



A student of the fine arts faculty of Dhaka University putting finishing touches to a mask yesterday. The masks are an inherent part of Mangal Shobhajatra, a key attraction of the Pahela Baishakh celebrations. Pahela Baishakh, the Bangla New Year, is less than a week away.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Reviving the rhythm

Preparations for Mangal Shobhajatra in full swing at DU

DIPAN NANDY and SIRAJUL ISLAM RUBEL

It's that time of the year again, when Dhaka University's fine arts faculty is surrounded by colours.

Students were seen busy with preparations for Mangal Shobhajatra ahead of Pahela Baishakh, the Bangla new year, to be held on April 14. What added more to the festivities is the fact that the event was halted for two consecutive years due to the pandemic.

This year, it's expected to make a comeback like never before.

"Mangal Shobhajatra 1429" will be held under the theme "Nirmal Koro Mangal Kore Molin Mormo Muchaye", which translates to an invitation to purify life and make it better by erasing

Due to the pandemic, the rhythm in our lives has been lost. Through this year's Shobhajatra theme, 'Nirmal' has been called upon to shed the inertia and filth.

Nisar Hossain
Dean of fine arts faculty



the gloom and negativity of all sorts.

Preparations for the event have been going on at the campus since March 31.

During a visit to DU's fine arts faculty yesterday, these correspondents found students busy crafting masks and festoons, supervised by faculty member Shishir Bhattacharya.

"It's like a dream come true. I've been seeing the preparations on television

since I was a little girl, and now I'm a part of it," said Mandira Sarker Tanni, a fresher at the faculty working on the preparations for the first time.

As part of fundraising for the event, a week-long "art camp" is ongoing at Zainul Gallery -- inaugurated last Tuesday by Syed Abul Barq Alvi, honorary professor of the printmaking department and former dean of the

faculty.

There is no corporate patronage or sponsors for the event. Works of the faculty members are being displayed, and the expenses will be met with the revenue generated from the sales of these works.

Nisar Hossain, dean of the fine arts faculty, told The Daily Star, "Due to the pandemic, the rhythm in our lives has been lost. Through this year's Shobhajatra theme, 'Nirmal' has been called upon to shed the inertia and filth."

He also mentioned that this year's procession will start from TSC and end in front of the vice chancellor's residence. Social distancing will also be maintained, he added.

This year's Shobhajatra will start at 9:00am on April 14, and will be inaugurated by DU Vice Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman.

Mangal Shobhajatra was initiated in 1989 by DU's Faculty of Fine Arts. Within a few years, it became an essential component of Pahela Baishakh celebrations. It came to be known as Mangal Shobhajatra in 1996. On November 30, 2016, it was recognised as a Unesco Intangible Cultural Heritage.

At least consider temporary waiver

Foreign secretary urges US officials on Rab sanctions

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh has urged the US to consider a temporary waiver for Rapid Action Battalion, as sanctions on Rab might undermine Dhaka's efforts to combat terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crime.

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen raised the issue during his meeting with US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman at the State Department on Thursday.

They talked about the pending legal procedure to de-list the organisation and individuals as well as remedial measures that have been taken by the government.

In response to queries from the US side, Masud elaborated on the context of enacting Digital Security Act (DSA) to combat cybercrimes, including those aimed at undermining religious harmony and victimising women and children.

He informed that the government is working with the European Union (EU) to reassess the law and identify possible loopholes.

On labour issues, he explained that the government has all intentions to improve the labour situation, as per the roadmaps undertaken with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and EU, and proposed that the US can also join.

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DU honours viva conducted 'violating rules'

DU CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka University teacher has allegedly conducted viva voce of the honours final exam in absence of an external examiner, which violates university rules.

The teacher, Dr Sazzad Hossain, chairperson of the exam committee, conducted the viva voce for students of the international relations department.

Before the exam, the department formed a three-member committee, with Prof Ruhul Amin, chairperson of the department, and retired professor Abul Kalam Azad from Jahangirnagar University (JU) as external examiner.

According to DU's ordinance and regulations, the presence of an external examiner is mandatory to prepare question papers, conduct viva voce and finalise results.

On February 20, Prof Abul Kalam submitted a letter to DU's exam controller, in which he said, "I had informed the exam committee's chairman that I would not be present at the moderation meeting. But I would be present at the viva voce."

"However, I heard that the viva voce has already taken place without my knowledge. I

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Cell formed to convict BNP leaders ahead of next polls

Alleges Fakhrul

UNB, Dhaka

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir yesterday alleged that the government has formed a cell to convict their front-ranking leaders across the country in "false" cases ahead of the next general election.

Speaking at a press conference at the BNP chairperson's Gulshan office, he also said the government is trying to wipe out BNP by using the

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PRAYER TIMING		APRIL 9			
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib	Esha	
AZAN 4:26	12:45	4:45	6:21	7:45	
JAMAAT 4:36	1:15	5:00	6:31	8:15	
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION					
SEHRI, IFTAR TIMING					
RAMADAN	APRIL	SEHRI	IFTAR		
7	9			6:21	
8	10	4:20	6:22		
9	11	4:19	6:22		



With concrete buildings taking over the cities, children these days hardly get spaces to play. But thankfully, for the few existing playgrounds, like this one in Moghbazar's Noyatola, they get to be their usual mischievous selves. This photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



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