

Dhaka Day by Day

Symbolism, Optimism And Beyond

by Fayza Haq

The power and beauty that our women can achieve in the world of art could be seen in the exhibition of Rokeya Sultana and Nasreen Begum at the "La Galerie," Banani.

Rokeya Sultana has been trying for a long time to get a foothold in the world of symbolism and impressionism with her etchings and lithographs. Although romantic and dream-like in her visions, she has attempted to do work which would leave a lasting impact. Looking at her work we are impressed by her combination of cynicism and optimism.

Rokeya enjoys working with figures, especially in the mother and child theme, where the child is the onlooker and the mother is the eternal suffering Madonna. As Rokeya feels through the life and existence of a woman and child, specially her own daughter Laura, she presents her thoughts in the simplified primitive form. Her creations are a combination of maturity and childishness.

In the recent exhibition, Rokeya has experimented with the forms in the city, rather than

the village with which she has no immediate touch. Her conception of the city, though crammed with automobiles, is peaceful and even romanticised. Rokeya's etchings have bold, fresh strokes. She is weary with realism and now fluctuates between reality and dream world. She is confident of her steps, whatever they are, and she dwells on the world that she knows best.

The details in her work show a careful choice of lines and colours. Whatever form and colour she uses, she is always aware of her surroundings. Her use of space and colour is strongly influenced by her stay at Shantiniketan. She combines the semi-abstract with the subconscious and creates a world that is a mixture of dream and magic.

About her present series that she has entitled "Sojourn" she says, "Death is the final point. What we are doing now is playing a role. In her etching about the city she has the police like an enormous clown, who is powerful at the same time as being funny. All this is like a stage, with each person playing his part," Rokeya comments philosophically.

In "No 2" she has circus characters with clowns and a trapeze girl. "Inside each clown is someone serious, perhaps. Yet he puts on an act of being happy and contented. I have purposely used this child-like art. I am weary of realism, I want to forget my academic styles and recall just the forms. I would like to present things that you can touch even in the dark," she comments.

Nostalgia has entered "No 3". The blue, black and white lithograph with fairies and images from childhood memory is a combination of sorrow and happiness. In "No 1" she has the acrobats performing again. They symbolise our

precarious position. We are all worried about losing our jobs, of not getting promotions, and not achieving our goals," she explains.

While in "No 9" and "No 10" she has played with the role of Madonna of the Renaissance, the clouds and the moon give the atmosphere of fairy-tale romance. The texture has been created by acid bites.

"Dance," once again, has the memory of childhood with beautiful dancing girls. The textures add rhythm and depth to the composition. It is definitely more than an illustration or a poster. Rokeya brings in the theme of refugee children in the etching and collagraph in "No 7" and "No 11". The artist's concern is that for refugees from all over the world. The artist's message is that it is the children who suffer most in a mishap like a war. Nasreen Begum, who also took part in the expose at "La Galerie," has brought in the sophistication and perfection of Oriental art of Abanindranath Tagore and Ismat Chughtai in her work. However, she has avoided boring repetitions by bringing

in dynamism in her pieces. Despite the dreaminess and the leisurely pace of the artist, the water colour, acrylic and pastel throb with feeling and life. They are very much the delineation of contemporary living, full of bright blues, reds and startling yellows. Although she has created an idyllic eastern atmosphere for her characters, these female figures are not overwhelmed by the backdrop.

Nasreen's women are intense and full of life. Despite the romantic background, the subjects are pulsating with life. The artist's orientalism does not remove her from the actuality of contemporary existence. The painter is very aware of the present. She is not just out to decorate but also presents a message through her symbols.

In "No 10" the butterfly stands for freedom, the rainbow for hope, while the girl is portrayed as trying to emerge from darkness and ignorance. The artist is acutely aware of the social and economic position of our women.

"No 7" has the portrait of a woman without a face. "Why go into those details when one can do without them," the artist comments. The white of the "sari" stands for purity while the flowers and ferns represent dreams and hopes in life. There are a lot of problems in life but we are still full of hope. The butterflies in the picture symbolise not only nature and eternity but also the element of optimism in human beings.

The girl sitting under a tree in "No 5" shows a beauty in a white "sari" with tremendous dexterity. All the pictures are dreamlike and poetic.

The artist has utilised traditional motifs and manner of painting to create both optimism and nostalgia.



Isolation. Watercolour

8 horticulture nurseries in CHT being damaged

Eight horticulture nurseries, raised with crops of Taka in the greater Chittagong Hill Tracts, are being damaged due to shortage of fund, reports UNB.

Ten officers and 96 staff members of all the nurseries along with their dependents have been passing their days in sub-human condition due to non-payment of their salary for the last four months, informed sources in Rangamati said.

Due to non-renewal of the special five-year scheme under which funds were made available has ended on July 30, '91, these projects are running without any fund.

In the absence of proper maintenance due to fund constraint the horticulture units are being damaged day by day.

3 DU researchers conferred PhD

By DU Correspondent

Dhaka University syndicate recently awarded PhD and MPhil degrees to three researchers for their research works in different fields.

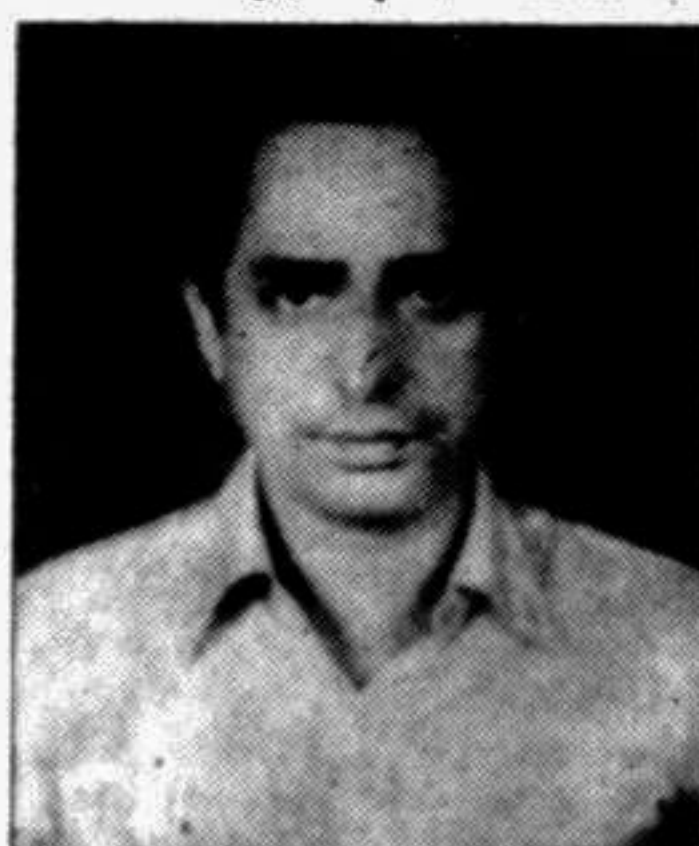
Sagarmoy Barua was awarded PhD degree for his research work on "Studies on relationship between Vitamin 'A' and iron metabolism" under the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science while Dr Zeba Mahmud was awarded MPhil degree under the same institute for her research work on "Effect of Vitamin 'A' and 'E' on spondylosis".

Fazle Akbar Haidar Talukdar was awarded PhD degree for his research on "Agronomic and Physiological responses of recently developed corchorus capsularis L and C. Olorious L. Lines to various cultural practices" under the Department of Botany.

Prof K. Ahmad, Prof Shah Md Keramat Ali and Prof AS Islam supervised the three research works respectively.

Anniversary of Amin Ahmed's death tomorrow

The six death anniversary of Amin Ahmed Chowdhury, Assistant Editor of The Bangladesh Times, will be observed on tomorrow (Wednesday), reports BSS.



The Bangladesh correspondent of Voice of America, World Service, and of the British daily, The Guardian, Amin Ahmed Chowdhury died on this day in 1985.

To observe the day, Quran khwan in the morning and Milad Mahfil after Asr prayer will be held at 50, Purana Paltan Line (near Bijoy Nagar Mosque) residence of the deceased.

Rasheda Amin has requested relatives, friends, colleagues and admirers to attend the Milad Mahfil.



School children holding a colourful rally in city Monday in observance of Universal Children's Day.

Govt to help market local building materials

50 pc city-dwellers living in sub-human conditions

Speakers at a discussion meeting on the World Habitat Day on Monday said about 50 per cent people in the metropolis are living in sub-human conditions and polluted environment in and around the slum areas, reports UNB.

Organised by Bangladesh Bastuhara Janakalyan Samity, speakers at the meeting said government's steps to solve the problems are quite inadequate.

Chief Patron of the Samity Amanullah Khan urged the government to take up a massive plan in this regard.

President of the Samity Atiqur Rahman chaired the meeting.

The meeting was addressed among others, by Sheikh Kamal Hossain, Tofael Ahmed and Golam Azam.

BSS adds: Works Minister Rafiqul Islam Mia Monday said the present government would take necessary initiatives to form a National House-Building Committee comprising relevant experts.

He was speaking as the chief guest at a seminar on "Housing situation of Bangladesh" organised in observance of the World Habitat Day-91 held at the Housing and Building Research Institute (HBRI) at Mirpur in Dhaka.

Organized by the HBRI, the seminar was presided over by

Dhaka to receive £15 m aid from UK

Bangladesh will receive a commodity grant assistance of 15 million pound sterling (Equivalent to approximately Tk 98 crore) from the United Kingdom under an agreement concluded in Dhaka an official source said Monday, reports BSS.

The amount will enable Bangladesh to procure goods and services from the United Kingdom or certain developing countries. Both the public and private sectors will be eligible as importers.

British commodity assistance is generally utilized for procurement of industrial raw and packing materials, spare parts, pharmaceuticals, fertilizer, pesticide and items of capital equipment and battery bridges.

With this 15 million pound the total amount so far received by Bangladesh from the U K as commodity aid stood at 208.83 million million pounds.

Works Secretary Enamul Huq. The key-note paper was presented by Prof Nazrul Islam of Geography Department of Dhaka University.

The Works Minister said our thinking must be accompanied with honesty, commitment and national dedication for the prosperity of our country.

Barrister Mia assured the HBRI that the government would do everything possible for the marketing of the building materials produced by

World Postal Day tomorrow

World Postal Day will be observed in the country tomorrow (Wednesday).

The slogan of this year is "The post, your universal partner", reports BSS.

The Postal Department will observe a "Service Week" throughout the country from tomorrow in observance of the day.

Raw jute traders lose Tk 100 cr

Fair price to the jute growers, earnings of foreign exchange through the export of raw jute and solution to the long accumulated problems concerning raw jute were discussed threadbare when the representatives of Bangladesh Jute Association held an emergency meeting with Jute Minister Hannan Shah in Dhaka on Monday, reports BSS.

During the meeting the association's representatives called for providing due facilities to private sector jute mills which export 80 per cent of the raw jute.

The representatives also referred to the loss of Taka 100 crore incurred by the raw jute traders during the last several

the HBRI.

Enamul Huq said the trend of migration from rural to urban areas could be reduced by the socio-economic development of rural people.

The seminar was also addressed, among others, by Acting Director of HBRI A K M Khorshed Alam, Architect Dr Shahidul Amin, Architecture Department of BUET, Khorshed Alam, Senior Principal Officer of Urban Development Directorate.

Alam of BHRI stressed the need for sustainable technology for housing considering the socio-economic condition of the housing problem. He urged the people to utilise the locally produced building materials. Dr Shahidul Amin said the housing problem was not created in a day and it is not possible to solve the problem overnight. He urged politicians, scientists, technocrats and others concerned to come forward to resolve the problem.

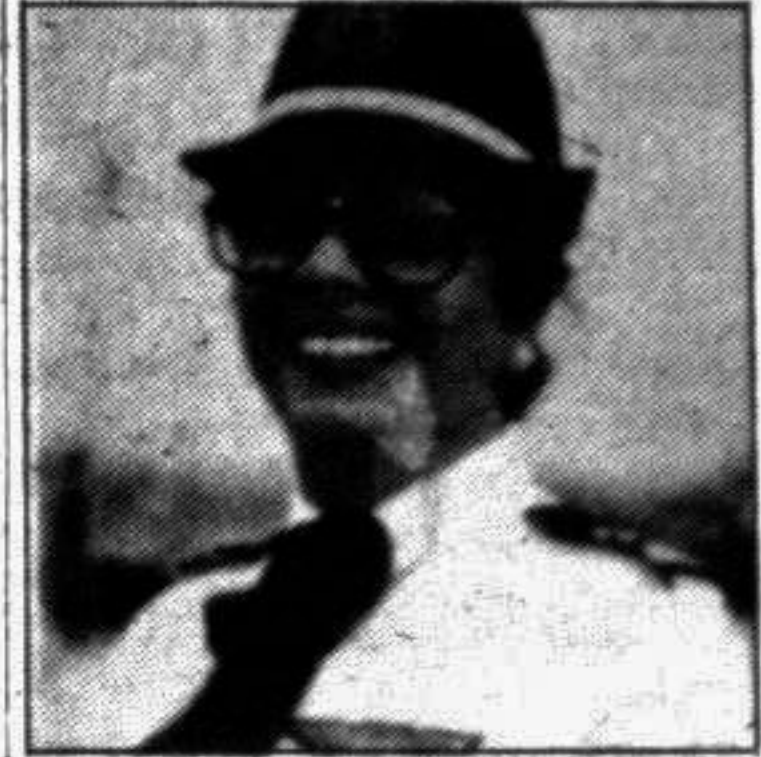
Mahalaya of goddess Durga held

Mahalaya Agamani Utsab of goddess Durga was held at Dhakeswari Mandir premises Monday morning, reports BSS. Mahalaya marks the beginning of the fortnight-long Durga Puja. Which is celebrated for five days from the sixth day to the tenth day of the fortnight.

Monday's programmes included recitation from the holy Chandi book and devotional songs welcoming the goddess Durga. Renowned singers, led by Sudhin Das, participated in the Mahalaya function.

Saifur off to Malaysia

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman left Dhaka Monday for Kuala Lumpur to attend the annual meetings of Commonwealth Finance Ministers there and the Board of Governors of IMF and World Bank in Bangkok, reports BSS. The Commonwealth Finance Ministers' meeting will begin in the Malaysian capital today (Tuesday) and the meeting of the Board of Governors of IMF and World Bank will begin in the Thai capital on October 12.



Yasmin first woman in Asia to pilot DC-10

By Staff Correspondent Captain Yasmin Rahman of Biman Bangladesh Airlines became the first woman in Asia to pilot a wide-bodied aircraft when she flew Biman's DC-10-30 flight to Jeddah on September 27 as First Officer.

Yasmin earned her B. Architecture degree in 1976 from BUET. She obtained her Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) in 1978. Later Yasmin became the first woman to captain a jet airliners in this subcontinent and the first Asian woman Route Check Pilot in 1987.

"Even when the Asian Air Giant Singapore Airlines discriminates against woman, Biman has a liberal policy in recruiting woman pilots", Yasmin observed.

Yasmin claims herself as the only architect-aviator in the world, who has represented Biman in many international conferences. Yasmin is married to Ashfaq Rahman, a DC-10 Captain of Biman and are one of the few couples in the world, who are common in their profession as pilot. The couple has two daughters.

What's on today....

World Lions Service Day

The 75th World Lions Service Day will be observed in Bangladesh as elsewhere in the world today (Tuesday). In observance of the day in Bangladesh, a ceremonial parade will take place at the Bijoy Smarani Point and a blood donation programme at BLF Bhawan at Agargaon beginning at 8 am. Food Minister Lt. M. Shamsul Islam will open the parade and the blood donation programme as chief guest. The concluding session will be held at the National Museum auditorium at 5 pm.

BIIS meeting

The chairman and members of the Board of Governors of the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIIS) will hold a discussion meeting with the visiting team of the Royal College of Defence Studies (UK) at the institute today (Tuesday) at 4.30 pm.

Soviet film show

A show of the Soviet film 'Chapayev' will be held at the Soviet Cultural Centre at Dhanmondi in the city today (Tuesday) at 5 pm. The show is the concluding programme of a three-day film festival organised jointly by Satyajit Roy Chalachchitra Sangsad and the Enjoy Chalachchitra Sangsad in collaboration with the cultural wing of the Soviet embassy in Dhaka on the occasion of the United Nations Day.

Muslim League

Bangladesh Muslim League will hold a seminar in connection with observance of the Eid-E-Miladunnabi at the Hotel Sundarban in the city today (Tuesday) at 4.30. Former Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury will attend the function chief guest while ex-justice Sultan Hussain Khan will be the special guest. Emin al-Islamic thinkers and philosophers will address the seminar.

Rotary Club of Dhaka

The regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhaka will be held today (Tuesday) at 5 pm at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel. Dr Saadat Hussain, Director General of the Radio Bangladesh, will be the guest speaker and will speak on 'Corruption in public offices'.

Rotary Club of Ramna

The regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Ramna will be held today (Tuesday) at 5.30 pm at the Hotel Sonargaon. Mohiuddin Ahmed, Director General of Post Offices, will speak on the origin of postal services as the guest speaker.

....and tomorrow

Seminar on Women's history

The Centre of Higher Studies in Humanities of the Dhaka University will hold a seminar on "Women's History: The case of Muslim Bhadracharya in Bengal (1876-1938)" at the seminar room of the Centre tomorrow (Wednesday) at 4 pm. Prof Sonia Nishat Amin of the History Department of the DU will present the key-note paper on the issue.

The DU Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof Wakil Ahmed will preside over while director of the Centre Dr Abul Kalam will conduct the seminar.

SAARC technical body meeting begins today

The ninth Technical Committee meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on sports, art and culture begins in Dhaka today (Tuesday), reports BSS.

Minister for Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Majid-ul-Huq will inaugurate the three-day meeting at 10 am at a city hotel.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain and State Minister for Culture Prof Jahan Ara Begum will attend the inaugural function as the special guests.

The ninth meeting of the SAARC Technical Committee on sports, art and culture will review the progress of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions of the eighth meeting held in Kathmandu in 1989. Director of the SAARC Secretariat Q A M A Rahim arrived in Dhaka on Sunday. The delegates of the SAARC countries already arrived in the city.

TV Tuesday

- 5.00 Opening announcement Al-Quran
- 5.15 Programme Summary
- 5.20 Recitation from the Gesta
- 5.20 News in Bengali
- 5.30 Cartoon Film: Adventure of the Galaxy Rangers
- 5.55 Educational programme
- 6.30 Programme for Mothers
- 7.05 Nazrul songs
- 8.00 News in Bengali
- 8.30 Drama Serial: Barna Bari
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Film: War and Remembrance
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.45 Close down

24,000 die due to pregnancy complications

About 24,000 women die from complication relating to pregnancy every year in Bangladesh. Of them 4,800 die from abortion related causes, reports BSS.

This was disclosed at an international symposium held in Dhaka on Monday at Hotel Sheraton.

A study conducted in 1978 shows that about 8,00,000 abortions were being done annually.

Most of the abortions were being performed by unskilled persons applying traditional methods resulting in extremely high number of deaths.

The two-day international symposium on "antiprogesterone" began on Monday under the auspices of Bangladesh Association for Prevention of Septic Abortion (BAPSA). Prof Wakil Ahmed, Pro Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University inaugurated the symposium as the chief guest.

The inaugural session was chaired by Prof Syeda Firoza Begum, President of BAPSA and was addressed by Ms Haidar Kamal, Director of BAPSA, Raymond C

Offenheiser, representative of the Ford Foundation and Ms Sigma Huda, Secretary General BAPSA.

Eleven experts from Canada, USA, France, India, Egypt and Switzerland presented paper in the symposium. Around 200 participants from home and abroad are attending the symposium.

The discussants said antiprogesterone drugs are the best method of birth control.

They said antiprogesterone drugs were less costly and more acceptable to women than surgical abortion. The drugs have been approved in France, Britain and China as non-surgical means of termination of very early pregnancies, they said adding "the drugs could be considered as a non-surgical means of menstrual regulation (MR) or an 'Mr drug'."

Pro Vice-Chancellor in his inaugural speech said millions of poor and illiterate women in developing countries like Bangladesh are suffering from unplanned and unwanted pregnancies.

Reliance is not just a Name.
You can come and see
for yourself.



Reliance has proved that it is not just another Insurance Company. Reliance is here to meet the needs of a changing world. Our strong back-up of human resources, in-depth market know-how and wealth of experience give us the strength to provide the security for all your general insurance needs.



EXPERIENCE • STRENGTH • SECURITY

RELIANCE INSURANCE LIMITED

BSB BUILDING, 8 RAJUK AVENUE
DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH
Phone: PABX - 240105-6, 235080
Telex: 671186 RL BU