

Dhaka Day by Day

On the Edge of Existence

By Fayza Haq

An exhibition of Matin Talukdar's ceramics and Chinese-style watercolour was recently held at the USSR Cultural Centre. Thirty ceramic pieces and 45 paintings were on display.

There is a vast scope for doing ceramic work in the country. Instead artists end up supervising the making of cups and saucers for commercial purposes in the factories," says Matin.

It would be a shame if skill that is learnt abroad, as in the case of Matin, is not properly utilised and appreciated in the country. As it is even artists who are appreciated at home go abroad and settle down there so that the nation loses a prized possession.

The ceramic glaze technique that the artist has learnt during his four-year stay in Beijing is not easily found in Bangladesh. The glaze is prepared by grinding stone and mixing it with water. This is applied with spray machine or brushstrokes," says Matin. "The firing gets the glaze. Stoneware is fired at 1200 degrees Centigrade and this is done in a kiln." A kiln costs two lakh Takas and it is impossible for the artist, who is just a lecturer in a local college, to afford this.

Making items like vases, dishes and figures like lions, cats and fish is easy enough for Matin. It is the burning in the kiln that is an exorbitant affair.

It is three years since he has returned from Beijing but he has not been able to do any work because of lack of financial support. As a lecturer at the Rajshahi Art College he lacks the machinery and instruments to carry out creative work. The students who work under him can only do sketches and work on clay. They cannot reach the final stage. "There is no way to survive in ceramics but to go in for commercial work," comments Matin, who made only a limited sale at his recent exhibition at the USSR Cultural Centre, but had much more success in an earlier display in Gulshan.

"Sometimes I feel like giving it all up and going abroad to make a living, even if it is as a labourer,"

Matin confesses.

His monthly salary is not paid regularly. The artist and his family are supported by money given by elders in the clan. "But I do not deny that I get a considerable amount of respect for being a teacher." Yet who can live on abstractions alone? Everyone longs for the tangible. The only way he dreams of surviving is by possibly getting a donation and starting a small project of his own. Donations, however, are not easy to get by.

It does not take him long to do the pieces. The fish took four days, the lions seven, and the cat only a day. The beautifully glazed vases in the exhibit were done during a period of three months when he was assigned to a factory in Beijing.

Dwelling on his paintings Matin says, "You cannot put layers of paints as you do in Bangladesh. In China you have to finish in one wash. The special paper that is used smudges intensely."

He also learnt new techniques of balance of composition. The writing in Chinese on the painting itself is an art. Matin learnt the Chinese language for a year. "There is a great softness in the use of colours in the Chinese method and this had to be mastered over a period of time," he informs. Again, subjects such as prawns and baby birds are depicted large. Flowers and leaves too are shown as enormous.

The artist has been trying to paint Bangladeshi subjects in the Chinese style. Thus he has shown village scenes, tigers, cranes and bamboo in a novel way. At times he has combined subjects from photographs with settings in books and added a dash of his own imagination.

In cases of young and talented artists like Matin both the government and prosperous commercial houses should be generous in their support and patronage. This would make them feel wanted and stop them from rushing to rescue points abroad.



A couple of exquisite ceramics on display at the Soviet Cultural Centre. —Star Photo



Four persons were killed and ten others injured in a collision between a microbus and a minibus near City Corporation Office at Uttara Saturday (story page-1) —Star Photo

Dhaka elected FAO body chairman

Dr. Akbar Ali Khan, Economic Minister at Bangladesh Embassy in Washington D. C., has been unanimously elected Chairman of the Consultative Committee on Surplus Disposal of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), reports UNB.

Anders Lundin, Commercial Counsellor of Sweden in USA, was elected Vice-Chairman of the committee.

This special committee was established by FAO of the United Nations in 1954.

The main responsibility of the sub-committee is to assess the impact of food assistance

Weather

Rain likely

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or thundershower was recorded at a few places over Dhaka division and at some places over Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi divisions on Saturday, Meteorological department says.

Similar rainfall is likely at a few places over Dhaka and Rajshahi divisions and the regions of Jessore, Khulna, Barisal, Comilla and Sylhet.

Met Office has forecast dry weather elsewhere till Monday morning. The night temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged.

Outlook for subsequent two days: dry weather expected.

Extended outlook for another five days: no marked change.

On Saturday the night temperature rose by one to four degree Celsius at places over Bangladesh. The night temperature was above normal by two to seven degree Celsius from place to place. The lowest temperature 13 degree Celsius -- was recorded in Dinajpur.

On Saturday the westerly lying over Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal and adjoining areas of Bangladesh become more marked and its associated trough extended to Assam across central part of Bangladesh the seasonal low lay over south Bay Met Office said.

Temperature and humidity recorded in important cities and towns of the country on Saturday were:

Cities/Towns	temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	max	min	9am	6pm
Dhaka	27.6	19.4	78	72
Chittagong	28.0	17.6	74	75
Rajshahi	28.4	14.5	86	63
Khulna	29.8	19.2	90	72
Sylhet	31.8	16.3	96	86
Jessore	29.0	18.0		
Barisal	27.6	19.4	97	76
Dinajpur	27.0	13.0	88	80

Minimum temperature recorded in major cities of the region on Saturday were:

New Delhi	08 degree celsius
Karachi	15 degree celsius
Hong Kong	12 degree celsius
Bangkok	21 degree celsius
Singapore	24 degree celsius
Colombo	21 degree celsius
Beijing	(-05) degree celsius

TV Sunday

- 5-00 Opening and recitations from the Holy Quran.
- 5-15 Recitations from the Bible.
- 5-20 News in Bengali.
- 5-30 Hashi Khushi : Children's programme.
- 5-55 Educational programme.
- 6-20 Sports programme.
- 7-05 Tagore songs.
- 8-00 News in Bengali.
- 8-30 Sampratik: Current affairs.
- 9-00 Drama serial: Against the wind.
- 10-00 News in English.
- 10-30 Raag-rang: Classical music.
- 11-30 News in Bengali.

10.p.c DA for workers demanded

By Staff Correspondent

National Revolutionary Front nominee for the Dhaka-4 (Dinara) constituency Mr. Abul Hossain, a worker of Karim Jute Mill, Demra has demanded 10 per cent dearness allowance for all workers.

Mr. Abul Hossain made this demand in an electoral meeting at Demra on Friday.

He said, government had created a disparity between the employees and workers by granting dearness allowance

'Qamrul's work inspires people'

Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed Saturday paid tributes to the unblemished memory of great artist Qamrul Hasan, reports ISS.

In a message on the occasion of the third death anniversary of the artist, the Acting President said this fearless genius was the voice against misdeeds, injustice and autocracy.

Justice Shahabuddin said the late artist, who had always uncompromisingly stuck to principles, ethics and aesthet-

ics, projected rural Bangladesh to the outside world through his creative art.

His bold brush inspired the people to rise against all kinds of indecency and falsehood and his artworks had inflamed the spirit of the freedom fighters during the country's liberation war, the Acting President said.

Qamrul Hasan had actively participated in the mass movement till the last day of his life, he said adding, let the ideals of this celebrated artist inspire us.

Firearms, bombs freely used JCD-BCL workers clash: 20 injured

Rival students of Tejgaon College clashed with firearms, bombs and sticks Saturday injuring at least 20, three with bullet, reports UNB.

Police and hospital sources said eight students were admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital. Among them, Aslam and Dipu, identified as Chhatra League (H-A) workers, sustained bullet wounds.

Hospital sources stated as bad the condition of Aslam, a 2nd-year student. He suffered bullet wounds on his back.

The cause of clash, which spread violence to the entire Farmgate area, could not be known immediately.

Chhatra League sources claimed activists of pro-BNP Jafayatullah Chhatra Dal attacked their students sud-

denly. Firearms and sticks were used and several crackers exploded during the skirmishes.

Witnesses said a group of students also went on a rampage outside the college campus and damaged about a dozen auto-rickshaws and other vehicles at Farmgate at about 10-30 am.

A brief clash also occurred between students and auto-rickshaw workers who were seen equipped with staves and iron rods.

Police rushed to the scene and resorted to mild baton-charge to clear the area.

A group of students of the college, previously secluded from campus politics, brought out a procession in the Farmgate area to protest the firing.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Succor
- 5 Short sleep
- 8 Male sheep
- 12 Above
- 13 Artificial language
- 14 Lamb's pen name
- 15 River in Siberia
- 16 Obtained
- 17 Fiber plant
- 18 Saturated
- 20 Sewage
- 22 Temporary bed
- 23 Greek letter
- 24 Tendons
- 27 Hold back
- 31 Exit
- 32 Equality
- 33 Flower parts
- 37 Comedy
- 40 Decay
- 41 Hurry

42 Affirm, assert

45 Bear witness

49 Hold on property

50 Decay

52 Goddess of discord

53 —

54 Netherlands commune

55 TV's Moreno

56 Despoils

57 Mournful

58 Prophet

DOWN

- 1 Maintain possession of
- 2 Without end
- 3 Unappreciated
- 4 Frolic
- 5 "Harlem" —
- 6 Fuss
- 7 Author Beatrix
- 8 Heretic
- 9 Landed
- 10 Small amount
- 11 District in

Answer to Previous Puzzle

PLEAD BAITS
ROAMER EUROPE
ATTU AISLE RA
RAH OWNED PER
ET SPENT PLAN
ROLLERS QUIDS
EONS BLUE
SPATS GLADDEN
LASS TRADE DO
ALT TRIVE PIT
ILY TEETH MATE
NOVELS BLATED
REELS RATED

Germany
19 Farm animal
21 Paris, in
24 Western
25 Anger
26 Openwork fabric
28 Suitable
29 Rodent
30 Aird
34 Places for combat
35 Ship's record
37 Talked idly
38 Wheel track
39 Goes in
42 Word of sorrow
43 Boundary
44 Fasting period
46 Great Lake
47 Location
48 Former Russian ruler
51 Harem room

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