

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Festival of songs for 'moments of need'

By S. Bant

One evening last week, the strains of "Hingshae Unmotto Prithivi" wafted through the cool air in and around the Shilpakala Academy. Tagore's description of a world mad with hatred and his prayer for peace never seemed more relevant. This relevance was the theme of the Third National Rabindra Music Festival.

"Like it or not," reminded one speaker, "Tagore permeates the lives of all Bengalis." The language which gave birth to his poetry is itself now circumscribed and even defined by his works. Outside the sub-continent, those who have heard of the Bengali language often know of its existence because of Tagore.

At home, there is hardly an occasion or a mood to which the poet has not addressed himself. Even in this age of New Kids on the Block and film music, Bengalis turn to Tagore in moment of need. Yet why is he still not the national poet in the one country which has the absolute right to recognize him as its own?

Distinguished singer Kalim Sharafi lamented this saying that it was possibly a deliberate oversight in our cultural scene. Objectively, from a literary viewpoint, and in scope and appeal, Tagore is the single largest talent this land has produced. A possible reason for the lack of official national recognition was hinted at by Mr. Shawkat Osman. "A name of Sanskrit rather than Arabic origin provokes an immediate reaction within most of us," he insisted.



Maleka Azim Khan rendering a Tagore song at the festival.

This tendency may point to a larger complex in the cultural psyche of the nation. The wish to have a Muslim as the national poet overrides the necessity to choose the most influential and talented candidate. That religion should not be a factor in such a choice is obviously an attitude that has yet to be accepted.

The Tagore festival, which lasted three days, is a laudable effort simple because it celebrates a man to whose achievements Bangladesh can justly lay claim. The quality of the singing was not remarkable, except for the odd young 'talent' or well-loved professional. But the very existence of such a gathering is heartening.

The organizers would do well, however, to present only the cream of the musical crop. The auditorium, nearly full at the start of the programme, gradually emptied. People sauntered disinterestedly in and out of the doors. If the performers had all delivered the goods, a more sustained audience interest could have been won. Once the quality of a show is compromised, it is difficult to lure back viewers the following year, despite a well-meant and earnest effort.

On the inaugural evening of the festival, Mr. Osman provided some comic relief. "There was one good thing about the British Raj," he joked, "Thanks to them, we can read Shakespeare in the original." In a festival dedicated to the "Shakespeare of Asia", the words reminded us of our priceless heritage.

Token strike in newspapers tomorrow

The journalists, press workers and general employees of the newspaper industry Saturday expressed grave concern over the delay in announcing the Wage Board award, reports BSS.

The leaders of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ), Dhaka Union of Journalists (DUJ), Newspaper Press Workers Federation and Employees Federation held a joint meeting with BFUJ President Rezauddin Ahmed in the chair.

The meeting viewed with anguish that despite the clear provision under Section-11 of the newspaper services condition act, the government did not announce the award within 30 days from the date of submission of Wage Board decision.

To protest the government failure to announce the Wage Board award the three federations and the DUJ have decided to observe four hours token strike from 10 am on Monday.

The meeting also decided to hold a protest rally at the National Press Club at 11 am the same day and will march towards President Secretariat to press their demand.

Plea to resume publication of Dainik Barta

By Staff Correspondent

Acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islam Abbas Ali Khan on Friday issued a statement urging the government to resume the publication of Dainik Barta, a Rajshahi based daily, says a press release.

The statement said the journalists of the daily became jobless as it was closed down.

Nezam-e-Islam to strengthen Army

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Nezam-e-Islam Party has announced its election manifesto on Saturday.

The party said if voted to power it would establish a democratic state based on Islamic principles of social justice. Islam will be the state religion of the country, the party manifesto said.

It said, the party would work for ensuring the basic needs of the people.

Nezam-e-Islam Party will ensure rights of the women in line with the teachings of the Quran and the Sunnah, it said.

The party would strengthen the Army. It would take steps to strengthen fraternal relations among Muslim countries, the manifesto said.

PID media centre at Sheraton

Press Information Department (PID) will set up a media centre at Dhaka Sheraton Hotel to facilitate visiting journalists who will stay at the hotel to cover the Parliamentary elections, according to a press release.

The media centre will be in operation round the clock from February 23 to March 2 during which PID will provide all professional help and facilities to the journalists.

Dhaka Sheraton will provide hourly shuttle coach service to the visiting journalists on a complimentary basis to and from the National Press Club.

APSU assistance sought

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Abhibhaba Samity on Saturday urged the examination committee to take security measures in the medical college admission test on February 15.

The samity also urged the All-Party Students Union (APSU) to assist so that the examination can be held without disruption, says a press release.



- 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.



The All-Party Students Unity brought out a procession in city on Saturday in support of lathi rally today (Sunday) seeking shifting of former President HM Ershad to Central Jail.

Plea to confiscate Ershad's property

By Staff Correspondent

All-party Students Unity (APSU) and Bangladesh Nagorik Committee in a joint meeting on Saturday called for confiscating the property and illegal money of deposed President Ershad and his associates to ensure free and fair polls.

The meeting demanded cancellation of the candidatures of Ershad and his ministers who were arrested or of those against whom warrants were issued. It also demanded early trial of Ershad.

Leaders of APSU and Nagorik Committee attending the meeting said that the illegal money, accumulated by corrupt politicians, businessmen and bureaucrats during Ershad's autocratic regime, had been creating imbalance in the election

Ahmed. They also called for sending back the US Ambassador.

The meeting termed the agreement on the Haripur Oilfield with Schmitzer as anti-people and demanded its immediate cancellation.

The meeting was attended, among others, by Prof. Khan Sarwar Murshed, Architect Mazharul Islam, Justice K.M. Sobhan, Engineer Sheikh Mohammad Shahidullah and Nurur Rahman of Nagorik Committee and Fazul Huq Milon, Asim Kumar Ukil, Nasirudozza, Bazlur Rashid Firoz, Ataur Rahman and Abdus Saitar Khan of APSU.

Workshop on flood control begins

A 6 day workshop on the Second Small Scale Flood Control, Drainage and Irrigation (SSFDI) Project was opened here Saturday at a local hotel, reports BSS.

Mr S.M Zakatul Alam, Chairman Bangladesh Water Development Board inaugurated the workshop which is being held under the joint auspices of Water Development Board (WDB) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), a press release said.

The inaugural session was addressed among others by Dr. I.R. Khan, and Mr. Herb Wiebe of CIDA, Mr. Md Abdul Majid Khan, Chief Engineer, WDB, Mr. Arifur Rahman Khan, Member WDB, Mr. Steven E. Rayfield, First Secretary, Canadian High Commission, Mr. Saeed A. Rana, Water Resources Adviser, World Bank, Mr. Stephen Gibbons, Counselor and Head of Aid, Canadian High Commission.

Strike in Suhrawardy Hospital to continue

By Staff Correspondent

Action Committee of the Suhrawardy Hospital employees took a decision at a meeting Saturday to continue their strike on demanding the removal of Project Director Dr. Jahanara Rabbat, a Press release said.

The meeting organised by the Unit of Class III and Class IV Government Employees Associations of the Suhrawardy Hospital also demanded to the concerned authority to cancel the transfer order of Dr. Mahmudur Rahman.

Md. Nazim Uddin, President of the Class III Employees Unit, presided over the meeting held in the hospital compound.

The committee also demanded restoration of normalcy in the hospital by removing the Project Director.

Gonoshyastha affairs to be probed

The government has constituted a five-member inquiry committee to enquire into allegations against various unlawful activities of Gonoshyastha Kendro or Gonoshyastha Trust, Savar and voluntary organisation Bangladesh Association for Voluntary Sterilisation (BAVS), according to an official handout in Dhaka on Saturday, reports BSS.

The committee, headed by consultant physician of Bangladesh Armed Forces Major General Anis Wayez, would submit its report with specific recommendations on the matter within a month to the government.

Citizens committee demands shifting of Ershad

By Staff Correspondent

Bangladesh Citizens committee has demanded immediate transfer of former President Ershad to central jail.

The committee in a statement on Saturday said to keep Ershad in a luxurious villa at people's expense was unreasonable as there were specific charges against him.

The committee demanded expulsion of US Ambassador William B Milam. It said the US Ambassador had interfered in the internal affairs of Bangladesh violating diplomatic norms.

JP workers asked to launch movement

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Shechhasabak Party Central Committee has ordered its all units to hold meetings and processions to press the demand of release of Ershad and Shah Moazzem, a press release said.

A meeting of the committee held Friday under the Chairmanship of Akhtar Hossain Chowdhury, was addressed, among others, by Ezzaz Ahmed, General Secretary of the party, Rouf Siddiq, Organising Secretary, Shamsul Huda Mamun, Joint Secretary, Masudul Alam, Joint General Secretary and Raddul Chowdhury.

Launch owners' plea for fuel at fair prices

By Staff Correspondent

Launch Owners Association Bangladesh, Thursday urged the government to ensure adequate supply of fuel oil at fair prices for uninterrupted plying of launches in different waterways of the country.

The Association alleged that the launch owners were not getting required supply of fuel oil to operate in different river routes causing disruption in carrying passengers and cargoes.

The Association claimed that 70 per cent of the country's total passengers travelled by waterways.

Radio to broadcast parties statements from 7 pm

Radio Bangladesh has made arrangements to broadcast election statements of different political parties on the occasion of the forthcoming parliamentary polls from 7 pm, a National Broadcasting Authority Press release said in Dhaka on Saturday in the city, reports BSS.

PROGRAMME FPAB workshop

The annual project development workshop of the Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) will be held at the auditorium of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), Joydebpur from tomorrow (Monday), reports BSS.

Presidential Adviser Alamgir M A Kabir will inaugurate the three day workshop that will formulate new project proposals on the basis of analysis of on going projects.

A press release of the association said that the workshop will be attended among others by presidents and secretaries of districts branches of the FPAB, volunteers, project officials and field officers.

The workshop will conclude on Feb 13.

Cancer society meet

The annual general meeting of the Bangladesh Cancer Societies (BCS) will be held at 9 a.m on March 8, at the auditorium of the BIRDEM, in the city, reports BSS.

The meeting will also elect the executive committee of the society. Health Adviser Prof M A Mazed is expected to be the chief guest at the inaugural session of the meeting.

Discussion on role of newspapers

Bangladesh Press Council is holding discussion on the role and responsibility of newspapers during transition to democracy today (Sunday) at 10 a.m at the Jatiya Press Club, reports BSS.

Prof. Moniruzzaman Miah, Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University will be the chief guest at the function which will be presided over by the Chairman of the Press Council, Justice Ruhul Islam.

Eminent journalists, lawyers, educationists and the intellectuals will take part in the discussion.

BTV employees continue strike

BY Staff Correspondent

The Third and Fourth Class employees of Bangladesh Television (BTV) continued their strike for the third consecutive day on Saturday demanding, among others, filling the

'Basanta Mela' in Khulna begins February 14

The Design Centre of Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) has organised a week-long Basanta Mela (Spring Fair) in Khulna Zilla School field with effect from first Falgoun (February 14), said a press release.

Arrangements for 250 stalls have been made in this connection. It is expected that more than 500 artisans from remote corners of Khulna division and other regions will participate in the Mela with their items.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- 1 Search
- 5 Fuss
- 8 Brad
- 12 Wife of Zeus
- 13 Bin
- 14 Fairy-tale opener
- 15 Bedouin
- 16 Mimic
- 17 Slitshonean
- 18 Limb
- 20 Negligent
- 22 At home
- 23 Reveal
- 24 Vest through
- 27 Surfeit
- 31 Baseball stat
- 32 Girl's name
- 33 To be indebted to
- 34 Strepand
- 36 Vegetable

DOWN

- 1 Bivalve mollusk
- 2 "From — to Eternity"
- 3 Actor West
- 4 Hare
- 5 Winglike
- 6 Plunge
- 7 Manages
- 8 Capital of New Caledonia
- 9 One opposed
- 10 Cross
- 11 Decreased
- 19 — garde
- 21 Emerald Isle
- 23 Bundles
- 24 Dress border
- 25 Native metal
- 26 — Donaldson
- 27 Stenderest
- 28 Pedal digit
- 29 Female sheep
- 30 Deposit
- 32 Great Lake
- 35 Mountain nymphs
- 36 Cake mix
- 38 Behold!
- 39 inclined roadway
- 40 Silkworm
- 41 Depression
- 42 Wire nail
- 43 Baked clay
- 44 Conduct
- 45 Sea eagles
- 48 Devoured

Answer to Previous Puzzle

MEDAL TASTE  
REMOTE OWLETS  
AT GETAWAY HE  
ITS STRAY ANT  
SLEW EAR ERIE  
EERIER DEVICE  
PET WEE  
PEELED RENTED  
LAND ETA STAR  
ART SPEND ASE  
IN SPONGES IS  
DENIES ELUDES  
DANTE SENIOR



Artistes of Bibartan Sangkritik Goshi rendering songs at the Central Shaheed Minar on Saturday in commemoration of the 1952 language martyrs.