthen it and render its enforcement easier.

One of the reasons why formal divorce is sought to be avoided is fear of being forced to pay the large amount of bridal money which the bride's parents insist on being mentioned in the marriage deeds. This is a matter of prestige, but some believe that a high figure is a deterrent against easy divorce. But when a marriage does collapse because of incompatibility between the partners or other reasons, the size of the promised figure is little help. The woman does not receive anything at all, when she is informally abandoned.

There is no fool-proof protection that society can offer to women who knowingly allow themselves to be lured into an illegal and immoral relationship by a promise of marriage, but those who exploit their innocence or gullibility must not be let off lightly. A man who plans to abandon a girl after getting her into trouble must be treated as a criminal, and should he deny his offence, he must be subjected to a blood test to establish the paternity of the child the victim has conceived.

Many women are not, because of their backwardness, aware of the rights which both religious and secular law guarantee them. What we think we need as a remedy against the widespread abuses from which women suffer is a restatement of what their rights are and how they can have them enforced against recalcitrant



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husbands or lovers. Rights in the abstract are one thing, but rights which are not clearly understood or which are not easy to enforce are no safeguard against social tyranny. The number of cases in which women are deprived of even a minimum of rights is increasing and posing a threat to social stability. Society as a whole needs to wake up to the seriousness of the situation.

( Editorial, The Bangladesh Observer, November 3 1987 )

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ANNEX - 7

দলিল করে দেয়ার পর মাত্র ১ দিনের ব্যবধানে ২৬ জন প্রকৃত মালিকদের অজান্তে চুরা মালিকদের নামে রেকর্ড সম্পাদন করে দেন। গতকাল জাতীয় প্রেস করে অনুষ্ঠিত এক সাবাদিক সম্মেলনে আলিয়াতির শিকার ৬৭ বিধা ১-এর পূজার বেশন

সংবাদ সাপ্তাহিক বৈধা ডেমার সাভোপ করা হয়। অস্থায়ীরা জোরপূর্বক পত্রিকার প্যাকেট নামিয়ে কেরোসিন ঢেলে তাতে আগুন ধরিয়ে দেয়। সংবাদপত্র এজেন্টদের কাগজ বহনকারী কর্মচারীদের মারখোর করে তাদের হাতখড়ি ও টাকা-পয়সা ছিনিয়ে নেয়।  
শেষ পৃঃ ১-এর কঃ দেখুন

সেতু বন্ধন।  
বুড়িগঙ্গার দু'তীরের বিতীর্ণ জনপদে প্রায় ৮০ লক্ষাধিক লোকের বাস। বিশেষ করে ঢাকা মিউনিসিপ্যাল কর্পোরেশন ও তার আশেপাশে ৬০ লক্ষাধিক লোক এবং নদীর অপর তীরে প্রায় ২০ লাখ লোকের বাস।

সাথে জড়িত।  
উল্লেখ্য, 'বুড়িগঙ্গার ৬ লক্ষাধিক ভাসমান লোক' সরাসরি এপারের উ রাজধানীর জীবনযাত্রায় হিসেবে বিবেচিত। অথবা আদমশুমারীতে যোগ হয় না। প্রশাসনে জনগোষ্ঠীর বেশীর ভাগ ৩০০ দিন-মজুর অধর্শিকিত ও স্বয়ং দেশের প্রত্যন্ত অঞ্চল সম্বন্ধে এরা রাজধানীতে বিতীর্ণ জনপদে বস্তিবাসী  
শেষ পৃঃ ৩-এর

## জীবন প্রবাহ

### নূরজাহান তার স্বামীর ঘরে যেতে চায়

॥ ইনকিলাব প্রকিবেদন ॥

পাঁচ হাজার টাকার যৌতুক পরিশোধ না করার নূরজাহান বেগমকে অন্তঃস্বস্তা অবস্থায় স্বামীগৃহ থেকে বিদায় নিতে হয়েছিল। ঘটনাটি ঘটেছে ঢাকা জেলার কেরানীগঞ্জ থানার চর কুন্দুলিয়া গ্রামে। ১৩৯২ সনের ৩ ফাদুন ডেমরা থানার পূর্ব কমতলী গ্রামের ইউনুছ আলী শেখের কন্যা নূরজাহান বেগমের সাথে কেরানীগঞ্জ থানার আকতার উদ্দিনের পুত্র নেওয়াজ আলীর সাথে দশ হাজার টাকার যৌতুকের বিনিময়ে বিয়ে সম্পন্ন হয়। কিন্তু সাপেক্ষিক অতাব-অনটনের মধ্যে বৃদ্ধ ইউনুছ আলী অর্ধেক টাকা পরিশোধ করার পর গত ১৮-৪-৮৭ তারিখে ইচ্ছেকাল করেন। যৌতুকের টাকা সম্পূর্ণ পরিশোধ করতে ব্যর্থ হওয়ায় নেওয়াজ আলী তাকে কাবিনও দেননি।



নেওয়াজ আলী 'অমানুষিক শারীরিক নির্বাসন' করেছে এবং তাকে পিছলিয়ে পাঠিয়ে দিয়েছে, আর বলেছে বাকী পাঁচ হাজার টাকা না দিলে নূরজাহানকে নেয়া হবে না। বৃদ্ধ ইউনুছ আলী জীবিতাবস্থায় এ ঘটনার সুপ্রাথমিক জন্য মহিলা সমিতি এবং কেরানীগঞ্জ থানার মামলা করেও ব্যর্থ হন। এছাড়া স্থানীয় গণ্যমান্য ব্যক্তিদের সাথে আলোচনায় করেও তাদের কাছ থেকে আশ্রয়প্রার্থক কোন কিছু পাননি।

ইতিমধ্যে নূরজাহানের কোল জুড়ে এসেছে একটি ফুটফুটে শিশু। নূরজাহান তত্বে সন্তানের খোরপোষের দাবী করে সন্তানকে এক নজর দেখে যাওয়ার জন্য তার স্বামীকে ধবর দিলেও ইউনুছ আলী শিশু সন্তানটিকে এক নজর দেখতে ২-এর পৃঃ দেখুন

বৌতুকের টাকা সম্পূর্ণ পরিশোধ না করার তিন মাসের অন্তঃস্বস্তা নূরজাহানকে

নগর পা

॥ স্টাফ রিপোর্ট ॥  
গত শুক্রবার রাতে ডেম ১ গ্রাম হিরোইনসহ সেবীকে গ্রেফতার ক জনার রশিদ, এনায়েত ও ব্যক্তি হেরোইন যে উত্সর্গ করত।  
জিসিআর উদ্ধার  
গত শুক্রবার রাতে বন থেকে একটি চোরা মাগামী আমির পুলিশগ্রেফতার করে।  
শেষ পৃঃ ৭-এর কঃ

The Daily Inqilab, October 18 1987. Front page feature entitled Jiban Prabaha. This one is a story of a woman, Nurjahan, who was deserted by the husband, as she failed to pay for dowry.

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ভারতীয় বাহিনী বিনম্রকার  
উদ্ভাটনীয় আফনা শহরে প্রচণ্ড  
পেরিনা বৃদ্ধের সম্মুখীন। নিবা-  
রেশন চাইয়ার্স অব তামিল ইনর  
(এনটিটিই) পেরিনারা প্রচলিত  
বৃদ্ধের রীতি পরিবর্তন করিয়া

ভারতীয় সৈন্যদের উপর তাত্ত্বিক  
হাফনা চানাইয়া গা-চাকা দিতেছে।  
আফনার পৌর কর্মকর্তারা অবি-  
লম্বে এই ভয়াবহ বৃদ্ধ বৃদ্ধের  
অন্য ভারতীয় কতৃপক্ষ এবং প্রেসি-  
ডেন্সি পরিবর্তনের প্রতি আবেদন

আনাইয়া বলিয়াছেন, ৭ শতাধিক  
বেসামরিক নোকে প্রাণহানি  
হইয়াছে। ভারতীয় বাহিনী প্রধান  
পেরিনা অবস্থানগুলি দখল করিয়া  
নিয়াছে এবং আফনা টাউন হন,  
(শেষ পৃ: ১-এর ক: স্র:)

## ‘গতকাল জীবনযাত্রা আরও স্বাভাবিক ছিল’

বাসস দেশের বিভিন্ন অংশ  
হইতে প্রাপ্ত তথ্যের বরাতে দিয়া  
আনার, আরও কন-কারখানার  
প্রমিত ও কর্মচারীদের কাছে পুন-  
রায় যোগদান এবং রাতার বর্ধিত  
সংখ্যার বান চলাচল করার গতকাল  
(মঙ্গলবার) প্রমিত কর্মচারী একা  
পরিষদ আহুত ৪৮ ঘন্টাব্যাপী  
(শেষ পৃ: ৩-এর ক: স্র:)

## ৭ দলের অন্তিমন্দন

গতকাল (মঙ্গলবার) ৭ দলের  
এক বিবৃতিতে প্রমিত কর্মচারী  
এক পরিষদের আহুত ৪৮ ঘন্টার  
বর্ধিত সক্ষম হওয়ার সক্ষমতার  
মনগণের প্রতি অভিনন্দন জানান  
হয়। বিবৃতিতে বলা হয় যে এই  
বর্ধিতে ইহাই প্রমাণিত হইয়াছে  
যে, এই সরকারের আর ক্ষমতায়  
ধাকার অধিকার নাই। ৭ দল



অবহেলাই আয়েশা  
সিন্ধিকার  
মৃত্যুর কারণ?

(ইন্ডেকাক রিপোর্ট)

পি.জি. হাসপাতালের একজন  
সিনিয়র ষ্টাক নার্সকে হাসপাতা-  
লেরই একটি ওয়ার্ডে যন্ত্রণার  
কাতরহইতে কাতরহইতে মৃত্যুবরণ  
করিতে হইয়াছে। অব্যাহত রক্ত

## বিশ্বব্যাপী শেয়ার বাজারে সঙ্কট

আন্তর্জাতিক বাজারে শেয়ারের  
মূল্যের সবনতি অব্যাহত রহি-  
য়াছে। তবে গতকাল মঙ্গলবার  
সামান্য উন্নতির আভাস পাওয়া  
যায়। গতকের প্রধান শেয়ারসূচক  
প্রাথমিক করেক ঘন্টার কেনা-  
বেচার পর একসময় ৩ শত পয়েন্ট  
নাশিয়া যায়। গত সপ্তাহে ওয়াল-  
স্ট্রিটে এই মন্দা শুরু হয়। বিবিসি  
ও ডয়েস অব আমেরিকা আনার,  
টোকিওর শেয়ার বাজারে প্রাথমিক  
কেনাবেচার পর অবনতির পরিমাণ  
ছিল প্রায় শতকরা ১৫ ভাগ।  
(শেষ পৃ: ৪-এর ক: স্র:)

তিব্বতকে স্বাধীন বৌদ্ধ  
রাষ্ট্র হিসাবে  
স্বীকৃতিদানের আবেদন  
ভারতের বৌদ্ধ সমিতির বার্ষিক

The Daily Ittefaq, October 21 1987. Front page report of a hospital nurse, who died in the hospital she worked for, because of reported negligence during the delivery of her first child.