

Moments of history on show

Ducsu Gallery has a rich collection on Liberation War and Language Movement

DURDANA GHILAS

Two freedom fighters with machineguns hanging on their back are ploughing land with two bulls. This 1971 picture shows something so real, so expressive determination and love for one's

country that cannot be expressed in words. It can be felt only by seeing the picture.

Another photo shows work to salvage the remains of students killed on the night of March 25, 1971 on the Jagannath Hall compound.

These are among the pictures depicting significant moments of the history on display at the Ducsu Gallery of Dhaka University.

The stem of the historical mango tree of the Language Movement is encased in a big

glass box kept at the gallery. In February 1952, the students of Dhaka University held a meeting under this tree, demanding Bangla to be the state language, and took the landmark decision to break Section 144.

Photographs, cuttings of

newspaper articles are displayed to remind the visitors of the events with historical significance.

"I like Ducsu Gallery because it depicts the history without any kind of political bias," said Nasir, a student of public administration. "This is the second time I came here. When I came here two years ago, the room was very small and narrow. Now it is quite spacious."

"Dhaka University is an indispensable part of the history of Bangladesh. DU students played a key role in the Language Movement of 1952, mass uprising of 1969, the Liberation War of 1971 and after independence the fall of Ershad in 1990," said another student.

Recently letters and some personal belongings of Shaheed Janani Jahanara Imam, coordinator of the Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee and mother of martyred freedom fighter Rumi, have been added to the collection.

Jahanara wrote a book Ekatturer Dinguli detailing her personal account of the Liberation War following the crackdown on March 25, 1971. In 1981, Jahanara was diagnosed with cancer but the disease could not hold her back from writing and working against the anti-liberation forces.

Gopal Das, the photographer, collector and originator of Ducsu Gallery, said that after the fall of Ershad in 1990 he thought of preserving the mementoes of contributions of DU students to various movements.

"A few days after the fall of Ershad, suddenly I noticed that the campus went a bit quiet. It was the hush after achieving what had been craved for a long time. But it alarmed me a lot. I thought that after a year or two people may tend to forget the role of DU students. So I should do something," he said.

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Ducsu walls display photographs of martyrs and rare documents of history.

REFRESHING V-DAY MEMORIES



An open-air exhibition of paintings and sculptures was held on the Dhaka University Campus yesterday marking the Victory Day. Every year students of the Institute of Fine Arts arrange the show to celebrate the day.

Electronic cash registers to be made mandatory

CITY CORRESPONDENT

The use of electronic cash registers at small and medium retail businesses is being made mandatory by the government to ensure collection of value added tax (VAT) from the retailers.

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) will start implementing this new policy in July next year when restaurants, sweetmeat stores, fast food outlets, grocery stores, beauty salons, furniture shops, community centres, department and general stores will have to use electronic cash registers for every day transactions.

The decision was taken in a bid to ensure that small and medium enterprises collect VAT properly from their customers and deposit it to the exchequer. The present manual system of accounting used at the retail outlets leaves room for tax evasion by deceiving VAT inspectors and this new scheme would eliminate that scope, believe the authorities.

"All small and medium retail

businesses, many of which have been evading tax by taking advantage of the current manual accounting system, will come under this new scheme," said an NBR official.

Eventually, the policy would be enforced at all commercial businesses, sources said adding that non-compliance of the policy would result in shutting down of the retail outlet under the section 37 of the VAT act.

To ensure strict enforcement of the policy, new trade licences would be issued for businesses that already use electronic cash registers, said sources adding that the existing trade licences would not be renewed unless the applicants start using electronic cash registers.

The NBR has already asked Dhaka City Corporation (DCC) to inform all its trade licence holders that the DCC would not renew their trade licences unless they purchase and start using electronic cash registers by July 1, 2008, sources at NBR said.

Regarding the difficulties encountered by VAT officials

under the present manual book-keeping system at retail stores, a VAT official at Policies Department of NBR said, "A lot of shop owners deceive the VAT officers by maintaining different books [in secret]."

"When the VAT inspectors go to the businesses for verifying VAT collection and payment information, they are presented with a register book that contains a small number of sales records. The businesses swindle the government out of a huge amount of tax this way," he said.

Retailers however denied the allegation. "We have to use different types of books to record different types of transactions. So, it's not always possible to locate and present every single book whenever the VAT inspectors demand," said Abul Hashem, a grocery store owner from Badda.

"It sounds like a good idea to make the use of cash registers mandatory. However, they should keep in mind that a good number of people may not be

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city express

The latest crop of quotes from the city's press -- words worth repeating, we feel, for their humour, insight or sheer outrageousness. Star City does not necessarily support the opinions expressed in this column.

"I want to make it clear that we never sought any mercy from anyone. If the claim comes from the government then it is an insult to the teaching community. If the government claims that we sought mercy [presidential clemency] they must prove it. We are ready to go to jail again if necessary. It is a matter of the prestige of the teaching community."

-- Moloy Kumar Bhounmik

One of the four convicted teachers of Rajshahi University told reporters while placing wreaths at the grave of Dr. Mohammad Samsoz Zoha, the first martyred academic of the country, after the government freed him and his colleagues in the face of rising public demand, on Monday. Source: The Daily Star

"It was my moral duty to extend support to my students and if I ever get the opportunity to do it again I will. I did it in 1990 during the fall of Ershad. I did it in 2001 when the police entered Shamsunnahar Hall and beat up our female students. I did it again on August 20, 21, 22 and 23, 2007."

-- Prof Anwar Hossain

General Secretary, Dhaka University Teachers' Association (DUTA) Said during the hearing of a case for breaching the emergency power rule on DU campus in August, on Wednesday. Source: The Daily Star

"The government can do everything. But would it not need to justify?"

-- Mainul Hossain

Law Adviser Told reporters: when asked whether the government should withdraw cases filed against the teachers of Dhaka University, on Tuesday. Source: The Daily Star

"I don't want money I just want my son to get a proper burial."

-- Nozla Akhand

Father of Amirul, who died in Bangs Bhaban collapse Told reporters while his son's body was hanging off the seventh floor, on Tuesday. Source: The Daily Star

Compiled by Durdana Ghilas

Winter vegetables yet to be cheaper for all

CITY CORRESPONDENT

Prices of winter vegetables have started easing but most of the items are still pricey for the low-income group.

Only white radish sells at Tk 8-10 a kilogram. But a medium-size cauliflower still sells at Tk 12-15, a cabbage at Tk 15-18 and beans at Tk 20-24 a kg.

"Prices will come down with further increase in supply," said a wholesaler at Karwan Bazar yesterday.

Farmers are yet to recover loss from the repeated floods, he added. The recent cyclone in the coastal districts will also have an impact on supply and prices, he said.

But most consumers are not happy at the on-going prices of winter items.

"We thought that prices of greens and vegetables will ease

in winter. But there is no sign of any relief yet," said Anwar Ali, a schoolteacher at Karwan Bazar.

During a round-up at the kitchen market this correspondent found that despite good supply prices of greens have not eased much.

Palong shak still sells at Tk 15-18 a kg. Lal shak at Tk 12-14, mula shak Tk 10-12 while lau shak Tk 15-20.

"How do you expect to get things at cheaper prices when all the items are supplied from far outside the city," posed a vegetable vendor at Shantinagar kitchen market.

"Farmers do not get your money. It all goes to the transport owners and fertiliser dealers," he said.

At Karwan Bazar, 'big' green chillies from India were selling at Tk 40 a kilogram yesterday. Local variety was scarcely avail-

able and was above Tk 60 a kg.

Newly produced potatoes have started coming from northern districts. The white variety sells at Tk 28-30 while the red at Tk 35-40 a kg. But potatoes from the old stock are still going strong as they sell at Tk 23-24 a kilogram.

Tomato prices have marked fall in the last one week. Green tomato sells at Tk 18-20 while the first batch of 'ripe' tomato is available at Tk 25-30.

Besides, turnip sells at Tk 14-16 a kilogram, carrot Tk 20-25, brinjal at Tk 20-25 and cucumber Tk 20-24.

Supply of gourds is yet to increase as a medium-size one still sells at Tk 25-30 while a pumpkin at similar prices.

But coriander leaves are now cheaper and they sell at Tk 35-40 a kg, down from Tk 100 a week ago.

