



PAHELA BAISHAKH

THE INDUSTRY THAT COLOURS THE CELEBRATION

|| AANILA KISHWAR TARANNUM ||



PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

Next Sunday, this dusty grey city will transform into a sea of colours, momentarily giving its residents a break from their monotonous routines. Dhaka will come alive for Pahela Baishakh -- a festival that transcends class, religion and social status.

In the past few years, the scale and scope of celebrating the Bangla new year has grown leaps and bounds, and an entire industry has contributed towards it. From designers to tailors, the fashion industry is perhaps the busiest during this time.

Biplob Saha, owner of fashion house Bishwa Rong, said, "Pahela Baishakh is incomparable to any other festival; it is quintessentially Bengali. People are spontaneous in its celebration."

Saha observed how celebration of this festival has grown bigger in the last ten years. "In terms of sales, Eid-ul-Fitr is still the biggest

festival. But there is a large quantity of items sold during Noboborsho," he said, also mentioning some interesting buying trends. "People love to wear similar clothes for the occasion. A group of friends buy the same saree, father and son come to buy the same panjabi; during other festivals everyone wants a unique outfit."

Ishrat Jahan, proprietor and designer of Desha, echoes Saha's observation. "Volume of sales for Pahela Baishakh probably comes second only to Eid-ul-Fitr. Saree sales are just as big as Eid during this time of the year, and customers love getting similar outfits for their entire family."

"Eid-ul-Fitr sales surge on the last ten days of Ramadan. For Pahela Baishakh, the shopping craze starts five or six days before the festival," she added.

There is heavy demand for new clothes during major festivals, but often that demand is for Indian or Pakistani clothing. Both Saha and Jahan observed that people generally buy more Bangladeshi products for Noboborsho.

"Even those who wear Indian and Pakistani apparel all year round, prefer Bangladeshi clothes for Pahela Baishakh. Perhaps, the reason is purely cultural," said Jahan. Saha emphasised that it's important to support Bangladeshi businesses. "Ultimately, the customers have a responsibility to keep traditions alive," he said.

Big fashion houses are not the only ones keeping deshi fashion alive. Small and medium entrepreneurs organise fairs all around town, often bringing their online businesses to the venues. Rangtaa is one such initiative that solely promotes Bangladeshi goods.



DHAKA VIBE

"Customers' dependence on foreign products is unsustainable and unprofitable for the local industry and economy in the long run. We were also motivated by some unpleasant experiences our entrepreneur friends were facing at commercial fairs back in 2013. In a market flooded with Pakistani lawn (dresses), buyers would ignore local clothes," according to the

Rangtaa team.

Rangtaa is an initiative of Meye Network to bring together female entrepreneurs in a fair business ecosystem, said the organisers. Rangtaa's message of inclusivity and patriotism has reached many. People in droves attended the two-day (April 5-6) fair.

Forty-nine entrepreneurs were present at this year's 'Rangtaa Mela' at Midas Centre, with handmade jewellery, clothes, bags, baked goods and more. Card transactions varied between Tk 3 and 7 lakh; cash transactions are manifold to that number, the organisers said. More than a thousand people attended the fair.

This season is highly profitable for SMEs as well as big brands. Fashion giant Aarong earns approximately Tk 17-20 crore, selling their huge range of apparel, home decor, accessories and more on the days leading up to April 14. Saree sales alone can account up to Tk 5 crore, said an Aarong designer.

As we gear up for Pahela Baishakh, buying new clothes and planning get-togethers, we should remember that an entire Bangladeshi industry is working hard to make the celebration memorable. If there is demand, there will be supply -- so it's important to be a responsible customer and place that demand in the right place.

Secretariat at no risk of electrical fire: Cabinet secy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh's secretariat has "foolproof security" in terms of fire hazard from electrical short circuits, Cabinet Secretary M Shafiul Alam said yesterday.

"We have circuit breakers everywhere. There's almost no chance of fire breaking out from a short circuit," he told reporters at Cabinet Division after a cabinet meeting held at Prime Minister's Office.

"This is a specialty of buildings constructed by Public Works Department (PWD). All the buildings have circuit breakers. It prevents electrical fire," he said.

The top bureaucrat made the comments at a time when fire safety has become a much talked about issue in the country following the tragedy at Banani's FR Tower.

The secretary said PWD has been taking different measures including changing expired fire extinguishers.

He said they will hold a meeting with all authorities concerned on whether there are any loopholes, and will take necessary action following scrutiny.

They will construct another 20-storey building on secretariat premises, he added.

CABINET DIVISION BUILDING AT EARTHQUAKE RISK

The secretary, however, said the Cabinet

Division building is not out of earthquake risk.

"It is a 60 or 70-year-old building. The base of this building is weak. We have a standing alert on earthquake," he told reporters.

"That's why prime minister has stopped attending office at the building and she attends meetings at other venue."

About the risk of officials working in Cabinet Division building, he said if the tectonic plate at Dawki -- near Sylhet -- moves, it would take two minutes to reach Dhaka.

"We have a mechanism of an alert. If we are alerted on time, we can evacuate," he said.

66 PERCENT DECISIONS IMPLEMENTED

In the first quarter of this year, a total of 36 decisions were taken in five cabinet meetings, he said.

Of them, 24 decisions -- or 66.67 percent -- have been implemented while the others are at implementation stage, he said.

In the same period last year, the cabinet took 63 decisions in seven meetings and implementation rate was 68.25 percent.

"Our performance was relatively better last year," he said.

Body of 8-year-old found in Demra mosque

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered body of an eight-year-old madrasa student from a mosque in the capital's Demra area yesterday, a day after he went missing.

The deceased was identified as Monir Hossain, a class one student of Nur-e-Madina Madrasa. He used to live with his parents at Dogair area of Demra, said police.

Victim's father Saidul Hoque, a small trader, said his elder daughter took Monir to the madrasa on Sunday morning. Later in the evening, when Monir's sister went to the madrasa to pick him up, the teachers said that he went home, said Saidul.

"We then started miking in the locality. After some time, an anonymous caller demanded Tk 3 lakh on the phone and we filed a general diary regarding the incident after informing the police," he added.

"I'm too poor to come SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

DHAKA TODAY

MUSIC

Taraga - Season.Spring
Episode.On
Venue: 3rd space,
Dhanmondi
Time: 6:30pm

FAIR

Baishakhi Haat
Organiser: Triangle Even
Solution
Venue: WVA, Dhanmondi
Time: 10am

CELEBRATION

Rokonuzzaman Khan
Dadabhai's 94th birth
anniversary
Organiser: Kochi
Kanchar Mela
Venue: Kochi Kancha
Auditorium,
Segunbagicha
Time: 5pm

SEMINAR

Construction Technology
Venue: The InterContinental
Time: 9:30am

BOOK LAUNCHING

Wreetu Comic Book
Organiser: Wreetu
Venue: EMK Centre
Time: 3pm



MAKE-UP WORKSHOP

Master Class on Make-up by
International Artist
Organiser: Kryolan
Bangladesh
Venue: Baton Rouge
Restaurant
Time: 9am

EXHIBITION

Unsettled
By Kazi Tahsin Agaz Apurbo
Venue: Jatra Biroti, Banani
Time: 11am

Farmers need help with climate change adaptation

Speakers say at MJF workshop

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Change in climatic variables like excessive rainfall and salinity intrusion caused about half the damage to agricultural, fisheries and livestock production in some parts of the country's coastal belt, says a Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF) commissioned report.

On the other hand, flood causes damage to about half of Aman rice production in some northern areas each year, it says.

Findings of the report, "Climate Resilient Agriculture in Coastal and Flood-plain Regions of Bangladesh", were disclosed yesterday at a workshop arranged by MJF at the city's Krishibid Institution Bangladesh.

The qualitative research was part of an ongoing five-year project of MJF. It was conducted in eight upazilas under five coastal districts -- Bhola, Patuakhali, Bagerhat, Satkhira and Barguna -- and two flood-prone northern districts, Gaibandha and Kurigram.

A research team collected data for the report through focus group discussion (285 participants), key informant interviews (66 participants), case studies, and literature review between May and November, 2018.

The report says in coastal areas, frequency and intensity of storms have increased in the last few years while erratic rainfall has affected agriculture production.

Due to excessive rainfall, farmers faced new types of pest infestation, it says.

Salinity caused foot disease of cows and fever of chicken and duck. Lack of forage reduced milk production, it adds.



From left, Dr Abu Wali Raghieb Hassan, Shaheen Anam, Mir Nurul Alam, Prof Ainun Nishat and Md Mahbubur Rahman at the programme. PHOTO: STAR

Moreover, salinity induced an average of 30 percent production loss in fisheries, it mentions.

The report also says thunderstorms increased in the past four to five years, causing deaths of livestock and humans in three Gaibandha and Kurigram upazilas.

Besides, heavy rainfall hampered post-harvest activities and vegetable production, it says.

The research found lack of accountability and political interferences as barriers to effective functioning of Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE).

According to the report, more than 80 percent farmers in Barguna use local rice variety while farmers of other coastal districts use high yield varieties. Limited cultivation of rice was noticed

in most of the areas due to water scarcity in Kharif-1 (autumn) season.

Meanwhile, farmers cultivated rice in limited scale in Kharif-1 season in northern areas due to occurrence of late flood and low economic benefits.

As immediate action, the report recommended making hybrid, high yielding and resilient varieties available for both flood and coastal areas through coordinated efforts of private seed dealers, DAE, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation and research institutions.

As mid-term action, efforts should be made for introducing site specific cropping pattern and other adaptive technologies to minimise loss. As long-term action, maintenance and storage facilities of surface water

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ICC Cricket World Cup England & Wales 2019

PROUD PARTNER

জিতে নিয়েছে আরও ৬ জন, আপনিও জিতে নিতে পারেন!

এ পর্যন্ত ইংল্যান্ড ওয়ার্ল্ড কাপ ট্রিপ জিতেছে ১২ জন এবং স্মার্টফোন জিতেছে ১০১০ জন*

মোহেদি হাসান, মোঃ আবির হুসাইন অনিক, মোঃ শাহিফুল আলম, ইয়াসির হুসাইন চৌধুরী, মোঃ রহিম মিয়া, রিয়াদ হাসান

ইংল্যান্ড যাও স্টেডিয়াম মাতাও

আরও পাওয়া যাচ্ছে

* বিস্তারিত বোললের গায়ে
* ক্যাপস্টেইন চলাকালীন এ পর্যন্ত ২৪ জন ইংল্যান্ড ওয়ার্ল্ড কাপ ট্রিপ বিজয়ীর মধ্যে ১২ জনের বৈধ ডকুমেন্টস পাওয়া গিয়েছে এবং ১৪৪০ জন স্মার্টফোন বিজয়ীর মধ্যে ১০১০ জনের কাছে পুরস্কার দৌড়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে
* বিজয়ীদের ইংল্যান্ড ট্রিপ তাদের বৈধ ডকুমেন্টস ও ভিসার উপর নির্ভর করবে