





How 'Peripheral Imaginaries' brought together landless communities and artists

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PHOTOS: AISHWARYA RAIHAN

Stuffed dolls and a bioscope, an almost-extinct art form involving miniature theatrical presentations using images, greet visitors upon entering the ethnically adorned Bengal Shilpalay.

Inside the gallery, an assortment of soft, squishy, colourful handmade sculptures stands in the middle. Their frankness attracts both young visitors and adults. The walls feature hand-embroidered sheets on which all the artists come together to showcase their folk-art styles, along with their names. These are bright, vibrant and eye-catching. Alongside embroidery, they also feature applique work.

The walls also display sarees, the primary attire of women in South Asia, including the Bengal region. These feature tiny appliqued poems written against injustice and religious blindness. One of the other two walls displays flat, stuffed sculptures of butterflies, traditional Bengali fans called *pankha*, peacocks, village houses, sweets, trees and more. All these are created by 25 members of a special community belonging to the struggling landless population of Bangladesh, in collaboration with artists from Britto Arts Trust. The final wall features framed folk art on paper, created with great simplicity.

Titled ***Peripheral Imaginaries***, the special exhibition opened on October 29 at Bengal Shilpalay, celebrating 45 years of resilience by landless people and rights organisation Nijera Kori. The exhibition brings together the artistic efforts of members of landless communities and artists from Britto Arts Trust, exploring the relationship between land, everyday life, collective struggles and the ability to imagine better futures.

The exhibition was formally inaugurated by artist Professor Syed Abul Barq Alvi and landless leader from Khulna, Rahela Begum. Hosted by prominent activist Khushi Kabir, the ceremony is also attended by the Director General of Bengal Foundation, Luva Nahid Choudhury. Founded in 1980 by Khushi Kabir, Nijera Kori works to support landless communities in Bangladesh in creating autonomous organisations through which they can collectively assert their rights.

By 2025, the Nijera Kori initiative encompasses 11,583 landless communities with 233,917 members, including 6,757 women's groups. Through collective organising and mobilisation, these groups pursue rights over natural resources, demand accountability from public institutions, advance women's rights and challenge fundamentalism.

Curated by Mahbubur Rahman, the exhibition features works using printed fabrics, applique and soft sculptures, the latter created by younger members of the landless groups. These participants from Paikgachha, Khulna; Bagatipara, Natore; Char Jabbar, Noakhali; and Dhanbari, Tangail, give wonderful forms to ideas generated by their lived experiences of land, their labour, the little things that make them happy and their fight for survival.

A workshop takes place ahead of the exhibition, during which these artists exchange ideas and methods with urban artists. The results are remarkable. The exhibition also features performances of landless women's theatre, music and bioscope.

Peripheral Imaginaries is not just an art exhibition. It is an echo of the lives of our landless population – the silent work force that runs the country. Bengal Shilpalay will continue this event till November 7, daily from 4 pm to 8 pm.

Cubic Art School showcases young artists at annual exhibition

Cubic Art School is showcasing artworks by young artists at its annual ***Children's Art Exhibition***, which opened at Safiuddin Shilpalay in Dhaka's Dhanmondi area on October 30.

Running until November 1, the exhibition brings together artworks reflecting children's emotions, dreams, curiosity and individual perspectives. Through colours, lines and forms, the young artists explore their imagination while demonstrating the role of art in nurturing creativity, confidence and independent thinking.

Established in 2003, Cubic Art School has been working to nurture children's creativity through art education, exhibitions, workshops and other artistic activities. The exhibition aims to encourage children to explore, imagine and create with confidence while promoting a greater appreciation of art among parents, educators and the wider community.



Netflix adapts 'PUBG' into live-action series with Donald Glover

Netflix is developing a live-action series based on the popular battle royale video game ***PUBG***, with Emmy-winning actor and filmmaker Donald Glover set to direct and star in the adaptation.

Glover will also write and executive produce the series alongside his brother Stephen Glover. Other executive producers include Michael Schaefer, Fam Udeorji, and Krafton's LV3H executives Taeseok Jang and Sujin Lee.

Known for ***Community*** and ***Atlanta***, Donald Glover previously collaborated with his brother on the latter, earning two Emmy Awards for his acting and directing.

Originally titled ***Player Unknown's Battlegrounds***, ***PUBG*** debuted in 2017. No release date or production schedule has been announced for the series.



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Scrapping caretaker system

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Asif Nazrul, law adviser to the interim government, called for forming an upper house of parliament based on proportional representation (PR).

"If the upper house is not formed on the basis of proportional representation, then do not form one. There is no need to spend public money on it."

Referring to debates in the 1972 Constituent Assembly, he said then-MP Hafiz Ahmed had proposed a 60-member upper house based on PR.

Under the proposal, bills other than money bills would go to the upper house, with disagreements between the two chambers settled through a vote at a joint sitting.

Asif also proposed that upper house members receive no salaries, cars or houses, saying this would attract "genuine people" willing to work for the country.

He further suggested that opposition lawmakers chair key parliamentary standing committees on public accounts, home affairs, public administration and local government to strengthen government accountability.

"Two institutions can ensure genuine accountability from the government. The higher judiciary must be independent and strong, and the parliamentary standing committees must also be empowered," he said.

Salahuddin called on the opposition to join parliamentary discussions on the proposed upper house. If formed under the PR system, its powers, scope and jurisdiction would need to be determined, he said.

"The opposition must come to parliament for these discussions."

The issues on which the opposition had submitted notes of dissent to the July Charter should be discussed in parliament.

"That is not going to happen through a long march," said Salahuddin, while stressing the need to set a deadline for the upper house to review bills passed by the lower house to prevent delays in lawmaking from disrupting state affairs.

He agreed that the upper house members should not receive salaries or official perks.

The drafting of the 1972 Constitution did not adequately reflect people's aspirations, which had changed through the Liberation War, said Firoz Ahmed, a former member of the Constitution Reform Commission.

The failure to accommodate those aspirations created a disconnect between the people and the state.

The Constituent Assembly did not function as a parliament alongside its role in drafting the Constitution, leaving little scope for debate and scrutiny of government actions, he said.

Firoz went on to describe the Constitution's power structure as centralised and authoritarian despite its democratic philosophy.

Calling for greater transparency and public participation in the current constitutional amendment process, Firoz said public confidence would grow through debate, criticism and consultation.

Fulfil people's mandate or pay

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and order, and an end to narrow partisan politics.

The Jamaat chief vowed to continue the movement until the demands were met, saying these were the people's demands rather than personal or party interests.

Accusing the BNP government of betraying the people, he said the party had failed to learn from the past and was creating fresh problems.

Shafiqur also questioned the government's position on the proposed Matarbari deep-sea port, referring to discussions during Prime Minister Tarique Rahman's recent four-day Japan trip.

The nation must be informed about the purpose and outcome of the visit, he said, adding that Bangladesh could not be leased out to anyone in the name of connectivity.

National Citizen Party Convener Nahid Islam and Member Secretary Akhter Hossen did not attend the rally, although the party is part of the alliance.

Other alliance leaders also criticised the government. Liberal Democratic Party Chairman Col (retd) Oli Ahmed alleged that district administrations, city corporations and other institutions had turned into BNP offices since the party came to power, with tenders being controlled through these bodies.

Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis chief Mamunul Haque said if the referendum was illegal, the legitimacy of the government and parliament would also come into question. He alleged that law and order had deteriorated, extortion and terrorism had increased, and shortages of gas and fuel were causing public suffering.

Jamaat Secretary General Mia Golam Porwar accused the BNP government of moving towards fascism, saying the formation of a committee to amend the constitution instead of undertaking reforms was a step towards one-party rule.

Addl DIG Abdullah

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The DB informed the ministry that illegal drug consumption and a DJ party were underway at the house during the raid.

During the nearly three-hour raid, DB officials seized one yaba pill, a small quantity of a substance identified as "kush", four bottles of alcohol and equipment used to consume yaba, according to the DB seizure list.

These included an empty 750ml bottle of locally manufactured Carew whisky, a half-filled one-litre bottle of Indian whisky, a one-litre vodka bottle that was about one-quarter full, and another one-litre bottle of Indian whisky.

Later that day, Special Metropolitan Magistrate Assaduzzaman of the DMP's Uttara division sentenced all 85 detainees in summary trials. The 59 men were each sentenced to one month in jail and fined Tk 1,000, while the 26 women received 15-day jail terms and fines of Tk 500 each.

The notification said the incident had created a negative public perception of the force and tarnished the image of Bangladesh Police.

It described the alleged conduct as contrary to proper discipline, indicative of inefficiency and a violation of departmental rules.

According to court sources, 21 people, including 12 women, have secured bail from a Dhaka court since October 25.

'Form minority govt with Palestinians'

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from office and pave the way for an alternative government.

The veteran politician dismissed proposals for a national unity government. Such an arrangement could bring Netanyahu's Likud, the largest party in parliament, together with opposition parties to secure a majority, while excluding far-right figures such as Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben Gvir.

"We prefer a new government by Eisenkot, as a minority government, and we are ready to help," he added.

Tibi hailed the Palestinian vote as decisive, saying unprecedented turnout had prevented Netanyahu from securing another majority.

'Graft in judiciary now an open secret'

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government's tenure, some judges were allegedly influenced by the prospect of promotions or preferred postings, he said.

"When allegations of this nature are made about such an important institution as the judiciary, the most important thing is to establish the facts through a proper investigation and take action against those found responsible," he said, adding that it must be acknowledged that there are many good, honest and responsible judges.

He also said that SC judges, like those in the lower courts, should be required to submit wealth statements to the relevant authorities.

"To ensure transparency, there should be a clear system for judges to disclose their assets or submit statements to a designated authority. There must be a clear and effective rule or law so that the matter can be handled institutionally."

Referring to the backlog of around 4.8 million cases across the country, Khokon said that very few effective initiatives to reduce the backlog have been observed so far.

Delays in delivering justice are not only overcrowding prisons, but also leading to human rights violations, he noted.

"First of all, politically motivated cases and politically influenced prosecutions must be stopped."

Due to false cases and delays in ensuring justice, young people may lose opportunities for education, employment and a normal life. Under such circumstances, they may become frustrated and be drawn into criminal activities, he said.

Khokon further said the chief justice, as the head of the judiciary, can play a crucial role in addressing allegations of corruption in the judiciary.

"By collecting information from different sectors, it is possible to identify where and what types of irregularities and corruption are taking place. Necessary action can then be taken against those found responsible."

He said litigants, lawyers and the SCBA can also play an important role in eliminating corruption and restoring public trust in the judicial system by raising their voices.

Asked about his remarks on the decline in lawyers' income, which led the CJ and also four judges of the Appellate Division to leave the courtroom in September, Khokon said his remarks were not targeted at any individual.

"There are supposed to be three benches in the Appellate Division. But judicial proceedings are now being conducted by only one bench. Moreover, the cause lists are not being published on time."

As a result, lawyers who primarily practise in the Appellate Division are suffering financially. "What I meant was that when the number of cases being heard and disposed of declines, lawyers' income will naturally fall as well," he added.

Jamaat, NCP face 'growing rift over local elections'

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with NCP Convener Nahid Islam's absence at the opening rally of the alliance's Dhaka-Khulna-Kushtia long march.

Three NCP leaders, Senior Joint Convener Sarjis Alam, Joint Convener Ariful Islam Adeeb, and lawmaker Abdul Hannan Masud, attended the programme, although none addressed the rally.

NCP leaders linked Nahid's absence to disagreements over local elections and to dissatisfaction within the party over Jamaat's response to alleged irregularities in Thursday's Thakurgaon-1 parliamentary by-election.

The shift was also reflected in the party's protest rally at Shahbagh on Friday and in remarks by senior leader Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain, which several party insiders interpreted as a signal that the NCP is seeking a more independent political identity.

Speaking about the Thakurgaon-1 by-election at the programme, Asif Mahmud said, "We have even seen the ruling party's candidate and the opposition candidates feeding each other sweets when we are going through a very critical and dire time for democracy."

Several leaders told The Daily Star that prolonged political dependence on Jamaat could hinder the NCP's ambition of emerging as a major opposition force.

Speculation about the future of the alliance intensified after Rashed Khan, political assistant to the prime minister, claimed in a Facebook post on Friday night that the NCP was preparing for a "peaceful divorce" from Jamaat.

He said some NCP leaders had informed him that the party was likely to leave the alliance soon, although no formal decision had been announced.

NCP Joint Convener Sarwar Tusher dismissed the speculation.

"It is [decision to hold separate programmes] part of the alliance's strategy. The rumours being spread about our relationship with the alliance are propaganda.

"If we ever decide to leave the alliance, it will be our own decision. We will announce it formally through a press conference," he told The Daily Star.

Jamaat-e-Islami Secretary General Mia Golam Parwar told The Daily Star that the NCP's senior leaders did not disclose their strategy despite their leaders attending the alliance programme.

"Many of our senior leaders could not attend today's programme due to work commitments and health reasons. We believe the same may be true for the NCP leaders. Every party has its own strategy, and we have no problem with that," he said.

According to NCP leaders, tensions first emerged during discussions over seat-sharing in union parishad, municipality, ward and city corporation elections.

The differences became more visible after the two parties failed to reach an understanding over mayoral races in Dhaka, Cumilla, and Mymensingh.

NCP leaders, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Jamaat was unwilling to give up either of the two Dhaka mayoral contests, prompting the parties to move ahead with separate candidates.

The NCP nominated Nasiruddin Patwary for Dhaka South City Corporation and Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain for Dhaka North City Corporation, while Jamaat identified Abu Sadiq Kayem and Selim Uddin as its prospective candidates for the two posts.

One NCP leader, also speaking on condition of anonymity, said the party had always viewed local government elections as an opportunity to build its own electoral machinery, including polling agents and ward-level committees, ahead of future national elections. He alleged that Jamaat opposed the NCP's efforts to contest the local elections independently and gradually reduce its reliance on joint alliance programmes.

Another senior Political Council member said the party would now place greater emphasis on organisational expansion while maintaining ties with its allies.

"That does not mean we are leaving the alliance," he said. "Our representatives will continue to attend alliance programmes. However, our organisational development must remain our primary focus."

Another senior leader said the renewed focus on independent political activities should not be viewed solely through the lens of local government elections.

He said the move was part of a broader political strategy, although differences remained within the party over the extent of participation in alliance programmes.

The NCP would continue working with its allies against what it described as unilateral actions by the BNP government while simultaneously strengthening its own organisation, he added.

The NCP recently reorganised its central committee and is preparing to restructure its Dhaka North and Dhaka South metropolitan units, including committees at the thana level.

The party also plans to hold rallies in Narayanganj, Gazipur, and divisional cities to mobilise supporters and strengthen its grassroots network.