

# Dhaka Day by Day

## Claiming Land Rights Through Art

by Fayza Haq

Australian Aboriginal art was here in the city for the first time, as was witnessed in the print exhibit at the National Museum.

This form of Aboriginal art is probably the biggest school of art, geographically, in the world. Its experts may number only a thousand but they are spread over thousands of kilometers of Australian outback settlements.

The basic designs of Aboriginal art include curved lines, dots and dashes. The patterns are artistic and symmetrical and use such colours as stimulating yellow, brilliant red and dramatic black.

Art authorities are finally recognising Aboriginal art as something completely different, and a style undoubtedly good. The rest of the paintings that emerge from Australia are often pale imitations and variations of what one sees in Europe, and USA.

The artists' work show the link of the people with the land, and the rights and responsibilities of the Aborigines. The art pieces prove that the country is theirs. "The visual arts of the Aborigines play a vital role for the recognition of their land rights and self-determination", says Roger Butler, the Curator of Australian prints, Australian National Gallery, who helped organise the exposition at Dhaka.

Although there is the present move to popularise Australian Aboriginal art, yet the industry remains insecure and uncertain. According to Dr. Jon Altman, who heads a Federal government inquiry into the trade, the artists are distressed when their works are taken from the deserts and sold at a price many times higher in places like Melbourne and Sydney.

Even the best of Aboriginal artists do not normally earn more than a few thousand dollars a year. The average white Australian in the capital cities, on the other hand, gets \$1000 a month in superannuation alone.

In 1985 the Aboriginal Arts Board told a parliament enquiry that Aboriginal craftsmen worked for as little as eighty cents an hour, although the industry was worth seven million dollars a year for the revenue of the Northern Territory.

As for the prints on display at Dhaka, they were a natural extension to Aboriginal painting and culture. The engraving of linoleum blocks was a process similar to the wood and stone

carving. The colours had the same opaqueness.

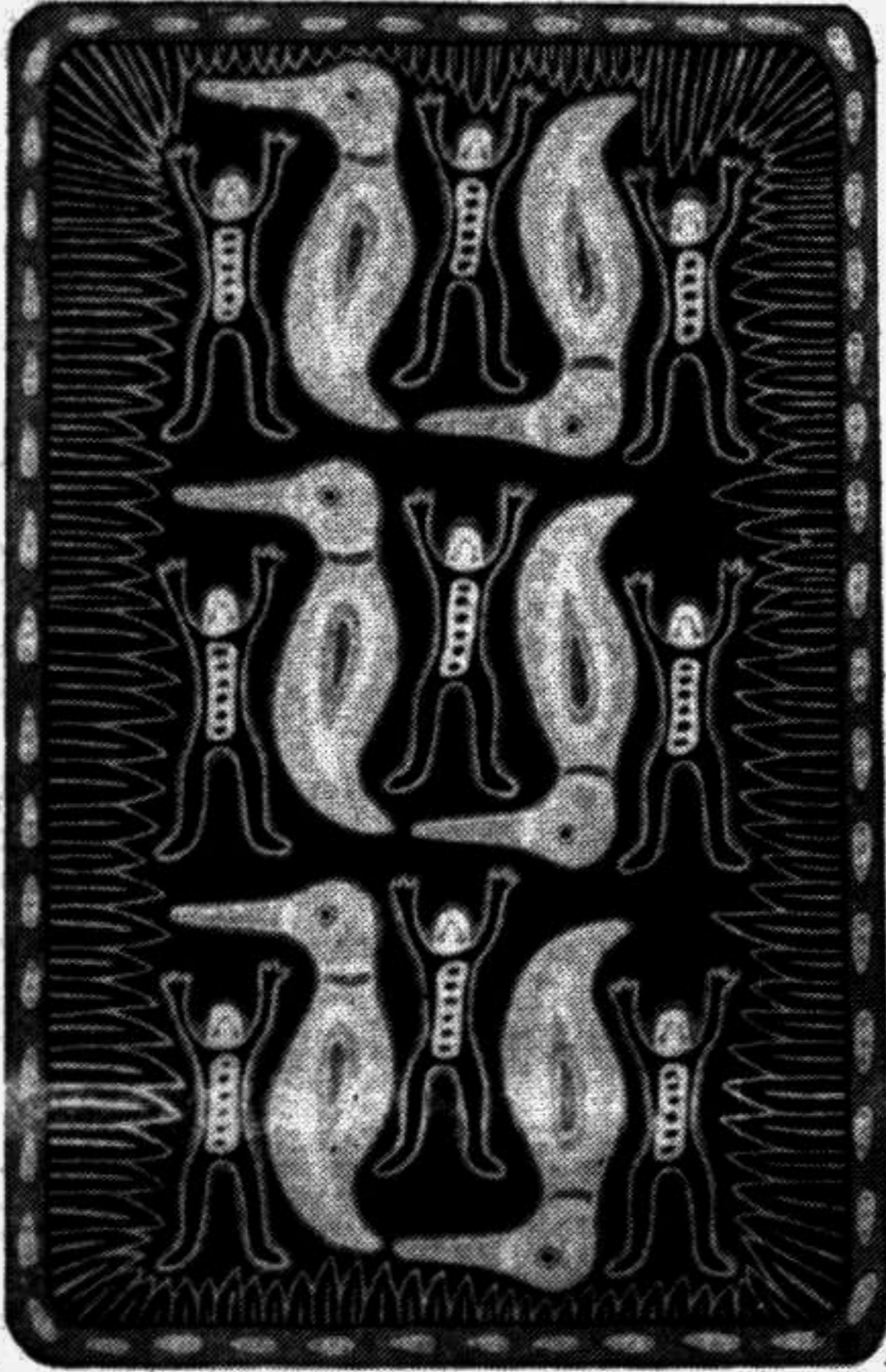
Robert Campbell Jr., who had "The Hunter" in linocut, was a self-taught artist, encouraged by the better-known print-maker Tony Coleing. He is now introducing his technique to other Aboriginal artists living near his home. His creations were absorbing pieces with simple but effective dots and lines. Ellen Jose, who had travelled in Japan, China, India, the Pacific region, Europe and Egypt, had an equally dramatic "Landscape" as his pride piece. The semi-abstract creation was a charming combination of representations of leaves, plants, rivers with cacti growth dominating. His "The cliffs" and "The boulders" were similarly lyrical.

Sally Morgan, who is a novelist, and is now working on her second book, had a delightful and picturesque screenprint "Men and ducks". Its colours were vibrant and romantic. Banduk Marika, who now holds the positions of the Curator of Yirrkala Museum and Assistant Manager of Buku Larnggay Arts, had a fascinating linocut included in the exhibition called "Gungaiung". This had a pattern of vegetables in the form of radishes and beetroots.

Jimmy Pike, who once belonged to a nomadic family of hunters and gatherers, had a gorgeous abstraction in "Larrripuka Main Country". It was as subtle as any abstract piece one sees in Europe. Poosarar's "Kangaroo Spiritman" was a magnificent and overwhelming creation in linocut. It contained images of kangaroos, emus, lizards and turtles. Presently studying at the Canberra School of Art, he does etchings, linocuts and lithographs.

Bede Tungtalam's "Man Hunting Dugong" was another engrossing piece. It was a neat, dramatic and stylised creation in woodcut. Trained at Darwin and Canberra, he produces screenprints for furnishing and clothing fabrics. He also does traditional wood sculpture.

The 28 prints of the seven artists expressed the philosophy and outlook of the fascinating original people from Downunder. The lithographs, linocuts, woodprints and screenprints also reflected a remarkable combination of the contemporary world with that of the Aborigines.



## Education Week programme begins June 2

The National programme of the Education Week, 1991 will begin in Dhaka on June 2, an official source said on Friday, reports BSS.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will inaugurate programme at the Shilpakala Academy at 10-30 am. Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs, Prof AQM Badruddoza Choudhury and State Minister for Education Principal Md. Eunos Khan will be present on the occasion as special guests.

A seminar on "education and democracy" will be held at 11-30 am on the same day.

Prof Shamsul Haq, Chairman of the University Grants Commission will present the main paper in the seminar. The first session of the seminar will be presided over by Education Secretary A N M Yusuf.

An open discussion will be held in the second session with Dr Al-Mute Sharafuddin in the chair while Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed will conduct the opening discussion.

On the second day, a prize distribution ceremony will also be held at the Academy at 10-30 am. Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs will distribute prizes among the best teachers, best educational institutions and competitors of different cultural functions.

## Jamaat demands arrest of Nizami's attackers

Jamaat-e-Islami, Dhaka City Unit, Friday demanded immediate arrest and punishment of those responsible for assaulting Jamaat Secretary General Moulana Mattur Rahman Nizami, MP, in the Dhaka University campus, reports BSS.

The demand was made at a protest rally held at the South Gate of Baitul Mukarram Mosque after the Juma prayer. The rally was presided over by the Jamaat Dhaka City Unit Secretary A T M Azharul Islam.

The rally was held as part of 'Doa Day' Friday observed by the party throughout the country to pray to Almighty Allah for the speedy recovery of Moulana Nizami from the injuries he received due to the assault.

It was addressed, among others, by Jamaat's Naeb Amir Shamsur Rahman and Secretary of the Jamaat's Parliamentary Party Advocate Sheikh Ansar Ali.

A protest march was brought out by the party which paraded the city streets chanting slogans against the attackers of their leader.

## PROGRAMME

### Seminar on cyclone

Civil Engineering Division of the Institution of Engineers will hold a seminar on 'recent cyclone and tidal surge in the coastal region of Bangladesh' background and possible mitigation' on Sunday at 3.30 pm at the auditorium of the institution.

### Urs

The annual Urs of Hazrat Shah Suft Amanat Khan (RA) will be held on June 13, Thursday, at his Daragh Sharif at Chittagong, reports BSS.

Milad mahfil, halkat zikir and special munajat will be held seeking divine blessings for the Muslim ummah as well as for those who were killed in the recent cyclone in the coastal areas.

All the followers of the Sufi have been requested to attend the Urs.

## Weather

### Thundershower likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain on thundershower with moderate to heavy falls accompanied by temporary gusty wind or Kalbaishakhy (Nor'wester) squall is likely at many places over Dhaka and Chittagong Divisions and at a few places over Rajshahi and Khulna Divisions, according to Met Office forecast valid till 6 pm Saturday.

Day temperature is expected to remain nearly unchanged. Outlook for subsequent two days: Rainfall activity likely to increase.

Extended outlook for another five days: Little change. The seen sets today (Saturday) at 6.42 pm and rises on Sunday at 5.11 am.

The maximum temperature of 36.5 degree Celsius was recorded in Satkhira.

Temperature and humidity of some towns on Saturday were:

Town/City	Max	Min	Humidity (%)
Dhaka	32.0	24.0	71
Chittagong	31.4	26.0	78
Rajshahi	34.4	23.5	78
Khulna	35.4	26.4	74
Cox's Bazar	31.0	26.5	88
Sylhet	32.8	21.3	77
Barisal	32.5	24.5	78
Rangpur	31.6	23.2	82
Dinajpur	31.4	22.4	87
Ishardi	33.5	-	72

# Bangladesh contributes only 0.4pc carbon di-oxide in atmosphere

A leading Bangladeshi expert has said Bangladesh contributes only 0.4 per cent of Carbon di-oxide while its effect on this part of the world is 10 per cent, reports BSS.

Dr Atiq Rahman, while presenting his key-note paper in a seminar on Global Climate Change and Bangladesh in Dhaka on Thursday, said the globe is getting warmer increasingly due to Green House effect and abuse of energy in various forms. "If the temperature increases by 1.6 degree, the Himalayan Glacier will melt down, releasing more water to inundate more land in future," Dr Atiq, Director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies said.

State Minister for Information Mohammad Nurul Huda Thursday urged the country's scientists and environmentalists to extend their wholehearted cooperation and expertise towards government efforts to effectively face natural calamities in Bangladesh.

The State Minister was speaking as the chief guest at the seminar organised by Lions Club of Dhaka Solidarity at Hotel Sonargaon Thursday evening.

The club President Lt ATM Rafiq presided over the seminar while it was attended, among others, by Governor of Lions District-328 Lt Jalal Ahmad, Lt Anwar Hossain Khan MP and Club Secretary Lt Emy Gonzales.

Termining the effects of natural calamities as close to number one problem in Bangladesh, Nurul Huda said that the government would raise the issue in international forums to draw the attention of the developed world as well as the world-renowned scientists

to this grave situation that the country had been facing time and again.

Quoting a study report, the State Minister said only one lakh people had died in natural calamities during the last 100 years in the world except in Bangladesh. "In Bangladesh alone, the deaths are much more higher in at least 60 storms and tidal bores that lashed this part of the globe between 1797 and 1991," he said adding that the damage to property was more than one's imagination due to such calamities.

He said, Bangladesh had fallen victims to cyclonic storms and tidal surge for 34 times during the last 30 years and the intensity of the wrath of nature was increasing fast with the passing of days.

He said the equatorial zone of the globe was increasingly

prone to such natural calamities which resulted from Green House effect. As Bangladesh is close to equatorial zone, he said, the country will face this problem time and again.

Dr A. Atiq Rahman said, "The nature has its own propensity and relaxation" and as the Green House effect is violating this process, the climate is getting changed resulting in various calamities in the world.

"Human activities should not cross a certain limit and if it is not followed, we do not know what will be the consequence," Dr Rahman said adding that energy in various form in the world was being abused leading to heavy concentration of carbon di-oxide in the atmosphere which was standing out as a danger for the human being as well as the animals.

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