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'Death Sentence' explores link between death and aesthetics

Director Francois Grosjean, from Alliance Française de Dhaka, graced the event as the Chief Guest, alongside artist and critic Mustafa Zaman, who attended as the special guest.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The opening ceremony of the art exhibition *Death Sentence* commenced on February 15 at the Bengal Shilpalay. Curated by Jewel A Rob, under the Bengal Foundation's Subir Choudhury Curatorial Practice Grant (SCCPG), works by five artists namely Anisuzzaman Sohel, Emran Sohel, Promotes Das Pulak, Najmun Nahar Keya, and Shimul Datta, are currently being featured in the exhibition.

Director Francois Grosjean, from Alliance Française de Dhaka, graced the event as the chief guest, alongside artist and critic Mustafa Zaman, who attended as the special guest.

In 2015, the Bengal Foundation established the practice of curatorial grants as a tribute to Subir Choudhury, the director, artist, and



arts organiser. Through an open call, Jewel A Rob's research proposal was selected for the SCCPG's exhibition in 2018. Despite encountering numerous obstacles, including disruptions due to COVID-19, the *Death Sentence* exhibition is now being presented.

The concept of the *Death Sentence* project revolves around the curator's empathetic viewpoint and response to artists' involvement in the design and aesthetics of weapons and war machinery. It delves into historical processes and explores the

intriguingly inverted relationship between death and aesthetics.

The thought-provoking show draws on the practice of five artists who have looked at the questions critically. The show aims to display reflections on deeply troubling contemporary concerns.

SCCPG's exhibition titled *Death Sentence* will continue till March 30 at Bengal Shilpalay in the Dhanmondi area. The exhibition will be open from 4:00pm to 8:00pm every day except Sundays.

Nachiketa honours Ekushey February with tribute song

Renowned artiste Nachiketa Chakraborty recently released a song titled *Ekta Ekusher Lage* in honour of the historic Ekushey February, emphasising the deep bond between Bangladesh and West Bengal despite the geographical barriers.



The song, sung by Nachiketa with Sayeeda Shampa, carries heartfelt lyrics penned by Golem Morshed and composed by Antu Golandaz.

About the song, Shampa remarked, "Nachiketa da is one of my favourite artistes. He consistently leads with socially conscious songs."

The song will be released on the YouTube channel named Gaan janala on February 21.

Islam Uddin Palakar ventures into cinema with folk song

In a musical journey spanning four decades, Islam Uddin Palakar has travelled far and wide, both in Bangladesh and abroad, captivating audiences with his regional folk songs.

The folk singer gained widespread recognition with the hit song *Deora* in Coke Studio Bangla's second season alongside singer Pritom Hasan. This rendition swiftly captivated the younger audience, elevating the singer's profile from a niche audience to mainstream fame.

Now, the singer has ventured into a cinema for the first time by lending his voice to a playback track in Ahmmed Humayun's upcoming film *Potu*.

The song titled *Biye Keno Holo Na* will debut on Jazz Multimedia's YouTube channel on Monday, with the film scheduled for release in theaters on the upcoming Eid.



NEWS

Ashfaque, wife sent back

FROM PAGE 12
A seven-year-old house help at the same couple's residence suffered injuries as she tried to flee through an opening of the eighth-floor flat.

The victim's family filed a case over the incident, but police submitted a final report before the court as they did not find any evidence to bear out the charges in the case, filed under the Children Act, 2013.

HUMAN CHAIN

A group of people from Laskarpur valley in Habiganj, a neighbouring district of Preeti's hometown Moulvibazar, formed a human chain yesterday demanding justice for her.

Under the banner of Laskarpur valley Socheton Nagorikbrinda, a platform of local tea garden workers, formed the human chain in front of Chandpur tea garden in Habiganj.

Protesters demanded punishment to Ashfaque and his wife over Preeti's death.

OPEN LETTER TO STAR

A platform called "Nipironer Biruddha

Shahbagh" (Shahbagh against oppression) sent an open letter to The Daily Star editor yesterday, demanding that Ashfaque be relieved of his duty as the newspaper's executive editor.

Khan Asaduzzaman Masum, president of Bangladesh Jubo Union sent the open letter on behalf of the platform.

The letter thanked The Daily Star editor for his note to the readers over the incident, but added that the platform was frustrated by the content of the note.

"It would have been responsible on your part as the editor had you relieved Ashfaque Haque of his duty as the executive editor in the interest of an impartial and a dispassionate investigation," it said.

Raising questions about why such incidents were repeating at the household, the open letter said, "We want to firmly state that we do not support the arrivals of children like Preeti Urang as house helps to seek a better life in Dhaka."

PTI wants judicial body

FROM PAGE 12
Sharif-led PML-N. Pakistan's election commission later formed a high-level committee to probe the explosive allegations.

After the press conference, the outgoing commissioner surrendered himself to the police, who arrested him and sealed his office.

However, a police spokesman said the commissioner was not arrested as there were no cases against him, but he was in the "custody" after the allegations. Chattha has been shifted to some unknown place.

A senior district administration official said security of the polling staff, returning and district returning officers had been increased and election material and data has been secured.

Meanwhile, the talks between the PPP and the PML-N to devise a power-sharing formula in the upcoming coalition government remained inconclusive, though both sides claimed "significant progress" in the discussions.

The third meeting between the Contact and Coordination Committees (CCCs) of the two

parties, which took place on Saturday evening, remained inconclusive and both decided to meet again today to finalise the power-sharing formula.

A brief announcement issued by PML-N after the meeting stated that there had been "significant progress" in talks with both sides, stressing the need for a "strong democratic government".

In the last meeting on Thursday, representatives of both parties sought more time to assess the proposals discussed in the first meeting.

The PPP has assured PML-N of its support in the government formation and election of the next prime minister on the condition that, in return, it will get key constitutional offices, including that of the president.

It may worsen

FROM PAGE 12
will worsen and continue to have implications for its neighbours.

"It is something we have to watch out for and enable our partners in the region, in this case Bangladesh and India, to cope with those stresses without it boiling over into instability in their countries as well," Lu said.

While speaking at an event in Washington last week on "The Indo-Pacific Strategy in Action: Commemorating the Second Anniversary," Lu emphasised the need for empowering partners in the region.

Acknowledging Dhaka's remarkable generosity in hosting over a million people from Myanmar for years, Lu said Washington also put significant efforts to engage and collaborate with Bangladesh to tackle the crisis.

"I have spent a lot of times on Bangladesh, [I saw] the effects of instability in Burma and what it means for the region," Lu, who visited Rohingya refugee camps, said.

Lu also highlighted the international community's efforts to solve the crisis by finding a way for the safe repatriation of the refugees back to Myanmar.

Lu said that the Indo-Pacific strategy is based on the premise that US and like-minded partners would try to offer a better proposition to solve crises in the region.

As the most dynamic and fastest-growing region on earth, the Indo-Pacific is a leading priority for US foreign policy and essential to global security and prosperity.

In 2022, the US inaugurated its Indo-Pacific Strategy, which lays out a shared vision for a free and open region that is more connected, prosperous, secure and resilient.

Croatian town

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Imotski, a small town situated on the slopes of the Dinara mountain, 30 km from the famed Adriatic coast. The town's population has decreased over decades due to successive waves of migration.

"Our fathers and grandfathers moved away, mostly to Western Germany at the time to earn something. To show they have earned some money they would drive back home in their Mercedes car," Ivan Topic, who runs a club of old-timer vehicles, told Reuters.

Grameen Bank can't nominate Faridpur's Rubel

FROM PAGE 1
Grameen Bank's board defended its decision to nominate directors, and chairman, for seven social business organisations founded by Nobel laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus.

As per law, neither Grameen Bank, nor any member of the board of directors, nor Prof Yunus own the non-profits, including Grameen Kalyan and Grameen Telecom, said Yunus Centre, which promotes Prof Yunus' philosophy and his concept of social business.

The organisations were established through individual initiatives of sponsor-members. These are separate not-for-profit legal entities, it added.

Prof Yunus had been the chairman of Grameen Kalyan and Grameen Telecom since the two institutions were formed, said the statement.

Grameen Bank initially had the power to nominate the chairman and some board members as mentioned in the articles of association. In May 2010, the articles were amended at Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM) of Grameen Kalyan and Grameen Telecom, leaving Grameen Bank with no authority to nominate directors.

The decisions of the EGMs were submitted to the Ministry of Commerce, and Grameen Bank cannot nominate chairman or board members for the two institutions, said the statement.

Grameen Bank's nominated representatives attended the EGMs and signed the resolution on behalf of the bank.

According to the Articles of Association of the companies, Grameen Bank is not a party to these institutions.

Prof Yunus does not have any ownership of any Grameen Bank organisations. He was only a full-time official, added the statement.

Prof Yunus, who along with Grameen Bank got the Nobel Prize for peace in 2006, has no ownership of Grameen Bank or any other institution created by him.

"He has never taken any money or honorarium from any institution he created. He has drawn salary as per the bank's pay scale only during his tenure with Grameen Bank."

Regarding the allegation of money laundering brought by the current Grameen Bank board, the centre said

the bank has been audited annually by renowned auditors that include Rahman Rahman Hug, Hoda Vasi Chowdhury & Co, ACNABIN, A. Qasem & Co.

The audits never found financial irregularities in this institution at any time.

Also, the inspection team of Bangladesh Bank and the committee and commission formed by the government had not found any irregularity, it added.

From Grameen Bank's inception to Prof Yunus's tenure as chairman, the board of directors was managed by respected and learned persons of the society who were all appointed by the government.

The claim that Grameen Telecom Bhaban was constructed with money from Grameen Bank is "motivated and baseless".

Grameen Kalyan was established in 1996 to provide primary healthcare by following principles of social business.

Before 1995, Grameen Bank received soft loans and grants from various donors and lending institutions. And as per the donors' condition, a Social Advancement Fund was created based on 2 percent of the funds.

The donors suggested that this fund be used for welfare of members and staff, it added.

According to an agreement between Grameen Bank and Grameen Kalyan, the fund was transferred to Grameen Kalyan for various welfare programmes, including providing interest on higher education loans given to children of Grameen Bank members.

As of 2023, the organisation paid Tk 555 crore for the said purpose and various activities of Grameen Bank, said the Yunus Centre.

Grameen Kalyan runs 143 health centres that benefit over 7 lakh people across the country every year, it added.

Regarding the claim that Prof Yunus received a Tk 24 crore grant from Grameen Bank during the establishment of Grameen Telecom, the statement said a Tk 24.77 crore loan was taken between 1995 and 1997 under an agreement to borrow Tk 30 crore from the Social Advancement Fund at 11 percent interest rate.

Faridpur's Rubel

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police in Faridpur arrested Rezaul with a pistol and two bullets.

Sub-inspector Farhad Hasan later pressed charges against Rezaul and Rubel in the case.

Public Prosecutor Nawab Ali said, "The judgement has proved that it is not possible to get away with crime by using power."

On May 16, 2020, Faridpur district AL President Subal Chandra Saha's house was vandalised. Subal then filed a case with Faridpur Kotwali Police Station accusing unidentified individuals.

While investigating the case, police raided the home of former local government, rural development and cooperatives minister Khandaker Mosharraf and arrested his close aide Sajjad Hossain Barkat and his brother Imtiaz.

After this incident, the political scenario of Faridpur changed and Khandaker Mosharraf went into self-exile.

According to a UNB report, Barkat and Rubel were also wanted in 11 more cases, including one for laundering Tk 2,000 crore. The two brothers illegally acquired assets worth Tk 3,000 crore by controlling tender, trading commissions, drug trade, and extortion.

Tk 2,535 crore was already laundered abroad.

Mafia active

FROM PAGE 12
regard is necessary to stop the operations of unauthorised hospitals, clinics, diagnostic centres and blood banks as the DGHS does not hold the power to do so.

On December 31 last year, Ayaan, a nursery student at a private school in the capital, was circumcised at United Medical College Hospital in Dhaka's Badda Thana. Doctors allegedly administered excessive anaesthesia to the child for the procedure without his parents' consent.

Since Ayaan did not regain consciousness several hours after the operation, he was transferred to the hospital's Gulshan branch.

After seven days on life support in the paediatric intensive care unit, doctors declared Ayaan dead, according to lawyer Shahjahan. He also said several other patients died earlier at the same hospital due to mishandling and negligence.