

book launching

A Labour of Intense Love

Publication ceremony of Jibanananda Das: Selected Poems with an Introduction, Chronology, and Glossary translated by Fakrul Alam held at Alliance Fracaise cafe

By Ziaul Karim

THE most popular poet of Bengal for the last forty years or so Jibanananda Das is also the least translated poet. And most of the attempts to translate Das are unsuccessful mainly because his intricate local imagery, the movement and the structures of the verse pose a stiff resistance to translation. In Jibanananda Das: Selected Poems with an Introduction, Chronology, and Glossary, Fakrul Alam has brilliantly captured the visual richness, the subtle metaphysics and the deep sensuousness of Jibanananda Das's poems. This was how the reviewers greeted the most comprehensive attempt to translate Jibanananda at the launching of Fakrul's translation of Jibanananda held on Friday the 25th at the cafe of the French cultural centre, Alliance Francaise at Dhanmandi.

The volume is a welcome addition to our malnourished translation culture and it came out at a time when the poet's birth centenary is being celebrated throughout the Bengali speaking world.

The one hour launching ceremony was nicely punctuated with recitation from the original and Fakrul's faithful translation, read out by the translator himself, and constructive assessments from the reviewers. Syed Manzoor Islam and Kondakar Ashraf Hossein — both front-ranking literary critics of our time.

Interestingly, the programme was hosted by artist Laila Sharmin who did the cover painting of the volume capturing brilliantly the Jibananandian world of idyllic imagery. The volume acquires a very pleasant personality for Laila's creative jacket painting. Speaking about Jibanananda from an artist's point of view she said his was a world predominantly of water-colour.

'This is a much waited translation of Jibanananda,' said Kondakar Ashraf to begin his discussion on the volume. The translation done by Fakrul, Ashraf considered a major breakthrough since Clinton B. Seeley's phenomenal A Poet Apart. In his view the translator had the linguistic capability to transport the typical Dasian world to the English speaking people. A poet as delicate as Das could only be rendered into a foreign language if the translator was deeply involved with the poems and Fakrul's translations, according to Ashraf, show the warmth of one who has newly fallen in love.'

Reflecting upon Jibananan-



Professor Syed Manzoor Islam claims Fakrul's translation wonderfully close to the Bengali original.

dais' achievements as a poet, Kondakar Ashraf said in his view the line-up of Bengali poetry 'now stands as Madhushudhan-Rabindranath-Jibanananda.' Though in his life time Jibanananda's recognition was under a shadow, as the days passing by he was gradually unfolding as a poet and shining brighter and brighter in our poetry firmament, opined Ashraf.

Fakrul has done the job with a mission and a vision', Ashraf said adding that the volume would prove invaluable in the future readings of

a metaphysical spell on the audience typical of Jibanananda Das.

Fakrul learned Bangla while translating Jibanananda Das,' said Syed Manzoor Islam adding, 'this is why his translation is free from any influence.' He compared Fakrul's translation with recently published volume from West Bengal by Sukanta Choudhury and claimed that Fakrul's one was successful in capturing the cadence of the Bengali original.

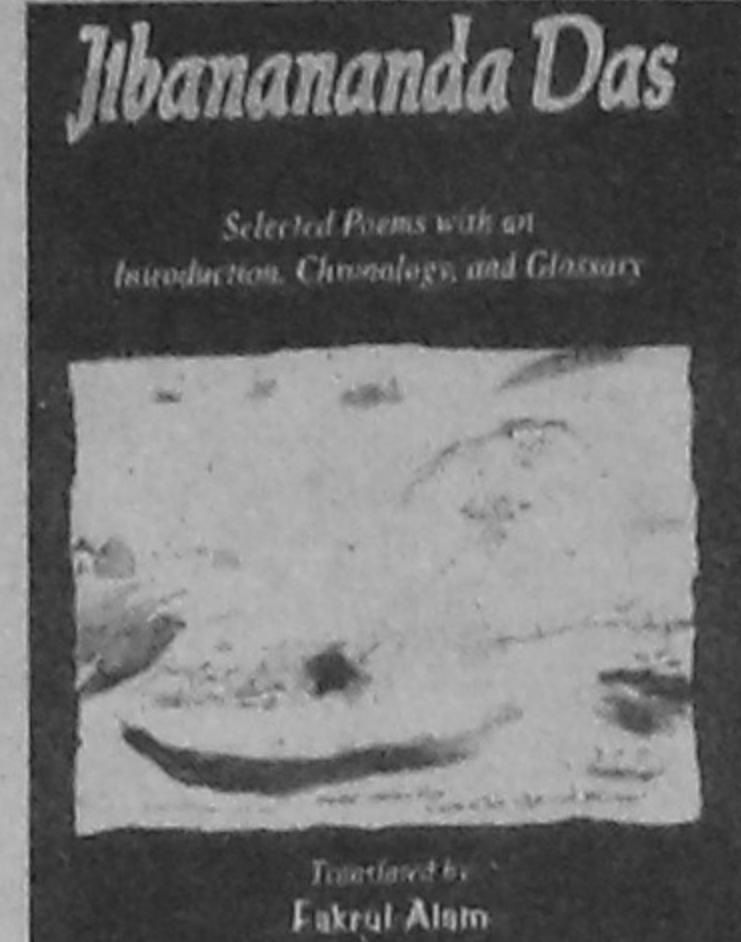
Said Manzoor: 'The most difficult part of any translation job is to successfully convey the cultural ambience to another language and Fakrul Alam has done it competently.'

Aminur, Nafisa and Fakrul then came in again with more poems to delight the audience. The poems were Hawer Rat,

Das,' said Christophe of the French cultural centre, the organiser of the launching ceremony.

Professor Anisuzzaman, the chair of the ceremony, said in his speech that his first encounter with Das's poems was with the volume Satti Tarar Timur, not the right book to begin with. Had it not been Ru-

Selected Poems with an Introduction, Chronology, and Glossary



Selected Poems with an Introduction, Chronology, and Glossary

poshi Bangla Jibanananda would not be a household name in Bengal, Anisuzzaman viewed.

Through Fakrul's translation, Anisuzzaman hoped Jibanananda Das's poetic achievements would be well represented in world literature.'

Ajker Rat, Akasina, Aabdh Aandhar Ek, and Shesh Holo Jeebaner Lenden. The selection was done keeping in mind the important poetic phases of Jibanananda's career.

In France we all know about Tagore and a little about Nazrul. Now thanks to Fakrul we will be knowing Jibananan-

da.

After Kondakar Ashraf's enlightening review came Aminur Rahman, an accomplished reciter, and Nafisa Jamal to read from Jibanananda and Fakrul chipping in with the presentation of his translation. The audience was eminently delighted to have a bilingual recitation session and appreciated the reading by giving a good hand. The poems read — Pakhira, Abar Ashib Feere, Shandya Hay, Kuri Bachher Pare and Hay Hriday — for a moment cast

Professor Anisuzzaman: chair of the launching ceremony of Jibanananda Das: Selected Poems

Jibanananda Das.

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position and the wings at the back of his throne represent his ever swelling desire to go higher and higher at the cost of anything. His loyal followers also with their black face surround him.

At one side some head of

common people are lying on the ground covered with plastic,

representing the ordinary

man's limitation to express their views and also suggestive of the fact that the freedom of expression gets crushed under the feet of the powerful men.

But Firoz always tries to bring out different dimension in his works. On the other side

there are some faces with intense look of conviction on

their face coming up from the ground, which represent the inevitable cry among the average man to fight the crime committed against them. We can trace Shubas Chandra Bose, Martin Luther King, Chey, Preeti Lata, Titumir, Nelson Mandela's faces among this crowd. The red scurf around their necks here

symbolizes the force of their purpose that is freedom from all kind of coercion and cruelty.

There are some drawings at the back, which shows the jay-

out of Firoz's work.

"While painting, my mind was often filled with different ideas, which were not possible for me to express through my painting so I have opted for installation," said Firoz.

Firoz graduated from Institute of Fine Arts, Dhaka University. He took part in several workshops and artistic campus including, Yuzen-en' in Japan, colour management, oil painting, watercolour and Calcutta Nandanik's workshop in India from 1993 to 1999. His four solo exhibitions were held in Khulna, South Korea, Japan and Dhaka. Firoz also participated in 35 group exhibitions in India, U.K., Scotland, U.S.A., Germany, Japan and Bangladesh.

He received several awards including best award for draw-

ing, watercolour, pencil sketch, pen sketch and Zainul Abedin Gold Medal from the institution of Fine Arts, Dhaka University.

Royal Overseas League's prize from U.K., Travelling award to Japan and Elizabeth Greenshields Award from Canada.

ing 20's 11:20 Drama: To Trap A Spy (*Robert Vaughn, *Luciana Paluzzi) 1:20 Western: Haunted Gold (*John Wayne, *Sheila Terry) 2:35 Romance: Far From The Madding Crowd (*Julie Christie, Terence Stamp)

ZEE NEWS TV

7:00 Jagran 7:30 to

10:30 PM Every Half Hour - Zee News Hindi

11:00 On The Trail 11:30

News In English 12:00

Business News 12:30 to

6:00 Every Half Hour —

Zee News Hindi

CARTOON NETWORK

5:30 World Famous

Shows 6:30 Tom & Jerry

Kids 7:00 Flintstones

7:30 The Popeye Show

8:00 Dexter's Laboratory 8:30 What A

Cartoon Show? 9:00

The Powerpuff Girls

9:30 Scooby & Scrappy

Doo 10:00 Sylvester &

Tweety Mysteries 10:30

Garfield & Friends 11:00

Cave Kids 11:30 New

Adventures of Captain

Planet 12:00 Tiny Toon

Adventures 12:30 The

New Scooby Doo Movies

1:30 Valentino - Bugs

Bunny Valentine

Spacial Love Toons 2:00

Tom & Jerry Kids 2:30

The Smurfs - Toon

Timash 3:30 The

Flinstones 4:00 The

Mask 4:30 Swat Kats

Doo 5:30 Dexters Labo-

ratory 6:00 What A Car-

toon Show? 6:30 The

Powerpuff Girls 7:00

The Popeye Show 7:30

Scooby-Doo Where Are

You? 8:00 Sylvester &

Tweety Mysteries 8:30

Valentino - Bugs Bunny

Valentino Spacial Love

Toons

TNT MOVIES

9:30 Documentary: Lau-

rel And Hardy's Laugh-

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20's 11:20 Drama:

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Vaughn, *Luciana

Paluzzi) 1:20 Western:

Haunted Gold (*John

Wayne, *Sheila Terry)

2:35 Romance: Far

From The Madding

Crowd (*Julie Christie,

Terence Stamp)

SONY MAX

6:30 Film Show 9:30

Chartbusters 10:00 Mu-

sic Mantra 10:30 Film

Show 1:30 Chartbusters

2:00 Music Mantra 2:30

Film Show 5:30 Film

Show 8:30 Chartbusters

9:00 Music Mantra 9:30

Film Show 12:30 Film

Show 3:30 Film Show

DD INTL

7:00 Classical Music

7:15 Tlk Back 7:45

STAR MOVIES

7:30 Drama: Red Surf

(15) 9:30 Drama: Eye For

An Eye (*Chuck Norris,

Christopher Lee, Maat

Clark) 11:15 Autobiog-

raphy: The Doors (*Val

Kilmer, Meg Ryan, Kyle

MacLachlan, Michael

Madsen, Billy Idol) (15)

1:30 Romance: The Only

Thrill (*Sam Shepard,

Diane Keaton) (15) 3:30

Action: Inner Action

(*Doug O'Keefe, Damian

Lee, Michelle Johnson)

(15) 5:30 Comedy: Sister

Act-2 (*Whoopi

Goldberg, Kathy

Najimy, Maggie Smith,

James Coburn) (PG) 7:30

Animation: Who

Framed Roger Rabbit

(*Bob Hoskins,

Christopher Lloyd) 9:30

This Week That Year