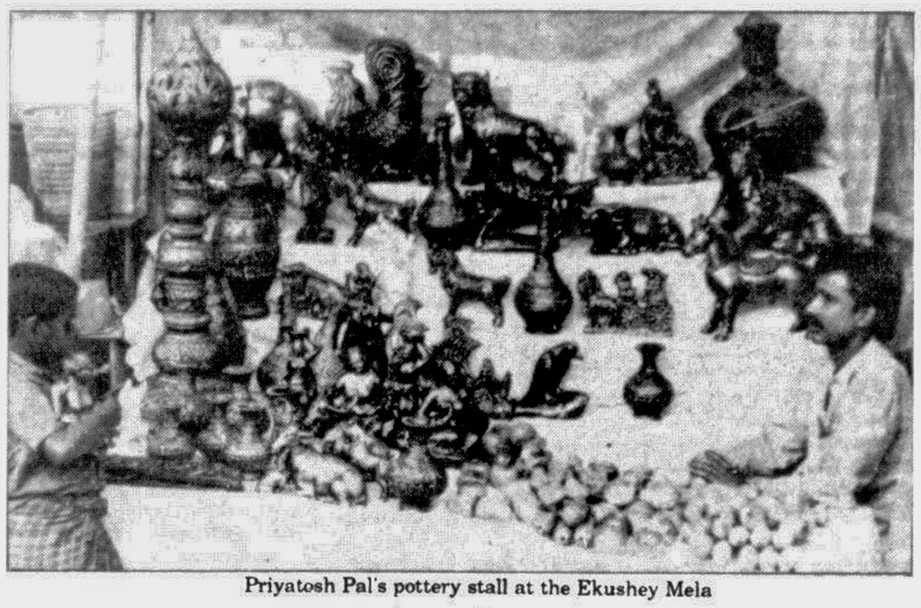
Dhaka Day by Day

Pottery with an Eye for Details

by Fayza Haq



Priyatosh Pal's pottery stall at the Ekushey Mela

Going for a song ! That was my impression when I saw the fine handiwork of the potters at the Ekushey Mela, stretching from the TSC to the Bangla Academy. This was despite the fact that I had visited the Ekushey Mela earlier. This time, however, I was cool enough to compare the quality and the prices of the commodities, with those found near Shishu Park and the fairly pricey shops like "Aarong" and "Shetuli."

At Nitai Pal's shop, one found wall-hangings of bullocks and men, struggling with logs of wood. The swirls of the "dhoti" of the men, the logs and the bullocks were admirable for their realistic details. Done in clay, they were painted over with black and gold, while the prices of the items ranged from Tk 10 to Tk 20. "I accept whatever I can get," the owner commented.

There were statues of a monkey man, with his pet animal on his shoulder. His "dugdugi", jacket with pockets, a satchel at the side, "lungi", and beard, had all been carefully chiselled, with an eye for details. They were painted bronze and black, and cost Tk 20 to Tk 25.

I found statues of a gypsy bangle-seller, with a thick plait, and a figure of a delectable goddess. She was depicted as carrying a basket on her head, holding on protectively to her young son in a "dhoti". These 10-inch statues, which bore bangles, necklace, and armlets, were painted in bronze and black, and their prices ranged from Tk 15 to Tk 20, depending upon the bargaining power of the customers.

Similarly, there were statues of branches, bearing parrots, which could be used as decorations by themselves, or even vases. They were in bronze, black and gold, and their prices ranged from Tk 20 to Tk 30.

A pair of eagles, at the same shop, had its wings outspread, while its mate perched by the side, with its wings folded. This was done in gold, bronze and black. The ingenuity of the potters was such that the statues could serve as both ashtrays and as decoration pieces.

There were vases and "kolshis" in beige and white, which were carefully done. There were others of the same pattern and size, touched with gold, green and black colours. Their symmetrical formations were delightful. The combination of the white rings and the grassy bush patterns on the "kolshis" were done admirably. Their prices varied from Tk 12 to Tk 15.

At the shop, were also bronze coloured ashtrays and the flower pots, which were done with geometrical designs, with their respective prices ranging from Tk 4 to Tk 10 or Tk 12.

At Priyatosh Pal's shop, one found fascinating table-lamps, about 3 feet high, designed with intertwining heart shapes, floral and animal motifs — ranging from elephants to horses and lions — with the base bearing intertwining leaf patterns; and it was priced Tk 200.

There was a statue at the same shop, which depicted a mother feeding her child. The piece, complete with locket, careful folds of a draped "sari", combed hair, and aquiline facial features, was placed on a dais, with its neat edging. This cost Tk 50.

The statue of a horse, at the same shop, was depicted with its saddle, curling tail, mane, bridle, hoofs, and ripples of muscles. A fairly large elephant, at the same place, cost Tk 100, and the animal was shown as bearing a bell at the neck, with its ears, legs and trunks, all done exquisitely.

A hen, with its four chicks, at that stall, was complete with its curling tail feathers. Its wings, legs, beaks and eyes, as well as the little chicks, appeared quite impressive, and was undoubtedly the result of painstaking work. It cost Tk 110.

A vase, which was in a fish pattern, costing Tk 50, had a base of waves. It was decorated with flashing fins and tail and scales, with its mouth open. This had been done with the confidence of a master potter.

While the other two stalls had their origin at Savar and Manikganj, respectively, "Choice Pottery", a shop with fixed prices, had its kiln at Rayerbazar. The salesmen, there, were two young brothers, Shujon Das and Sunil Das.

There, one found a statue of a courting couple — with the lady with her bosoms bared, while the paramour at her knees, appeared like some "zamindar" or princeling, going by the details of the depiction. This was an unglazed work, costing Tk 60. There were statues of the comedian Gopal Bhar, which appeared more like the laughing Buddha, with its pot belly, selling at the same rate. The women and animal figures, their prices ranging from Tk 20 to Tk 40, were also fairly sophisticated.

The stall also sold ashtrays and vases with leaf and fish patterns, found in burnt-sienna and yellow-ochre glaze, for Tk 30. Miniature vases in jade colour were for Tk 10 and Tk 15. Meanwhile, the minute picture frames with heart patterns, in jade glaze, were for Tk 15.

Coming away from the pottery shops of the Ekushey Mela, I learnt where my friends got their essential decoration pieces for their homes at reasonable prices.

A solo art exhibition of recent works by internationally renowned artist Shahabuddin at Shilpangan here. — Star photo

Biswas, Khaleda greet Tizard, Bolger

President Abdur Rahman yesterday congratulated Dame Catherine Tizard, Governor General of New Zealand on the occasion of its National Day, reports UNB.

In a message the President said "On the happy occasion of the national day of New Zealand, I have great pleasure in conveying to your excellency my heartiest greetings and warmest felicitations."

He hoped the friendly ties binding between the two countries will be further strengthened and consolidated in the years to come.

In another message, Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia greeted James Brendan Bolger, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Begum Zia hoped that the existing bonds of friendship and cooperation between the two countries will be further strengthened for mutual benefit of the people of the two countries.

'Nation needs combined talents of scientists'

Prof Mohammad Shahjahan, Vice-Chancellor of BUET, yesterday (Friday) emphasised allocation of more funds for research and proper utilisation of the available meagre resources in inventing appropriate technology for country's progress and development, reports UNB.

He was addressing the inaugural session of the biennial meeting of Bangladesh Physical Society yesterday morning.

National salvation depends largely on utilisation of the combined talents of all scientists including physicists, chemists, mathematicians and engineers, Prof Shahjahan said.

"For us, 'Research for Research Sake' is a mere luxury", he said. It is imperative for our existence to find out ways and means to break the self-repeating cycle: slow pace of research due to financial constraint, failure to invent technology for lack of progress in research and the resulting financial crisis.

The BUET Vice-Chancellor stressed the need for progressive development of physics and called for placing of more funds for research work in this field.

Prof M Shamsul Huq, Chairman of the University Grants Commission was the chief guest at the inaugural function in the seminar room of BUET (Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology). President of Bangladesh Physical Society Prof AM Harunur Rashid presided.

The new fellows of the Society, announced by Prof Harunur Rashid during his presidential speech, are: Dr M A Mannan, Prof Kh M Mannan, Prof Sadruddin Ahmed Chowdhury, Prof A K Roy, Dr SMMR Chowdhury and Prof Sultan Ahmed.

Shahabuddin's art exhibition begins

A 17-day solo art exhibition of Shahabuddin began Friday at Shilpangan, a contemporary art gallery in the city, reports UNB.

Poet Begum Sufia Kamal inaugurated the exhibition at a simple function at the gallery premises, which was addressed, among others, by National Professor Abdur Razzaq, Barrister Syed Ishtiaq Ahmed and journalist Faiz Ahmed.

In his speech, Begum Sufia Kamal lauded the efforts of Shahabuddin in earning fame for the country through his works of art.

She urged all the artists from Bangladesh, currently living abroad, to depict the country keeping its originality in their works like that of Shahabuddin.

A total of 35 works of Shahabuddin, recognised as one of the master painters of the contemporary world by the International Olympic Committee in Barcelona, were put on display in the exhibition which will continue till February 21.

Most of his works, including "Advance," "Chitro", "Yes" and "Victory", based on liberation war and inner human feelings, were all a swirl of varied colours. The deep red stood for anger, blue for sorrow and torment, and the white signifying peace as well as blank spaces in life.

Born in Dhaka in 1950, Shahabuddin held a number of solo exhibitions at home and abroad, and received many national and international awards for his outstanding contribution in painting.

Democracy without rule of law meaningless : Biswas

President Abdur Rahman Biswas said here yesterday that rule of law, human rights and independence of the judiciary were the pre-conditions of consolidating democracy, reports BSS.

"Democracy becomes meaningless unless rule of law is established" he said adding "human rights have to be protected first to establish rule of law".

Biswas was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of a seminar on "Legal Aid, Rule of Law and Human Rights" and "Ombudsman and Democracy" held at a local hotel under the auspices of the monthly Legal Aid, yesterday.

State Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Aminul Haq, Press Council Chairman and Advisor of the monthly Justice Sultan Hossain Khan and seminar secretary of the monthly Niaz Rahim also spoke. Editor of the monthly Advocate Khawaja Golum Murshed presided.

At the main seminar session Justice Habibur Rahman Khan, Justice high court division of the Supreme Court, presented key note paper on "Legal Aid, Rule of Law and Human Rights" while Justice Badrul Haider Chowdhury, former Chief Justice presented key-note paper on "Ombudsman and Democracy".

Justice M H Rahman, Justice Appellate Division, Supreme Court, presided over the seminar session while, among others, Justice Kemaluddin Hossain, Justice M H Rahman and Justice Habibur Rahman Khan took part in the discussion.

"Despite having poverty and resource constraints we have to launch relentless efforts to establish rule of law in the country," Biswas said adding, the enlightened section of the society including the members of the legal profession would have to launch united thrust towards this indispensable struggle.

He said that legal aid was an indispensable aspect in establishing rule of law.

A social commitment to provide legal aid to the poor, helpless and illiterate people was necessary in this regard, he observed.

President said that highest stress was given on rule of law and human rights in the constitution. He called upon all conscious section of the society to remain alert so that social hindrance could not undermine these fundamental rights.

It is essential to start discussion on expert level whether creation of ombudsman was essential for making a corruption-free and accountable administration in the country, said President Biswas.

Aminul Islam lauded the role of the lawyers community in the struggle against autocracy and establishment of democracy. The members of the legal profession should remain vigilant so that democracy could not be disrupted by "any quarter" for any other "ism".

He said that the words like human rights, rule of law, democracy and legal aids were inter-related. Without rule of law democracy can not survive he said adding "without democracy peoples' fundamental rights can not be protected."

In his key-note paper Justice Badrul Haider Chowdhury said that corruption had constituted a heavy burden on both the economy and administrative efficiency. Some of these burdens could be countered through an ombudsman office as envisaged in the constitution.

BBC Governor Ms Shahwar Sadeque addressing a press conference here yesterday. Head of Eastern Service William Crawley (L) and Editor of World Service Ernest Warburton are also in the picture. — Star photo

Live BBC phone-in programme

Khaleda's interview Feb 21

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia will give an interview with British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) at 8 pm on February 21 as part of its live international phone-in programme, reports UNB.

The interview, conducted by BBC's English and Bengali services, will be simultaneously broadcast on BBC World Service radio and television.

This was disclosed at a press conference, organised by BBC World Service, at a local hotel this evening on the occasion of launching its new programme "Spotlight on South Asia".

It was addressed by BBC Governor Shahwar Sadeque, Head of BBC Eastern Service William Crawley, Editor of BBC World Service English Department Ernest Warburton and Serajur Rahman of BBC Bengali Service.

Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao will be the first guest in the pioneering bi-media venture as part of BBC's two-month South Asia season of events and special radio programmes specifically focusing the sub-continent.

BBC's Head of Eastern Service William Crawley said that Begum Khaleda Zia is among the five leaders of South Asia, who have accepted to give interview in the phone-in.

Responding to a question, Crawley said BBC not only give coverage on disaster but also on the positive aspects of the region highlighting the life of people.

He added that BBC's current emphasis on South Asia is due to many factors like presence of a large population of South Asians in Britain. South Asia covers 20 per cent of the world population and the region having the characteristics of both developed and developing countries.

BBC Governor Ms Shahwar Sadeque, a Bangladeshi by birth, spoke on the policy of BBC and upheld it saying, "We are free from all sorts of political and commercial pressure".

She, however, said they are organising seminars and open-house programmes to help chalk out a new charter for the BBC in 1996.

"Our overall span of programmes and events, which we are calling spotlight on South Asia is World Service's most ambitious season ever undertaken", said Ernest Warburton.

"Altogether we will be transmitting more than 100 special programmes. Subjects range from tigers to tea and from Gurkhas to gurus. We will be touching on music and religion, drama and politics. Almost everything that reflects the variety of life in the region."

The press briefing was also attended by Marc Deutsh of International Department of BBC and Bangladesh Correspondent of BBC World Service Ataus Samad.

Sandhani founding anniversary observed

Poet Begum Sufia Kamal yesterday called upon the people to come forward in greater numbers to donate blood to save life and also for posthumous eye-donation to give light to the blind, reports UNB.

She was addressing as chief guest a seminar organised on the occasion of 16th founding anniversary of Sandhani at the National Press Club in the morning.

Begum Sufia Kamal lauded the role of Sandhani, a voluntary institution of medical and dental students. She hoped their service for mankind would inspire the young generation and help save the youths from degeneration.

Ashoke Kumar Roy, advisory committee member of Sandhani's central committee, presented the key-note paper on "Blood and Physical Fitness".

He said blood donation activities should be encouraged to meet the growing demand of blood for the dying. But it should be ensured that the donated blood is free from any type of germ, Roy added.

Chaired by Sandhani Central Committee President Mahbubul Alam, the seminar was also address[illegible] by Dr Habibe Millat Mun[illegible] Monilal Aich Litu and Dr Tariq Reza Ali Tutul.

Sandhani volunteers from eight medical and one dental colleges of the country attended the seminar.

It was followed by a colourful rally which ended at the Central Shahid Minar.

Happy Birthday (6th Feb)

To My
Lakshmi Ba.

—From Your
Dearest Sunshine

Bangladesh envoy to US calls on Ackerman

Bangladesh Ambassador to the United States Abul Ahsan on Thursday called on Congress man Gary L Ackerman, the new Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Sub Committee for Asia and the Pacific at the latter's Washington DC Office, according to a message received here on Thursday, reports BSS.

Ackerman took over the chairmanship of the comm[illegible]tee from Stephen Solarz last month.

Congratulating Ackerman on his assumption of the office of chairman of this influential sub-committee, Ambassador Ahsan stated that Bangladesh looked forward to work closely with him to promote the existing relations between the two countries. The ambassador mentioned the support extended by the committee at different times particularly during the struggle for democracy and at times of natural disaster.

Ackerman said he was happy to receive Ahsan and appreciated Bangladesh's commitment to democracy, the chairman assured his committee's full support to the government's democratization process and efforts to institutionalize it. He lauded government's effort to look after the Rohingya refugees despite its many difficulties and expressed happiness over UNHCR reinvolvement in the repatriation progress.

Tender Notice

বিদ্যুৎ বিল নিয়মিত
পরিশোধ করুন

Name of work: Carrying of various goods of Distribution Division, PDB, Sylhet during 1992-93. (ADP). Estimated cost: Taka 7,26,500/- Eligibility of contractor: PDB enlisted 'A' & 'B' class contractors; only those having experience in similar work worth equivalent amount can participate in the tender and must have valid 'A' 'B' & 'C' electrical licence. Price of tender: Tk 500/-. Place and date of tender availability: Chief Engineer, Central Zone, PDB, Dhaka/Superintending Engineer, Sylhet Electric Supply Circle, PDB, Sylhet & Agrani Bank, Zindabazar branch, Sylhet up to 15-2-93. Date of receiving & opening tender: 16-2-93 up to 12-30 PM & on the same day at 1.00 pm. All formalities of the tender must be complied with.

Executive Engineer
Distribution Division
PDB, Sylhet

Biddut/Jan-837(4)/92-93
DFP (BA) 723-28/1
G-172

Jubo Dal thanks voters of Mirpur

Bangladesh Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal President and General Secretary yesterday congratulated the electorates of Mirpur for electing BNP nominee in a free, fair and neutral by-election, reports BSS.

In a joint statement here Jubo Dal President and Mayor of Dhaka Mirza Abbas, MP and GS and State Minister for Forest and Environment Gayeshar Chandra Roy also thanked all the officials and employees worked for the smooth holding of the by-election.

The Jubo Dal leaders said BNP had conceded its defeat in the last three by-elections honouring the verdicts of the people as their verdict is the final.

They regretted that a political party could not accept the verdict of the Mirpur by-election and had resorted to violence.

Dhaka's role on human rights progress lauded

The Washington based International Law Institute has lauded the role of Bangladesh government under the leadership of Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia for effective progress on human rights, according to a message received here yesterday, reports BSS.

"We deeply appreciate the role of the present democratic government under the able leadership of Begum Khaleda Zia for effective progress of human rights in Bangladesh," the institute stated.

Meanwhile the institute has set up a project on the establishment of a regional human rights commission for the South Asian countries under SAARC umbrella. Several organizations in the United States and South Asian countries have expressed strong support to the project.

Khandaker Mazharul Haque Kaiser, a Bangladeshi lawyer and currently visiting scholar at the Georgetown University law centre has been appointed as the project director. As project director he is engaged to maintain contacts with foreign ministers of SAARC countries, international organisations and US officials, the message added.

Microbiologists' confce postponed

The 11th annual conference of Bangladesh Society of Microbiologists scheduled to be held today (Saturday) at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council auditorium has been postponed due to unavoidable circumstances, reports UNB.

The new date of the conference will be announced later, says a press release.

Weather

Night temperature may rise

By Staff Correspondent

Dry weather will prevail over the country with partly cloudy sky over Rajshahi division and the regions of Mymenshingh, Tangail, Dhaka and Sylhet during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Saturday).

The met office forecasts, night temperature is likely to rise by about one degree Celsius over Rajshahi division and the regions of Mymenshingh, Tangail, Dhaka and Sylhet and will remain nearly unchanged elsewhere over the country.

The minimum temperature of 10.4 degree Celsius was reported from Srimangal yesterday (Friday) and the maximum of 30.3 degree was reported from Feni.

The sun sets today at 5.48 pm and rises tomorrow at 6.37am.

The maximum and the minimum temperature and humidity recorded in some of the major cities and towns of the country yesterday were:

Cities/Towns	Temperature in Degree Celsius		Humidity in Percentage	
	Max	Min	9am	6 pm
Dhaka	29.5	13.6	75	54
Chittagong	29.5	14.2	74	66
Rajshahi	28.92	12.0	66	66
Khulna	29.0	14.2	64	50
Cox's Bazar	28.0	15.4	61	67
Barisal	29.5	12.5	83	67
Sylhet	29.0	14.9	69	74
Dinajpur	27.5	11.6	83	53

জনসংযোগ ও প্রকাশনা বিভাগ
বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক
প্রধান কার্যালয়
ঢাকা।

নকশা আহবান

মুক্তিযুদ্ধের চেতনা, বাংলাদেশের সমাজ, সংস্কৃতি ও ভাষার কথা বিবেচনায় রেখে বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের বিভিন্ন ভবনের দেওয়ালে শিল্পকর্ম সম্পাদন এর জন্য নকশা আহবান করা যাচ্ছে।

এ ব্যাপারে যারা পূর্ব অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন এবং বিশেষ [illegible] এ ধরনের কাজের স্বীকৃতি রয়েছে-তাদেরকে ১৯৯৩ [illegible] তারিখের মধ্যে প্রস্তাবিত লে-আউটের খসড়া, শিল্পকর্মের মাধ্যম এবং সিলগালাবদ্ধ খামে আনুমানিক ব্যয়ের হিসাব বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের পরিচালক, জনসংযোগ ও প্রকাশনা বিভাগ-এর ঢাকাস্থ প্রধান কার্যালয়ের ৪র্থ তলায় অবস্থিত ১৩ নম্বর কক্ষে জমা প্রদান করনের জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাচ্ছে।

এ ব্যাপারে বিস্তারিত তথ্যের জন্য জনসংযোগ ও প্রকাশনা বিভাগ-এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।

জসওপবিঃ ৪৮/৯৩-১০৮
ডিএফপি (জি) ১৬৫৮-১/২
জি-১৭৮

এফ, এম, মোকাম্মেল হক
উপ পরিচালক
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