

12TH ASIAN BIENNIAL FINE ARTS EXHIBITION OPENS

Uphold humanity, promote good sense to meet demand of time

PM tells artists

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday urged the artists to uphold humanity and promote welfare, good sense and aesthetics through their wonderful artistic skill and intellect to meet the demand of the time.

"We believe in open window policy. We'll have to be familiar and maintain contact and relation with the practice of arts, intellectual progression and evolution of thoughts in contemporary world," she said while she was opening the 12th Asian Biennial Fine Arts Exhibition at the Osmani auditorium.

Some 450 pieces of works of 152 artists from 32 countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America have been put on display in the exhibition.

The Prime Minister said the world is changing fast and passing

through turmoil. Thoughts, taste and sense of art are also changing. It has become imperative to practise, preserve and flourish the great tradition and serene values of Asia.

"Amidst strong competition in globalisation, our art and culture will have to be enriched, made acceptable and attractive. This is a big challenge of the 21st century," she said.

Expressing her optimism, Khaleda said the brilliant artist community here is capable of facing this challenge through their creative intellect and practice.

She, however, reminded that one cannot become an immortal artist by depending on others and remaining isolated from one's own soil and culture.

Quoting great English poet Keats that 'truth is beauty, beauty is truth', she said a work of art should not be

distant from truth and reality.

Asian fine arts has great prospects, she said, adding that fine arts and unique expression in the countries of the region is striving for further excellence.

She said contemporary art in the country started its journey following the eminent artist of the soil, Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin. Later, great artists like SM Sultan and Qamrul Hassan further advanced the process.

Mentioning the courageous role of artists during the War of Liberation and in all progressive democratic movements, she said such spontaneous patriotism, pro-people mindset and courage brightened their artistic outlook and enriched the domain of arts.

Recalling the 1st Asian Biennial Fine Arts exhibition inaugurated by late President Ziaur Rahman in

1981, she said since then the exhibition had deepened the cultural relations alongside the friendship among the states in Asia and beyond.

The Prime Minister hoped that the exhibition would enable the artists from home and abroad to enrich their thoughts, imaginations and creativity.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Selima Rahman, director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy Ahmed Nazir and director general of National Museum Mahmudul Huq also spoke at the function.

Khaleda distributed grand prizes among three best artists - Hiroshi Fuji of Japan, Dhali Al Mamun of Bangladesh and Shidhaghat Al Khoran of Iran. Besides, eight artists were given honorary awards.



Stranded Pakistanis stage a demonstration at Muktangan in the city yesterday demanding their repatriation.

PHOTO: STAR



Eminent lawyer Dr Kamal Hossain launches a book titled 'We've Learnt Nothing from History' by M Asghar Khan, second from right, at Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS) auditorium in the city yesterday. Prof Rounaq Jahan of Columbia University, extreme left, and former Air Vice Marshal (Retd) AK Khandker, extreme right, also seen.

HC verdict against fatwa violation of constitution Says Amini

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islami Oikya Jote (IOJ) Chairman Mufti Fazlul Haque Amini yesterday said the High Court verdict against 'fatwa' is the violation of the constitution.

He was speaking at a press conference organised by the Islami Ain Bastobayan Committee (IABC) at Mashik Modina office at Purana Paltan in the city yesterday.

Amini at the press conference announced that IABC would observe countrywide programmes including rally, activists' conference, procession and mass contact, from today to 22 and a grand rally at Paltan Maidan on March 24 protesting publication of cartoons on Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (SM) and demanding cancellation of High Court verdict against 'fatwa'.

Reading out a written statement Amini said those who are saying the arrest of Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) Chief Shaekh Abdur Rahman is a pre-planned drama, are behind all militant activities in the country.

He demanded exemplary punishment to Abdur Rahman and his followers.

Amini said a section of media is trying to link the militancy with mosque, madrasa and Islamic organisations without any proper judgement.

The media, which are trying to find out the link between JMB and the olemas, are foes of Islam and the country he said. "I also demand punishment to those media," he added.

He said there is no relation between madrasa students and Abdur Rahman.

He said "We are against interrogation of JMB chief by foreign agencies."

IOJ Senior Vice Chairman Maulana Muhiuddin Khan, Maulana Nur Hossain Kashemee, Abdul Latif Nezami, Ershad Ullah, Abdullah Washkeh, Abul Kashem, Lokman Hossain and Sheikh Mujibur Rahman were also present at the press conference.

Raise taxes for mobilisation of internal resources

Bhuiyan urges city corporations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

LGRD and Cooperatives Minister Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan has suggested the city corporations to raise taxes for mobilisation of internal resources.

"To get better services, people will have to pay more," he replied when asked whether it would create extra pressure on city dwellers.

According to Mannan Bhuiyan, Dhaka City Corporation did not increase taxes in last twelve years.

Earlier addressing as chief guest at a solid waste management conference, the LGRD minister cautioned that major cities would collapse very soon if a modern system of waste management is not taken in hand.

He said open dumping should be stopped and instead controlled dumping should be introduced to protect environment from further degradation.

He said the previous waste management system was manual and the government wants to introduce a modern system by replacing it.

Bhuiyan stressed the need for good governance in solid management through accountability and transparency.

He refuted the allegation that two new city corporations- Sylhet and Barisal- are being subjected to government negligence.

"We do not discriminate against the two cities while distributing resources," he said categorically responding to an allegation of Sylhet City Mayor Badruddin Ahmed Kamran at the conference.

The conference was told that the government has taken up a master plan for solid waste management in six city corporations.

The acute waste management problem facing all the major cities would be resolved through imple-

menting the master plan by 2015, the minister hoped.

The master plan was formally announced at the Waste Management Conference 2006 organised jointly by Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) at a city hotel.

The plan would be implemented

in three phases- immediate, mid-term and longterm.

Money for implementing the project would come from three sources, government, development partners and own resources.

Mayors of five cities Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Mizanur Rahman Minu, Sheikh Tayebur Rahman, Badruddin Ahmed Kamran and Advocate Mujibur Rahman Sarwar also spoke about their vision in waste management at the conference.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Matsushiro Horiguchi also spoke on the occasion.

Dhaka City Mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka said, "The conference is a milestone in expressing our commitment to accelerate the improvement of solid waste management in the country."

He read out an eight-point declaration on behalf of all the city mayors.

The declaration said solid waste management should be based on good governance, partnership with communities and appropriate technologies.

It said solid waste management is an essential part of urban services to protect health and environment of the city dwellers.

In the declaration, the conservancy department of DCC was renamed as Solid Waste Management Department with necessary reforms and restructuring.

The declaration also laid emphasis on establishing a network among the cities to stimulate exchange of knowledge, technology and experience for capacity building, staff training, developing supportive policy and organising solid waste conferences at suitable intervals in different cities.

CPB founding anniversary today

BDNEWS, Dhaka

The Communist Party of Bangladesh will observe its 58th founding anniversary today.

CPB will hold discussion as part of its countrywide programme at its central office at Purana Paltan on the occasion.

The party was founded on March 6, 1948 as the Communist Party of Pakistan. The main strength and activity of the newly constituted party was in the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

With the emergence of Bangladesh as an independent state in 1971, the party took its nomenclature as Communist Party of Bangladesh with comrade Moni Singh as its president.

It played a vital role in the 1969 mass upsurge and also during the nationwide upheaval and the non-co-operation movement of 1971.

The CPB actively participated in the armed struggle for liberation of Bangladesh in 1971. A 'Special Guerilla Force' under the direct command of CPB-NAP-BSU fought against the Pakistani occupation army.

Moni Singh, the former president of CPB, was elected a member of the Advisory Council of the Provisional Government of Bangladesh.

CPB is also actively fighting against the present four-party alliance to bring about an end to what they said is the misrule of BNP-Jamaat alliance government.

1207 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,207 people on various charges from different parts of the country in last 24 hours ending at 6:00am yesterday.

During the drive, the law-enforcers also recovered five firearms, 15 bullets and four explosives, said an official handout.

SSKOP Mar 8 programme postponed

BSS, Dhaka

Leaders of Sangbadik Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (SSKOP) in a joint statement yesterday announced the postponement of its March 8 programme as the government has announced 40 percent Dearness Allowance (DA) through a gazette notification.

The leaders demanded immediate implementation of the 40 percent DA in all newspapers and news agencies.

They also urged the government to take action against the owners of the newspapers, who violate the law in implementing the 40 percent DA.

CAG SUBMITS AUDIT REPORTS TO PRESIDENT 'Regular audits a must for financial discipline of govt'

UNB, Dhaka

President Iajuddin Ahmed yesterday stressed the imperative of regular audits for ensuring financial discipline of the government.

"The role of audit report is very important as transparency and accountability are being established in different sectors of the country," he said when Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Asif Ali submitted several audit reports to the President at Bangabhaban.

The CAG presented five performance audit reports, two issue-based audit reports, 12 special and nine annual audit reports.

According to a report, the format of audit report has been recast to make audit modern and timely.

Measures have also been taken to get rid of the traditional audit.

Meanwhile, two audit manuals and four audit guidelines have been issued.

The Audit Office will be shifted to the new audit building in June, the report said, adding that work on audit training academy will be completed by December this year.

Iajuddin thanked the CAG and all concerned for timely submission of the audit reports.

Secretary to the President AM Moniruzzaman Khan, Military Secretary to the President Maj Gen ANM Muniruzzaman and Press Secretary to the President M Mokhlesur Rahman Chowdhury were present on the occasion.



PHOTO: STAR

Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Choudhury speaks at a CPD workshop on 'Corporate governance-Are we on the right track and corporate financial reporting' at a city hotel yesterday.