

Dhaka Day by Day

Engulfed in a Grey World of Graphics

by Fayza Haq

All the graphics works of Wakih Rehman, as seen at the La Galerie and the Alliance Francaise, had very muted colours with a domination of grey. Black, dull brown and burnt sienna also predominate.

"I go in for dull colours," Wakih explained. "I am influenced by Nature. In Germany where I stay and work there are no leaves on the trees or sunshine for nearly nine months of the year. The sky is perpetually cloudy. Apart from Nature, he continued, "I am often depressed as I have my legs in two boats mentally, so to say, I am torn between my own country of origin and my new home in Europe. When I am in Germany I miss my friends, not so much my family. This is although I have some friends in Germany too. Yet socialising is not so easy in Europe as in Bangladesh. You just don't drop in, you've to make an appointment beforehand."

"He added "My work is not happy or naive subjects. They are serious socio-political themes. I furthermore don't feel hopeful about the future of the world."

"Everyday and Everywhere" was a lithograph in aluminium plate. Pictures and images are taken from records of the Vietnam War. He had removed the faces of the images. "When I was doing this work the Gulf War was on. I felt one war was like another. I wished to portray only the violence of the war," Wakih commented about his work. You could see the foot of a dying man. There was the victory sign made by a soldier. The pictures are taken from newspapers. The artist wanted to portray the image of war, and he had done that quite aptly in blue, black, red and white. On the images were typed words that related to the war.

One of the artist's "Untitled" pieces had the theme of a diary. "Instead of writing a diary I have created this image," Wakih explained. A face could be seen through the colours and the black smudges. In another of "Pages of a Diary" the page looked burnt and destroyed. This was to express the past that was over and dead. "When a man writes a diary it is spontaneous. The visual images you see are personification of scattered thoughts," Wakih elaborated.

In another "Untitled" piece Wakih commented, "I gave this name so that people could think whatever they wanted. It is a combination of incidents. Sometimes many things take place at one time which have nothing to do with each other. There is the well-known delineation of the Ku Klux Klan which brings in the discussion of the Nazi revival." Adjacent to this were found scenes of violence from a Bengali film. "We have a highly developed society

in Europe yet it is obsessed with religion, nationality and colour," the artist added. There were cross lines to hold the images together as one finds in windows. Images of men being tortured were replete in the entire. "It is a combination of the reality in Bangladesh and Germany." It was done in black, yellow, ochre and reddish brown.

"Provocation" had twisted forms of faces in a row. This was the distorted form of a German politician delivering a speech. Along with it were scenes of a Bengali film. "People are moved and captured by fantasies like the film and the speech of the politician," the artist explained.

"Civilization" had the images of ancient Egypt. This was mingled with the picture of Taj Mahal and religious scenes from Renaissance painters in Europe. Industrialisation was also brought in in the form of depiction of machines. At the end you saw a stark naked man,

in dire need. The message of the artist was that we have achieved very little from civilization.

In "Mood" one found the depiction of lethargy. The empty and still hands showed that there was nothing to do. The dots and circles stood for a symbolic movement in life. The piece was in red, yellow and black.

Another untitled piece brought in bricks and houses. They were all complicated a series of spectacles and faces, one heaped on another. There was sheep in the

foreground as well as children with masks. "A tale of a country" had the portrait of Khalida Zia. Along with it were pictures of Islamic fanatics and the army. There was also a hungry and stark naked child, showing the poverty of the country. "Maybe one image has no relationship with another but they are all happening at one time," the artist explained. The piece was in green and vermilion.

Commenting on Europe, where he stays the artist said, "The place is big, there are many artists and the competition is tough. I am living in what used to be East Berlin. One gets help from the government. There are numerous galleries. Although these galleries are out to make money yet there are more chances for the artist's talent to flourish. My staying in Germany is a personal matter. I met a German girl while studying in China and now I find myself in Germany."

Asked to comment on the art scene in Bangladesh Wakih said success in Dhaka depended on contacts. "Seventy per cent of the buyers are foreigners and here too one needs contacts."



Forge unity to consolidate democracy, Sircar tells students

Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar Wednesday called upon the students to forge greater national unity to consolidate democracy through establishing rule of law, reports BSS.

The Minister was addressing as chief guest a discussion meeting and its party organised by Jagannath College unit of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) held in college premises.

Presided over by President of the college unit of JCD, the meeting was addressed among others by State Minister for Shipping Harun-ur-Rashid and central JCD leader Elias Ali.

Snatchers held in Kathalbagan

A squad of Tejgaon police led by OC Md Akhtaruzzaman arrested Babul, Fakir Ali alias Liton and Suman from Kathalbagan area Tuesday night in connection with Saturday's snatching incident at a shop at Kawran Bazar, reports UNB.

Police also seized Tk 21,450 from Suman's possession, which the accused confessed as part of the snatched money.

On Saturday, some miscreants snatched Tk 48,350 from businessman Babu Miah and his nephew after stabbing them.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police rounded up 110 people on various charges in the last 24 hours and sent them to court.

SAARC confce on environment in Calcutta April 4

President of the Wildlife Society of Bangladesh, Prof Kazi Zaker Hossain will attend a conference of the environment scientists of the SAARC countries to be held in Calcutta on April 4, reports BSS.

Kazi Zaker Hossain who is also the President of the Association for the Preservation of Birds won the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) award "Global-500 role of honour."

The SAARC scientists are expected to put forward a set of recommendations for approval at the Earth Summit beginning at Brazilian capital on June 5.

The Earth Summit is expected to be attended by the heads of governments of all the countries.

Leaders of Muslim states greet Biswas

Heads of different Muslim states and government have felicitated President Abdur Rahman Biswas on the occasion of holy Eid-ul-Fitr, reports BSS.

In separate messages of greetings, the Muslim leaders expressed their best wishes for the President's personal well-being and continued happiness and further prosperity and progress of the brotherly people of Bangladesh.

Those who sent the messages are: Amir of Qatar Khalifa Bin Hamad-al-Thani, President of the Maldives Mameen Abdul Gayoom, President of Syria Hafez-al-Assad, President of the National Salvation Revolution Command Council of Sudan, Lt. Gen. Omar Hassan Ahmed-al-Bashir, Amir of Bahrain Isa Bin Salman-al-Khalifa, President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Zayed Bin Sultan-Al-Nahayyan, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE Maktoum Bin Raahid-al-Maktoum, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of Kuwait Saad-al-Abdullah-al-Salim-al-Sabah, King of Morocco Hassan II and King of Jordan Hussein I.

President of the Philippines Corason C Aquino, President of Vatican City based Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue Francis Cardinal Arinze and Director General of Rome based Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) Edouard Saouma also sent felicitation message on the occasion of the Eid-ul-Fitr.

Thursday

- 5.00 Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from the Geeta
- 5.30 Jarna Ajana
- 5.55 Mahey Ramzan
- 6.30 Cartoon: The News Three Stooges
- 7.05 Debate
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.40 Drama of the week
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.25 Drama series: Twin Peaks
- 11.15 Khabar/The News
- 11.25 Friday's programme summary
- 11.30 Closing

Bangladesh keen to import Hungarian electric bus

Bangladesh and Hungary Wednesday agreed to make efforts to augment the level of trade relations and diversify Hungarian imports from Bangladesh, reports BSS.

The agreement emanated from official level talks held between the two countries in a "very friendly and cordial atmosphere reflecting the close traditional relations between them".

The Bangladesh side at the talks, held on March 31 and April 1, was led by Additional Foreign Secretary (B) A H Mahmood Ali while the Hungarian side was headed by visiting Deputy State Secretary of Hungary Denes Tomaj. The Bangladesh delegation included Ambassador S M Rashed Ahmed, Director General, Europe.

The talks covering wide ranging subjects of bilateral, regional and international concerns also reviewed in depth bilateral, political, economic, trade and cultural relations between the two countries.

The two governments expressed the desire to further expand and deepen the bilateral relations and contacts.

The Bangladesh side expressed their gratitude for the support extended by the Hungarian government and people during the Liberation War and thereafter for the progress and development of Bangladesh.

While expressing satisfaction at the level of economic and trade relationship between the two countries, the Bangladesh side showed keen interest in the Hungarian proposal for electric trolley bus for Dhaka City which would constitute a visible landmark of cooperation between the two countries. Both sides agreed the need for examining the proposal in concrete manner by experts of both countries.

Apart from Hungarian involvement in joint venture in the field of pharmaceutical, it was agreed that both sides would explore the possibility of expanding joint venture in other mutually beneficial fields.

Hungary which currently import jute and jute goods worth 30 million US dollars would be happy to diversify her trade with Bangladesh in other

areas including readymade garments, leather goods tea, etc.

The Hungarian side emphasised the need for private sector organisation of the two countries to establish direct contacts in view of the emphasis laid by both the countries on free market economy. The Hungarian side also expressed full support and solidarity with Bangladesh on the issue of Myanmar refugees.

209 undertrial prisoners freed

The government has ordered to release 209 undertrial prisoners detaining in jails for light offences on the occasion of the Holy Eid-ul-Fitr, reports BSS.

The government expressed the hope that the released persons would play their due role in the socio-economic development of the country as good citizens.

Earlier, the government had ordered to release 36 detained persons after reviewing their cases under Special Powers Act of 1974.

It's new just for you

The Daily Star is pleased to introduce a new column where individuals and organisations can publish Birthday and Anniversary Greetings, Congratulatory and Condolence Messages, Get-Well/Good-Luck Wishes, Birth/Death Announcements, In Memoriam, etc. at nominal charges.

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UNHCR airlifts tents

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) airlifted 10 units of rubhalls, heavy-duty warehouse tents in Chittagong Wednesday, reports UNB.

This shipment follows three previous plane loads of relief goods for nearly 2,00,000 Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, said a press release.



Death anniversary of Justice Hossain today

The sixth death anniversary of Justice Syed Mohammad Hossain will be observed today (Thursday), says a press release.

Justice Syed Mohammad Hossain is the eldest son of late Syed Tasadduque Hossain, the then District and Session Judge in undivided India during British rule and was also a judge during early period of Pakistan.

Justice Hossain, an eminent judge of the Supreme Court, was illegally removed by former President Hussain Muhammad Ershad under martial law. His removal from the judgeship of the Supreme Court was protested by the Bar Associations and intellectuals all over the country.

Quran khwani and milad mahfil will be held at the residence of Begum Syed Mohammad Hossain at 38, Ditu Road, Maghbazar, Dhaka on the occasion.

WB prescribes steps to streamline food sector

World Bank has prescribed a number of steps to streamline the food stock and distribution system and augment food production in the country, reports UNB.

In a recent report the Bank has commended various steps taken by the government with respect to increasing food production but stressed developing a proper food management scheme to ensure its sustainability.

Recent progress in food-grain production, resulting largely from the liberalisation and privatisation of irrigation equipment and fertilizer market, raises questions about sustainability of increase in production, it said.

In addition to the need for continued attention to input prices and distribution, there is also a need to ensure that domestic output prices provide sufficient incentives to channel agricultural resources to efficient crop activities.

The report maintained that

government's financial difficulties and stock management problems, linked with food distribution system, call for adjustment of the policy framework as Bangladesh approaches foodgrain self-sufficiency.

It said in view of the adjustment need for limited land availability and prospects for extending cultivation onto new land, programmes to increase agricultural production and productivity require more intensive use of established arable land.

The report further stressed increased productivity and efficiency which depend primarily on the quality of support services, particularly to small farmers.

A review of output pricing and market development in the context of economic efficiency will necessarily consider the government's trade and exchange rate policy as well as its price stabilisation mechanism.

Weather

Dry spell to prevail

By Staff Correspondent

Met office Wednesday forecasts weather will remain mainly dry all over the country till 6 pm today (Thursday).

Day temperature is likely to rise by one to two degree Celsius over the country today.

The maximum temperature in the country, 36.7 degree Celsius, was recorded at Rajshahi while the country's minimum 19 degree Celsius was reported from Rangamati Wednesday.

The sun sets today (Thursday) at 6:15 pm and rises tomorrow (Friday) at 5:49 am.

Temperature and the percentage of humidity recorded in some major cities/towns of the country Wednesday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	34.7	23.2	51	36
Chittagong	33.5	23.8	56	53
Rajshahi	36.7	22.3	35	31
Khulna	34.2	23.0	46	43
Cox's Bazar	34.5	23.2	63	53
Sylhet	32.0	21.0	84	69
Rangamati	33.8	21.0	37	27
Mymensingh	34.1	21.4	67	58

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