

Electric Bangladesh: Fossil Free Futures

Monica Jahan Bose

Bay of Bengal (Shad/Ilish Fish), (2017-2023)

Etching, aquatint, woodblock, watercolor and acrylic on paper

Bring Good Things to Life (2023)

Etching, aquatint, and woodblock on paper

My family is from an island in the Bay of Bengal on the frontlines of climate change. I use a combination of etching, watercolor, and sari woodblocks to create works that speak to climate change. "Bay of Bengal (Shad/Ilish fish)" is about the burning of fossil fuels leading to waters warming, harming fish and other species. "Bring Good Things to Life" uses two etching plates, plus wood blocks depicting renewable energy.

Growing up in the US, I heard the GE slogan and had positive associations with the company. GE's export of fossil fuel infrastructure to Bangladesh is extremely concerning to me and my family. The work shows a woman struggling in a poisoned, overheated red environment. Both the pieces have the Bengali words "Red Blood," a phrase and slogan from our Liberation War that is also relevant to the current existential struggle of the climate crisis. My hope is that GE will bring "good things" in the form of renewable energy to Bangladesh and abandon these terrible fossil fuel projects. I bring my own collective history into my art work: my heritage and ancestral homeland may drown under the Indian Ocean.

Debashish Chakrabarty

Periphery's Echo – 1 (2023)

Mixed Media, Print on Canvas

Periphery's Echo - 2 (2023)

Mixed Media, Print on Canvas

Periphery's Echo: A Resilient Tapestry of Resistance.

In the depths of Debashish Chakrabarty's creative journey as an artist from Bangladesh, he has been captivated by the plight of his nation, a land nestled on the periphery of the global capital centre and embroiled in intricate power politics. Through his latest work, "Periphery's Echo," he seeks to shed light on the profound struggles faced by the people of his region, particularly their lack of agency when confronted with the imminent threat of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) power plant.

Bangladesh, a country with its unique cultural tapestry and vibrant heritage, is an embodiment of resilience and strength. Yet, it finds itself precariously positioned on the outskirts of the global power landscape, where decisions are often made far removed from its own voices and aspirations. It is within this context that Debashish's artistic expression strives to reveal and amplify the silenced narratives of his people.

"Periphery's Echo" is a multifaceted artwork that weaves together the collective experiences of the marginalized communities affected by the LNG power plant. Through a variety of mediums—ink and digital drawings, and mixed media—he creates a visceral and thought-provoking experience that resonates with viewers and challenges the prevailing narratives of progress and development.

Morshed Mishu

GE Greenwash; Farting CO2 Gas (2023)

Digital, Print on Canvas

Liquefied Natural Gas or LNG power projects in Chattogram region in Bangladesh with GE Vernova's involvement would add approximately 430 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e) to the atmosphere throughout the plant's operational lives. This is equivalent to almost double the annual national emissions of Bangladesh.

I tried to portray this particular point in this cartoon of mine, where two LNG containers are aligned in such a way that it looks like the backside (ass) of a human body. And that part is releasing CO₂ gas in a form of fart and polluting the atmosphere of Bangladesh. Map of Bangladesh in the form of a lady holding a placard and protesting against this pollution.

CO₂ vs See O₂ (2023)

Digital, Print on Canvas

GE vernova's LNG power plants will release enormous amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) gas into the atmosphere. Corporations like this don't care much about the environment and care more about making money. Profit becomes Oxygen (O₂) for them and they're so focused on that part that they can't even see CO₂ pollution.

In this particular cartoon I tried to portray this point. Where everyone can see CO₂ pollution, but money makers will see what they want to see.

Ata Mojlish

Daily Diet 01 (2023)

Digital Multimedia, Print on Canvas

Daily Diet 02 (2023)

Digital Multimedia, Print on Canvas

Southeast Bangladesh's Chattogram region sees General Electric's (GE) involvement in new liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects that would emit nearly double the country's annual emissions over the plants' operational lives. We must not neglect the immediate impact of fossil fuel projects, especially GE's contributions. Consequences go beyond humanity's future, affecting livelihoods of humans and animals, erasing identities, cultures, and histories.

"Daily Diet 01-02," a diptych-style multimedia piece, focuses on displacement in Chattogram's Matarbari and Moheshkhali areas. Using imagery from 2023 ads of Coal Power Plant projects, it reimagines machinery as otherworldly vessels with vivid hues, depicting abduction of humans and wildlife. This work emphasizes the urgency and prompts ethical considerations, advocating for sustainable alternatives to protect our planet and communities.

AFM Moniruzzaman 'Shipu'

Life on the GE Raft (2023)

AR, Print on Canvas

The GE Barbecue (2023)

AR, Print on Canvas

Light, air, water, and soil. These are our lives. They are everything to us. We are just parasites in this world. Do not pick up what you want from the ground and burn it in the air. If this earth does not survive, we will not survive. Would you?

Curatorial note by Zaid Islam

In grade school I learnt about the “greenhouse effect” and “global warming”, and we wrote essays on these topics. At that tender age, hope was instilled in us. We believed that if we could create enough awareness, the damage could be reversed.

Yet here we are, on the verge of extinction. Leaders struggling with promises to implement policies, and multibillion dollar lobby groups. Seas of plastic and its microgranules in living bodies, with giant cetaceans killing themselves to bring tons of our waste back to our shores. Smoke from wildfires crossing oceans into the next continent. Oil spills in the largest mangrove forest. Habitats of wildlife being encroached upon so devastatingly that species are going extinct faster than we can count. Insatiable greed. Gross violations. Unaccountability. Plundering continues.

I come from a nation of resilient people. I have experienced it in the coastal regions of Bangladesh. We continuously learn how to adapt to changing patterns. While it may be true that our nation needs energy for development, what we do not need are redundant dirty technologies being dumped on us, when clean and renewable sources are available.

This is a tiny effort to draw attention of stakeholders to GE Vernova. WE SEE YOU!

Curated by Zaid Islam

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