



## Pahela pride and joy

It would be quite interesting to calculate how many megawatts of human energy is required and spent in Pahela Boishakh festivities, and find out where from this energy comes?

Tens of thousands of people gather on festivals despite the deterrent effect of bomb scares, the often-unruly crowd, the dust and heat and the apparent superficiality of many rituals like

the eating of Paanta Bhaat etc. Maybe the underlying motivation comes from the deep desire to "be oneself".

Although the fact remains that "being oneself" is a very delicate and ambiguous job, the phenomenon of a "sensible human being" starts with this "being oneself". Or, in our time, this phenomenon starts with the polite refusal to become a part of a homogenised sterile global

culture. Pahela Boishakh is in a sense, one starting point not only of becoming a Bangali; but of the endeavor towards becoming a complete person.

The psyche of the contemporary urban Bangali is heavily loaded with the influence of the west. Whatever is approved and endorsed by the western camera is considered to be worthwhile. Everything else is not worth mentioning. To many

persons, being a Bangali is not a very great idea. This problem is now been seen in a new light.

The contemporary man is also disillusioned by the west. People have started to grow bored by the concept of unconditional and unlimited flood of western influence. The same western culture in every major city of the world is no longer fashionable.

More and more people are finding it inspiring and refreshing to find a link to their roots. People have had enough of fifty channels of rubbish on TV. Now is the time start anew.

There is also a component of defiance in all these. There is a hunger for resistance -- resistance against all kinds of dominance. There is a newfound intensity in this new mission.

Then again, there is this problem of becoming too much of a Bangali. Artificiality and camera-consciousness should be avoided by all means. We cannot relive history people cannot live collectively in archeology. We must also be aware of this fact.

The emphasis should be on the Bangali temperament. What make us unique is, not only the rice and fish, but also our

language and temperament, our overall collective disposition.

Pahela Boishakh should not only be a mere set of festivity. Its essence should be carried all through in our urban culture, our literature, our art and architecture and in our overall psyche. In a comprehensive movement of resistance, it should really be the Pahela step.

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Story: **NAUSHAD EHSANUL HUQ**  
Assistant Professor,  
UAP Dhaka  
Photo: **ANISUR RAHMAN**

