

Dhaka Day by Day Of Masks and Messages

by Fayza Haq

Sovon Som, a well-known artist, professor and critic from Rabindra Bharati University, held an interesting exhibition of his works at "La Galerie," recently.

The first painting had a mask with tear-drops done in beige and grey, with flowers, which represented crocodile tears of the foreign missionaries like those of Mother Teresa and Gunter Grass. The artist commented "Our poverty is a saleable commodity for the foreigners." Below were three figures — which denoted hungry people — a man, his wife and his child. The details of the faces, the eyes, nose, lips were done in a realistic manner. With light and dark shade contrasting with each other, the composition was clearly a symbolic one.

The tear-drops represented the hypocritical show of sorrow for the existing conditions, and the brown people below stood for the Indian masses. The rest of the painting was burnt-sienna, while the flowers were orange and white. There was the moon and the blue sky on the top. The composition was neat and done with care.

In "No. 9" gouache on silk, he on silk, had lovers embracing each other. This was a realistic depiction with amorous figures clinging to each other, in the act of love-making. The girl's long tresses and feeling of contentment and the man's adoration of the woman was depicted in an idyllic manner, while the limbs were done in a subtle grey. There was a predominance of orange, burnt sienna and black, with faint touches of green. This was a miniature painting.

In "No. 6", one witnessed the depiction of the middle class Indian family, with the man suited and booted, with striped blue tie, while the woman sported a silk "sari." The faces were shown almost like cement statues, which represented their lack of feeling, and their overwhelming hypocrisy. The grey faces reminded one sometimes of photographs, and at others of statues from the Ajanta caves. The background was purple, with green leaves, which balanced the composition. The facial features had been done with immaculate care and proportion.



"No. 10" had a limbless scarecrow which looked almost like a human being, sporting a jacket and a tie. There was a lady in a majenta "sari", and she had her arm around the scarecrow, so that the effect was bizarre. This was against the backdrop of an orange sky, and intervening leaves of the garden. It was illustrative, decorative and at the same time surrealist.

In "No. 7", gouache on silk, there was a statue of Buddha with a flower in his mouth. Looking at it was a woman, done in a sketchy manner, with her jewellery and painted finger nails. The background of grey and beige held the composition together. It was once again a neat and symbolic creation.

"No. 19", gouache on silk, depicted a child playing with a doll. This was impressionistic. The child dressed in pink sitting on a beige checkered floor, was more effective than some of the more symbolic and stylised works.

In "No. 23", one saw the child once again scribbling on the wall. This was more like a sketch. In 17, similarly one saw a child with a short orange dress, with her panty showing. The composition included scribbles on the wall by the child, in blue and green which was all quite effective.

In "No. 2", one was confronted with a child again, and this time the child was playing with a pistol, which symbolized the questionable games the children indulge in now-a-days. The mask hanging from his body once again represented the restlessness in present society. "Thus, from childhood, man is trained today to get used to violence. In this manner, childhood is marred today," Sovon Som commented.

There was yet another symbolic fascinating creation of masks lying pell-mell on the ground with burning chaos in the background. This painting stood for the Naxalite Movement, which has been foiled.

The exhibition comprised works, which were a selection of the artist's last 20 years' work, in water colour on silk, and canvas. It is always a welcome change to be able to view the works of visiting artists and to learn from them.



Bangladesh Federation of University Women arranged a Baishakhi Mela at the Dhaka Business and Professional Women's Club in the city yesterday. —Star photo

Decoration shop owners seek exemption of VAT

Bangladesh Decorators' Malik Samity yesterday urged the government to exclude their business from Value Added Tax (VAT) to protect what it said, the service oriented decorators' business from destruction, reports UNB.

Decorators are being harassed by the revenue officials as huge burden of VAT is arbitrarily imposed on their business, the samity alleged at a news conference at the Jatiya Press Club in the afternoon.

Reading out a written statement, samity general secretary Mohammed Zakir Hossain expressed the apprehension that the decorators' business might have to be closed if the government did not exclude VAT from it immediately.

He said imposition of VAT on the decorators without

considering their investment and income is illogical as it is a seasonal business involving a small capital.

The samity has already submitted memoranda to the Prime Minister, the Finance Minister, State Minister for Finance, Finance Secretary and other concerned authorities. But no response was received yet, the samity leaders said.

They warned of an action programme if the VAT is not withdrawn immediately from the decorators business.

The press conference was attended by samity leaders, including Joyenuddin Ahmed, Hafizuddin Ahmed, Sultan Ahmed and Abdul Kadir.

Train up children properly : Anwar

Commerce Minister M K Anwar has urged all to train up children properly to create a happy, prosperous and prestigious nation, reports UNB.

He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of a drawing, recitation and essay writing competition for the children held at the Shishu Academy yesterday.

Recalling the contributions of late President Ziaur Rahman, the minister said that Shaheed Zia had realised the necessity of training the children and has established the Shishu Academy, the Shishu Park, introduced the television programme Notun Kuri and created a separate ministry for women's affairs.

Organised by Genesis, the function was also addressed by Genesis president Noor Hossain Rana and secretary general Farooq Nawaz.

Steps to cultivate paddy alongwith shrimp taken

Minister for Agriculture and Irrigation, Water Development and Flood Control Major General (ret'd) M Majid-Ul-Haq said here yesterday the government had taken up appropriate measures and achieved the technology of cultivating High Yielding Variety (HYV) paddy alongwith shrimp cultivation in the coastal areas, reports BSS.

He was addressing as the chief guest a function organised by "Shatkshira Jana Samity" at ICMA auditorium at Nilkhet here. Among others, the function was also addressed by Farida Rahman MP, eminent child specialist Dr M R Khan and the president of the Samity Habibur Rahman.

The Agriculture Minister said the present government

was committed to develop each and every part of the country through balanced distribution of wealth and resources. He said no development could be achieved without the joint effort of the government and the people.

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Govt to ensure welfare of all sections of people: Huda

RAJSHAHI, May 7: Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda today said that the main objective of the BNP government was to ensure overall welfare of all sections of people including aboriginals in the country, reports BSS.

He said that the aboriginals were enjoying equal rights with other citizens and contributing their mite for overall development.

He was addressing as chief guest the aboriginals' cultural function at Kachua village under Tanore thana, 27 miles north of Rajshahi town.

Presided over by Jhabu Charan Baskey, an aboriginal, the function was also addressed by State Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Barrister Aminul Haq and Durbin Kisku.

A large number of aboriginals attended the function.

Barrister Nazmul Huda said that the aboriginals as citizens of the country voted BNP to power and added that their problems will be solved.

He called upon them to extend their support for implementing the 19-point programme of the present government. He said the present government was working hard to ensure food, clothing, housing, medicare and education for all.

Barrister Huda bitterly criticised those political parties who were engaged in disrupting the development process of the government. He called upon all to resist those political parties who were calling hartal and creating anarchy.

Barrister Huda said that the

policy of the government was to make the country happy and prosperous by increasing production in mills and factories.

The Information Minister advised the aboriginals (Santal) to perform their religious rites and cultural activities and work for the development of the country.

25 hurt over land dispute

JHENIDAH, May 7: Twenty-five people were injured, eleven of them seriously, in a clash between rival groups over a land dispute at village Shyamnagar in Sadar thana of the district today, reports UNB.

The 11 seriously injured, including Sabeda Khatoon (55) and her son Minhazuddin (30), were admitted to Jhenidah Sadar Hospital. Of them, the condition of Minhazuddin and Baker Ali (50) was said to be critical.



Saturday

- 5.00 Opening announcement Al-Quran Programme summary
- 5.10 News in Bangla
- 5.25 Special programme on the occasion of Tagore's Birthday: Orey Sabuj
- 5.50 Cartoon film: Peter Pan and the Pirates
- 6.20 Special programme on the Red Crescent Day
- 6.45 Tagore songs
- 7.30 Live telecast of Tagore's birthday programme from Shilpakala Academy
- 8.00 News in Bangla
- 8.30 Mati-o-Manush
- 9.00 Special programme on Tagore's birthday: Bangladesher Ridoy Hote
- 10.00 News in English
- 10.30 Special drama on the occasion of Tagore's birthday
- 11.30 Khabar/The News
- 11.45 Closing

Weather

Thundershower likely

By Staff Correspondent

Weather forecast for the next 24 hours commencing 6 am today (Saturday) says rain or thundershower with temporary gusty or squally wind may occur at many places over the divisions of Chittagong, Barisal and Dhaka.

Rainfall is likely at a few places over the divisions of Khulna and Rajshahi during the same period, while moderately heavy falls are likely at different places over the country.

The Met office forecasts, day temperature will rise by one to two degree Celsius over the country.

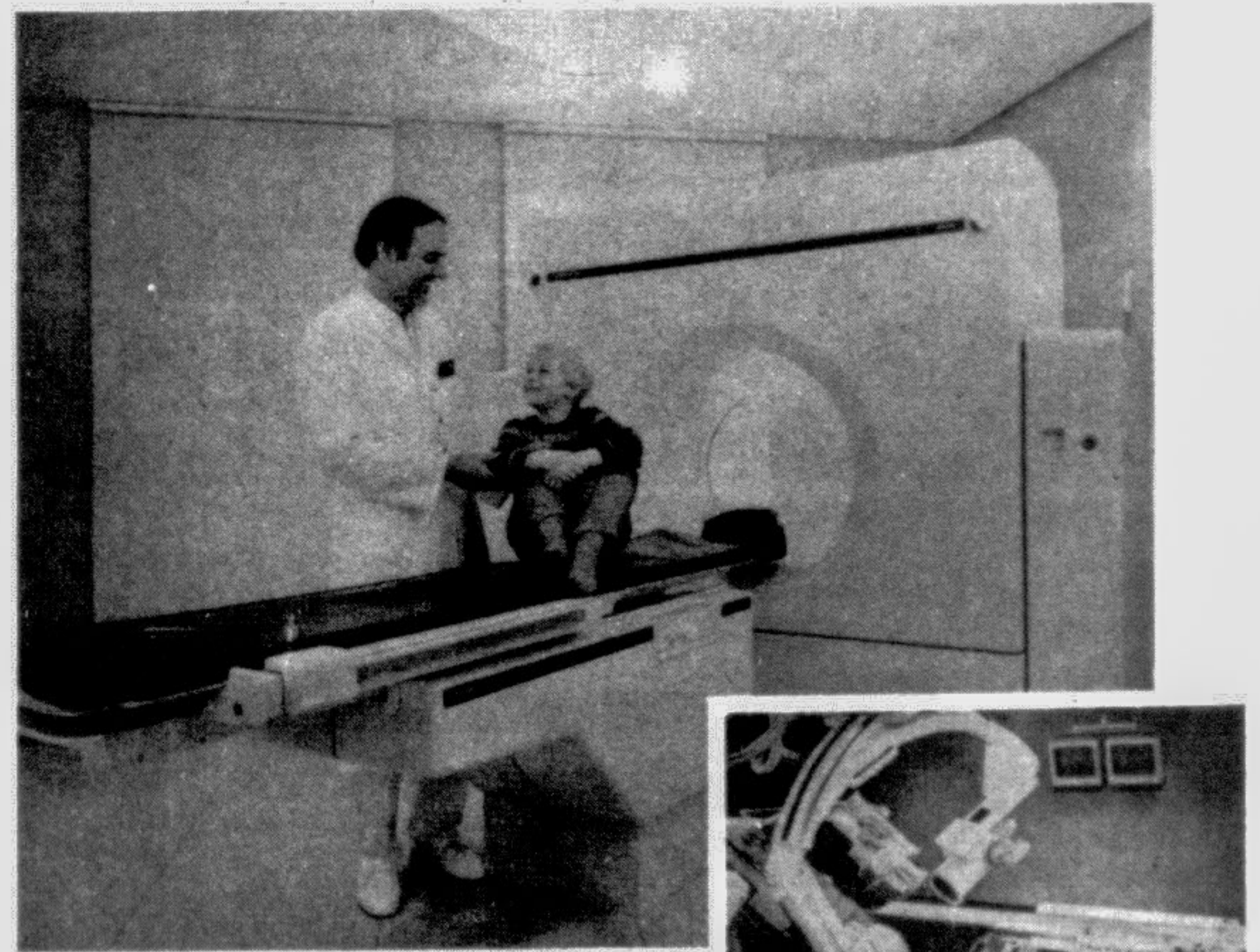
The maximum temperature of the country recorded yesterday (Friday) of 34.0 degree Celsius was reported from Satkhira and the minimum of 18.5 degree was reported from Rangamati.

The chief amounts of rainfall recorded in 12 hours from 6 am to 6 pm yesterday are : Feni 68 mm, Bogra 60 mm, Chandpur 44 mm, Dhaka 42 mm, Sandwip 38 mm, Sitakund 37 mm, Satkhira 36 mm, Bhola 34 mm, Barisal 33 mm, Patuakhali 32 mm and Rangamati 30 mm. Rainfall at many other places was recorded below 30 mm.

The sun sets today at 6.31 pm and rises tomorrow at 5.19 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	26.6	21.5	81	94
Chittagong	33.0	21.0	71	95
Rajshahi	25.3	21.7	82	82
Khulna	33.2	20.2		
Barisal	30.8	19.4	88	100
Cox's Bazar	31.0	21.0	77	80
Sylhet	26.1	19.2	89	82
Dinajpur	24.3	22.6	97	78



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