

Dhaka Day by Day

Women's Strifes and Struggles

by Fayza Haq

Most of Barbara Jenson's paintings in her recent exhibition 'Farewell Bangladesh', at Gulshan, were inspired by her stay in Bangladesh. An art lecturer at Bangor, Wales, for 15 years, Barbara was with her husband who had been working with a Danish fishery programme in Mymensingh.

One of the constant themes in Barbara's work were women and their place in society. The other themes had been men at work. She had done a lot of portraits as she felt there were many photogenic faces in Bangladesh.

"Painting is much more than representation or craft showing how well you can draw. It's to do with how you react to what you see around you and how you paint shows your emotions to other people. As a Westerner I painted the obvious that struck me: the poverty, overpopulation and the medieval aspect. On the one hand you have people as they lived in Europe 300 years ago, and on the other there are the trappings of technical society," the artist commented. "It is important for an artist to stimulate awareness in people—either beauty or social issues—a response to environment," she added.

In 'Symbols of a New Order' there were boats, weighing scales, and deer which was an apazilla election symbol. There were the children in the foreground, looking out of the picture to the future. "For me they were asking a question: Are the promises the symbols represent going to be fulfilled? The piece was done in brown black, and yellow ochre."

In 'After the Storm' the artist was contemplating on the many women and children who were not able to fend for themselves in the recent cyclone. Faces of agony were shown in black and brown. In 'Men, a Woman and her Children' the men had their backs to the woman and were leaving for the mosque. The artist wanted to point out that the women were overburdened with children. White men had a strong position in the male dominated society. Barbara wished to show that women were excluded from many things, including the matter of going to the mosque.

'Three Graces' was about the universal strength of women despite all the adversity of a male dominated existence. Each woman had a child to her breast and many little ones were milling around her but she was still strong despite her underprivileged position. "I have used the mosque in the background to give the halo effect of the lion", Barbara elaborated. She had used brown, ochre, blue and green to give a realistic and startling effect.

In 'Barriers to Womenhood'—1, 2, and 3, the artist had collages of cinema posters of sexy, voluptuous women. There were also depiction of wall paintings with women with their fists flung upwards, taken from Ershad's time. Over the collage of the cinema posters was a network of

lines. "This was a symbolic barrier between the women in the 'burqa' and the women on the posters who displayed themselves freely," the artist explained. The piece dealt with dual standards. "It was alright to have sexy women on the posters but the real women you meet every day must hide behind the 'burqa', was the artist's comment.

"When my husband went working in the field, he went on the motorbike and I went along with him. While he talked to the men at the fishpond the women called me into the 'bar' the artist narrated. The curious and friendly faces were stressed on and mingled with humour and sympathy in 'Inside the Bar' painting. There are a lot of colours but they were subdued by the interior of the house", Barbara explained another of her work.

"Women at the Ferryghat" and 'Fishermen at the Ferryghat' were symbolic. The artist had used sails like banners floating in the wind. "The sails reminded me of medieval banners," the artist remarked. She had used all the bright colours of the 'saris' as well their simple flowing shapes. The 'lungs' in the painting were also very colourful.

"Women without Men" was about women being alone, widowed, and abandoned. "As they were without a man they were defenceless. It is hard to be poor and alone if you are a woman. Yet there was the redeeming feature that they had each other", Barbara elaborated. "Women Alone" had a worse fate as the subject was totally alone. "The purpose was not to depress. It was simply to point out, if you know what is wrong you can rectify it," the artist said.

Barbara had done fishermen in conte crayon, which was like charcoal. The rhythms, shapes and fluid movements of the strong people at work was beautifully captured. "The men were very slender and not beefy as in the west and they had enormous grace", Barbara elaborated.

Added to these Barbara had done a lot of portraits such as "Muscleman", "From Friday Prayers", "Garro Mother and Child". They were often in crayon and were done with care and imagination. Similarly "On the Street", "Kid on the Block" and "Baksheesh Boy" spoke of psychological insight and empathy for the subjects.

Barbara's Nepal paintings were imaginative collages of chard, string, corrugated paper, marbled paper, and feather. In oil and acrylic. Barbara, a mother of three grown children, said "It is important that students of art should get an excellent grounding in their craft—that they understand colour and material. They should develop draughtsmanship and realise that painting is not a matter of technique but a matter of awareness. Perhaps there is a tendency to look to the west when there is a wealth of inspiration and a long history of excellent art in Asia."



'Fisherman'

'Complete all projects in time'

Dhaka City Corporation Mayor Mirza Abbas Sunday directed the officials its Engineering Department to complete all the projects on schedule for ensuring civic amenities of the citymen, reports UNB.

"No laxity in implementing these development projects will be tolerated," he warned while addressing high officials of the corporation at the head office Sunday morning.

To end water logging in the city, he also directed the concerned officials to keep clear all the drains and outlets.

Expressing dissatisfaction about the city street lighting, he gave directives to ensure more lights.

Meeting of cabinet sub-committee on jute held

The cabinet sub-committee on jute met at the conference room of the Jute Ministry Sunday with Agriculture, Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Minister M Majidul Haq in the chair, reports BSS.

The meeting was attended by Jute Minister A S M Hannan Shah, State Minister for Finance Majibur Rahman, Rezaul Karim MP, Jute Secretary M Akhtar Ali and concerned officials.

The meeting discussed problems relating to the financial crisis in jute sector as a whole and the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) in particular.

The meeting also reviewed the progress in the implementation of the sub-committee's earlier decision on working capital loan in respect of jute mills for the year 1989-90 and 1990-91.

Corrigendum

Dancer Sujata Mishra's recital on April 18 was inadvertently reported to be organised by Rotary Club. The recital was organised by the High Commission of India in Bangladesh.

Sharanananda gets 'world humanity peace' award

Eminent Buddhist Bikkhu Shrimat Sharanananda Bikkhu (Shibu) of Bangladesh was given 'Biswa Manabata Shanti' (World Humanity Peace) Award by the United Nations and UNESCO representative Dr Seo Kyung-Bo in a simple ceremony at Seoul in South Korea on April 10, reports BSS.

He was also given the title of 'renowned social worker' on behalf of the peoples of South Korea for his outstanding services to the destitute and social services in the remote areas of Bangladesh.

Steps to raise finished leather export earnings to be taken

Industries Minister Shamsul Islam Khan Sunday said that present government would take concerted effort to raise the finished leather export earnings from present six hundred crore Taka to two thousand and five hundred crore Taka per annum within two years, reports BSS.

He said this while addressing a meeting of the Bangladesh Finished Leather Exporters Association in the city.

The Minister said that the finished leather manufacturers and exporters of Bangladesh had earned excellent reputation by exporting quality products in the international market.

The minister urged the finished leather exporters to turn their industries into leather goods manufacturing unit to earn more profit.

He said that Bangladesh

finished leather factories now equipped with advanced technology and highly experienced technicians, could help in turning this industry into a number one foreign currency earning sector.

Referring to his recent visit to Italy, the Industries Minister said that the Italian leather entrepreneurs would come to Bangladesh soon.

He also said that the Italian industrialists showed keen interest to set up joint-venture industries in this sector in Bangladesh.

The Minister urged the local finished leather exporters to contact the leather industrialist in Italy. He assured of all possible help from the government side for the rapid development of the finished leather sector.

Azizulur Rahman, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Indus-

tries and A K M Rahmatullah, President of the Association also spoke on the occasion.

Earlier, the Minister visited to modern finished leather industries at Hazaribagh. These industries are producing high quality finished leather and leather products including shoe, safety products, and fashion wear.

Demands for these items are adequate in Italy, France, Germany, UK, Spain, Russia, Japan, Australia, Taiwan, China, Romania, India, Thailand and Hong Kong.

The Minister also visited modern finished leather industry which was reared by fire two days ago. He said that the government would extend all possible help to re-opening this industry soon.



General Asif Nawaz, Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan, called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban on Sunday. —PID photo

Pak Army Chief meets Biswas

The visiting Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan, General Asif Nawaz, called on President Abdur Rahman Biswas at Bangabhaban Sunday, reports BSS.

During the meeting, President Biswas said that development and prosperity of the people were the main objectives of the present democratic government of Bangladesh.

He stressed the need for promoting further bilateral cooperation among the friendly countries including the Muslim Ummah.

President Biswas expressed the hope that friendship between Bangladesh and Pakistan would continue to be strengthened in the days ahead.

He conveyed his greetings and best wishes to Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

General Asif Nawaz conveyed to President Biswas the greetings and best wishes of the Pakistan President and the Prime Minister.

He stressed mutual cooperation between Bangladesh and Pakistan particularly in the field of science and technology.

Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Muhammad Noor Uddin Khan, Defence Secretary Anisur Rahman, Pakistan High Commissioner in Dhaka Anwar Kemal and members of Pakistani delegation were present.

RCC Mayor visits rice market

RAJSHAHI, Apr 19: Mayor of Rajshahi City Corporation Mizanur Rahman Minu visited the retail and wholesale market of rice here Sunday, reports BSS.

According to an official handout the Mayor observed that there was sufficient stock of rice in the market and expressed his satisfaction seeing that price of rice has decreased by Taka one to two per kg.

The rice traders told the Mayor that price of rice would decrease further within some days as rice was being sold in the market at government controlled price and diesel was being supplied as usual.

The Mayor requested the rice traders not to create any artificial shortage of rice and to keep the flow of rice in the market.

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Faria

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20th April 1992

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'Beef fat not harmful in raising serum cholesterol level'

Beef fat is not as harmful as it is commonly believed in raising serum cholesterol levels, Dr K C Hayes, a reputed nutrition expert from the United States said in Dhaka Sunday, reports BSS.

Speaking at a seminar on "Nutritional Aspects of Saturated Fat," held at the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science, Dhaka University, he said beef fat had about 40 per cent mono unsaturated fatty acids which was found to be neutral, neither raising nor lowering serum cholesterol levels in average people.

Prof Hayes is the Director of the Foster Biomedical Laboratory at Brandeis University in the United States.

He said beef fats also had 4 per cent poly unsaturated fatty acids which lowered the harmful cholesterol called Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL). Fats and oils are important part of our diet which supply energy.

In an adult, a high level of LDL is considered harmful because it tends to build up in

the coronary arteries, ultimately damaging the heart muscle and its ability to pump blood.

The other type of cholesterol called High Density Lipoprotein (HDL) is beneficial as it protects against arterial deposits and remove cholesterol from tissues and transport it back to the liver for excretion.

About 50 top nutrition scientists from Dhaka University, Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council, Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institute and other government bodies and research institutions attended the seminar.

Prof Hayes's visit to Bangladesh was sponsored by the National Renderers Association (NRA), a US-Canadian trade association, for exchange of views on recent research finding and technical advancements in food and nutrition.

The seminar was presided over by the Director of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science Prof M Keramat Ali.



Chittaranjan, Mahiuddin get NBC Gold Medal

By Staff Correspondent
Chittaranjan Shaha and Mahiuddin Ahmed have been awarded the National Book Centre Gold Medal for the Banla years 1997 and 1998 for their significant contribution to the publication arena.

The awards were distributed by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at Osmani Auditorium on Pehela Baishakh. Chittaranjan Shaha started his career in publication in 1951 and set up 'Muktadhara' during the War of Independence. The house has over 1600 books to its credit. Mahiuddin Ahmed started the publication house, University Press Limited in 1974 and acclaimed reputation for its scholarly publications.

Girl Guides Assoc arranges baby show

Bangladesh Girl Guides Association Sunday arranged a baby show at Guide House to celebrate the 'World Health Day,' reports BSS.

Seventy children from 'Hashi Khushi Day-Care-Centre,' 'Guide Home,' 'Social Education Centre' and other schools participated in the show.

Nine children from three groups were awarded. The awardees are from Group A (0-1 year) 1st-Shaheen 2nd-Rumi 3rd-Moshumi (From Group B (1-3 years) 1st-Akhima 2nd-Sabina 3rd-Shabuj and from Group C (3-5 years) 1st-Imon 2nd-Tania 3rd-Shurovi.

Khorsheda Begum, Deputy National Commissioner (Programme) distributed prizes among the winners. Suraya Zebunnessa, Project Commissioner also spoke on the occasion.

Weather

No change in day temperature

By Staff Correspondent

Met office's weather bulletin valid till 6 pm today (Monday) forecasts, rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur at one or two places over Dhaka division and the regions of Jessore, Kustia, Khulna, Comilla, Sylhet, Rajshahi, Pabna and Bogra and weather will remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country.

Met office also forecasts, day temperature is likely to remain nearly unchanged over the country today (Monday).

The maximum temperature in the country, 38.9 degree Celsius, was recorded in Rajshahi while the country's minimum, 19 degree Celsius, was reported from Sylhet Sunday.

The sun sets today (Monday) at 6:22 pm and rises tomorrow (Tuesday) at 5:33 am.

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

Cities/Towns	Temperature		Humidity	
	Max	Min	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	35.3	25.8	71	67
Chittagong	32.2	25.6	70	75
Rajshahi	38.9	23.8	71	41
Khulna	35.4	24.5	81	73
Cox's Bazar	33.0	25.8	71	73
Sylhet	30.0	19.0	79	61
Dinajpur	35.6	23.8	69	58
Fardpur	36.3	24.6	85	45

Monday

- 5.00 Opening announcement Al-Quran
- 5.10 Programme summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.20 Recitation from the Geeta
- 5.30 Cartoon : The Great Space Coaster
- 6.00 Sports programme : Wrestling
- 6.30 Jibon o Prajukti
- 7.05 Debate
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Janamat
- 9.00 Barnali : Songs programme
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Film : Highway to Heaven
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.40 Tuesday's programme summary
- 11.45 Closing

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