

'The art of resistance'

Exhibition kicks off today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

An exhibition titled "The Art of Resistance" was inaugurated yesterday at The Daily Star Centre, marking the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence and Human Rights Day.

The exhibition features works by a diverse group of Bangladeshi artists, who use their creativity to challenge injustice, promote equality, and inspire social change. From evocative paintings to impactful political cartoons, the artworks address critical issues, including the right to life, justice, freedom, safety, work, and education.

The event highlights the role of art as a tool for advocacy and activism, providing a platform for dialogue and interaction. Visitors showed great enthusiasm as they explored the exhibits, admiring the depth and diversity of the pieces on display.

The exhibition is open to the public daily from 10:00am to 8:00pm until December 21.

Showhat Rasadin Showkhin, an artist featured in the exhibition and a student of Dhaka University's Faculty of Fine Arts, said, "After the July uprising, most events or exhibitions were centred around the uprising. This event is a bit different; I've seen cartoons focusing on human rights here. It feels good to attend a different kind of event like this in these past few months."

Another artist, Mahatab Rashid, said, "I'm getting introduced to many people's work all at once. An exhibition is all about the spectators. All kinds of viewers will come. If someone sees something and feels inspired, that is the ultimate reward for an artist."

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Women and Children Affairs Adviser Sharmeen Murshid attended The Daily Star's exhibition "36 Days of July: Saluting the Bravehearts" at The Daily Star Centre in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Make internet safe for women

Speakers call for strict regulations

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Strict regulations at both the policy and platform levels, comprehensive online and digital education, and clear definitions of cyber violence are needed to make the digital space safer for women and children, said speakers at an event yesterday.

These recommendations came during a programme, titled "Catfishing & Avatars: Exploring and Mapping the Bangladesh Cyber World", at The Daily Star Centre.

The event was organised by Sister Library, a Goethe-Institut Bangladesh project, with support of Star Books and Literature and Her Story Foundation.

Speaking at the event, Sharmeen S Murshid, women and children affairs adviser to the interim government, asked, "If freedom of expression jeopardises my security, my democratic rights, makes

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Ensure safety of minorities

Jaishankar urges Bangladesh

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
New Delhi

Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar yesterday expressed concern over the treatment of minorities in Bangladesh, stating that India hopes Dhaka will take measures to ensure their safety in its own interest.

Speaking during the question hour in the Lok Sabha, he added that India aims to establish a mutually beneficial and stable relationship with the new dispensation in Bangladesh.

"We have drawn their attention to our concerns. Recently, the foreign secretary visited Dhaka. This subject came up in his meetings. And it is our expectation that in its own interests, Bangladesh will take action for the safety of minorities," he said.

Jaishankar said the treatment of minorities in Bangladesh has been a source of concern as there have been multiple incidents of attacks on them.

VEHICLE ENTRY DU enforces restrictions on weekends

DU CORRESPONDENT

Traffic congestion plagued areas surrounding Dhaka University yesterday as the university restricted vehicle entry to its campus on the weekends.

The DU authorities set up check posts at seven key entry points, including Shahbagh, Nilkhet, Doel Chattar, and Polashi, to enforce the new measures. According to DU officials, the decision to limit vehicle movement on Fridays and Saturdays was made to maintain the campus environment at students' request. Only emergency vehicles, university guests, and official vehicles were allowed entry.

Sala Uddin Ahmed, a private car driver, said, "I was unaware of the ban and got stuck near Shahbagh while heading towards TSC."

The restrictions caused heavy traffic jams on roads including Shahbagh, Nilkhet, Banglamotor, and Azimpur-Mirpur. Khalid Munsur, officer-in-charge of Shahbagh Police Station, said the measures followed DU's directives to enhance campus security.

On Thursday, DU Vice-Chancellor Niaz Ahmed Khan inaugurated a security and surveillance box at the Palashi intersection, saying the initiative aims to strengthen campus safety and control vehicular movement.

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Once the lifelines of Dhaka, the city's canals are now mere shadows of their former selves—clogged with pollution, suffocated by encroachment, and neglected due to flawed urban planning. In this seven-part series, The Daily Star explores the current condition of the capital's canals, botched restoration attempts, and how the sorry state of these waterways is exacerbating the city's waterlogging woes. Together, these stories reveal what it will take to bring Dhaka's dying canals back to life. Here is the fifth part of the series:

Boats row here NO MORE

Unplanned construction of embankments, roads killed Dhaka's waterways

HELEMUL ALAM

Once upon a time, boats would glide through the waters of Karwan Bazar. Laden with goods—sacks of rice, fresh vegetables, timber, and pottery—these boats would anchor at the dock near what is now the Film Development Corporation.

Traders shouted prices, buyers haggled, and boatmen rested their oars to share stories of their journey over cups of tea.

This continued until the early 1980s, when waterways were a vital means of communication in Dhaka.

But those days are now a distant memory, replaced by traffic jams on roads and the towering presence of endless concrete.

Mindless encroachments, sprawling road networks, and flood control measures sealed the fate of Dhaka's boat culture, severing its connection with the rivers and canals that once sustained it.

According to locals, the turning point began with the construction of the Tongi Diversion Road and the Rampura stormwater pump station.

These projects disrupted the natural water flow and blocked boat communication in many areas.

A 36-kilometre embankment from Tongi to Killarmore in Lalbagh and a 3.8-kilometre floodwall plus road from Killarmore to Postogola further

compounded the problem.

The embankments may have safeguarded the city against flooding, but they also cordoned off 136 sq km of Dhaka, cutting off crucial waterway routes.

The Rampura stormwater pumping station, constructed in 1993, became a definitive barrier.

While boats could still row between Rampura Bridge and the eastern parts of the city partially, the western and central part have lost connectivity totally. Though the water bus service is still active in

the Hatirjheel part, it is confined to this waterbody due to a lack of connectivity.

"In the 1970s, the Begunbari canal [now Hatirjheel] was alive with activity," recalled Azizur Rashid Babu, a resident of Moghbazar.

"Boats would come from the Buriganga and Balu rivers, carrying everything from fresh produce to construction materials. But after the Rampura regulator pump and the Tongi Diversion Road were built, it all came to a halt," he added.

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Unplanned construction of embankments, sluice gates, and roads has severed boat communication between one part of the Rayerbazar canal and another. Inset, a boat still gliding through a constricted portion of the capital's Gopibagh canal.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

BUFFALO CURD

A delectable Bhola delicacy



SUSHANTA GHOSH

If you find yourself roaming the streets of the island district of Bhola, you might just spot one of the countless iconic "Moisha Dahi" (buffalo curd) signs that are almost synonymous with the district itself.

The unique speciality of this buffalo curd, along with the passion locals feel for it, has earned it the tag of a Geographical Indication (GI) product.

Locals said the people of Bhola have been enjoying this unique curd for over 200 years. The primary feature that makes this curd such a delicacy is the fact that it is made using raw milk without anything being added to it.

Abdul Hai, owner of the local "Adarsha Dahi Bhandar," said they have been selling buffalo curd since his father's time.

"It is quite fresh and delicious. However, this curd does not last for more than one day. If kept in the refrigerator, it can last an extra 2-3 days," he said.

"I make around 40-60 kg of buffalo curd every day. It is very easy to make, as it turns into a solid curd after being left in a pot for 8-10 hours," he added.

Local yoghurt and curd makers informed this correspondent that there are 40 such shops in Bhola town selling this delicacy. Between them, they sell at least 1,500-2,000 kg of Moisha Dahi every day.

Mobasher Ullah Chowdhury, a local, said, "No wedding, birthday, or any other event is complete

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Amend national energy policies

Say speakers, demand 20pc budget allocation on renewables

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The national energy policy and the integrated energy and power master plan need urgent amendments, said speakers at an energy conference yesterday.

In addition, a renewable energy policy should be formed quickly, they added.

On the last day of the three-day "Conference on Bangladesh Energy Prosperity 2050," speakers called for allocating at least 20 percent of the national power and energy budget to renewable energy expansion.

Hasan Mehedi, member secretary of Bangladesh Working Group on Ecology and Development (BWGED), the organising platform, read the declaration making this demand.

The declaration also demanded a reduction of at least 50 percent import duties and registration fees on Electric Vehicles and 30 percent for hybrid vehicles.

Experts at the session, which took place at the capital's BIAM Foundation auditorium, demanded "No Electricity No Pay" policy be initiated for all power plants, which might help lessen the fiscal burden on the country.

They also demanded that import duties on renewable energy accessories—necessary for both utility-scale and household solar power plants—be reduced.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, adviser to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, appreciated the initiatives put forward.

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