

The Truth Behind Pohela Boishak

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The first time I'd ever heard of Pohela Boishak was when I was at the tender age of four. This of course was in Bangladesh, where there were ever so many decorations like humongous Tia pakhi (parrots) and heavily decorated masks. But the main thing I'm aiming at is the wonderful environment and the warmth that is there when you arrive. It was a massive event – like New Years Eve at Circular Quay but only bigger.

The first time I'd ever been at a Pohela Boishak venue in Australia was in 2002 when I was six and it was held at Burwood. At that specific time it didn't really matter to me what Pohela Boishak was but as the years flowed by I began to care about venues and where I went and soon I began to realise that the Burwood venue was extremely clumsy - it was packed with people so you could barely walk around. The music was amplified also because of the limited space. Either way it was terrible. But I also heard that there was competition, like two venues competing with each other to attract more people. In the beginning of 2006, Pohela Boishak was introduced to a whole new level. Along came Sydney Olympic park.

I have a sister, a father and a mother. Their birthdays are on the 26th of Nov, 9th of June and 16th of Feb. Now you're probably wondering "where is he going with this?" Or "what does this have to do with anything?" Well, if my family had different parties for every birthday eg. I had a party for my dad's birthday my mum had a different party and my sister had a different party then the whole meaning of the thing would be ruined. Similarly Pohela Boishak is being dealt with like this. Bongo Bondhu porishod is a well respected organisation within the Bengali community. But they are also the cause of the 3 venues and the competition. Now I asked my father why this occurs and he is basically the reason I'm writing this. He says it's for popularity and I strongly agree. But what he also told me is the truth about BBP.

BBP is the shortcut for Bongo Bondhu Porishod. There are three organisations all listed under the name of BBP. So it's sort of like saying there are three people-a, b, c. A wants to start an organisation called Coles. B wants to fight with A but sadly ends up with an organisation called Coles. Now C sees what A and B have done and wants to prove to them he is the best but unfortunately his organisation is also called Coles. So that's three organisations all named the same thing!! People these

days...so greedy.. so anyway the competition for popularity destroys the meaning of Pohela Boishak, its values, its morals and its overall existence. Don't get me wrong - I'm not saying that the Sydney Olympic park is bad, its just that its so good that if there was no competition we would be back at Burwood-i.e.-square one.

Who is Pohela Boishak for? Is it for the Adults? Or is it for the young generation (young people)? Well I think every one deserves a Pohela Boishak no matter what the age maybe. But another thing to consider is how long they want to run this programme. As previously stated, Pohela Boishak is for every one so not only should they have facilities for adults but for children of ALL AGES. There is also the factor of the different venues. How much do you think it would cost for a young person to go from Sydney to Randwick Racecourse? And who would want to spend their day travelling from one venue to the other? So if these orgs want to keep running this program for a while to come they should restructure their approach and not make it such a difficult day.

What is Bengali culture? My father always tells me that what is happening in Australia is not the true essence of Bengali culture. I came to Australia at the age of 6. I didn't know much about Bengali Culture but I kind of agree with my father. Culture is not all about fighting! It's about the origin of your land, your history, and your traditions. It's not about who is more popular nor is it about who hosts what festival. This links to Pohela Boishak because Pohela Boishak is all about culture and this constant fight of power shows us kids that as we grow up and take the adult's spots we should divide and not unite - "apni ki Preo bhai er onushthan e jachen na ki Rono Bhai er onushtane jaben ?" I thought I would be answering this question in the next twenty years. Turns out I'll Probably be answering this question in the next five years.

So I think its time the organisations put their past behind them, unite and put the people first. Hire the Olympic park even if competition ceases to exist. After all, there would be no Pohela Boishak without the people.

Wriyu is 11 and loves to play cricket, read books and has passion for acting.