



## BAISHAKHI DHAKA 1419

**F**UN, fair, festoons and fine arts -- here comes the biggest secular festival of Bangalee. Students of Dhaka University fine arts institute bring out Mangal Shovajatra, the good-luck parade with large folk motifs, which has become an urban ritual of Pahela Baishakh, the first day of Bangla calendar. The celebration lifts the spirit of city dwellers. Leaving behind all worldly anxieties, they in the morning rush to Dhaka University area where the day is celebrated in a very vibrant way. Thousands also choose Ramna Udyan where artistes welcome Pahela Baishakh through songs; obviously Tagore's evergreen lyric *Esho he Baishakh* tops the chart.

People, mostly youths, paint each other's face with colours. Women go all traditional with red mehndi on their hands. Dressed in bright-colourful clothes, they hang around with friends and family members. Small stalls sell local products, mostly decoration pieces, with flavour of village fairs. Panta bhat with fried Hilsa fish is the most sought-after menu of urban people in the morning of Pahela Baishakh. On this day, forgetting sorrows of the previous year, all look for a fresh start in life.

Photo: RASHED SHUMON

