



FLOODS AND DHOLAI KHAL: DACCA TO DHAKA RELIVED

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Bangladesh experienced three devastating floods in 1954, 1955 and 1988. In 1955 due to the rolling water from the upstream areas, Dholai Khal too was badly affected and could not save the then Dacca.

The flood of 1955 inundated almost the entire city of Dacca with the exception of Wari Begumbazar and Ramna and few other elevated lands. Bangshal, Nazirabazar, Satrowza, Nazimuddin road, Hussaini Dalan, Zindabazar, Alobazar, Armanitola, Babubazar, Narinda, Gendaria, Lalbagh, Hazribagh, Nawabganj and many other places went underwater.

Once upon a time, Dholai Khal used to be the life line of Dacca. A deceased senior citizen who lived that time informed me that Dacca was wrapped around by Dholai Khal in two and a half coils (araipanch). Another historian further informed me that at that time one could not reach Sadarghat from Lalbagh, without crossing a bridge or aqueduct. Every cross-section had a bridge or aqueduct with Dholai Khal flowing underneath it. The corners were spotted



PHOTO: STAR FILE

with boats docked. In fact it was a familiar sight especially under bridges like Lohar Pool and Babu Bazar Pool.

Dacca was surrounded by Dholai Khal, which was a part of the then provincial town.

During pre-liberation period the planners of the longest serving ruler preferred to convert Dholai Khal into passageway by directing the water flow through concrete pipes laid below. The massive work was done on the stretch

from Narinda end to Nayabzar. Dholai Khal is now a thing of the past.

Amsterdam, the capital of The Netherlands is a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its ring of canals and monumental buildings. It has 100 kilometers of canals, 1,500 bridges, and also 90 islands. The canals were dug in the 17th century to facilitate the management of water in the deltaic region of Amsterdam being at the mouth of the river Rhine. Holland is a low lying area and Dutch expertise is highly appreciated for its water management. Those who visit Amsterdam, find the round the year limpid water of the canals very admirable.

The past heritage of the Netherlands scripted its own way of water management by judiciously laying a network of eco-friendly canals and bridges that make Amsterdam an example of splendid urban grace. The eco heritage of Dacca was also surrounded by a network of canals which is Dholai Khal. Dacca and later Dhaka had its own thoughts on the matter and worked accordingly. ■

OF MELODIES AND RIGHTS

ELITA KARIM

A Bangladeshi celebration of any kind is incomplete without the song 'Abaar elo je shondhya'; a child growing up with a *gaaner* teacher (music teacher) at home would know the lyrics and melody to the song 'Mamonia' by heart; finally professing one's love to the other or experiencing a lovers' squabble would remind one of the songs 'Ey neel monihar' and 'Aage jodi jantam'. Lucky Akhand's mesmerising melodies touch the hearts of many even today.

As he lies in the hospital bed trying to survive the deadly clutches of cancer, his evergreen melodies are still playing on someone's monetised youtube channel, being sung by one of the younger musicians on a TV live, sold to a content provider by a music label company or simply downloaded illegally from shady websites. Despite being a land of culture and music, we are yet to realise that a musician, a singer or a composer survive off of the music that s/he creates and the words that s/he writes.

As the news of Akhand's illness spread, fans and well wishers from all over the world have been sending all kinds of support from the USA, the Middle East, Singapore and also India. Clearly, Lucky Akhand's melodies have touched the hearts of so many Bangladeshi expatriates living in those countries. In addition, the last few weeks witnessed high officials from banks and multinationals operating within the country paying a visit to Akhand and offering financial support. Many individuals have also stepped forward to take care of Akhand's financial issues.

According to the copyright laws, Lucky Akhand is to get a share of every download, every piece of music that he created, not to mention from the different social media platforms that now allow revenues to accumulate once registered. If these copyright laws had been properly maintained and implemented by the authorities, Lucky Akhand, today, would have been wealthy enough to pay for his diagnosis, treatment and the daily rent for a hospital room. Unfortunately, that is not the case. Even though many have come forward to support Akhand – both financially and emotionally – the authorities, policy makers, investors and corporates are yet to understand and implement accordingly the copyrights laws, which would allow Akhand to claim his earnings through the various platforms.

Here's wishing the great maestro a speedy recovery, so that he can continue creating unique melodies for us and put Bangladesh on the global map, in the field of music.

To help Lucky Akhand, please donate whatever you can to the following:

Lucky Akhand, AC: 162-101-137369, Ducth Bangla Bank



ABOUT TOWN



BANGLADESH FASHION SUMMIT 2016

August 27, 11 am, Krishibid Institution of Bangladesh, Khamarbari Road, Farmgate
Hosted by: Fashion Design Council of Bangladesh - FDCB
For more information, visit-
<https://www.facebook.com/events/700432760058029/>



ANIMECON DHAKA 2016

August 26, 11am-8pm, Al-Fuad Community Center, Mirpur 6
Hosted by: Unified Anime Legion - Bangladesh
For Query, visit-
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1311743428850886/>



PRAN DRINKING WATER WALKATHON

August 26, 6:30am-11pm, International Convention City Bashundhar, Purbachal Express Highway
Hosted By- Pran Drinking Water
For more information, visit-
<https://www.facebook.com/events/872082236258341/>