



AN ODE TO JOY

Rokeya Sultana's art blossoms at Edge Gallery

Exquisite textures with precise light and shades, centering on the vivid reflections that colours depict, with the adjustment of sharpness and tone, are evocative of her paintings.

ZAHANGIR ALOM

The saying, 'The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world' rings true in the artistic journey and pursuits of renowned artist, Professor Rokeya Sultana – who has, over the years, created a hallmark of her own. Her vast volume of unique works speaks of that reality. Her art practice is largely focused on her internal life and exploration of the feminine, as well as various fluid emotional states and sensual abstract topographies.

'Pancha Bhoota', or the five great physical elements – Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether – form the basis of all cosmic creation. These elements have different characteristics, and also account for different faculties of human experience. In Indian philosophy, the human



Rokeya Sultana with her artwork



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

body is considered to have been made of these five elements.

Entering the furnished Edge Gallery in Gulshan 2, one cannot but get amazed at seeing a life-sized canvas of the artist.

Rokeya Sultana captures nature's underlying harmony in her paintings, to project her desire for peace. Producing richly textured canvases, her singular style resonates with delicate, inwardly expanding applications of shimmering paint.

The language of Rokeya's art is sharp and intense – like poetry – and is prominent with regard to both subjects and techniques. The features of her Madonna series tell stories of the species from various parts of the world making her brushes pray like counting beads of rosary on canvas as her lyrical wash suggests.

Through the use of colour, movement, light, shades and various forms, she searches the subconscious of Sigmund Freud in the mystical land of Lalon. The aesthetic unity she achieves through a melding of soothing melodies is amazing in their clarity and depth.

Exquisite textures with precise light and shades, centering on the vivid reflections that colours depict, with the adjustment of sharpness and tone, are evocative of her paintings. What is distinctive in her work is the technique and treatment of colour. She deconstructs forms and spreads shimmering yet warm colours on life-sized canvases for her ongoing solo exhibition titled 'An Ode To Joy' at Edge Gallery.

The sensitivity of womanhood and the creative power of motherhood have always shone through her artworks. The artist's

several series like 'Spirit Within', 'Flow of Life' and 'Flaming Desires' shed light on a symbolic meaning, with a deep philosophical connection.

Her "Madonna" series is a strong feminist statement portraying determined womanhood. It represents the everyday woman, moving around in the world, jostled and always in peril – but, at the same time, carrying a conscientious omnipresence.

"Madonna is a movement," asserted Rokeya Sultana. "She is vulnerable because although she is a peacemaker, she is prepared to fight. She is a symbol for all women. She changes throughout time, but she is forever performing the same role." The artist explained that the series is a symbol of protest against an unjust society, so her rebellion grows deeper.

Rokeya Sultana takes joy in simple things, through knowing the unknown and seeing the unseen. The beautiful, minute details of the universe attract her greatly. As an ardent worshipper of nature, she observes the beauty and diversity of nature through her aesthetic lens of mind.

Jeetu Ahsan making a comeback with OTT project

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Popular television actor Jeetu Ahsan is making a comeback with a thriller series titled "Makal" directed by Animesh Aich. The five-episode mystery thriller will be released on Bioscope in September 8.

The story of the series revolves around a mystery criminal named Torofdar, who creates illusions in various ways, whenever the police tries to catch him. The series casts Intekhab Dinar, Orchita Sporshia, Hasan Masood, Rawnak Hasan and Joy Raj among others.

Taylor Swift wins top MTV video award, announces new album

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Taylor Swift won three awards – video of the year, best long-form video and best direction at MTV's annual Video Music Awards on Sunday for a 10-minute version of her 2012 breakup song "All Too Well" and made a surprise announcement of a new album "Midnights" coming in October 21.

Jack Harlow won four total awards, though that includes two technical categories. Lil Nas X and Harry Styles each won three awards while Nicki Minaj, Red Hot Chili Peppers and Lisa of BLACKPINK each won two.



COUNTRYWIDE

EROSION BY TEESTA, DHARLA

Many rendered homeless in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Over 200 families at several villages under different upazilas of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram have been rendered homeless in the last one month due to sudden erosion by the Teesta and Dharla rivers.

According to sources at Lalmonirhat Water Development Board (WDB) and local administration, the two rivers, Teesta and Dharla, continue devouring fresh areas in at least 18 to 20 points at different upazilas of the district.

The erosion took serious turns at some places and already devoured vast arable land and many homesteads.

Moreover, about 400 dwelling houses and several hundred bighas of cropland and other establishment

are under threat of being eroded any time, the sources add.

Sixty-three-year-old Maleka Bewa of Purbo Kalmati village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, who lost her husband Abdul Gafur nearly 10 years back, has been a victim of river erosion for at least 13 times in her life.

on August 15, although she was able to shift one of her shanties to other's land with the help of locals, the other went to the Teesta river.

Monnaf Mia, 58, of the village said the Teesta river has devoured his homesteads, orchard and arable land.

Now he is living on other people's land as he cannot afford to buy land and build a house, Monnaf said.

Lalmonirhat WDB Executive

Engineer Mizanur Rahman said work is going on to prevent erosion-hit areas by dumping sand fill geo bags.

If the water level in the Teesta river rises, the erosion might take a serious turn again, he said, adding that he has informed his higher authorities to take necessary measures to stop the erosion permanently.

Lalmonirhat Sadar Upazila Parishad Chairman Kamruzzaman Sujon said many families have become homeless and destitute due to erosion by the Teesta and Dharla rivers.

If required measures are not taken immediately to prevent the erosion by the two rivers, the number of homeless people will keep increasing day by day, he added.



WDB dumping sand bags in different erosion-hit areas to protect the river banks. The photo was taken from Purbo Kalmati village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Now's not

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educational institutions, there have been talks about dresses of female students. This is a resolved issue."

She alleged that those who were behind the killing of Bangabandhu have now made the resolved issue unresolved.

The education minister's remarks came yesterday when netizens are criticising some university students who formed a human chain asking women to wear long attires which they think are "decent".

Earlier, a young woman was assaulted by some men and women at Narsingdi Railway Station for wearing what they claimed "indecent cloths", which also drew huge criticism from people.

At the meeting, the education minister also said she would soon sit with the vice-chancellors of public universities to strengthen the counselling services at the universities to prevent cases of deaths by suicide.

Nasa calls off launch

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indication of a major setback for Nasa or its primary contractors, Boeing Co B.A.N for SLS and Lockheed Martin Corp L.M.T.N for Orion.

"We don't launch until it's right," Nasa chief Bill Nelson said in a webcast interview just after the lift off was scrubbed. "It's just illustrative that this is a very complicated machine, a very complicated system, and all those things have to work. And you don't want to light the candle until it's ready to go."

Still, the delay was a disappointment to thousands of spectators who had gathered on the shores around Cape Canaveral, with binoculars in hand.

Next polls

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commissioner and learnt about preparations of a free and fair election.

"The chief election commissioner talked about the EVM system and how it has been developed and the decision of using EVM in as many as 150 constituencies. We hope that it will be instrumental in ensuring a free, fair and participatory elections," Naoki added.

Truckloads of rice

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and fine rice at \$450.

Moniruzzaman, deputy director of Benapole Land Port, told this newspaper that activity in the port has increased, and instructions for speedy offloading were issued to the officials there.

The 230 trucks that entered yesterday were in the transshipment yard of Benapole port since July 23, when the government permitted rice import.

However, the pace of rice import through Hili Land Port was slow due to technical issues in the server there.

The importers, through their clearing and forwarding agent, submitted their bill of entry papers for their imported rice yesterday, but the customs officials could not process the papers for issues with the server, said the officials.

On the other hand, the Deputy Commissioner of Hili Customs, Kamrul Hasan, was on leave.

He was supposed to join yesterday afternoon, said officials of Hili Land Port.

The Daily Star tried to reach Kamrul for comments but he did not answer his phone.

Officials at the port said the facility has also been facing serious space problems, which contributed to the slow pace of offloading.

Harun Ur Rashid, the president of Importers' and Exporters' Group of Hili Land Port, hailed the government for slashing the duty. He said many importers had held off on importing.

"It will be a relief for importers as well as the government," he said, urging the customs department to process the bill of entry as fast as possible.

Meanwhile, at Bhomra Land Port in Satkhira, 280 tonnes of rice in

10 trucks were imported from India yesterday.

At Ghojadanga port on the Indian side, around 100 trucks laden with rice have been in the queue to enter Bangladesh, Bhomra customs sources said.

Abul Kalam, customs superintendent of Bhomra Land Port, said they are expecting that rice import will rise today.

On the other hand, rice import was yet to start through Burimari Land Port in Lalmonirhat.

Samir Mazumdar, customs inspector at the port, said, "Some businessmen have already communicated with us in this regard. Hopefully the import will begin soon through the port."

The government on Sunday slashed the import duty on rice and is working to import about 12 lakh tonnes of food grains as it looks to rein in the price of the staple amid a cost of living crisis.

As of August 24, the government's food stock stood at 19.14 lakh tonnes, which is the highest in recent times and much above the safe benchmark of 12 lakh tonnes, according to data from the food ministry.

According to a Reuters report citing government officials, Bangladesh will buy 1 lakh tonnes of parboiled rice from an Indian public sector firm, 2 lakh tonnes of parboiled rice and 30,000 tonnes of white rice from Vietnam.

The Bangladesh government is also holding talks with Myanmar to import rice, the officials said, putting aside a rift over the Rohingya refugee crisis, said the Reuters report published yesterday.

[Our correspondents from Dinajpur, Jashore, Satkhira and Lalmonirhat contributed to this report]

Not opening

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forcing the authorities to change the mode of financing for this particular work.

Later, the project authorities awarded the contract after arranging funds from the Bangladesh government.

The company will get five months to complete the work after it is handed the project site following the signing of the contract, which is yet to be done. It may take the contractor

up to March to complete installation of the signaling system, the official added.

Besides, the work on nine vehicular underpasses are going on and it would take some more time to construct approach embankments.

Also, there are some complexities over the clearance of girders and dirt wall of some bridges under the project and it would take some time to solve those problems.