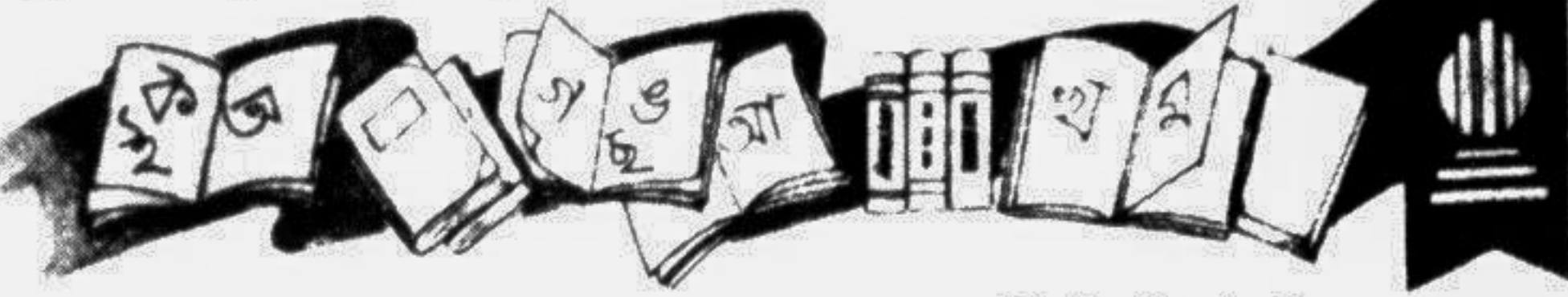


Spirit of Ekushey Lives On



Dhaka Day by Day

Movement that Shook the Stage

by Raffat Binte Rashid

The festive, fairlike turn of the Ekushey Granthela, has become the cause of worry to a tiny fraction of the mass population out there. The book fair, which is a part of the Ekushey celebration is the only time when all the great works of Bangla literature, past and present is reviewed. All wait, for the melia to surprise the general public.

Kabir Chowdhuri, an eminent educationalist and former chairman of Bangla Academy, during the crucial and exciting tenure of '69 to '72, perceives two sides of this particular public celebration.

"I believe there are two sides, one is positive, because February 21 has now acquired a mythic proportion. Myth in the good sense, good literary sense, where something embraces the emotions of multitudes, where ideas are generated, going beyond the specific disc. And it became a myth in that sense where it is no longer confined to merely Bengalee language, but the total emotion of the people, for their advancement in all sectors, music, architecture, politics."

He said "Its, taking in a certain festive character is not illegitimate in my opinion. Its understandable and need not be condemned, I should think that for one month this kind of absorption in a festive fairlike atmosphere is alright. But along with this Bangla Academy should never forget that its main task is to promote, research in matters of Bengali language, literature, and to promote and publish good books of all times, collecting good manuscript, building up good section of translation of all kinds of books. It should be a place of scholars and scholarship, for most part."

Bangla Academy was always the focal point of all mass movements. It provided a cohesive platform where all the legitimate demands of the Bengalees were highlighted. During both the pre and post liberation time, Bangla Academy helped directly and indirectly. The academy should never set aside its basic principles. Kabir Chowdhuri recalled the Ekushey celebration in the liberation year. He said, Ekushey was always and will always be celebrated with such tremendous amount of zeal and passion. "In 1971, February 21 was observed with great enthusiasm, the war was gathering momentum — a war, which was a direct fruit of the language movement. You can simply imagine the excitement of the Bengalees and during those days in Bangla Academy I felt I was involved in constructive work, something very meaningful both for myself and my country."

Asked about Ekushey's other influence in our culture and heritage Chowdhuri said "Ekushey demonstrations showed the path to all the other

movements in our country. Starting from language, culture, basic rights, to independence.

"One of the main change in our culture, is the practise of drama. Drama is another area which shows how liberation can unleash the creativity.

"After liberation, everybody knows about the group theatre movement. There was no tradition in Bangladesh of going to a theatre house, which has now become a regular feature. He said, "drama was there even before. And Ekushey had given birth to the finest play that we have in Bangla, 'Kabar' of Munir Chowdhuri.

"I look at the language movement in a wider perspective, than merely a movement for recognition of Bangla as state language. It has got a symbolic character. And from that point of view, Ekushey awareness has given rise to a large body of resistance, which resist fundamentalism, communalism, and protest against autocracy. All these are indirectly, a fruit of Ekushey.

"Our plays depict humanitarian aspect, humanism, anti-fundamentalism, and anti-fanatism. However there is one criticism. Sometimes these plays are too loud, too overtly propagandist, they do not pay enough attention to the final aspects of art, esthetic heights and qualities.

"But Bangla drama has attained great heights. For example in verse dramas, a difficult art form, much significant work has been done. Epic dramas, with vast canvas, has broken down the conventional forms of acting, highlighting the sentiments of patriotism."

However, Chowdhuri has few reservations. He said "Quality of acting, production, set design, lighting, these have made remarkable progress. But I will repeat, there is no scope for complacency and a great deal has to be done in this regard.

"Drama is still limited within the upper class. The range of audience has to be broadened. Attempts have been made about the gramen theatres, patho natoks, but more should be done to take up drama to concern men."

He suggests that, "It's a difficult task, it can't be done independently. Think of a practical situation, how do you take a drama group into a remote village and ask them to perform?"

"But slowly the barriers have to be broken. In fact its a two way process. Drama can help the social transformation, similarly social changes brought up by other forces can make the journey of drama easier."

And now like the annual Bangla Academy book fair, should there be a similar drama festival well planned and organised for the people?



Kabir Chowdhuri



Jahanara Imam addressing a meeting of the Ghatik Dalal Nirmul Committee yesterday at TSC auditorium. — Star photo

APSU demands withdrawal of ban on CU politics

CHITTAGONG, Feb 19: Chittagong University chapter of All Party Students Union (APSU), today urged the university authorities to fulfill its five-point demand which include withdrawal of prohibitory order on political activities on the campus, reports BSS.

Addressing a press conference at the Press Club here, Selim Reza Sourav, APSU leader and President of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL (M-I) university unit said that the whole university campus has been turned into a waste land without cultural and political activities since the imposition of code of conduct by the university authorities.

Sourav alleged that the authorities did not permit the APSU to hold the Ekushey February on the campus.

Other demands placed at the press conference included punishment to the persons responsible for the killings of Farooq, opening of new departments like Journalism, International Relations, and Geography, renovation of Shaheed Mozammel auditorium, immediate repair of Central Shaheed Minar and building up of an open stage at the Arts Faculty premises.

CUCSU General Secretary Azimuddin, Anup Khastagir of BCL, and Saifuddin Khaled Kharoo of Chhatra Union also spoke.

Publication ceremony

A completely revised and enlarged edition of the first thesaurus of Bangla language book 'Jatha Shabda' is being released on the occasion of the Ekushey February, reports UNB.

This Bangla thesaurus is an indispensable reference book for every writer, poet, teacher, journalist and professionals writing in Bangla.

This important and unique work has been completed after four years of intensive and extensive research.

Written by Justice Md Habibur Rahman the book has been published by the University Press Limited.

The main aim of the book is to provide a wide range of alternative meanings and associations to a host of Bangla words, expressions and phrases, said a UPL press release.

Legal Counsel of Junior Chamber Int'l due today

By Staff Correspondent David H. Oji, General Legal Counsel of the Junior Chamber International (JCI), arrives in Dhaka today.

Bangladesh Junior Chamber, the country chapter of the world-wide leadership development organisation, will accord a warm reception to Oji at the Zia International Airport.

During his stay, the General Legal Counsel of JCI, will call on the top leaders of the country and visit several programmes taken up by the Bangladesh Junior Chamber, said a press release.

KCC implementing Tk 16.5 crore uplift projects

KHULNA, Feb 19: The Khulna City Corporation (KCC) is implementing a Tk 16.5 crore development project to increase civic amenities to the city dwellers, reports UNB.

The project, the second phase of the Corporation's development programme, is expected to be completed by the current fiscal year.

The project included: construction and reconstruction of 61 roads, drains, culverts, Kachha Bazars, setting of sodium and tube light, construction of slaughter houses and three parks including a modern park at Khalishpur.

Meanwhile, KCC have completed development works in five slum areas in the city under slum its development projects. It also extended interest free loans among the slum dwellers.

Blockade aimed at triggering permanent loss

Jute Minister Brig (Retd) Hannan Shah yesterday said the recent industrial blockade was aimed not merely at discrediting the government, but causing permanent damage to the jute sector, the most vital sector of our economy, reports BSS.

There were some invisible force behind this destructive move to cause huge loss to nations vital sector", he told newsmen at his official residence last evening.

He said the blockade came at a time when the industry (jute industry) was poised for a "take off" and Bangladesh was getting responses from newer markets.

The Jute Minister said since the strike (caused by blockade) could not affect more than one-third mills, its impact on production would be minimal in the long term. However, there would be a long-term negative impact on reputation — a bad publicity affecting exports, he added.

'Mini Bangladesh' to be set up at Sonargaon

The three-month long crafts village and folk programme series ended yesterday at the Folk and Crafts Foundation at Sonargaon, reports BSS.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of the programme, Food Minister M Shamsul Islam said revival, preservation and practice of the nation's heritage can only ensure building up of a healthy and prosperous future.

He said despite the backwardness in the economic front, we have a glorious cultural heritage that upheld the nation's identity in the world society over the historical period. The ruling party is determined to encourage the culture of our own heritage for the nationalistic development, he said.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Prof Jahanara Begum said her ministry has taken all measures to set up a permanent complex in Sonargaon named Mini Bangladesh which would project the culture and traditional life style of the different parts of the country.

Weather

Night temperature may fall

By Staff Correspondent Rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty wind may occur at one or two places over Dhaka, Chittagong divisions and the regions of Pabna, Bogra, Rajshahi, Jessore and Kushtia while weather will remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country during the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Saturday).

The Met office forecasts, night temperature is likely to fall by one to two degree Celsius over Bangladesh.

The maximum temperature of the country of 34.0 degree Celsius was reported from Rajshahi and the minimum of 15.3 degree was from Dinajpur yesterday.

The sun sets today Saturday at 5.57 pm and rises tomorrow Sunday at 6.27 am.

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	9 am	6 pm
Dhaka	31.6	18.8	78	50
Chittagong	28.2	22.4	80	75
Rajshahi	34.0	16.2	68	48
Khulna	33.5	23.2	88	69
Barisal	31.2	23.6	92	84
Cox's Bazar	28.5	23.0	83	76
Dinajpur	31.0	15.3	87	32
Srimangal	27.8	17.4	86	84

Nirmal Sen at SKSD congress Anti-liberation forces firm to create anarchy

The two-day second congress of the Samrik Krishak Samajbadi Dal (SKSD) began here yesterday with a call for greater unity among the left forces to carry forward the movement for the establishment of an exploitation free society based on Socialism, reports BSS.

Held at Col Taher auditorium the inaugural session was presided over by Nirmal Sen, acting First Secretary of SKSD. It was also addressed by Ganotantrik Biplobi Jote leader Badruddin Omar and five party leaders Hasanul Huq Inu, Khalequzzaman Bhuiyan, A F M Mahbulul Huq and city leader of SKSD Belayet Hossain.

More than 200 delegates from different parts of the country are attending the congress.

Addressing the congress Nirmal Sen said time had come when all the left forces should unite to provide an alternative to the present politics in the country.

Sen said both the BNP and the Awami League represented the same class and accused these two parties of violating the commitment made by the three alliances by giving nominations to the men of autocrat Ershad in the last general election.

He said the February 27 elections in 1990 were free but it was heavily influenced by money power.

The SKSD leader said the two major political parties had given shelter to the terrorists who, he added, were creating terrorism on the campuses.

Nirmal sen said the "Anti-liberation forces like Jamaat-Shibir" were now determined to create a state of anarchy in the country and added that these forces had taken hostage of the Rajshahi University. The

economy of the country was being shattered as mills and factories were being closed down.

Omar said mere implementation of better wage was unlikely to solve the problems if industries were closed down.

He said during the Pakistani regime the number of multi-millionaire was between three and four but now several thousand people had become multi-millionaire in Bangladesh.

Hasanul Huq Inu stressed the need for greater unity of the left forces and urged the workers of left leaning parties to evaluate the present political war in the country.

He alleged that the present government had rehabilitated the men of Ershad. The BNP, he said, had not repealed the Special Powers Act which, he added, curbed fundamental rights to some extent.

Navy qirat competition held

The annual Qirat and Azan competitions of the Bangladesh Navy concluded at BNS Haji Mohsin Mosque after the Jumma prayers yesterday, says a press release.

About 100 qirat representing 8 teams drawn from different ships and establishment of Bangladesh Navy took part in the four-day meet.

Commodore Fakhruddin Ahmed, Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff attended the function as the chief guest and later gave away the prizes.

Among others senior officers of the Naval Headquarters and a large number of sailors were present on the occasion.

Statement condemned

By Staff Correspondent

Nineteen journalists of various national dailies, who are also the students of Dhaka University, in a statement Friday strongly condemned the statement issued by 206 students of the university demanding ban on the sale of some Liberation War based books.

The statement said the students had otherwise opposed the war of independence by raising such demand. They were, in fact, hindering the emergence of the spirit of the Liberation War, the statement added.

It, however, called upon the students of the university to identify the enemies of the struggle for independence.

The statement was signed by Tarek Al Naser (Bangladesh Observer) Moazzem Hossain (Janakantha), Hafizur Rahman Karjan (Sangbad), Nazrul Islam Mithu (Khoror), Zahid Newaj (Banglabazar Patrika), Mustaq Hossain (Bangladesh Times), Jayedul Hasan Pintu (Rupali), Matiar Rahman (The Telegraph), Sheikh Majlish Fuad (Banglabazar Patrika), Krishnapada Roy (Morning Sun) and Sohel Manzur (The Daily Star).



Lioness Club of Dhaka organised a Friday clinic yesterday at Bikrampur Kalma thana.