

Dhaka Day by Day



Culture Confronts Anarchy

by Rahat Fahmida



Kalim Sharafi

"No one can ever question about the significance of Ekushey. Though now, with the change of time, Ekushey February is celebrated more like Muharram. It is more a day of festivity than a day of mourning. I feel in a way it bears the essence of celebration and remembrance. Please don't misunderstand me. The intense respect for the martyrs is visible and so is the love for the language. I am not being critical about the whole thing," said Kalim Sharafi, an eminent singer and cultural personality, during an interview. He had been actively involved during the language movement. But his activities stand out because Mr Sharafi was associated with a cultural organisation in Chittagong, 'Prantik', even some 40 years back. He logically pointed out that their emotional attachment to the day February 21 is bound to be different from that of the youths of this generation, who celebrate it with great enthusiasm. This is only because Kalim Sharafi and his associates have been a party to the whole language movement. Their memory of the language movement is vivid. Listening to him on the television or radio, or even during his stage performances, one could hardly imagine how much this noted singer has to share about his experience and work during this movement.

Looking back nostalgically in his memory line, Mr Sharafi said that their organisation was a progressive one, which worked towards mass awareness about the recognition of Bengali language. And the road they chose was through fine arts, that is, songs, dances, cultural shows and dramas. He described the spiritual adventure of passing from an 'everlasting no' to an 'everlasting yes'. Kalim Sharafi's eyes were bright with emotion as he described the events during the language movement: transition of feeling in themselves, in which they moved from doubt, uncertainty and spiritual deadness to hope, confidence and a zest for productive life.

The noted singer said that at war or in peace, the Bengalis are by nature revolutionary. They are in a way united; and have not or will not submit to dictation. They are given to stating their experience, but their awareness and perceptions are acute. Kalim Sharafi confidently remembers that their movement was successful in mobilising the mass of Bengali people, creating an awareness for their mother tongue. For him, however, the 'no', the state of despair from which the Bengalees tried to free themselves, has been pressing and immediate. What was so inexhaustibly wonderful about these mass dramas and songs put forward by 'Prantik', was its power to awaken in people the awareness of their language and culture that they did not know they had. They read a poem or a story or saw a play and discovered that they knew more than they had suspected — about their love and loyalty for Bengali language. Within months, Kalim

Sharafi, then an active cultural worker, said that people became aware of ranges of experience that they shared with every other person who spoke in Bengali.

Kalim Sharafi said that for these activities he and his co-workers were definitely pinpointed and they had to pay for it as late as after the 1954 elections. They had to go the extent of even fleeing from this country for sometime. For some years he was the programme director of television from the time it started. And he clearly remembers that they were never allowed to explicitly celebrate Ekushey, even after Bengali was accepted as a state language. There were instructions and permission from Pindi, informed Mr Sharafi that — "You can observe Ekushey with reference." So they had flags with Bengali alphabets which spoke of the significance of the day.

Looking back Kalim Sharafi remembered another small incident, which left him shocked and stunned for quite sometime. It was some time after February 21, 1952, when he met the SP of police at Dhaka, who shamelessly put out his hand and introduced himself as, "I am the person who ordered firing in 1952," and immediately Kalim Sharafi drew back in disgust and refused to shake hands.

Though the values and ideas are changing but what Mr Sharafi strongly feels about the Bengali language is, "It is a world in which we sometimes find our own concerns — our own hopes and fears and loves and hatreds. It is a world both mysteriously near and remote. No one word can sum up what happened to us and how it happened 40 years ago, when we entered it."

SCF demands trial of Golam Azam

By DU Correspondent

Samajtantrik Chhatra Front Saturday held a rally in front of National Press Club demanding trial of Golam Azam and his associates.

Addressing the rally SCF President Belal Chowdhury said that the bourgeoisie political parties — the Awami League, BNP and the Jatiya Party pardoned the anti-liberation forces and rehabilitated them socially and politically.

The rally also addressed by the SCF General Secretary Kazzuzzaman Ratan, Assistant Secretary Mahbubur Rahman and Maksud ibne Rahman.

Earlier, the SCF brought out a procession on the Dhaka University campus.

PDF discussion meeting on Ekushey Feb 18

The Patriotic Democratic Front (PDF) will hold a discussion meeting in the Bangladesh Communist Party office premises on February 18 at 4 pm in connection with observance of 'Ekushey' (February 21), says a press release.

The meeting will be addressed by Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed, Gazul Haque, Abdul Matin and the central leaders of the PDF.



A cooking demonstration using palm oil as an ingredient was held Saturday morning at the Gulshan residence of Malaysian High Commissioner Tunku Dato Nazihah Mohammed Rus. —Star photo

Bangla Academy Ekushey programmes begin

The week long Ekushey Programme of Bangla Academy began Saturday at its premises through discussion meetings, reports UNB.

Presided over by Gazi Shamsur Rahman the meeting was addressed among others by Prof Mohammad Harunur Rashid, Director of the Academy and Prof Zamal Nazrul Islam.

The meeting observed one minute silence in honour of the memory of martyrs who laid down their lives in various democratic movements.

Speaking on the occasion Gazi Shamsur Rahman said 'non usage of Bangla in government offices is punishable' and there should not be any hesitation regarding it, he added.

The meeting was rounded

off with a cultural function. A discussion meeting on '20 years of Bangladesh: Education and Curriculum' will be held at 4-30 pm.

Dr Abdullah Al Muti Sharfuddin, Prof M Shamsur Ali, Dr Nurun Nahar Fatmunnisa, Prof Shahul Alam will address the meeting while Prof Zillur Rahman Siddique preside over the meeting.

Chinese acrobats off to Vietnam

The Chinese acrobatic team left here Saturday for Vietnam after a two-week performing visit to Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The 15-member team staged seven shows in Dhaka and two in Chittagong.

In Memoriam

On the occasion of the 15th Death Anniversary of Late Khan Bahadur Mujibur Rahman, a Milad Mahfil will be held today, the 16th February, 1992, at CEN (H)-13, Road No. 109, Gulshan, Dhaka at 4:00 p.m.

All relatives and friends are invited. Would those who are unable to attend, please offer a special prayer for his departed soul.

Family of Late Khan-Bahadur Mujibur Rahman

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'Osmany played bold role in establishing democracy'

President Abdur Rahman Biswas Saturday said consolidation of the democratic system, as desired by the late General M A G Osmani, was imperative for the independence and sovereignty of the country, reports BSS.

He said, "let us show our best respects and regards to this great national hero by building a prosperous and welfare society through the united efforts, understanding and in a democratic atmosphere."

In a message on the occasion of the 8th death anniversary of the Supreme Commander of the Independence War, President Biswas said General Osmani had played a bold role during the independence war and later in the establishment of a democratic system in the post-independent Bangladesh. President Biswas said General Osmani was uncompromising against injustice and falsehood. His uncompromising, long struggle for the establishment of democracy is an inspiration to all of us, President Biswas said.

Terming the General's patriotism as unparalleled, President Biswas said he loved the country and the nation above self.

Expressing his deep regards to the memory of General Osmani, President Biswas prayed to the almighty Allah for the peace of the departed soul.

What's on today

Diploma Engineers

The 16th national councilors conference of the Institute of Diploma Engineers begins today (Sunday) at 9 am at the WAPDA auditorium in Dhaka. Dhaka University Vice-Chancellor Prof M Maniruzzaman Miah will open the three-day conference as the chief guest.

Lions Club of Shahbagh

The meeting of the board of director and the second fortnightly regular meeting of the Lions Club of Dhaka Shahbagh will be held today (Sunday) at the Sicily Chinese Restaurant in the city at 6-30 pm and 7 pm respectively.

Bangla Academy

Bangla Academy will hold a discussion of '20 years of Bangladesh: education and curriculum' at the academy premises. Dr Abdullah Al-Muti Sharfuddin will present the key note paper. Prof. Zillur Rahman Siddiqui will preside over the discussion meeting.

Tamuddun Majlish

Tamuddun Majlish has organised a discussion today (Sunday) at 4-30 pm at the Jatiya Grantha Kendro (National Book Center) auditorium in Dhaka to mark the historic Language Movement.

Justice Abdur Rahman Chowdhury will attend the discussion as the chief guest while principal Dewan Mohammed Azraf will preside.

Rotary Club of Dhanmondi

The 284th regular weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Dhanmondi will be held today (Sunday) at 5-30 pm at Sonargah Hotel. M R Akhter Mukul will speak on 'Du-mukhi larat: Amrat Bangladesh' as guest speaker.

Mahendrajai Memorial

Prabhu Jagabandhu Mahaprakash Math has organised a three-day memorial service for Acharya Sripada Mahendrajai beginning today (Sunday) in the Math premises at Hatkhola in the city.

Chayanika Biddypith

The annual prize distribution ceremony and study material distribution ceremony of the Chayanika Biddypith, a school run by Onnesha, will be held today (Sunday) at 4 pm at 2/2 Purana Paltan in the capital.

Diploma Health Technologists Assoc

Bangladesh Diploma Health Technologists Association has organised a discussion at 11 am today (Sunday) at the Dr Ibrahim Memorial Diabetic Centre auditorium on the occasion of the association's 6th founding anniversary.

Weather

Night temperature to fall

By Staff Correspondent

Rain/thundershower likely to occur at one or two places over Chittagong division and weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country till 6 pm today (Sunday), according to Met office.

Night temperature is likely to fall by one to three degree Celsius at many places over the country.

The maximum temperature, 28.9 degree Celsius, was recorded at Khepupara in the country while the minimum, 12 degree Celsius was reported from Rangpur Saturday.

The maximum and the minimum temperature recorded in Dhaka Saturday were 26.6 and 17.2 degree Celsius respectively. The humidity recorded in Dhaka was 100 at 9 am and 63 at 6 pm.

The sun sets today (Sunday) at 5:54 pm and rises tomorrow (Monday) at 6:31 am.

The temperature and the percentage of humidity recorded in some major cities/towns Saturday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	26.6	17.2	100	63
Chittagong	27	17.3	92	76
Rajshahi	26.2	14	92	
Khulna	28.3	15.1		76
Sylhet	26	19.4	90	89
Khepupara	28.9	21.4	61	71
Rangpur	22.8	12	93	78
Fardpur	26.7	14.5	74	64

30 thousand children become blind annually for vitamin A deficiency

The Deputy Leader of the House in the parliament, Prof Badruddoza Chowdhury, said in Dhaka Saturday that development of a positive attitude towards the people with disability alone would lead us halfway through their rehabilitation, reports BSS.

It is none of the crimes of many of them that they are disabled. Prof Chowdhury said and observed that anybody who was hitherto not a disabled person might become one at any point of life because of some adverse circumstances.

Prof Chowdhury was addressing the inaugural function of the three-day national seminar at a local hotel to formulate an action plan for the welfare of the people with disability.

The seminar was organised by the NGO Affairs Bureau, the National Forum of the Organisations Working with the Disabled (NPOWD) and the Voluntary Health Services Society (VHSS) with assistance from the International Centre for the Advancement of Community Based Rehabilitation (ICACBR) Canada.

Prof Malcolm Peat, Executive Director of the ICACBR, Syed Ahmed, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Mohammad Sha-

hidul Alam, Director General of the NGO Affairs Bureau addressed the function which was attended by diplomats and social welfare workers and leaders.

Himself a prominent physician Prof Chowdhury recounted various circumstances that can cause disability from congenital or lactating circumstances to the old age mishaps because of mishandling during birth or a bathroom fall through drug addiction, vitamin A deficiency etc.

He called upon the social welfare associations to help

Contraband seized: One held

Three kilograms of high variety of gunja, 300 sticks of bidi stuffed with gunja and 65 tiny gunja packets have been seized from a place near BDC bazar of Jagti Sugar Mill in Kushtia, reports BSS.

A special squad of the Department of Narcotics Control of the Kushtia sub-sector seized the contraband item Friday and arrested a person named Md. Kafiluddin in this connection, a press release of the Department said in Dhaka Saturday.

Anniversary of Sgt Zahurul Haque's death observed

CHITTAGONG, Feb 15: The death anniversary of Sergeant Zahurul Haque was observed at BAF base Zahurul Haque with due solemnity here Saturday according to an ISPR press release, reports BSS.

A mahfil-e-milad was arranged at the base mosque on this occasion and prayers were offered for the salvation of the departed soul.



Samajtantrik Chhatra Front brought out a procession in the capital Saturday demanding trial of Golam Azam and other war criminals. —Star photo