

## Dhaka Day by Day

## Capturing the Pleasant side of Reality

by Aasha Mehreen Amin

Whether we see life as simple and beautiful or complicated and ugly depends on what we focus on. For the photographer this is all the more true for he does not merely document an object or an event through his lens. It is his imagination, his perception that determines the tone of the photograph, whether sad or happy or just static. Syed Noor Hossain, in his exhibition of assorted photographs at La Galerie, displays his taste for the simple pleasures of life.

A sense of positivism and optimism is characteristic of all Hossain's photographs. This is especially apparent in his portraits. 'Life on the Street' is a black and white picture of a homeless family who live on the streets of Calcutta. The people in the picture look relaxed and happy. The background of a dirty broken road and worn out rickshaw is in striking contrast to the faces of the family where eyes sparkle with real pleasure. The picture shows that even stark poverty

cannot mar a few happy moments shared by a family. The picture of a coconut vendor also in black and white, has the same positive tone. The vendor's expressive eyes, his satisfied smile, the pile of coconuts and the sacks of spices are all captured in detail by the expert eye of the photographer.

Similarly, "Another Hard Day" depicts a Calcutta street just waking up after a drizzle. The cobbled road shines with the rain drops as two men drag their cart wheel to begin their day.

In a somewhat different sphere but in the same mellow mood is Hossain's collection of coloured still life that brings inanimate objects to life through manipulation of colours and angles. The 'Reflection in Crystal' series shows crystal jars containing coloured jelly pieces which reflect through the glass in a medley of spectacular colours. Hossain's remarkable eye for detail can be seen in the photograph titled, 'The Splash', which shows a ball splashing into a bucket of water displacing trickles of water.

Catching the exact moment of the splash, the photograph captures the colours of the green ball against the red bucket, the different shades of the cracked floor reflected against the light. 'Moss on the Rocks' is also an interesting photograph taken from above of squarish rock like surfaces surrounded by different shades of green moss. Colours that dominate most of the photographs are vibrant reds, magentas, purples, pinks and indigos — colours that could be described as happy and alive.

Historical photos at this exhibition which will go on until May 14th, include a coloured



1971 portrait of Monique Sihanouk in Peking and a group of Chinese school children singing Communist slogans in their uniforms as 'Mao's Little Red Guards' in post-Cultural Revolution China. A rare black and white photograph of the now extinct Ramna Zoo taken in 1962 is also a part of this exhibition.

One may be a little disappointed at the dearth of black and white shots in this exhibition. The photographer explains that this is due to the limitation and expense of printing that has prevented him from displaying a vast range of black and white photographs.

As the exhibits will show, being a diplomat has enabled Hossain to give an international flavour to his collection. He has taken pictures in China, Japan, Malaysia, Switzerland, Calcutta and other far away lands. He has held a photography exhibition in Tokyo in 1989 and participated in the All India slide show in Calcutta in 1992.

Hossain's love and fascination for nature is apparent in his collection of remarkably well defined photographs of landscapes, flowers and animals. 'Frog in the Lily Pond' for example, is a beautiful shot of a little amphibian sitting on a leaf. The photograph has been taken with a precision showing every detail of the frog's

greenish skin, its reflection on the leaf, the veins of the leaf and sparkling drops of water on it. The 'Friendly Butterfly' is also a wonderful shot of a gorgeous black and white butterfly resting on a human hand — a symbol of friendship and peace. Other nature photographs that reveal Hossain's talent for capturing minute details include shots of orchids, a peach rose with dew drops and an endearing scene of a baby elephant suckling its mother.

Hossain, now Director General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, says that although a little bit of technical training will come in handy, a good photographer basically depends on his own ideas and imagination. Over the years Hossain has acquired many different types of cameras including classics such as Linhof Technica, Hasselblad 500C/M, Rolleiflex 2.8F and Leica M 3. He however, insists that it is one's creativity and not equipment that makes one a good photographer.

Hossain's somewhat stylized photography reveals the uncomplicated positive aspects of reality. This has been completely intentional. Many photographers prefer to record the gruesome side of reality; I like to capture the happy moments of life, says the diplomat-cum-artist.

## What's on today . . . .

**Seminar:** On Strategy for Water Quality Monitoring organised by the Department of Environment in association with the World Health Organisation. Main Speaker: Dr Ivanildo Hespanhol. Chief guest: Abdullah Haroon Pasha, Secretary, Ministry of Environment. Venue: Hotel Purbani. Time: 9 am.

**Anti-drug Discussion:** Organised by Life, an anti-drug organisation, in collaboration with the VHSS. Chief guest: Special advisor to Unicef Manzur-ul Karim. Venue: Scout Bhaban, Kakrall. Time: 9 am.

**Reception:** To Dhaka city Mayor Mohammad Hanif and a cultural function. Organised by Dhaka Metropolitan Meat Sellers Association. Venue: Public Library, Shahbag. Time: 4 pm.

**Rotaract Club of Uttara Central:** The charter presentation. Venue: Kinnaree Restaurant, Uttara Model Town. Time: 6:30 pm.

**Rotaract Club of Notre Dame College:** Regular weekly meeting. Venue: Notre Dame College. Time: 4:30 pm.

**Rotary Club of Dhaka Mid-Town:** Regular weekly meeting. Venue: Hotel Sheraton. Time: 5:30 pm.

## . . . . and tomorrow . . . .

**Inner Wheel Club of Dhaka Buriganga:** Organises a drama show 'Bichchhu'. Venue: Mohila Samity auditorium. Time: 7:30 pm.

**Painting Exhibition:** On 'women' organised as part of women's week. Chief guest: State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum. Special guest: Renowned French journalist Mrs Menie Gregoire. Venue: Residence of French ambassador Jean-Michel Lacombe, House-7, Road-99, Gulshan. Time: 5 pm.

**Bangladesh Television (BTV) Wednesday**

4:30	Opening announcement.
4:45	Al-Quran Programme summary.
5:10	Sports programme: Wrestling.
5:25	News in Bangla.
6:00	Programme on population: Agamee.
7:00	Tagore musical programme: Open: Unmesh.
7:25	Tagore song.
8:00	News in Bangla.
9:05	Film show: The A-Team.
10:00	News in English.
10:30	Magazine: Kathamala Khabar/ The News.
11:30	tomorrow's programme summary.
11:45	Closing.

## Weather

## No change in temperature

Rain or thunderstorm accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at a few places over Dhaka, Chittagong and Barisal divisions and at one or two places over Rajshahi and Khulna divisions during the next 24 hours till 6 pm today, reports UNB.

Met office says no appreciable change in day temperature is expected over the country.

Yesterday's maximum temperature in Dhaka was 34 degree Celsius and the minimum 25 degrees.

Country's highest temperature of 38 degree Celsius was recorded at Jessor and the lowest 19.1 degrees at Kutubdia.

Sun sets today (Wednesday) at 6:32 pm and rises day after tomorrow (Thursday) at 5:18 am.

## 'Conventional laws not enough to establish women's rights'

Renowned French journalist and writer on women's affairs Mrs Menie Gregoire, who is on a visit here, has said that conventional laws are not enough to establish women's rights in society, reports UNB.

She suggested that evolutionary process are better than revolutionary process for getting the women's rights established.

Madame Gregoire was addressing a discussion meeting on 'Evolution of Women in the European Countries and its Consequence' at the Alliance Francaise here yesterday.

Women are working as naval commanders, judges or ministers but their numbers are less than their male counterparts as women are busy with their household work as well as raising of children, she observed.

Elaborating the role of media in ensuring women's rights in France, she said that the French newspapers have an important role in establishing their rights.

Lacombe, Director of Alliance Francaise Xavier Barres and Director of CESTI Dr Rifat Rashid also spoke on the occasion.

Among others, the discussion was participated by Prof Nazma Siddique, Chairperson of the Department of Philosophy, Jahangirnagar University, Roushan Jahan of 'Women for Women' Farida Akhter of UBINIG, a women rights organisation, and Helen Rahman.

ল্যাপারোম্বকপি মেশিনের সাহায্যে  
গল ব্লাডার অপসারণ

বোগাযোগ করুন:  
মনোয়ারা হাসপিটাল (প্রাঃ) লিঃ  
৫৪, সিরাজেব্রী রোড, ঢাকা  
ফোন: ৮০০৩৫৮, ৮০০৮৭২, ৮০২১২২

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