

Metropolitan

Dhaka Day by Day

Pointing at Racism

by Aasha Mehreen Amin



As Europe becomes a single market with talks of a common currency becoming a reality, a darker side to this dramatic unification is revealed. This is the rise in the tide of racism that poses as a contradiction to a united Europe. The victims of race-related violence and discrimination are the immigrants from South Asia or Africa described after as 'coloured' people. Roshini Kepadoo demonstrates this contradiction in her photographic exhibition titled 'European Currency Unfolds' being held at the Dark Gallery in Dhanmondi. Through sophisticated collage techniques and using text to explain the images, Roshini projects the disintegration of race relations and the rise of racial discrimination in the wake of European unification.

One of the first exhibits is a poster showing a wrinkled currency note on top of which is a white sequined mask. Superimposed on this is the face of an Indian woman, her ethnicity apparent in her nose pin and the black shawl that covers her head. The expression on her face is one of resigned acceptance.

The second poster depicts the plight of immigrant workers in Europe. Another currency note with many intertwining hands locked in chains embossed on it possibly to show the kind of slavery the migrant worker is subjected to even today. On top of this is a passport with Kempadoo's name. Under all this parts of an official document can be seen. The visible text describes migrant workers as 'problems' that should be dealt with: 'In countries with a tradition of migration such as Germany and France the problem of migrants who do not wish to return ... their possible re-training for the tertiary sector.' The 'tertiary sector' means menial jobs which are invariably given to Blacks or South Asians.

'Open for Business' is another poster. This time the currency is Italian. On this is superimposed the face of a Black youth, possibly a labourer, his expression defiant yet tranquil. The next explains it all: 'The murkier doings of industry. Systems of exploitation are erected on the back of the foreign worker where labour is alien, foreign and therefore rightless. Governments want the work cheap, unorganised, invisible.' The note is cut off on the left by the image of a ship overflowing with Black men, some even jumping into the water.

A ten-pound English note in orange and grey dominates another of Roshini's work. Blended with this is the image of the back of a young Black girl carrying boxes of bananas labelled 'Geest', possibly an English company. Figures of people, some black, some white walking around aimlessly, are also included showing their separateness and mutual distrust of one another. The caption of this picture 'Poverty and dependency, the legacy of colonial rule.'

Another striking image is in the poster showing two white supremacists shouting hate slogans. At the back is a 20-Franc note on which is the face of a Middle Eastern Muslim woman, her head covered in with white cloth, her face benign, placid.

The next poster is of a leather jacket made to look ominous because of the reptilian material. Peeking out of the pocket are some money including an English note with Queen Elizabeth's face. In the background is a pair of outstretched, their hands tied in ropes. The red colouring of the photograph gives a dramatic effect. One of the last items in this series shows a Spanish currency note, on the left of which is the image of colonists with their Christian flag and sharp spears contrasting with the native people welcoming them with fruits. 'Five centuries of discovery becomes justifiable genocide of the first peoples,' reads the caption.

The series concludes with the poster showing a German Mark. On one side is a woman, her head covered and on another an East German family. The caption reads: 'The Volk Deutsche from Eastern Europe are the answer. The East German 'bros and sis' it is argued can do the job that were formerly done by foreign immigrants.' The exclusion of the latter is thus made inevitable.

What Roshini says in her posters is nothing new. Yet it is the powerful imagery in her work that makes it so unique and dramatic. Her photographs of people are simple which at the same time capture expressions that are honest and catching. Using the computer she has created remarkable collages of images that show the plight of ethnic minorities in various European countries. At a time when the evils of 'ethnic cleansing' and racial hatred against are at their peak, Roshini's posters are a slap on the face of the European Community ideal.

Government survey says

Over 15m people live under open sky

More than 15 million people live under open sky and the number may reach 25 million by the year 2000, says a government survey, reports UNB.

The survey was conducted recently preparatory to a national housing policy to provide 'shelter to all people by the year 2000', a global strategy fixed the United Nations.

The housing shortage in the country was in 1991 at about 3.10 million units — 2.15 million units in rural areas and 0.95 million in urban areas.

About five million shelterless people were living in the urban areas alone.

The survey report said housing stock is deteriorating fast due to ageing, negligence, poverty and civic apathy on the part of the dwellers. The current trend shows that the housing shortage is likely to exceed more than five million units by the year 2000.

At present 30 per cent of the rural families do not have their own homesteads — they live in ejmal, mortgage or rented homesteads.

Eighty five per cent of houses in rural areas are kutcha and most of these are in unsatisfactory conditions in terms of structural qualities.

With the rapid growth of population in urban areas, over 50 per cent of urban population will be living in slums and squatter settlements by the year 2000, the report said.

The survey identified the financing as one of the most formidable constraints in building and maintenance of houses.

The existing resources for housing finance include personal funds of potential urban builders and buyers, savings of overseas Bangladeshis, government loan, government budgetary allocations, contributions by international donor agencies, commercial banks, specialised financial institutions and NGOs.

The share of housing in the public sector development programme is less. Banking, insurance and investment agencies are away from investment in the field.

Only about five per cent of the housing units constructed in the country are financed from formal sources. The rest financing comes from savings, private borrowing and informal sources.

House Building Finance Corporation, the largest formal sector financial institution in the field, has served only a very small proportion of households, mostly in the middle and upper-middle class groups in the urban areas.

Rural Development and Cooperative Division, government and Grameen Bank have recently started a house financing programme for the rural poor.



Awami League chief and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina addressing the party's executive committee meeting at her official residence yesterday. — Star photo



Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda speaking at a discussion marking the 75th anniversary of birth of the poet Abdul Hye Mashreki at the Jatiya Press Club auditorium yesterday. — Star photo

বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় যাদুঘর

শাহবাগ ঢাকা-১০০০

বাংলা নতুন শতাব্দী বরণ উপলক্ষে জাতীয় যাদুঘরের তিনমাস ব্যাপী অনুষ্ঠানমালা

শিশু-কিশোরদের সুন্দর বাংলা হাতের লেখা প্রতিযোগিতা

বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় যাদুঘর ঢাকা, জিয়া স্মৃতি যাদুঘর চট্টগ্রাম এবং জমশানী যাদুঘর সিলেটে একই সঙ্গে শিশু-কিশোরদের জন্য 'সুন্দর বাংলা হাতের লেখা' প্রতিযোগিতার আয়োজন করা হয়েছে।

শিশু-শ্রেণী থেকে দশম শ্রেণী পর্যন্ত চারটি বিভাগে প্রতিযোগিতা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

এপ্রিলের ৪ তারিখ থেকে ১৩ এপ্রিল '৯৪-এর মধ্যে অফিস চলাকালে উল্লিখিত যাদুঘরসমূহে এসে নাম নিবন্ধন করতে হবে। এপ্রিলের ১৫ তারিখ শুক্রবার সকাল ৯-৩০ মিনিটে প্রতিযোগিতা অনুষ্ঠিত হবে। সকাল ৯-০০ টার মধ্যে প্রতিযোগীদের পেন্সিল, কলম, ক্লিপবোর্ড এবং নিবন্ধন কার্ডসহ স্ব-স্ব নাম নিবন্ধনকৃত স্থানে উপস্থিত হতে হবে। যাদুঘর কর্তৃপক্ষ কাগজ সরবরাহ করবে।

বিশ্বাসিক ইংরেজী জার্নাল 'বাংলাদেশ ললিত কলা'-এর প্রকাশনা উৎসব এবং বাংলা খেলাধুলির অনুষ্ঠান

১৭ এপ্রিল '৯৪ রোববার বিকাল ৪টাঃ জার্নাল প্রকাশনা অনুষ্ঠান, সন্ধ্যা ৬টাঃ বাংলা খেলা

'সুন্দর বাংলা হাতের লেখা প্রতিযোগিতা'র পুরস্কার বিতরণী এবং সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান

১৯ এপ্রিল '৯৪ মঙ্গলবার, বিকাল ৪টাঃ পুরস্কার ও সনদপত্র বিতরণ, সন্ধ্যা ৬টাঃ সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান।

'জেলা ঐতিহ্য সংরক্ষণ কর্মসূচি'র ডিডিও পূর্ণায় করার লক্ষ্যে পবিত্রমূলক প্রদর্শনী

২৯ এপ্রিল '৯৪ শুক্রবার, জেলা-রাজবাড়ী ০৬ মে '৯৪ শুক্রবার, জেলা-পিরোজপুর

৩০ এপ্রিল '৯৪ শনিবার, জেলা-বান্দরবান ০৯ মে '৯৪ সোমবার, জেলা-ঝিনাইদহ

০২ মে '৯৪ সোমবার, জেলা-নেত্রকোনা ১০ মে '৯৪ মঙ্গলবার, জেলা-টাঙ্গাইল

০৩ মে '৯৪ মঙ্গলবার, জেলা-ভোলা

শিল্পাচার্য জয়নুল আবেদিন, কামরুল হাসান ও রশিদ চৌধুরীর চিত্রকর্ম প্রদর্শনী

১৩ মে শুক্রবার থেকে ১৫ জুলাই '৯৪ শুক্রবার দুইমাস ব্যাপী পদার্থী সমাপ্তি দিবসে বিকাল ৪টাঃ শিল্পীত্রয়ের চিত্রকর্মের ওপর বিশেষ সেমিনার এবং সন্ধ্যায় সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান।

উৎসাহী দর্শক/শ্রোতাদের বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় যাদুঘরের শিক্ষা বিভাগ থেকে আমন্ত্রণপত্র সংগ্রহ করার জন্য অনুগ্রহ করা হচ্ছে।

যোগাযোগের ঠিকানা

কীপার শিক্কা

বাংলাদেশ জাতীয় যাদুঘর

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Australian Defence Force chief due today

Chief of the Australian Defence Force Admiral Alan Beaumont AC Ran arrives in the city today for a two-day goodwill visit, says a press release of the Australian High Commission in Dhaka.

During his stay, Admiral Beaumont will call on President Abdur Rahman Biswas and meet senior Bangladesh military staff to discuss issues of mutual interest.

Admiral Beaumont's visit is the second to Bangladesh this year by a senior Australian military officer. General John Sanderson, who commanded UN forces in Cambodia, visited in January.

He will be accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Justine Beaumont. Admiral Beaumont will leave Dhaka tomorrow for Pakistan and India.

Admiral Beaumont is Australia's most senior military officer, with command of all three armed services. He took up his position in April 1993 after 45 years of service with the Royal Australian Navy.

He was born at Newcastle NSW in 1934. Educated at Boolaroo Public School and Newcastle Technical High School.

Conference on Tagore's works begins today

The two-day conference on Tagore's works begins today. Noted Tagore researcher Justice Mohammad Habibur Rahman will inaugurate the convention at 4:30 in the evening at the auditorium of National Museum. Poet Abul Hossain, president of the Rabindracharcha Kendra — the organiser of the conference — will chair it. The coordinator of the kendra Ahmad Rafiq will give away the welcome speech.

On the first day a seminar on 'The recent translations of Tagore's works' will be held at 5:30 pm. Syed Nazmuddin Hasem will present the keynote paper. Khandaker Ashraf Hossain, Shaheen Mahmud and Dr Manjula Basu will take part in the discussion on the paper.



Thursday

4:30	Opening announcement, Al-Quran, Programme summary
4:45	Children's programme: Ruanthum
5:10	News in Bangla
5:25	National Television School Debate Competition
6:30	Mass Education Programme: Esho Para Shikhi
7:00	Jiboner Alo
7:25	Nazrul songs
8:00	News in Bangla
8:30	Drama of the week: Ami Kar Ke Amar
10:00	News in English
10:30	Mini series: Act of Will
11:30	Khabar/The News
11:40	Tomorrow's programme summary
11:45	Closing

Weather

Temperature may rise

By Staff Correspondent

Rain or thundershower accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely to occur over the regions of Rangpur, Dinajpur, Mymensingh and Sylhet while weather is likely to remain mainly dry elsewhere over the country during the next 12 hours commencing 6 am today (Thursday).

The Met Office forecasts, slight rise in day temperature over the country is expected.

The country's highest temperature yesterday of 36.0 degrees Celsius was recorded in lowardi and the lowest 17.4 degrees in Kutubdia.

Rainfall amounts recorded from 6 am to 6 pm yesterday across the country were Sylhet 16 mm and Rangpur 4 mm.

The sun sets today (Thursday) at 6.17 pm and rises tomorrow (Friday) at 5.44 am.

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