

Dhaka Day by Day

Feeling a Dance

by Nico den Tuinder

Recently, I greatly enjoyed the performance of Shukla Sarkar and her dance troupe of the Dhurupad Arts Centre. That is to say, those parts that I could see and hear. The audience tried everything it could to prevent me from having a marvellous evening at the auditorium of the National Museum.

And that was only the final hurdle on a long road to haute culture. I once lived in London for nearly one and a half years. There you have "Time Out", a weekly magazine which announces all the films, music performances, plays, operas, musicals, etc. You can plan your cultural programme well in advance, and adjust your weekly time schedule accordingly. Here in Dhaka, it is virtually impossible to know what is going on. I am a member of the Alliance Francaise, but do not receive its monthly programme. Each month I have to go there to pick it up. The same applies to the Goethe Institut. A weekly calendar in the newspaper with all events would be a great benefit to me, and all those institutes catering for Dhaka's cultural life.

The Bengalis have a knack for fasting right until the middle of the night, and the timings of cultural events are adjusted to that. So people like me, who are used to having their dinner at a time, when the rest of Bangladesh is starting to consider their afternoon tea, have to suffer. Sometimes performances even start at 6 O'clock. I then have to eat at 5 pm!

How does one obtain a ticket? The performance was duly announced in the newspaper, but yours sincerely did not see any ticket booth whatsoever. Like a poor *bakshishwallah*, I had to beg for a ticket, anxiously waiting for some ten minutes for entering. Thanks to the hospi-

tality of the organisers, and the Tk 250 in my wallet, I was granted permission to see more of Dhaka than the grubby buildings, dirty streets and overdecorated cars.

Pfff. I sighed, when I entered the auditorium. My troubles are over. And now for the dance and music, I thought. Well, there was the dance, there was the music, and there was the Dhaka audience. The visual and musical balance was in favour of the latter. Children — I like them, especially when they are asleep — but not during a cultural performance. Why can't parents leave these noisy little goons at home? Photographers. Please let the professional ones be seated in the front row of seats, and allow them one flash each. Smash go the cameras of the amateurs. Next, late-comers arrive. A large family coming in, forcing the audience to get up, of course, creates its own visual spectacle, but I am sure that is not the idea behind organising a dance performance.

Earthquakes. In the Science Museum of London, you can stand on a shaking platform and feel what an earthquake is all about. In the 1970s, an era full of films of disasters, "Towering Inferno" and "Airport", I watched Earthquake.

Surrounded by a special musical system to generate low-frequency sound waves imitating earthquakes, I am sure, my neighbour at the auditorium relished both the platform and the film. The dancer frequently shook her right leg, sending waves of vibration through all the seats, and so literally made me feel that an earthquake had come around me.

I think events like this should be renamed. The performance by Shukla Sarkar and her dance troupe had the audience mesmerised.



The performance of Shukla Sarkar at the National Museum Auditorium. — Star photo



Visitors at the painting exhibition of Nazrul Islam at the La Galerie in the city Saturday. — Star photo

BNP not afraid of any movement'

BNP standing committee member and Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Dr Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain yesterday said the BNP government would not leave power at any undue request or in face of pressure from any quarter, reports BSS.

"The BNP government has come to power with the people's mandate through a fair and impartial election and not at the mercy of anybody," he said.

The minister was addressing as the chief guest the installation ceremony '94 of Dhaka City Jatiyatabadi Chhatradal (JCD) at the Shilpakala Academy auditorium in the city.

Dr Mosharraf Hossain said BNP was not afraid of any movement and would not bow down to any pressure of illegal demands.

With the City Chhatradal President Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu in the chair, the function was also addressed, among others, by DUCSU VP Amanullah Aman MP, Barkatullah Bhulu MP, Sayed Mohammad Mohsin MP, President of Central Chhatradal Fazlul Hossain, General Secretary and DUCSU AGS Nazimuddin Alam, JASUS President Zahid Ho-ssain Chunnu and central leaders of Chhatradal Moniruzzaman Monir, Kamruzzaman Ratan, Abul Khair Bhuiyan.

Workshop on polythene pollution

Participants at a workshop held in the city yesterday stressed the need for creating awareness among the people against the use of polythene shopping bags, reports BSS.

The day-long workshop on "Environmental Management Towards Polythene and Plastic Pollution" was jointly organised by the Environment and Social Development Organisation (ESDO) and the Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD).

Bangladesh suggested joint collaboration for the development of tourism in Bangladesh and suggested India with its vast experience and resources should come forward to help Bangladesh in this sector.

A survey conducted by ESDO recently revealed that about 15 lakh families in the capital throw away 45 lakh polythene bags every day. Of the total, only ten per cent are disposed of at fixed places like dustbins while the rest are thrown into drains, manholes, canals and open places.

Memorial meeting

CHITTAGONG, Sept 25: Speakers at a memorial meeting today paid tributes to founder-editor of *Dainik Azadi* Abdul Khaleque Engineer saying his contributions towards development of journalism in the port city would be remembered for all time, reports BSS.

The meeting held at the *Azadi* Auditorium under the auspices of Ottijaya Sanarakhan Parishad in observance of his 32nd death anniversary was presided over by Chowdhury Zahirul Huq, convener of the Parishad.

Malaysian deputy minister calls on President

ABM Mosharraf Hossain and General Secretary of City Chhatradal Saiful Islam Nirab.

"The BNP government always welcomes any democratic move and constructive suggestion for the betterment of the people", he said.

Referring to the Awami League demand for scrapping the Indemnity Act, Dr Mosharraf Hossain said it was not the BNP but the Awami League leaders headed by Khandaker Moshtaq Ahmed who passed the indemnity bill. He also said the Awami League government had rehabilitated the *rajakars* and *al-badrs* in the country through announcing general amnesty. "Now it is not democratic and also not logical to demand for the repeal of the Indemnity Act and the trial of *rajakars* and *al-badrs* when BNP is in power after about two decades," he observed.

Referring to Opposition's demand for caretaker government, the minister said it could not be an alternative to a democratic government as it had no constitutional basis. "It is not the caretaker government but only the Election Commission which can give guarantee to free and impartial election in the country," he reiterated adding, "We should all come to a consensus to make the Election Commission more powerful for sustaining democracy in the country."

President Biswas said the Bangladeshi workers employed in Malaysia were hard-working, sincere and law-abiding and expressed the hope that more Bangladeshis would be recruited in Malaysia in future.

He hoped that the visit would further strengthen the bond of friendship between the two countries.

The visiting minister thanked the President for receiving him and members of his delegation. He conveyed greetings of the King and the Prime Minister of Malaysia to President Biswas. Reciprocating, President Biswas also conveyed his warm greetings to the King and the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

67 bodies get Youth Welfare Fund aid

The dignity of labour has to be established in society to attain the desired goal of self-employment of the country's unemployed youth, Agriculture and Water Resources Minister Major General (retd) M Majidul Huq said in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Addressing a function to mark the distribution of cheques between Taka five thousand and Tk 30 thousand to 67 non-government youth organisations from Youth Welfare Fund at the Directorate of Youth Development, the minister said, "We have to free ourselves from feeling shy to do our own work".

Presided over by Secretary, Ministry of Youth and Sports M Azizul Huq, the function was also addressed by State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain, Director General, Directorate of Youth Development Fazlul Huq and Rafiqul Islam Sarker, a member of Youth Welfare Fund.

Citing an example of self-employment in India, Majidul Huq said degree certificates are used there as collateral for bank loans. He said when neighbouring countries can introduce such programmes, there is no reason for us to lag behind.

He appreciated the Ministry of Youth and Sports for its recently introduced realistic

programmes to create employment opportunities for the youth through various training programmes.

Expressing concern over prevailing unemployment problem, Sadek Hossain said, "We welcome initiatives of non-government organisations to create self-employment opportunities as the government alone cannot solve the problem."

Azizul Huq said, of the trained youth, 60 per cent were self-employed.

Science team leaves for Delhi today

A three-member Bangladesh official science and technology delegation leaves the city today for New Delhi, reports BSS.

The delegation will have talks with Indian officials to review and renew the existing science and technology cooperation working programme between Bangladesh Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (BCSIR) and the Indian Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

The Bangladesh delegation is scheduled to return home on October 2.

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The Sarak Paribahan Sramik Federation organised a rally in front of the Jatiya Press Club yesterday. — Star photo

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