

RECOMMENDATIONS

Folk Cultural Festival

February 9 'Dhaka Basi'--an organisation of Dhakaites, will hold a festival of folk culture at the Novera Hall of the National Museum. The programme will start at 3.30 p.m.

Film

February 9 Bangladesh Bird Club will screen a video film show on the killing of migratory birds in the country. The show will take place at the National Press Club at 11.00 a.m.

Publication

February 9 A publication of three books by Professor Dr. Moniruzzaman Mia will take place at the National Press Club at 3.45 p.m.

Exhibition

February 1-March 2 Saju Art Gallery is holding a painting exhibition titled, Grand Group Art Exhibition, displaying works of more than a hundred artists of the country. The exhibition will run through March 2 from 10 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. everyday except Friday.

Erratum

On the Entertainment Page of February 7 issue of The Daily Star the fixture of the opening match of the ICC World Cup Championship was wrongly put as South Africa VS Australia. Actually the match is between South Africa and West Indies. We heartily regret the error.

Anniversary

Remembering poet Abu Zafar Obaidullah

68th birth anniversary of the poet observed

HARUN UR RASHID

POET Abu Zafar Obaidullah was the foremost carrier of the ancient tradition of Bangla literary trends among all poets of his time. Speakers told this about him at a seminar at the seminar hall of Bangladesh Press Institute yesterday. Arranged by Centre for Bangladesh Culture (CBC), the seminar celebrated the poet's 68th birth anniversary, the first after his irreparable demise last year. Eminent poets, journalists, the poet's relatives, and many followers of the poet attended the discussion. The programme was moderated by poet Belal Chowdhury.

Abu Zafar Obaidullah is perhaps the lone example of poets who also had been involved in government profession. Obaidullah was a bureaucrat by profession and a minister for some time. But instinctively he possessed a great attachment with the literature of the country and its simple rural life that has greatly contributed to the literary subjects. Obaidullah emerged as a poet at a time when Bangla literature was being immensely influenced by the modern literary trends of Europe. Poets like Jibanananda Das, Buddhada Basu, Sudhindranath Datta in the West Bengal, and Shamsur Rahman, Syed Ali Ahsan, and many others in Bangladesh were reigning the scene of Bangla literature. At that time, Obaidullah, however, did not follow his generation's path; instead he greatly drew from the old traditions. He chose the simplistic rhyming form of Bangla chhara and wrote poems on contemporary aspects of life. This was definitely a brave step just at the start of any poet's career.

Obaidullah is most famous for his immortal poem 'Ami kingbadontir katha bolchhi' and also the poem on the Language Movement of 1952, 'Kumro phuley phuley nuyeh porechhey lotata'. The first poem firmly depicts the legacy of our ancestors, which has also built the

rich literary tradition of this land. It declares straight and firmly but not in arrogant tone that our national consciousness, our linguistic existence, and our literary passion have been possible only for the contribution of those learned ancestors. To deny them is to destroy ourselves. The poem hugely draws images and symbols from the nature, which pertain to the folk people and their occupations. The poem 'Kumro phuley phuley' is a mournful presentation of a mother's wait for her son, who has not returned after the incidents of February 21. But not just these two, in fact all Obaidullah's poems are greatly awash in patriotic ardour of the poet. His first collection of poems, Shaatnori Haar, was written in the style of old Bangla ballads.

Many elder and young poets of the time came to the celebration and spoke about the poet. To many Obaidullah was intimately known as Sentu Bhai. Eminent journalist poet Mahub Hassan said that Obaidullah's poems revealed his inner self, which was quite spiritual in nature. Enayetullah Khan, a

younger brother of the poet, said that Obaidullah as a poet seemed to him more as a mystic spiritualist. His poems have a moral strength like the sloke that haunts the reader. The poem 'Ami kingbadontir katha bolchhi' creates that haunting feeling in the reader's consciousness drawing him nearer to the ancient root of his existence. Enayetullah said that this spirituality emerged, not from his thought about death, rather from an inexplicable and inevitable curiosity for it. Another young poet Iqbal Aziz considered Obaidullah as the most distinct poet of the 1950s. He termed Obaidullah's spirituality as 'Tagorian secularism'.

Celebrated performer Pragya Laboni recited two poems of Abu Zafar Obaidullah. The first one she recited is probably the last poem of Obaidullah. The poem starts in a tone of uncertainty on the poet's part about his creation: 'Ei muhurtey ami ja lakhchhi/ Ami janina ta keu porbey ki na'. Laboni also recited the poem Kumro phuley phuley. Poet Faruk Alamgir informed that he had made a short film on this poem, but it was

lost during the Liberation War. He regretted that he never again could do it. Kazi Rozi concluded that Obaidullah came to tell of the myth and himself turned into a legend. At the end of the programme recitation of 'Ami kingbadontir katha bolchhi' by Nazimuddin Hashem and his wife was played on the recorder.

Among others present at the discussion were Mrs. Obaidullah Khan, Editor of the Weekly 2000 Shahadat Chowdhury, Managing Editor of The Daily Star Fahim Munaim, eminent columnist and politician Rashed Khan Menon, Dr. Rafiqul Islam, Shahiduddin Khan, Habibul Alam, Dr. Samad, Masum Ahmed Chowdhury, Dr. Shaikat Ali, Sajjad Kadir, Dr. Rizwan Siddiky, Masud Mannan, poet Asad Chowdhury, poet Tridib Dostidar, poet Mahub Bari, and poet Belal Chowdhury. Belal informed that a collection of Abu Zafar Obaidullah's poems is preparing to come out this month. Editor of the Holiday Enayetullah Khan also wished to bring out a special issue in retrospect of poet Abu Zafar Obaidullah.



Poet Asad Chowdhury recites from a poem at poet Abu Zafar Obaidullah's 68th birth anniversary.

Exhibition

Where colours and images abounded

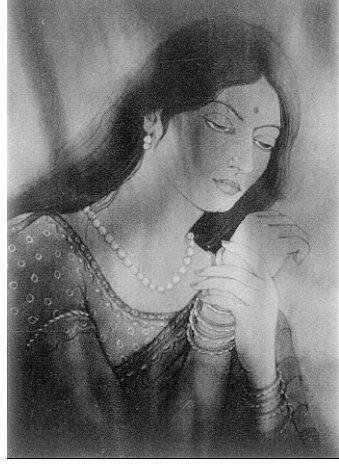
The Indo-Bangla-Thai exhibit

FAYZA HAQ

THERE was a coming together of talent from three countries, Bangladesh, India and Thailand, at the Indian High Commission gallery at Satmasjid Road. Although the artists were young yet one had a lot to learn from their work.

Rafi Haque has been dealing with anti-war theme for quite some time. After visiting the Hiroshima Peace Memorial he was inspired to do his "Impression of Hiroshima". In his paper lithograph he has dealt with images taken from those seen in 1945 at Hiroshima. Thus in the right orange portion one saw the destruction of the city with its people. The floating orange leaves to the right on the red background were the memories that were reflected over the years. The red represented the voice of revolution while the black smudges stood for pain and sorrow. Meanwhile the blue section to the right backdrop stood for the present search for peace. In his second work he has brought in brown, orange and beige splashed with black. In the background were the images brought about by the bombing. Together with this was the image of a hand going over a memorable letter of someone who had died in the bombing.

Abdul Aziz had brought in oriental art influences in his work such as "Makeup-2" (water colour on paper) where one saw a woman with jewellery on her neck, ears and hands. Her clothes had been done delicately and details in the embroidery of the sari and blouse had been brought in. Her facial features had a classic effect large eyes, prominent nose and curved lips. In another water colour the subject was again draped in a sari and she had strands of white flowers in her hair as well as in her hands. She was decked with dainty accessories as had been the earlier subject. Aziz said that since Oriental art was an integral part of our culture he had gone into it. He said that he used live models with



alterations of his own as well as experimentation so that the paintings did not appear flat.

Babul Mahmood in his acrylic on canvas "Childhood" showed two tops swirling with multicoloured kites at the back. In front were many colours like green, red and blue that represented the joy in the hearts of the young. In another such creation the kites at the back were abstract, while the tops were shown in sections. In Anukul Chandar Mojumdar's work one saw the mother and child theme. He has used raw colours as red and green with outlines of black. Anukul said that he tried to emulate the volume of the presentation of SM Sultan and the simple strokes of Zainul Abedin. In Zahir Hossain Newton's work one saw the rhythm of nature. He brought in flowers, five yellow birds, thick, fleshy leaves and portions of watery area. In his untitled piece once again we saw the rhythm of colours although there they were muted and represented as lines or circles which were again set in a grayish white centre. Azag Kabir, in his work "Freedom", had made his three birds of brass that had been hammered together and they were perched on a stainless steel circle. Kamrul Islam Nadim's "Party" depicted a huge "dekchi" containing food for a big party. The



shades of brown brought in the impact of the heat on the vessel.

In Tarun Chokrobarty's acrylic on canvas works depicted how those who had power in their hands exploited the weak and helpless. On a chessboard Tarun had depicted how women were the victims of men's greed. In another canvas he had depicted expectation as a woman waited for someone to appear at an open window. In another he had brought in a winged horse behind a poor woman who was groping towards a flower. A castle and moon had been included in the composition. In another came a dream of a young woman who had visions of her death, although even in that stage she was holding a beautiful bird. In Biraj Kumar Paul's "Kochuri Pana" we found fleshy water hyacinths with their tick pale green leaves surrounding the flowers. In his depiction of Buddha, in oil, one found a partly broken statue with the sayings of Buddha written in gray at the back. In Anup Kumar Karar's "Pujarani", oil on canvas, one found a devotee in a white sari with a vermilion border proceeding to carry flowers for worship. Sanjay Mojumdar's "Untitled" one found an expression of his feelings through the play of colours.

From Thailand had come the paintings of Chhatthakur Kabilsingh, Virochn Kiatyuddhaji, Akron Thongnong, Jatuporn Kerdpiiboon and Thiraut Bunyasakseri which brought in more ranges of themes and styles.

All in all, the exhibition had been a remarkable one.

TV GUIDE

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Table with columns for ZEE CINEMA, ZEE MUSIC, and ALPHA TV, listing programs and times.

Table with columns for STAR MOVIES, HALLMARK, and STAR SPORTS, listing programs and times.

Table with columns for TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS and STAR SPORTS, listing programs and times.

Table with columns for PICK OF THE DAY and STAR WORLD, listing programs and times.

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