



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

The universality of dance

An art form fit for any emotion, in any language, at any time



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SUDESHNA SWAYAMPRAKHA

Arts allow for a semblance of normalcy, an escape from the otherwise cruel realities and crises of the present world. One would find solace in the embrace of arts, diverting the mind to provide a means of reflection, to find beauty in life, to enable self-expression. Dance is one of those art forms that helps to soothe the troubled soul and envelopes us to momentarily get lost in the rhythm and motion of the universe.

Dance has been, from the ancient times the most instinctive form of art. Humans unconsciously learn to dance even before they learn any other social skills; so ingrained is dance within us. While everyone possesses this basic language of communication through the body without even knowing, there are those who dedicate their lives to practice and elevate this language to an aesthetic level to make it art. Dancers work hard to improve skills, stretch themselves to limits, connect to the inner selves to create dance pieces.

The power of dance was witnessed as the world stood still during the pandemic. As people were cooped up, dance provided a way to release pent up energy within the confines of the homes. Technology and social media blessed us with visuals of dance from all around the world, where dancers and non-dancers equally shared their innermost expressions through a common shared language of the

body. All coming together to create a rhythm that was felt by all who viewed; an artistic and creative form of body movement that brought its audience around the world to connect as a community during a period of grave uncertainty and tragedy.

29 April marks “International Dance Day”, initiated in 1982 by the Dance Committee of ITI (International Theatre Institute) celebrating the birth anniversary of Jean-George Noverre, (1727-1810 the creator of modern ballet). The day is celebrated with high spirits in the dance community to make people aware of the value and importance of the dance. The dance community present and promote their work on a broad scale, so that people in places of authority are aware of the value of the art form to support it.

However, should we limit dance to just aesthetic performances that is to be appreciated and enjoyed by its audience? Being the art that derives its’ tools and inspiration from nature itself, I believe we should do more to give back to nature and life itself through dance. In a tumultuous world, the possibilities are numerous, from using dance to address social issues, raising awareness for social injustices, to using it for its healing capabilities for both physical and mental concerns. The embodied experience of dance, that has its’ roots in the nature can help to create empathy towards other humans and be inclusive of all regardless of gender,

race, class, physical capabilities. Even though inaudible, the language of dance is capable of speaking loudly to convey messages that need to be heard. Dance has the capability to help us connect ourselves to the rhythm of the cosmos, to actually go back to the bosom of nature where it all began, to help protect the world and make it a place for all to tap their feet to the eternal beat harmoniously.

Just as the author of this year’s International Dance Day Message, YANG Liping, famous dancer and choreographer from China very clearly highlights in her note: “...As human beings, we should respect nature, learn from nature, and harmonize with nature, just like the earth, the mountains, and the sky.

Dancers and choreographers need to listen more attentively to the joys and sorrows of the world, using dance to complete the dialogue we have had with nature, and life which has lasted for thousands of years.

Today, I will not only continue to share our dance culture with the world, but I also hope to invite all the dancers in the world who love dance and who would like to express their emotions through dance, to jointly dance for conveying our love and praise to heaven and earth.

Life never ends, and dance never stops.”

The author is a renowned dancer and choreographer.

Bhawaiya legend Sharifa Rani passes away

Legendary Bhawaiya singer Sharifa Rani has passed away yesterday at 10 am, in a private hospital at capital’s Shyamoli. The news of her passing was confirmed to the media by the deceased’s relative, reporter Ali Akhtar Golam Kibria. She was 73.

Born on June 9, 1950, she was a native of Rangpur upazila. After settling down in Dhaka with her engineer husband, Sharifa left her career of singing for radio and TV, around 1977-78.

Her songs which had been published before the Liberation War, reached immense popularity for their folk roots and her extraordinary voice. Iconic songs like, *Kanichato Garinu Akashi Akali* was widely beloved when it was released in Rangpur Betar.



Sony releases Bangla poster for ‘Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse’

The long-awaited sequel of Academy Award winning *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse* is finally set to be hitting the theatres soon. Sony has already released a multitude of posters for the new film, to cater to the fans waiting eagerly all across the world.

Excitedly for the Bengali fans, there’s a poster of *Spider Man- Across the Spider-Verse* in Bengali that has been released with posters in other languages like, English, Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Marathi, Kannada and Malayalam. This was done as a promotion for the film’s Pan-Indian release.



COUNTRYWIDE



A local influential man built this illegal structure after occupying part of the government road at Hosnabad village in Lalmonirhat’s Patgram upazila. PHOTO: STAR

Illegal structure on government road

Eviction order yet to be implemented

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

More than half a hundred farmer families in Patgram upazila have been facing serious trouble for long as a local influential man restricted their movements by building a permanent structure, occupying a portion of a government road.

As a result, several hundred residents of Hosnabad village under Baura union are compelled to use the adjacent cropland to go to their destinations as there is no other alternative.

Following several complaints submitted by the villagers, Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammad Ullah conducted a separate investigation in this regard.

After investigation, DC Mohammad Ullah issued an eviction order on April 2 in order to remove the illegal structure from the government road.

But, unfortunately the eviction order has not been implemented yet due to unknown reason, putting the villagers in utter disappointment.

Local farmers said former Jamaat leader Shafiqul Islam and his men forcibly occupied six decimals area of the government road nearly two years ago and built concrete structure on it.

Since then Shafiqul and his men has

continued obstructing the villagers from using the road.

Meanwhile, due to obstacle, farmers living in the nearby area have to face serious problems in bringing their agricultural products at home, locals said.

Farmer Shahinur Islam said they will have to leave the village and shift elsewhere if the road is not freed for public’s movement by removing the illegal structure.

This road is the only way of communication for the residents of Hosnabad village, he said, adding that villagers have been using arable land that went alongside the road as an alternative for the last two years.

Manik Mia, a member of Baura Union Parishad (UP), said Shafiqul is so influential that no one dares to protest him in fear of harassment.

“I have personally tried to resolve the issue on several occasions, but failed,” Manik said.

Contacted, Shafiqul claimed that he is the genuine owner of the land and said unfortunately the land has been registered as government khas land.

Lalmonirhat DC Mohammad Ullah said the road will be freed from the illegal encroachment soon.

‘Don’t know if I’ll be alive till then’

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no people on the streets. All shops are closed,” he said.

Monowar said he wanted to return to Bangladesh. “Don’t know whether I can return home alive?”

Twenty-four-year-old Md Rasel Mia, who was with Monowar, went to Sudan in August of 2015. He hasn’t been back home since.

“I was planning to go to Bangladesh but now I fear for my life,” he said.

Rasel said more than 1,000 Bangladeshis live in Khartoum and all are at risk.

Most Bangladeshis living in the Sudani capital work in tailor shops and polythene factories. “Our shop was in a risky area and during the ceasefire, we moved to this place. But this is not safe either.”

Hailing from Narayanganj, Rasel said the ceasefire was not holding as gunfire

continued and people are moving to safer places. “But it seems that there is no safe place in the country right now.”

Rasel said that the Bangladeshi embassy was working to bring them back to Bangladesh and possibly they will be taken to a safer place on April 30.

“I don’t know whether I will be alive till then.”

Sultan Danesh Ali, president of the Bangladesh Community in Sudan, said



the situation in Khartoum is deteriorating day by day.

On Wednesday, armed men stormed a building in a Khartoum neighbourhood where 50 Bangladeshis were staying. They took their money, food, and mobile phones, he said.

Bangladeshis are running out of money and food.

Whenever Bangladeshis are getting out on the streets, they are getting mugged. There were cases in which the muggers took the shirts the victims were wearing, he said.

Islami Andolon

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Even though Rupon is running as an independent and doesn’t have a political affiliation, locals say that he has a great chance in the city known as a BNP stronghold.

Besides, rifts within the Awami League in Barishal are common knowledge. AL insiders say their activists and leaders may not be able to overlook the difference and unite for the polls.

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Islami Andolon Bangladesh (IAB) also has a lot of supporters in the city.

As the BNP boycotted the election, its supporters may extend their support to the IAB leader, making it difficult for AL candidate Abul Khair Abdullah to win the election on June 12.

Teletalk SIMs for Rohingya

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The SIM cards would be sold against the ‘Family Counting Number’ from the database prepared by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Subsequently, the committee recommended access to the database for mobile operators and law enforcement agencies.

It would be a challenging task to get the refugees to get used to using the new SIM since the network of Myanmar operators is strong and they use Myanmar SIMs to communicate with relatives, business partners (especially drug trade and other businesses) located in Myanmar, said a representative of the special branch said.

But, weakening Myanmar’s network by installing jammers on the border is costly, according to an official of another intelligence agency.

About 1,100 jammers would be needed and each jammer costs Tk 2 crore, taking the total cost to approximately Tk 2,200 crore, he added.

“We are trying to

provide them with SIMs to bring them into a system,” Zaman told The Daily Star.

More meetings will be held before a final decision is made, he added.

The length of the Bangladesh-Myanmar border is very small compared with the Bangladesh-India border, said Abu Saeed Khan, a senior policy fellow at LIRNEasia.

“Bangladesh previously was able to stop the signal of Indian network operators. So, the government should utilise the experience of those officials who accomplished that.”

The cross-border criminals, including Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, are comfortably communicating using the network of Myanmar operators.

Before the Rohingya refugee influx to Bangladesh, there was no Myanmar network coverage on the border, Khan said.

“It’s a national security threat to both Myanmar and Bangladesh and this is what the Bangladesh government should

Sugar price

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National Board of Revenue (NBR).

Taslim Shahriar, senior assistant general manager of the Meghna Group of Industries, told The Daily Star, “The sugar price is increasing almost every day. Today (yesterday), the price of sugar increased by \$ 20 to \$670 per tonne in just two hours.”

He said, “The mill-gate price of sugar, which is currently awaiting release from port, will be at least Tk 125 per kg.

The Tk 25-30 VAT on every kg of Sugar should be discounted, he said.

This month, Meghna Group delivered 62,920 tonnes that had import prices between \$510 and \$30, as per documents.

When his attention was drawn to this, Taslim said they have to pay ship owners between \$40,000 and \$50,000 for each day of delay in offloading the cargo. Besides, the weak taka has increased the cost.

“The average import price of sugar awaiting release from the port is more than \$600 per tonne,” he said.