

Unit 3

Events and Festivals



Objectives

After completion of this unit, you should be able to

- talk about different events and festivals
- participate in a conversation and give opinions in a logical sequence
- infer meanings from the context

Overview

Lesson 1: Mother's Day

Lesson 2: May Day

Lesson 3: Victory Day

Lesson 4: International Mother Language Day

Lesson 5: Pahela Baishakh



Answer Key

Lesson 1 : Mother's Day



A. Read the following text.

Mother's Day is a modern celebration honouring one's own mother, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds, and the influence of mothers in a society. It is celebrated on various days in many parts of the world, most commonly in the months of March or May. The celebration of Mother's Day began in the United States in the early 20th century. Today Mothers Day is celebrated in several countries including US, UK, India, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Turkey, Australia, Mexico, Canada, China, Japan and Belgium. People take the day as an opportunity to pay tribute to their mothers and thank them for all their love and support. The day has become hugely popular and in several countries phone lines witness maximum traffic. There is also a tradition of gifting flowers, cards and other gifts to mothers on the Mothers Day. The festival has become commercialized to a great extent. Florists, card manufacturers and gift sellers see huge business potential in the day and make good money through a rigorous advertising campaign.

In Bangladesh, Mother's Day is celebrated on the second Sunday of the month of May. Discussion programs are organized by government and non-governmental organizations to observe the day. Different reception and cultural programs are arranged to mark the day in the capital city. Television channels air special programs, and newspapers publish special features

and columns to mark the day. Greeting cards, flowers and gifts featuring mothers are in high demand at the shops and markets.



B. Answer the following questions:

- a) Why is mother's day celebrated?
- b) When is it usually celebrated?
- c) How is this day celebrated?
- d) When this day is celebrated in our country?
- e) How is this marked in our country?

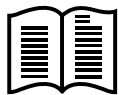
C. Make a flow chart showing how mother's day is celebrated in our country.

D. Now, write a paragraph on how you celebrate mother's day.

Lesson 2 : May Day



Garment workers and other labour organisation members took part in a rally to mark May Day, International Workers' Day in Dhaka.



A. Read the text and answers the questions that follow.

May Day or the international Labour's day is observed on May 1 all over the world to commemorate the historical struggle and sacrifices of the working people to establish an eight-hour workday. It is a public holiday in almost all the countries of the world.

Since the industrial revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe and the US, the workers in mills and factories had been working a long shift, fourteen or even more hours a day.

On May 1st in 1886, inspired by the trade union, half of the workers at the McCormick Harvester Company in Chicago went on strike demanding an eight-hour workday. After two days, a workers' rally was held near the McCormick Harvester Company and about 6000 workers had joined it. The rally was addressed by the labour leaders. They urged the workers to stand together, to go with their struggle and not to give in to their bosses. Just at this moment some strikebreakers started to leave the meeting place. The strikers went down the street to bring them back. Suddenly about 200 policemen attacked them with clubs and revolvers. One striker was killed instantly, five or six others were seriously wounded and many of them were badly injured.

The events of May 1, 1886 is a reminder that workers will continue to be exploited until they stand up and speak out to gain better working conditions, better pay and better lives.



B. Answer the questions below:

- What is the significance of May Day?
- How long did the workers have to work before May Day occurrence?
- How many workers were injured on that day?
- Why did the workers in Chicago go on a strike?
- What is the moral of the story of May Day?

C. Fill in the blanks with the words given in the box.

congeste d	laboriou s	hour s	opport unities	unhealth y	ordinary	smal l	On foot	advanc e	garment s
---------------	---------------	-----------	-------------------	---------------	----------	-----------	------------	-------------	--------------

A man who works in a (a) -----factory is known as garments worker. A (b) ----- garment worker in our country leads very (c) -----life. She/he starts for working place at about 7 am. She/he is to pass a long way every day to reach the factory. She/he goes to the factory (d) ----- . In the factory, he/she works in a (e) -----room. The atmosphere of his/her working place is very (f) ----- . She eats very poor lunch with her colleagues in the factory. Almost every day he/she takes his/her lunch from home. She is given a break for half an hour. She works in the factory for long (g) -----till deep at night. She likes working in a factory rather than in a household. She is used to do over working. In spite of his/her hard working he/she is given (h) --- -----wages. With this small income, he/she has to manage his/her family. So, he/she is unable to take proper food, treatment, wear new clothes and to educate his/her children. In spite of playing important role to (i) -----our economic progress he/she is not given honor and dignity. So, he/she should have been given better (j) -----in the factory and society to lead better and comfortable life with beside us.

Lesson 3 : Victory Day



Wreaths of flowers are placed at the altar of National Martyrs Memorial in Savar marking the Victory Day



A. Read the text

Victory Day (Bijoy Dibos) is a public holiday in Bangladesh celebrated on December 16 to commemorate the victory of the Allied forces over the Pakistani occupation forces in the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971. The commanding officer of the Pakistani Forces General AAK Niazi surrendered his forces to the Allied forces commander Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Aurora, which marked ending of the 9 month-long war.

The Bangladesh Liberation War (Muktijuddho) was a war of independence in 1971 which established the sovereign nation of Bangladesh. The war lasted over duration of nine months. It witnessed large-scale murders, the migration of 10 million refugees and the displacement of 30 million people.

The war broke out on 26 March 1971, when the Pakistan Army launched a military operation called Operation Searchlight against Bangali civilians, students, intelligentsia and armed personnel. Bangali military, paramilitary and civilians formed the Mukti Bahini (“Liberation Army”), which was engaged in guerrilla warfare against Pakistani forces. The Pakistan Army was engaged in the systematic genocide and atrocities of Bengali civilians, particularly nationalists, intellectuals, youth and religious minorities. On 16 December, the Allied Forces of Bangladesh and India defeated Pakistan in the east. The subsequent surrender resulted in the largest number of prisoners-of-war since World War II.

The Surrender of Pakistan Armed Forces marked the end of the Bangladesh Liberation War and the creation of Bangladesh. Most United Nations member countries were quick to recognize Bangladesh within months of its independence.

The celebration of Victory Day has taken place since 1972. The Bangladesh Liberation War became a topic of great importance in cinema, literature, history lessons at school, the mass media, and the arts in Bangladesh. The ritual of the celebration gradually obtained a distinctive character with a number of similar elements: Military Parade by Bangladesh Armed Forces at the National Parade Ground, ceremonial meetings, speeches, lectures, receptions and fireworks. Victory Day in Bangladesh is a joyous celebration in which popular culture plays a great role. TV and radio stations broadcast special programs and patriotic songs. The main streets are decorated with national flags. Different political parties and socioeconomic organizations undertake programs to mark the day in a befitting manner, including the paying of tributes at Jatiyo Smriti Soudho, the national memorial at Savar near Dhaka.



B. Complete the following sentences:

- a. The Liberation War of Bangladesh broke out on -----.
- b. The war lasted for ----- months.
- c. It was basically ----- warfare.
- d. Operation Searchlight was a kind of -----.
- e. The victory of the ----- over the Pakistani forces.
- f. The Liberation Army was consists of -----, -----, and -----.

C. Answer the following questions:

- a. Why do we celebrate the victory day every year?
- b. What type of war was it?
- c. Why did the Pakistani forces operate operation searchlight?
- d. How is the victory celebrated?
- e. How did Bangladesh become independent in 1971?
- f. What role do media play in the victory day celebration?

Lesson 4 : International Mother Language Day



People from all walks of life gather at the Central Shaheed Minar in the capital to pay respect to the martyrs of the Language Movement in 1952.



A. Read the text

The International Mother Language Day is a red letter day in the history of Bangladesh. Formerly it was known as 'Language Martyrs' Day', but now it has been recognized internationally as the 'International Mother Language Day' on 17 November, 1999 by UNESCO. At present this day is observed all over the world to show love for mother tongue. In our country it is observed as a national mourning day. This is the day on which a lot of young Bengalis laid down their lives to uphold the right of their mother language.. This is known as language movement. The seed of Language Movement was sown on 21 March 1948 when Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the then Governor General of Pakistan, at a public meeting in Dhaka declared that Urdu would be the only state language of Pakistan. The then students of Dhaka University brought out a peaceful protest procession against the declaration on 21 February 1952. When the procession reached near Dhaka Medical College, police fired on the procession. Salam, Barkat, Rafique, Jabbar including others were shot dead in the language movement procession against the illegal ruling party of Pakistan. Every year we observe the day with profound solemnity and great respect for the martyrs. Early in the morning the whole nation comes to the martyrs' monument to pay homage and due respect to the departed souls. People of all walks of life come here bare-footed in procession and offer flowers and wreaths to show honour to the martyrs. People keep them silent for some minutes in honour and remembrance of the language martyrs. Government

and non-government organizations arrange programmes to celebrate the day. On the occasion national programmes are participated by the President, Prime Minister, and other high officials of government. Newspapers publish special supplements on the occasion. Television channels and radio stations broadcast special programmes highlighting the significance of the day. Prayer is held in public prayer halls throughout the country for the salvation of the martyrs. This day inspires the people to love their mother language. We should do everything to save the honour of our mother language.



C. Answer the following question:

- Why 21st February is celebrated as international Mother Language Day?
- Why do people go to the Saheed Minar?
- What happened when Urdu was declared as state language of Pakistan?
- How do people show respect to the memory of the martyrs?



D. Write briefly how 21st February is celebrated.

Lesson 5 : Pahela Boishakh



The programmes of 'Pahela Baishakh', the first day of the Bangla New Year begin at dawn with the musical soiree of Chayanat, a leading cultural organisation of the country at Ramna Batamul in Dhaka.



A. Read the text

Bangla New Year or **Pahela Boishakh** marks the first day of the *Bangla Calendar*. Pahela Boishakh is celebrated with great festivity in Bangladesh.

Bangla New Year or Pohela Boishakh connects all **Ethnic Bengalis** irrespective of religious and regional differences. **Pahela Boishakh**; is the occasion to welcome the New-Year with a new hope of peace, prosperity and goodwill. In **Bangladesh**, it is a *national holiday* celebrated on **14 April**.

Pahela Boishakh is a public festival of the Bangalees; it is celebrated among all Bangalees-irrespective of religious and regional differences. As discussed earlier; the celebrations started from Akbar's reign. But the public celebration of Pahela Boishakh and the large-scale organizations of cultural events have started more recently.

The Pahela Boishakh celebrations and festivities reflect the life in rural Bengal. Usually on this day everything is washed and cleaned; people bathe early in the morning and dress in fine clothes and go to visit relatives and friends. Special food items are prepared for the guests. Starting as a rural festival, Pahela Boishakh has now become an integral part of Bangali culture.

People from all walks of life dress-up in traditional Bangali attire: Men wear *dhuti / payejama / lungi* and *kurta / Panjabi*. Young women wear white saris with red borders, and adorn themselves with *tip* (bindis), *churi* (bangles) and *fūl* (flowers). It's like a custom to start the day with the traditional breakfast of *Pantā-Bhāt* (leftover rice soaked in water), onion, *Shōbuj Lōnkā* (green chillies), *Āchār* (pickles), *dāl* (lentils) & *Bhāja Elish Māch* (fried Hilsa fish).

Boishakhi Fairs are organized in many parts of Bangladesh. The lifestyle of rural Bengal is showcased in almost all these fairs. Various traditional handicrafts, toys, cosmetics, agricultural products, as well as various kinds of food and sweets are sold at these fairs. The fairs also provide entertainment, with singers and dancers staging jatra (traditional plays), pala gan, kobigan, jarigan, gambhira gan, gazir gan and alkap gan. They present folk songs as well as baul, marfati, murshidi and bhatiali songs. Narrative plays like Laila-Majnu, Yusuf-Zulekha and Radha-Krishna are staged. Among other attractions of these fairs are puppet shows, merry-go-round and Giant wheels are also installed and are enjoyed by the children.

In Dhaka, large numbers of people come out of their houses and gather early in the morning under the banyan tree at **Ramna Park**. Along with the rising sun, the *Chhayanat* artists sing the famous song of Tagore in chorus, *Esho, he Boishakh, Esho Esho* welcoming Boishakh.

Apart from these, various cultural programs are organized by social and cultural organizations all over the country. Newspapers and magazines bring out special supplements. Targeting the Pahela Boishakh event, various movies, music albums, books etc. are released and special programs are also telecast on television and radio.



B. Answer the following question:

- What is Pahela Boishakh?
- How do people celebrate this day?

- c) What is the main attraction of this day?
- d) How is the day celebrated by the socio-cultural organizations?
- e) What do electronic and mass-media do on that day?

Answer Key

Lesson 1

B.

- a. Mother's day is celebrated to honor one's mother, as well as motherhood, maternal bonds.
- b. it is usually celebrated in the month of the March or May.
- c. different organization arrange different cultural programs to observe the day.
- d. It is celebrated in the second Sunday of the month of May.
- e. It is an occasion of paying tribute to the mothers and thanking them for their love and sacrifice.

Lesson- 2

B.

- a. May day is celebrated all over the world to commemorate the historical struggle and sacrifices of the working people to establish an eight –hour workday.
- b. The workers in mills and factories had been working a long shift, fourteen or even more hours a day Before May Day occurrence.
- c. Many of the workers were badly injured on that day.
- d. The workers of Chicago went on strike demanding an eight- hour working day.
- e. The moral of May Day is to establish the right of the labours.

C.

garments, ordinary, laborious, on foot, congested, unhealthy , hours, small, advancement, opportunities.

Lesson- 3

B. a. 26 th March, 1971. b.09 c.guerrilla d.military operation.e.allied forces. f.Bengoli military, paramilitary, civilians.

C.

- a. We celebrate the victory day every day to commemorate the victory of the Allied forces over the Pakistani occupation forces I the Liberation war of Bangladesh in 1971.
- b. It was guerrilla warfare against the Pakistani forces.
- c. The Pakistani forces operate operation searchlight to kill the Bengali civilians, students, intelligentsia and armed personnel.
- d. Military Parade by Bangladesh Armed Forces at the National Parade Ground, ceremonial meetings, speeches, lectures, receptions and fireworks. Victory Day in Bangladesh is a joyous celebration in which popular culture plays a great role.
- e. Bangladesh became independent through a 9 months long guerrilla warfare against the Pakistani occupation forces by the Allied forces.
- f. TV and radio stations broadcast special programs and patriotic songs on the eve of the victory day.

Lesson- 4

C.

- a. 21 February is celebrated to show love mother tongue. The day is also celebrated with due solemnity to pay homage to the martyrs of the language movement.
- b. People go to the Shaheed Minar to pay homage and due respect to the departed souls.
- c. The then students of Dhaka University brought out a peaceful protest procession against the declaration on 21 February 1952. When the procession reached near Dhaka Medical College, police fired on the procession. Salam, Barkat, Rafique, Zabbar including others was shot dead in the language movement procession against the illegal ruling party of Pakistan.
- d. People of all walks of life come here bare-footed in procession and offer flowers and wreaths to show honour to the martyrs. People keep them silent for some minutes in honour and remembrance of the language martyrs.

Lesson-5

B.

- a. Pahela Baishakh is the 1st day of Bangla year. It is a traditional festival day in the life of Bengalis. Every year the day is celebrated across the country.
- b. On this day people including both males and females wear traditional clothes and attend various programs to celebrate the New Year. The Chayanat, a leading cultural organization, begins the day's first programs at Ramna Batomul in Dhaka.
- c. The main attraction of this day is Baishakhi fair which is held both in rural and urban areas of the country.
- d. Different socio cultural organizations arrange various programs such as cultural functions, discussion, and colorful processions etc.
- e. Bangladesh television and also private channels telecast special programs on this day. This is a public holiday. So everybody can participate and enjoy the programs of the day.