

LOVING AND LIVING WITH PLANTS

BY LAILA KARIM



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THE LEGEND BEHIND THE LOTUS

The Lotus - the water lily symbolises beauty, majesty, grace, fertility, wealth, richness, knowledge and serenity. There are several types and colours of this water lily. Shapla is honoured as our national flower and Padma - the lotus type is for auspicious purpose, the flower of God and Goddesses.

In the past few days we have seen from media reports how this single flower added value to the nature of Bangladesh, especially the country side, the hoar and bills (marshy wide water bodies). Whoever experienced the scene knows that it is unforgettable and a memory to cherish forever! Lotus not only pleases our eyes, but is very much essential in our religious lives. For Hindus and Buddhists, this is the symbol of purity and a means of offering.

Very recently we had three back to back religious festivals; Durga Puja followed by Lakhmi Puja and the Buddha Purnima. We know, lotus is special to the goddesses of Lakhi, Duga, Swarshwati and also to Lord Shiva. Lakhmi, the Goddess of wealth, holds lotus in her two hands! In Buddhism, lotus is auspicious; it is the flower that symbolises 'fortune, rising and blooming above the murk to achieve enlightenment, purity - spirit of the mind and body and faith and fullness'. It is also treated as the symbol of beauty, prosperity and fertility. This sacred flower represents eternity, divinity and the journey of life, ever renewing youthfulness. The colour of lotus also speaks. White goes for purity, golden for achievements, red for compassion and love, blue refers to common sense, pink tells the history and legends of

Buddha and also represents self-awareness and purple is for purity. The stages of its growth also depict the journey of human lives. Lotus grows in mud and that tells us life evolves from soil and rotten contents, it has fragile roots, it has sufferings - with resilience finally it reaches the fullest beauty and purpose. The Hindu holy book Gita says 'human is adjured to be like the

of lotus is seen in all the walls of mandir and has great value in architectural design. Lotus is treated as a medicinal plant in Indian Ayurvedic medicine mainly used to treat indigestion and also used as food item.

In Bengali literature, Lotus is the symbol of feminine beauty- the eyes of the lady of love is described as -Padmalochona!



lotus; they should work without attachment, dedicating their actions to God, untouched by sin like water on a lotus leaf, like a beautiful flower standing high above the mud and water'. In Egyptian mythology, the Lotus is associated with the sun, because it bloomed by day and closed by night and was even believed to have given birth to the sun! Besides religion, Lotus also is a symbol for various forms of dances and Yoga (PadmaAshona) posture. Engraved motif

Lotus is easy to grow in our urban set ups - It is in y/our reach. Just visit a good nursery. The nursery staff will help you out with all the learning and facilities required - with a not so expensive price.

Quick Tips! Select the right container. You can grow lotus in plastic and ceramic or clay containers though, but better to put in used bath tubs or pre -formed ponds in landscape (see the images). The right size container will

depend on the type of lotus you chose. Bowl lotuses are very small and can fit comfortably inside a 2-gallon (7.57-liter) container, but a large lotus may need a 50-gallon (189.27-liter) container. Aquatic containers for lotus are available (not in our country, but chari - our native container also works) Most dwarf lotus are capable of getting 3' to 4' tall. They can tolerate smaller containers, but will perform better in larger containers. Make sure that your container does not have holes. Fill your container with dirt; 60 percent clay and 40 percent sands (a mix of clay and construction site sand is ideal). Dense soils with lot of rotten leaf - mash also work sufficiently well. Leave about 1 to 4 inches (2.54 to 10.16 cm) free-empty space in between the top of the soil and the rim of the pot. Lotus prefers full sunlight - at least few hours a day is necessary for its healthy growth. Lotus will make floating leaves first, then standing leaves. It is best to begin fertilising when the lotus is starting to make standing leaves. A pinch or very small portion of urea will do. Lotus is adaptable to different water chemistries. During pruning or trimming time, never cut flower or leaf stems below the water level, as roots and tubers use stems (even dead ones) to provide oxygen to the roots. Be aware about pests like white fly and spider mites.

Lotus grows well with fishes - try with goldfish!

Please feel free to send me email to share your thoughts, feedback, and photos of your garden, or to tell your story; or ask a question on the garden issue. Email: lifestyleds@yahoo.com

THANK GOD IT'S FRIDAY

BY TANZIRAL DILSHAD
DITAN

IT'S A SHE THING @DLF

Date: Friday, November 20

Time: 2:15pm - 3:30pm

Venue: Bangla Academy, Dhaka University
Inspired by The Vagina Monologues, VDAY Dhaka brings a collection of stories from women and girls from around Dhaka. This theatrical production showcases the struggles of a woman in a Bangladeshi society. Catch the performances at the Dhaka Lit Fest. Registration is FREE and MANDATORY. Register here:
<http://www.imdhaka.com/dhaka-lit-festival/>

MANAS PRESENTS CAFÉ SHANCHAIYTHA CHA CHAKRA- 2

Date: 19th Nov

Time: 6:00 pm

Venue: House: 37, Road 6, Block D, Niketon, Gulshan

Your experiences matter and even the smallest of happy experiences will always stay in your memory. MANAS presents Shanchaiytha Cha Chakra 2 and once again they want to add to your experiences bringing forth a delightful evening of good music, pleasant conversations some special tea!

This time MANAS is launching two absolutely new flavours of tea, again with the spirit of Tagore's Shanchaiytha! Also, numerous flavours will be available for purchase!

BIPAD BHANJAN SEN KARMAKER PAINTING EXHIBITION

Date: 19th November

Time: Daylong

Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Francase
Bipad Bhanjan Sen Karmaker's world of thought behind his paintings is deeply influenced by his childhood memories of the village where he grew up. In the midst of rivers, canals, green fields, schools, temples, mosques, playgrounds, and the peaceful coexistence between Hindu and Muslim communities, he imbibed the natural beauty of his surroundings. He observed the gentle breeze blowing from south over the green fields and the winter morning when the dewdrops fell on leaves and the opalescence of sunrays covered them. He feels that the beauties of the six seasons can only be seen in such villages as the one reflected in his paintings. In his canvases, he tries to depict the day to day life of the common people leaving in Bangladeshi villages so that the viewers may discover their culture, way of life and the beauty beneath.

DRAWING THE LINE

Date: 19th-21st November

Time: Day long

Venue: Bangla Academy, Dhaka
Dhaka Literary Festival, held at the historic premises of the Bangla Academy every year since 2012, marks a resurgence of Bangladeshi literary culture while vigorously also engaging other cultures. Goethe-Institut has participated in the festival since its third edition in 2013. This year, Goethe-Institut presents 'Drawing the Line - Indian Women fight back', a collection of visual

stories, published by Zubaan, in which fourteen young women respond to the activism and debates on the ground following the brutal gang rape and murder of a young medical student in Delhi in December 2012, negotiating anger, fear, hope and resistance. Created in a weeklong workshop, organised by Goethe-Institut New Delhi and Zubaan, these stories talk to each other as they powerfully describe the fierce determination of the writers/artists to continue the battle for change. Urvashi Butalia, co-founder of Zubaan with over 35 years of experience in feminist and independent publishing, will be present for the presentation.

WPPB BRIDAL FESTIVAL 2015

Date: November 19 - November 21

Time: 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Venue: Gulshan Shooting Club, Gulshan 1
"WPPB Bridal Festival, 2015" will be your best resource for wedding planning in Bangladesh. It will be held at the Bangladesh Shooting Federation (Shooting Club), Gulshan 1, Dhaka introducing you to the industry's top wedding experts including bridal makeup artists, wedding planners, photographers, cinematographers and venues. Brides and grooms can meet one-on-one with vendors offering special discounts only for the visitors of "WPPB Bridal Festival, 2015" and explore other exciting offers. Plan your wedding with various vendors just under one roof and save your precious time, energy and money. Get inspired with ideas for photography, cinematography, decor, venues and catering by visiting nearly 60 booths of the best vendors this industry can offer! Elegant fashion shows will showcase the latest styles and trends of this season. Bring your friends and families and have a blast planning your

dream wedding and book your favorite honeymoon destinations in a few minutes with the help of the experts!

INDIAN CLASSICAL VOCAL PERFORMED BY: MARINA AHMED

Date: Wednesday 18 November 2015

Time: 6.30 PM

Venue: Red Shift Coffee Lounge, Radius Centre, 5th Floor, Bay's Galleria, 57 Gulshan Avenue, Gulshan, Dhaka.

Marina Ahmad was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and began training in North Indian Classical vocal style at age four. Her pursuit of North Indian classical music ultimately took her to its birthplace and after a brief stint at the Gandharva Maha Vidyalaya in New Delhi, Marina was taken on by the internationally renowned Sangeet Mart and Padma Bhimbushan Pandi Tjasraj-ji, a master and luminary of the North Indian Classical music genre. She went on to receive training in his Mewati Gharana for over two decades and remains one of his senior disciples, performing alongside him worldwide. She has also received training in Karnataka music from Srimoti T.L. Balamoni, Prassana Varrier, and semi-classical music from Gita Chandra and Niser Hussain Khan. Marina has also shared a stage with Grammy-award winning artist Youssou N'Dur and has recorded two classical albums and a Sufi music album featuring interpretations of the work of Hazrat Khawaja Gollam Farid and Bolleh Shah. Her concert will also cover her interest in Sufi explorations as well as some Ghazal/Thumri compositions. Tickets: Tk. 600 available at Red Shift/Radius or online Tk. 660 at www.imdhaka.com (Limited seating so please book early)