

Samina Zaman's POETRY OF TIME impresses at Zainul Gallery

ART & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The Zainul Gallery at the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka, inaugurated a solo art exhibition titled *Poetry of Time* featuring works of artist Samina Zaman on Thursday, October 9, at 11:30 am.

The event was inaugurated by the chief guest, Dr Abdus Sattar, Professor of the Department of Oriental Art, Dr Azharul Islam Sheikh, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts, attended as the special guest. The ceremony was chaired by Gopal Chandra Trivedi, Chairman of the Department of Oriental Art, and curated by Dr Shake Manir Uddin, Chairman of the Department of Art History at the University of Dhaka. Samina Zaman, currently a designer at the renowned fashion and lifestyle company Disha Limited, is showcasing 31 artworks executed in mixed media and watercolour on paper. The exhibition will remain open from 12 pm to 7 pm till October 15.



PHOTOS: RATUL CHOWDHURY AND COURTESY

'Girgiti' to bring gritty crime thriller to OTT

The Bangladeshi crime-thriller series *Girgiti* will premiere on Bongo on October 16, delving into the corrupt and violent world of Biralpur, a town overtaken by drugs, power struggles, and murder.

When three men under businessman Chowdhury are killed, detective Maruf Zaman, played by Irfan Sajjad, investigates, only to face a shocking murder inside the police station.

Directed by Laskar Niaz Mahmud, with a story by Rahat Mehedi Haque and screenplay by Jyotirmoy Roy, the five episode series emphasises realism and emotional authenticity.

The cast includes Shatabdi Wadud, Nader Chowdhury, Ashish Khandakar, Mohana Meem, and others, blending seasoned performers with newcomers.

Edited at SK Studio in India, *Girgiti* promises suspense, psychological depth, and a gripping exploration of human nature.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Living on Death Row'

The European Union Delegation to Bangladesh, in collaboration with the Embassy of France and Drik, presents *Living on Death Row*, a powerful photo exhibition by Mosfiqur Rahman Johan. Curated by Tanzim Wahab, the exhibition explores the human cost of Bangladesh's death penalty system through stories of confinement, trauma, and resilience.

Date: Friday-Sunday | Oct 10-19, 2025

Time: 3 pm-8 pm

Venue: DrikPath Bhubon, Shukrabad



Government to honour Lalon Shah's legacy with countrywide celebrations

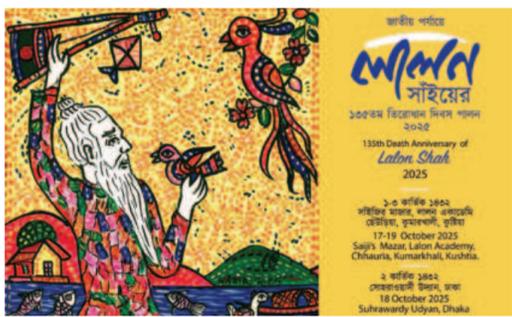
The government has announced nationwide celebrations to mark the 135th death anniversary of mystic saint Lalon Shah, with major Lalon Utshab events to be held in Kushtia and Dhaka from October 17 to 19.

The announcement came through the official Facebook

page of Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus. Kushtia's Cheuria, home to the Lalon Akhra, will host devotees, bauls, and musicians in a three-day festival of music, philosophy, and spirituality.

Performers include TunTun Baul, Sunil Karmakar,

Rowshan Fakir, and Latif Shah. In Dhaka, a special celebration at Suhrawardy Udyan on October 18 will feature Emon Chowdhury and Bengal Symphony, Band Lalon, Nirab and Bauls, Band Nobi, Suchona Shely, Band Baula, Arup Rahi, and Samogeet.



NEWS

A look back at referendums in Bangladesh

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Ershad followed in the footsteps of his predecessor.

Amid growing public opposition, he held a referendum on March 21, 1985, following the issuance of the Referendum Order, 1985.

The referendum was meant to determine whether voters had confidence in the policies and programmes adopted by HM Ershad, and whether they agreed to his continued tenure as president until elections could be held while the constitution remained suspended, according to the EC report.

According to daily Ittefaq's report dated March 18, 1983, Ershad, the then chief martial law administrator, announced an 18-point programme the previous day.

The programme included commitments to transform politics into "politics of action", secure political freedom through economic emancipation, promote rural development, reduce income inequality through equitable distribution of national wealth, uphold Islamic ideals and values in national life, and eliminate corruption.

The referendum saw around 72.44 percent turnout, with 94.11 percent voting in favour of Ershad.

According to the report, there were again two ballot boxes -- one labelled

"Yes" with Ershad's image on all four sides and the other was labelled "No".

In the book, Yeahia wrote that political activities and opposition to the referendum were banned. Political parties not only urged a boycott but also called a general strike (hartal) that day. With major political leaders under house arrest and universities closed, it was difficult for the opposition to organise demonstrations. As a result, the boycott call did not significantly influence voter behaviour.

The campaign was entirely one-sided, with the opposition blacked out by government-controlled electronic media. Academics criticised the voting procedure, noting that voters were not asked to mark ballot papers in any way.

"It was very easy for manipulators to move ballot papers from the ballot box to the one with Ershad's image," Yeahia wrote.

Observers found the turnout figures highly dubious. According to many, actual voter turnout was at most 20 percent. The Times (London), in its editorial titled "Learning to Live with a Lie", cited a two percent turnout and deemed the referendum a fraud, according to Yeahia.

Election expert Abdul Alim said the 1977 and 1985 referendums were held to "legitimise" the regimes of Ziaur Rahman and Ershad.

"There are serious doubts about the official figures of turnout. In reality, voters in such large numbers did not turn up at the polling centres. The bureaucracy was actively mobilised, and state-sponsored campaigns were used to inflate the turnout -- there is no doubt about that," he said.

Based on the Referendum Act of 1991, the third referendum was held on September 15, 1991.

It was the first time in the country's political history that a constitutional issue was addressed through a referendum. Voters were asked: "Should the president give assent to the Constitution (Twelfth Amendment) Bill, 1991?"

The fifth amendment to the constitution, passed in 1979 during Ziaur Rahman's tenure, made it mandatory to hold a referendum for any proposed changes to the preamble or to Articles 8, 48, 56, or 142 of the constitution. This requirement was later abolished through the fifteenth amendment in 2011 under the Awami League government.

The results of the third referendum showed that the turnout was 35.2 percent with 83.6 percent voting in favour of the bill.

Democracy was restored following Ershad's ouster, and parliament adopted the Twelfth Amendment Bill in 1991. This led to the reintroduction of parliamentary government,

3 economists win Nobel for work on innovation, growth

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Memory of Alfred Nobel, is the final prize to be given out this year and is worth 11 million Swedish crowns (\$1.2 million).

Mokyr, a professor at Northwestern University in the United States, was awarded half the prize.

Aghion, a professor at the College de France and INSEAD in Paris and at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and Howitt, a professor at Brown University in the United States, shared the other half.

The award comes at a potential inflexion point for the global economy with many expecting artificial intelligence to spark a new growth spurt. It also highlights the strategic risks for Europe of falling further behind the United States and China on technologies of the future as well as the potential costs of barriers to global trade.

Speaking by phone at the press conference, Aghion said de-globalization and tariff barriers were "obstacles to growth" adding that the bigger the market the more possibilities to exchange ideas, transfer technologies and for healthy competition.

"Anything that gets in the way of openness is an obstacle to growth. So I see there kind of dark clouds currently accumulating, pushing for barriers to trade and openness," he said.

Aghion called on Europe to learn from the U.S. and China, which he said have found ways to reconcile competition and industrial policy.

"In Europe, in the name of competition policy, we became very anti any form of industrial policy. I think we need to evolve on that and find ways to reconcile industrial

policy in areas like defense, climate, AI, biotech," he said.

Howitt, who said he had been "absolutely stunned" by the award, was also critical of President Trump's trade policies.

"It's pretty clear that these are going to discourage innovation by reducing what we call the scale effect, he told Reuters. "Starting a tariff war just reduces the size of the market for everybody."

He said that trying to bring manufacturing jobs back to the U.S. could perhaps make some political sense but was not good economic policy.

"We're good at designing running shoes, but it's best for us to leave others to make them," he said.

The awards for medicine, physics, chemistry, peace and literature were announced last week.

with the president becoming the constitutional head of state and the prime minister the executive head.

The amendment also abolished the position of vice president and stipulated that the president would be elected by parliament.

In the book, Yeahia mentioned that floods in parts of the country and a lack of awareness among rural voters regarding the technicalities of the constitutional issue were among the major reasons for the low turnout.

He noted that there were no allegations of rigging or malpractices commonly associated with the previous two referendums. As no political party opposed the constitutional amendment bill, no one campaigned against the referendum.

"It is clear from the turnout rate that the referendum had not generated much interest among the voters. The campaign was calm and almost limited to the media," he wrote.

Abdul Alim said that all political parties sought to move from a presidential system to a parliamentary form of government, and they campaigned for it.

around 3.8 lakh teachers and 1.7 lakh staffers.

In another development, BCS General Education Association yesterday said they would stage sit-ins on their respective campuses instead of attending classes today, demanding justice and respect for the teaching community.

Masud Rana Khan, member secretary of the association, confirmed the decision to the media, while its president, Prof Khan Moinuddin Al Mahmud Sohel, said further programmes would be declared after Wednesday.

The assault on teachers occurred at Dhaka College on Sunday when students from seven affiliated colleges took out a procession demanding swift implementation of the Dhaka Central University Act 2025.

A student was reportedly confined to the teachers' common room, prompting fellow students to besiege the administrative building and secure his release. The situation was later brought under control by police and college authorities.

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Now govt college teachers

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SM Jubair Husan, a lecturer at the Department of Islamic History at Raghobpur Rahmania Fazil (Degree) Madrasa, said all the teachers and many students came to the madrasa yesterday, but no classes were held.

On Sunday morning, the MPO-listed teachers gathered in front of the Jatiya Press Club and held a rally to push for the same three-point demand, causing congestion on Topkhana Road. Later, a 13-member teachers' delegation met officials at the finance ministry.

However, around 2:00pm that day, police charged batons, sprayed water cannons, and fired sound grenades to disperse the protesters, leaving several teachers injured.

The teachers had given the government an ultimatum until Sunday evening, but as no response came, they enforced a full-day work stoppage at all MPO-listed institutions yesterday. There are over 26,000 MPO-listed non-government institutions in the country, employing

Yunus places six proposals

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supply chains, empowering local entrepreneurs through finance and partnerships, ending export bans and reforming trade rules to support food security, and expanding access to technology and innovation, especially for rural youth in the Global South.

Calling for systemic change, Yunus advocated for social businesses -- enterprises that solve problems without personal profit. "Profit-maximising businesses have left billions behind."

He urged governments to create legal and financial frameworks to support social businesses, citing successful models like Grameen Bank and Grameen Danone.

He envisioned a "Three-Zero World": Zero Wealth Concentration, Zero Unemployment, and Zero Net Carbon Emissions. "This is not a dream. It is a necessity," he declared.

Youth empowerment was central to his message. "Let's not tell them to wait for jobs. Let's empower them to create jobs," he said, proposing investment funds, agri-tech hubs, and climate-smart enterprises led by

youth. "If we invest in youth, we will not only feed the world, we'll change the world."

Prof Yunus praised Bangladesh's role in global cooperation, noting its founding membership in the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty.

He also highlighted the country's food production achievements, saying the country feeds over 170 million people despite its small land area and also support 1.3 million Rohingya, who fled under violence in Myanmar.

"We've mechanised farming, built robust distribution systems, and are greening agriculture."

He recalled Bangladesh's peaceful youth led movement in 2024 for democracy and human rights, saying, "They are shaping a new Bangladesh -- one that puts its people at the centre of governance."

Prof Yunus emphasised imagination and innovation. "If we can imagine it, we can create it." He urged global collaboration to build a just, inclusive, and hunger-free future, grounded in dignity and justice.