

Dhaka Day by Day

Capturing Colour and Laughter

by Fayza Haq

Felicity Volk, whose exhibition of photographs opened at "La Galerie" on Saturday, is out to capture the fun and laughter that she can see around in Bangladesh and other Asian cities. Auburn-haired and bright-eyed, this tall, earnest young woman glows with praises about what she sees and preserves with her camera.

She has been taking photos for the last three years. Most of the photos she has displayed are portraits. She is interested in having this exhibition in order to show her positive impression of Bangladesh. "For me that is embodied in the people in the country," Felicity remarks.

She has not been involved in the art world before in a big way. It all began with a visit to India where she stayed with a friend who is a photographer, based in Delhi. He was working on a documentary, "Project Tiger". This awakened her interest in photography.

She has focused her attention on the people

taken to photography, believes that Bangladesh is very rich in drama, music and the visual arts. She has seen plays and has witnessed 'sitar' recitals. She has been to places like the Bulbul Academy and she finds the local music and dance very soothing.

Felicity, who has been here before during a nine months travel through Asia, began her trip in Singapore. Then she went to Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Indonesia, India and Nepal, apart from Bangladesh. She worked part-time to raise the funds while she was studying. It is her trip to Asia that got her interested in the east. "The Australians are normally Eurocentric in mentality," she commented.

What touched her most while she was taking the photographs was the willingness of the people to form a bond with the person taking the pictures, whom they did not know, even though it was for a second.



Felicity Volk with Bangladeshi children: The eye is the window to the soul.

and the differences between the varied communities in the country. "Those distinctions are based on religious, social and ethnic factors," the photographer explains. "What I want to capture in the photo is the individual spirit. I believe the eye is the window to the soul. At the moment I am interested in faces. Maybe in a year's time I may diversify." While she likes to be surrounded by nature her primary fascination is people — their feelings, thoughts and lifestyle," she said.

This exhibition has been motivated by the desire to present a positive side of the country and to encourage other people to see it. "Even in a marriage relation if the husband says to the wife, 'You're ugly, you're ugly' she will start to believe she is ugly. Likewise if the wife says to the husband 'you're useless' he will end up believing he is useless. The photos I took are of Old Dhaka, Kamalapur and Savar — in areas regarded as poor parts of the country. While I'm not seeking to romanticise or glamourise people's lives what I'm saying is that life can be simple and beautiful."

Felicity comments that the impression given of Bangladesh in the international media is very one-sided. She says that if the media insists that Bangladesh is so prone to natural disasters that nothing can be done, people start to believe it, and that is the way the people of Bangladesh see themselves too, she adds.

"If you point out the positive side to a person or a country there is greater pride in the national identity. Invariably the people I've met in Bangladesh, when I asked them what they think of their country they say, 'We are a poor nation'. I don't understand why they don't talk about the country's wealth in terms of artistic traditions, cultures and the strength of the human spirit to go on despite natural disasters," Felicity continues.

The young Australian diplomat, who has

Asian art exhibition begins Nov 1

The 5th biennial Asian art exhibition will begin in Dhaka November 1 under the auspices of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, reports UNB.

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia is expected to open the month-long exhibition at the Osmani Memorial Hall at 10.30 am.

Works of well-known artists will be simultaneously displayed at Osmani Memorial Hall and Shilpakala Academy auditorium.

Birth anniversary of Fazlul Huq to be observed Oct 27

The birth anniversary of the late AK Fazlul Huq, the then Chief Minister of the British Bengal and the Golden Jubilee of Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta will be observed on October 27.

All former pupils of Lady Brabourne College have been requested to contact Jahanara Begum, General Secretary, Lady Brabourne College Old Students' Association, 6, Circuit House Road or Principal Central Women's College, Dhaka for details and registration by the October 24, says a press release.

UK Minister for Overseas Development arrives Oct 30

British Minister for Overseas Development Ms Lynda Chalker will pay a five-day official visit to Bangladesh beginning October 30, official said Saturday, reports UNB.

During the visit, Chalker will review British assistance to Bangladesh and explore new areas of cooperation.

She is expected to call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia, Foreign Minister ASM Mostafizur Rahman and Finance Minister Saifur Rahman.

Observers attach special importance to the British Minister's visit following an assurance given by Britain to continue assistance for economic development of Bangladesh.

The assurance came when British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd called on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia in Harare on Friday.

He also invited Begum Zia to visit the United Kingdom. Britain is one of the major donors providing continued assistance to help promote the socio-economic condition of Bangladesh.

US Foreign Office official due Oct 30

US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Tereseta Schaffer is likely to arrive in Dhaka on October 30 on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, officials said Saturday, reports UNB.

She will have talks with officials here to review different aspects of Dhaka-Washington cooperation in a move to bolster it in days ahead, they indicated.

Tereseta is expected to call on Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and other ministers.

Radio artistes meet Speaker

A delegation of the staff artistes of Radio Bangladesh, Dhaka called on Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in his office chamber at Sangsad Bhaban Saturday afternoon and congratulated him on his election the Speaker of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad.

The Speaker thanked the artistes for their congratulations. Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Pannu was present on the occasion. The delegation included, Shubal Dutta, Begum Hena Kabir and Shaifur Rahman Duh.

Textile team leaves for China, HK

A seven-member Bangladesh textile delegation led by State Minister for Textiles Abdul Mannan leaves Dhaka for China, Thailand and Hong Kong today (Saturday) for a two-week official visit to those countries, according to an official handout, reports BSS.

During its stay in China, Thailand and Hong Kong, the delegation will visit some textile mills and exchange views with the respective counterparts about the development and progress of the textile industries of these countries.

The delegation includes high officials of the Ministry of Textiles and its organ corporations, representatives of different chambers of commerce and industries and other sectors of textile industries.

Plea to publish complete works, set up Farrukh Academy

Speakers at a discussion meeting on Saturday termed late Farrukh Ahmed as a poet of national heritage and Islamic resurgence, reports BSS.

The discussion meeting was held in observance of the poet's 17th death anniversary at the National Book Centre under the auspices of Tamaddun Majlis.

Eminent philosopher and Islamic thinker Principal Dewan Mohammad Azraf presided over the discussion which was participated by Poet Al-Mahmud, Poet Shahabuddin Ahmed, Poet Al-Mujahedee, Poet Abdul Mannan Syed and Hasan Iqbal.

Touching different aspects of the works of Poet Farrukh, Principal Dewan Mohammad Azraf said Farrukh had depicted faults of the modern civilization truly by using figure of

speech in his epic poem "Sat Sagarer Majhi." He urged the future posterity to uphold the universal ideals and humanism, that Farrukh preached through his writings.

Paying glowing tributes to the late poet, Poet Al-Mahmud said there was no scope for rejecting the great Humanist and Islamic thinker.

Those who are now ignoring the poet, would recognize him as a great epic poet in Bangali literature who upheld humanism. The love and fascination of "Sat Sagarer Majhi" would never be withered," he added.

Poet Al-Mujahedee, said like Nazrul and Iqbal, Farrukh was a great architect of the national heritage and Islamic entity.

He said as an epic poet in modern Bengali literature,

Poet Farrukh was a successful composer of sonnet after Michael Madhusudhan Dutta.

Abdul Mannan Syed said it was Farrukh Ahmed who had bitterly criticised what was prevailing in the society during the sixties in the name of Islam.

Recalling his use at rhetoric and prosody in the style of punthi in his epic poem "Hatem Tai" Mr Mannan said his individual style was unparalleled even to his successors.

The discussions also urged the Government to fulfil the proposal, raised in the discussion, about publication of complete works of Poet Farrukh, establishment of a Farrukh Academy and naming the road where he resided as Farrukh Sarani.

Indian envoy meets Biswas

Indian High Commissioner in Bangladesh, K Srinivasan, Saturday called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban and handed over a letter of felicitation to him from the Indian President R Venkataraman, reports BSS.

In his letter, Venkataraman said Bangladesh and India were linked together by enduring ties through friendship and cooperation.

He said "as a close neighbour we have watched with admiration the significant steps taken to restore and strengthen democracy in Bangladesh." The Indian President also said "we are confident that under your new political system our mutual relations would be consolidated further."

Reciprocating the sentiment, President Biswas hoped that the relations between the two friendly democratic countries would continue to grow.

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An international development agency invites applications for the position of Accounts Assistant. The candidate must have at least a Bachelor's degree in Commerce, Accounting or Management, must be fluent in written and spoken English, should possess word processing skills (Word Perfect and Lotus 1-2-3), and must possess at least 4 years, prior professional working experience.

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Fraternity Council to hold 2-day function

CHITTAGONG, Oct 19: National Fraternity Council, Chittagong will hold a two-day function on November 1 and 2 here with a view to promoting good understanding and harmony among the members of different communities, reports BSS.

President to the Council, Begum Umratul Fazlana General Secretary, Mahbulul Huq told journalists Saturday that the two-day function will include, seminars and cultural functions to be held at the Muslim Institute Hall and Lakshmi Maidan. Eminent intellectuals and artistes from Dhaka and other places would participate in the seminar and the cultural functions, they said.

TV Sunday

- 4.00 Opening announcement, Al Quran
- 4.30 Federation Cup Football final
- 5.20 News in Bangla
- 6.00 Educational programme: Can you do it?
- 7.05 Tagore songs
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Probaho
- 9.00 Drama series: Oshin
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.25 Parliament roundup
- 10.40 Rang Rang
- 11.30 Khabar/The News

Weather

Dry weather likely to prevail

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast valid till 6 pm of Sunday says, it will remain mainly dry over the country. The day temperature will remain unchanged. The weather on Saturday remained dry. The highest temperature of the day was recorded from Jessore. The lowest temperature of 19.2 degree Celsius was reported in Dinajpur.

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

The temperature and humidity of some cities on Saturday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature		Humidity	
	max	min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	32.2	22.4	64	75
Chittagong	31.2	24	82	72
Rajshahi	32.2	20	67	87
Khulna	32.2	22.4	75	72
Rangpur	31.3	19.9	78	80
Sylhet	31	22.4	90	69
Comilla	31.2	24	73	78
Jessore	33	21.3	x	x



Prof. Jahanara Begum, State Minister for Cultural Affairs distributing prizes among binds at a function organized by Rotaract Club of Mahanagar on Saturday.



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