

Dhaka Day by Day

The Art of Silence

by Sabah Chowdhury

Blue lights focussed on the arms and legs only, as the artist stood silently on the stage. The stage and the auditorium as well as dark as the evening crowd waited for the next move. The limbs of the man on the stage began to tell



Mime Zakir Hossain trying to make a point on the stage.

a story without any words. As the lights grew bright, the pantomime progressed, and the Guide House evening crowd were treated to a delightful evening of the art of silence.

Organised on the 29th January, by a humanitarian organisation called Friends of Bangladesh (which has its parent society in the UK), it was their first charity show in Bangladesh. The funds of the show will be utilised for the benefit of orphans, disabled, children and distressed women.

The items were titled The Restless Boy, The Unhealthy Lifter, Wretched Voter, In Love, This is Life, Soccer Hooligan, Death and Theft. The first piece was a serious one, but the show moved on to lighter comic pieces to the delight of the audience.

Talking to Star, the performer Md. Zakir Hossain provided insight into his art and commitment. A practising lawyer, he performs mime for personal interest and satisfaction.

Asked as to how he manages to find time out of his busy schedule to practice and perform, he replied, "It is not easy to combine law with mime, but if there is a will, there is a way." An amateur, he thinks he should be able to perform even better.

Zakir is inspired by pioneers of this field in Bangladesh like Partho Mojumdar, Kazi Moshurul Huda and others.

As a performing art, mime has a bright future in Bangladesh, both from the point of view of its interest among the viewers as well as people performing, he said.

Sadly enough, although there is so much interest and enthusiasm, the scope for its development is limited in our country. The main reason being absence of any facility for training of those interested.

There should be frequent workshops to train newcomers, as organisational training is totally absent in our country. Those mostly interested are young University students, both boys and girls, said Zakir. And they are trying to learn this art at their own interest and initiative. There is a need for professional training, informed the promising mime.



Qamrul's death anniversary today

By Staff Correspondent

Different socio-cultural organisations throughout Bangladesh have chalked out elaborate programmes to observe today (Saturday) the third death anniversary of celebrated painter Qamrul Hassan with due solemnity.

On the occasion, the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation and the Institute of Arts and Crafts have arranged discussion meetings on the life of Hassan, who is rated next to Zainul Abedin in the field of painting.

Several organisations in three other metropolitan cities of Chittagong, Khulna and Rajshahi will also observe the death anniversary of the painter.

Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh Television will put up special programmes to highlight the achievements of Qamrul Hassan, who was associated with the country's democratic movements throughout his life.

Fire Brigade awaits modernisation Too many blazes, too few fighters

By Shahzad Monzu

Fire Service and Civil Defence Department lacks the logistic support necessary for effectively fighting a blaze or to meet the exigencies when a serious accident occurs.

The department is dreadfully short of modern equipment and manpower.

A fleet of 50 ambulances on which 116 fire stations largely depend are too inadequate to combat high incidence of fire.

Moreover, most of these vehicles are almost spent since they have outlived their life long ago. Some of them are not in working condition.

There are only 116 fire stations including nine river fire stations in the country. There are three districts without any fire station. Fire stations are yet to be set up in almost all upazilas.

The fire stations have only 21 special vehicles to fight fire in multistorey buildings. They have only 106 water lorries, 127 push cars, 246 pumps and other instruments.

Most of the firefighting instruments including fire-floats which are used in river fire stations are outdated and now unfit for use, according to a Fire Brigade source.

Among the Fire Brigade strength of 4,514 men only 2,194 are firemen who come to the rescue of people from fire hazards. The ratio of fire fighters for 11 crore people is too small. The number of fire-fighters should be increased three times its present strength according to a Fire Brigade source.

Firemen get 24 hours' rest after 48 hours' work. It is alleged that it is the violation of international labour law.

According to a fire brigade source, three ambulances are a must for each divisional and district headquarters.

From the statistics available for the last three years it appears that 4,535 fire incidents take place annually. A fire brigade source said most of these fire incidents are the result of negligence on the part of people and such incidents can be averted if a little bit of civic sense is cultivated.

Fire accidents are generally attributed to open cooker, cigarette butt, chemical reaction, cracker blasts and electric short-circuits etc.

It is vital that multi-storey buildings contain emergency exits or emergency lifts which can operate automatically when the electric supply fails.

Another official said Fire Brigade cannot properly utilize the modern equipment it has, for they are to operate them in

crowded places like market with narrow passage, multi-storey buildings and industrial spots where it is time-consuming and very difficult to rescue life and property.

Many countries including India have laws under which fire service approval is required before erecting any building, construction of market place or setting up industries. But such prior approval is not required in Bangladesh under the Building Act of 1989. India amended this act in 1986.

Specialists suggest that inexpensive safety measures such as underground water reserve, fire-breakers and temperature indicators should be there in every building in order to avoid repetition of

such a tragic incident as the big fire at the Saraka garment factory in December, 1990 which claimed a toll of 25 lives.

Specialists also suggest that every industry needs fire-fighting equipment including smoke detectors, hydrant sprinklers and high velocity sprays to deal with fire hazards.



Poetess Sufia Kamal addressing the National Poetry Festival on its first day in city on Friday. Also seen on the dais are Faiz Ahmed and Shamsur Rahman. —Star photo

Poets urged to cleanse society

By Staff Correspondent

Begum Sufia Kamal Friday called upon the poets to work unitedly with rest of the population to cleanse the society of the ills that got rooted during the past autocratic rule, reports BSS.

While paying tributes to the poets for their relentless and uncompromising struggle against the authoritarian rule, Begum Sufia Kamal said though autocracy had been removed from the centre of the stage, its vestiges still continued to cause concern to those who cherished freedom, democracy and wellbeing of the masses.

Begum Sufia Kamal was inaugurating the fifth poetry festival at the road-crossing near the TSC, the venue of the four previous festivals organised by Jatiya Kabita Parishad. The inaugural session of the two-day festival was presided over by the Parishad Chief poet Shamsur Rahman.

The theme of this year's festival was "poetry for democracy". The inaugural session was addressed, among others, by poet Nirmalendu Goon, General Secretary of the Parishad and poet Faiz Ahmed, Convener of the festival committee. Poet Mohan Raihan read out the declaration of the festival.

One minute's silence was observed at the outset to pay respects to those who sacrificed their lives during anti-autocracy movement and those prominent personalities who had passed away after the last festival.

Begum Sufia Kamal said the nation was now passing through a critical juncture. She said the poets had role to play this to materialise the hopes and aspiration of the masses for a decent living. She was optimistic that the poets would

work with likeminded people to ensure justice, fairplay and peace in the society and guarantee security of all including

Poet Shamsur Rahman said, poets are for democracy because its absence denies the people their basic rights and the way to creativity. "We are against autocracy for we believe in democracy and only in a democratic atmosphere, we can compose poems, paint pictures and sign songs freely, he observed.

Mr. Shamsur Rahman said the mass upsurge that forced the collapse of autocracy had added a new dimension to the poetry festival. He said keeping that spirit in mind "poetry for democracy" was selected as the slogan of the festival.

The Parishad President warned that like in the past, the poets would again rise if any evil force attempted to silence peoples' voice. We would continue to remain vocal against autocracy, communalism and terrorism, he added.

Faiz Ahmed expressed happiness of the parishad members for being associated with the masses in detroning the autocratic rule. He said, we are also thankful to the people for the ovation they have given to the poets for their contributions to the anti-autocratic movement. The victory against autocracy has revived and revitalised self consciousness of the poets, he added.

Faiz Mohan Raihan said the fifth poetry festival was unique because this was for the first time, the festival was taking place in an atmosphere free from autocracy. He said, we all including the poets should work such a way that the nation was never chained by autocrats.

After the inaugural session, a procession was brought out.

'Hahnemann diagnosed AIDS'

By Staff Correspondent

A noted homeopath Dr. Khondkar Manzoor Elahi has disclosed it was Dr. Samuel Hahnemann first who had diagnosed the dreaded Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) 200 years ago.

While speaking at a largely-attended biennial conference of the Mymensingh branch of the Homeo Peshajibi Samity at Mymensingh town, he said the killer disease was then identified as 'Mised Miasm'. Homeopathy can cure the disease, he claimed.

A Press release issued in Dhaka on Friday said the grand conference was attended by the Secretary-General of the Samity Dr. Abdur Razzak Talukder as chief guest while Dr. Shahjahan Kamal, President of the Samity and Dr. Elahi attended it as special guests.

Dr. Muslehuddin, Dr. Nazrul Islam, Dr. Birendra Chandra Barman, Professor Dr. Golam Mostafa Hossain Biswas, Dr. Sultan Ahmed Bhuiyan, Dr. Abdur Rahman, Dr. Subal Sarker, Dr. Ratan Kumar Dey and student leader Gazi Shanker Majumder. The conference was presided over by Dr. Lutfun Nahar Anam.

Dr. Elahi attended it as special guests.

OCAB meet with President postponed

By Staff Correspondent

The scheduled meeting of the Overseas Correspondents Association of Bangladesh (OCAB) with Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed at the President's Secretariat today (Saturday) was postponed, according to OCAB sources.

The OCAB cited unavoidable circumstances as the reason for the postponement of the meeting.

Rule on Ctg University

By Supreme Court Correspondent

Upon a writ petition filed by Mr. Md. Abul Kalam Nuruddin, a student of physics of M.Sc. final year of the Chittagong University a Division Bench comprising Mr. Justice Md. Abdul Jalil and Mr. Justice Kazi Shafiquddin issued a Rule Nisi upon Chittagong University and nine others to show cause as to why the respondent No. 1-3 to show cause as to why they shall not be restrained from proceeding in pursuance, to the show cause notice dated 8.1.1991 (Annexure-II) issued by the respondent No. 3 until the Enquiry Commission set up by the Government for the same purpose submits its report as being infringement of the fundamental right of the petitioner guaranteed by Article 31 and 35(a) of the Constitution; pending disposal of the Rule the Hon'ble Court was pleased to stay the operation of the impugned order (Annexure-II) and proceeding before the Board of Residence, Health and Discipline.

Mr. Abdur Razzak moved the petition.

Concern over violation of code of conduct

By Staff Correspondent

The Central Committee of the Coordination Council of the Bar Associations, Bangladesh, Friday called upon the political leaders of all parties and the people of country to exercise vigil so that none could create impediments in the way of holding free and impartial elections either through ill-gotten money or illegal arms, reports BSS.

The call was given at the extended meeting of the Central Committee of the Coordination Council of the Bar Associations, Bangladesh, held at the south hall of the Supreme Court Bar Association.

Presided over by Shamsul Huq Chowdhury, Convener of the Coordination Council the meeting was addressed among others, by Dr. Kamal Hossain, President, Supreme Court Bar, Altaf Hussain, President, Dhaka Bar Association, Presidents of

different Bar Associations of the country, Attorney General Aminul Huq, and Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed.

The meeting, in a resolution, expressed concern at the violation of the code of election, application of force, incidents of clashes, murder and acts of violence by the participants of the February 27 general elections. The meeting, made a fervent appeal to all parties, their leaders and the people of the country to exercise tolerance and maintain decorum for consolidating the foundation of democracy in the country.

It expressed anxiety over the price spiral of essentials in the wake of the Gulf war and centering on the political situation and urged the government to take legal steps against the hoarders and profiteers

Democratic league leader expelled

By Staff Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Feb 1: Chittagong City Chapter of Democratic League expelled its leader Nurul Absar Chowdhury for violating party directives and tarnishing the image of the Six-Party Alliance, a D.L. press release said Saturday, reports BSS.

Nurul Absar Chowdhury, took nomination from Islami Oikya Front for contesting in the coming parliamentary elections, the press release added.

Body recovered

By Staff Correspondent

Mirpur Police Thursday recovered body of a youngman found hanging from the ceiling of his residence with a jute cord, reports UNB.

Babu (25), a garments industry employee and resident of Mirpur Section-7, allegedly committed suicide.

Police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for autopsy while a case of unnatural death has been filed with Mirpur Police in this connection.

CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Word of sorrow
- Meadow
- Goat to activity
- Old French coin
- Leather strap
- Impolite
- Insect egg
- Distilling; unwilling
- Equally
- Japan ender
- Arrow poison
- Joints
- Snakes
- The Wizard of —
- Fairy in "The Tempest"
- Swiss river
- House
- Addition
- Exists
- Slenderer

DOWN

- Arabian garment
- Unit of Bulgarian
- Faroe Islands
- Whirlwind
- Snow runner
- Poetry
- Father
- Locomotive operator
- Classifies
- Comfort
- The self
- That thing
- Inscription; motto
- Sea eagle
- Abrasive instrument
- Great Lake
- Football part
- Pekoe and coloring
- Auction
- Beverage
- Bill Murray film
- Shoshonean
- Indians
- Fishing parts
- Loosely woven cotton
- Negative
- Go by water
- Gaelic
- Providence's st.
- Everybody's uncle
- Correct
- Be defeated
- Condescending look
- DOE
- Denies; renounces
- Dress protectors
- Concerning
- Near
- Strong winds
- Leak through
- Monster
- Strain
- Stalemate
- Period of time
- Nothing
- River in Scotland
- Note of scale

Answer to Previous Puzzle

AIDES STOLE
SCRAPE RIPENS
ET DIED SNAP
AIM CRISP AMA
TOES SPORTER
SNAKE SPARKLE
NIPS SMEE
MISTOOK SLEEPS
OD SCRIM SPAT
TEE HELOT SNA
EARL LORE AI
SLIEST SOLEMN
SNEER ETANA

Ershad's release demanded

By Staff Correspondent

Jatiya Mahila Party on Friday demanded immediate release of the ousted president Ershad now under house arrest, reports UNB.

At a meeting in Dhanmondi residential area, the woman front of the Jatiya Party also voiced demands not to shift Ershad to jail.

Speakers at the meeting urged the government for taking proper measures to facilitate voters to exercise their rights of franchise freely in the coming parliamentary polls.

In her presidential speech, Marium Haishmuddin, Chairperson of the organisation, called upon people from all walks of life to cast votes in favour of JP candidates.

General Secretary Taufika Karim bitterly criticised defunct political parties, particularly BNP and Awami League, for making, what she called "adverse comments against her leader Ershad".

Umme Kauser Salsabil who is contesting the forthcoming polls as JP nominee from constituency Dhaka-9 (Muhammadpur-Dhanmondi) also spoke on the occasion.

BKSAL withdraws in favour of AL

By Staff Correspondent

BKSAL leader Hashim Uddin Haider Bahari has withdrawn his candidature in support of Mozaffar Hossain Paltu, who is contesting Feb 27 polls from Dhaka-6 (Motijheel-Sabujbagh) constituency as the nominee of Awami League-led 8-Party Alliance, reports UNB.

Red Crescent Board goes

By Staff Correspondent

The Acting President Justice Shahabuddin Ahmed who is also the President of Bangladesh Red Crescent Society, has dissolved the Managing Board of the Society for failing to discharge its functions properly, reports UNB.

He has appointed and Adhoc Managing Board for a period of six months effective from February 2.

Maj. Gen. (Retd) A. F. M. Abdul Huq has been appointed chairman of the adhoc board while Sadri Isaphani its vice-chairman and Ekramul Amin, treasurer.

TV Saturday

- 5-00 Opening and recitation from the Holy Quran.
- 5-20 Esho Gan Shikhi : Music lessons for children.
- 5-55 Cartoon Film : Popeye and Son.
- 6-20 Matti-o-Manush
- 7-05 Banshori : Folk songs.
- 8-00 News in Bengali.
- 8-30 Chera Sur.
- 9-00 Sanglap : Current affairs programme on elections, conducted by Muhammad Jahangir.
- 10-00 News in English
- 10-30 Drama Series : Return to Eden.
- 11-30 News

Jamaat leaders' allegations

By Staff Correspondent

Abbas Ali Khan, acting Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami and Maulana Motiur Rahman Nizami, secretary general of the party, have demanded of the authorities to make the Islamic University a full fledged on alleging that its Islamic character is being destroyed.

The leaders in a statement on Friday said the attempt to turn the Islamic University into a general university was evident from the emphasis given on the social science faculty over the Sharia faculty. They alleged that a conspiracy was being hatched to prevent the students with madrasa background from admission into the university by lifting the quota system.

Azad urged to implement Wage Board award

By Staff Correspondent

The President and General Secretary of Dhaka Union of Journalist (DUJ) Friday urged authorities of the Daily Azad to implement the Newspaper Wage Board award, reports UNB.

The DUJ President Zahurul Haque and the General Secretary Ruhul Amin Gazi, in a statement, said an undesirable situation has arisen in the "country's oldest" newspaper on the question of salary



A children's painting competition was held in the premises of Bangla Academy in city on Friday to mark the beginning of the month-long programme on historic Language Movement of 1952. The contest was devoted to 1990 mass upsurge. —Star photo

75 Bangladeshis return home today

By Staff Correspondent

Some 75 Bangladeshis are likely to be flown from Aqaba, Jordan to Dhaka today (Saturday), reports UNB.

Foreign Office sources said Friday the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) has chartered an Aeroflot plane to repatriate this who earlier crossed into Jordan from Iraq since the outbreak of war.

Weather

Dry weather to persist

By Staff Correspondent

Mainly dry weather with partly cloudy sky is likely to prevail over Bangladesh till Sunday, Meteorological Department says.

The night temperature rose by one to two degree Celsius at most places over the country Friday night and is likely to rise further by one to two degree Celsius on Saturday night.

Outlook for subsequent two days: Little change. Extended outlook for another five days: No marked change.

The lowest temperature recorded in Dhaka city on Friday was 16.8 degree Celsius while the country's lowest minimum temperature 13.1 degree Celsius was recorded at Srimongal and Rajshahi.

The sun sets today (Saturday) at 5.46 pm and rises tomorrow (Sunday) at 6.39 am.

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

Cities/towns	temperature in Celsius		Humidity in percentage	
	maximum	minimum	9am	6pm
Dhaka	28.5	16.8	69	72
Chittagong	28	14.3	83	78
Rajshahi	28.2	13.1	77	76
Khulna	29.5	15.5	100	81
Comilla	27.3	15.4	98	93
Sylhet	25.6	15.6	88	78
Bogra	28.8	14.6	80	68
Dinajpur	27.5	13.8	85	68
Rangpur	26.9	14.8	80	67
Jessore	30	14.1	96	72
Barisal	28.6	15	90	72
Mymensingh	27	14.2	86	73

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

Karachi	10 degree Celsius
Beijing	-03 degree Celsius
Colombo	23 degree Celsius
Bangkok	21 degree Celsius
Singapore	24 degree Celsius
Calcutta	19 degree Celsius