

CULTURAL FEAST

Book Fair



Title: Amor Ekushey Book Fair
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy
Date: February 1-28

Theatre Festival

Table with columns: Play, Troupe, Date. Lists various theatrical performances like Chhayanaut, Samayer, Proyojona, Raibang, Projapati, Circus Circus, Shyamaprim.

Solo Painting Exhibition

Artist: Marina Golyaeva
Date: January 30- February 5
Venue: Exhibition Hall of the Russian Centre of Science and Culture

Title: Breakfast News
Artist: Yasmin Jehan Nupur
Date: February 3-13
Venue: Alliance Francaise Dhaka

Photo Exhibition

Title: My World, My Future
Organisers: British Council, Dhaka and Map Photo Agency
Venue: British Council, Dhaka
Date: February 2-28
Time: 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Movie and TV play screening

Table with columns: Film, Director, Date. Lists movies like Joyitra, Lal Shalu, Ishakh Konnya.

Ekushey Book Fair picking up

KARIM WAHEED

LIKE every year Amor Ekushey Book Fair '06 began on February 1. On the third day in the afternoon, the queues went all the way to Doyel Chatter and TSC (Teachers Students Centre). Fortunately the queues did not get stalled. People seemed to get used to the idea of going through the heightened security system at the entrance.

However, all did not seem to be velvety. Starting from this year, even the stall-owners' vehicles carrying supplies of books are not allowed beyond the TSC point or Doyel Chatter for security reasons.

Representatives of several publishers, stall-owners and attendants complained that this new 'security measure' is a huge inconvenience. Abdus Salam at the Bishwa Shahita Kendra stall said, 'Perhaps the authorities do not realise how difficult it is to carry books all the way from TSC when a van is not allowed. Considering the current bomb threats, I understand the heightened security measures but the authorities should consider our convenience as well.'

Some did not mind this 'inconvenience' though. Emdadul Haq at Systec Publications' stall said, 'We moved everything necessary to the stall on January 31. The new security measure will ensure



Serpentine queues at the Ekushey Book Fair

everyone's safety at the fair and everyone should accommodate the authorities regarding this process.'

The readers seemed enthusiastic. Children, accompanied by parents or relatives, were seen checking out the new publications at different stalls. Some stalls tried to lure the young readers in innovative ways. Ankur Prokashoni's main attraction is the Bangla translations of the Harry Potter series. One of the stall attendants was seen wearing a

wizard's pointy hat, which pulled in quite a crowd of keen youngsters.

The book fair that first started at the Bangla Academy premises in 1972 gained momentum in the next few years. In 1984, the book fair was officially named Amor Ekushey Granthomela. By 1992, the number of stalls at the fair exceeded 350; about 270 different publishers and organisations participated. This year, the number of participating publishers and organisations is 305.

Some of the new books published on the occasion of the fair are: Diversity and Citizenship, edited by Mesbah Kamal, Utturey Shangkheeran by Tania Noor and Humayun Qadir Rochonaball (1st part) edited by Abu Shahriar. The book launch of Anamdar Ekattur--a memoir of the Liberation War, was held at the Nazrul Stage on February 3 as well.

Another attraction for the readers this year is the increased percentage of discount on books. This year, the publishers of Bangla Academy have decided that the discount of books will be 30 percent; until last year the discount was set at 20 percent.

Part of the book fair is the discussions and cultural programmes at the fair premises. On February 3, a discussion, titled Bingsho Shotokor Chintadhara, was held. The discussion was presided over by Mohammad Abdul Quaiyum. Qazi Rafiqul Haque, Razia Sultana and Abul Ahsan Chowdhury participated in the discussion. A cultural programme was held in the evening.



A young bookworm at the fair

Street theatre festival

Theatre troupes from outside Dhaka perform six plays

ERSHAD KAMOL

The main attraction of the third day of the week-long street theatre festival was the participation of theatre troupes from outside Dhaka. Uchcharan Natya Sampradaya from Chittagong, Shongshoptak Natya Dal from Narayanganj, Rajshahi University Drama Association, Rudra Natya Dal from Bagerhat and Gobindaganj Theatre from Sylhet staged Ar Ekti Juddha, Khepa Paglar Pachal, Posta Akali, Biral Tantra and Shaheed Minar respectively at Central Shaheed Minar premises on February 3. Moreover, the renowned theatre troupe of Dhaka, Prachyanaut staged Mandar.

The contemporary social turmoil was depicted in the plays on the third day. The playwrights such as SM Solaiman, Mannan Heera, Abidul Islam, Zahidur Rahman Shaon, Rahul Anand and Abdul Hamman expressed their wrath and anguish through a satire on contemporary society.

The third day of the week-long street theatre festival began with the staging of Uchcharan Natya Sampradaya's production Ar Ekti Juddha, written by Abidul Islam and directed by Shamim Ahmed. The play focused on the need of another war to eliminate evil from the society.

SM Solaiman's rough theatre 'Khepa Paglar Pachal' is a satire on politics as well as the powers that be.

It was presented as a musical. Khepa Paglar Pachal was directed by Sanaulah Haque.

Mannan Heera's play Posta Akali, directed by Dilip Kumar Adhikari, is a cry of the oppressed farmers of the country.

Biral Tantra by Zahidur Rahman Shaon is a satire on our faulty democratic system, while Abdul Hamman's play Shaheed Minar glorifies the martyrs of the Language Movement in 1952.

Rahul Anand's play Mandar is an implicit satire on contemporary society.

The week-long street drama festival arranged by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation will continue till February 7.



A scene from one of the plays staged at the festival

Kasturi : The up and coming danseuse

KAVITA CHARANJI

The attractive Bharatnatyam, folk and modern dancer Kasturi Mukherjee is entirely committed to her medium. Embarking into this performing art at the tender age of four, she has travelled a great distance--as enlisted artist of BTV, performer and teacher. Among her notable performances was in Tagore's dance drama Chitrangada (where she played the role of the heroine in 1990) and Shujoumukhi Nadin in 1995.

Kasturi's art has also taken her to distant lands. In November 2005, she winged off to China for a performance. Recently she went to Japan, Myanmar, Malaysia and Turkey as part of a Bangladeshi cultural delegation. Up next is a trip to Italy early February where a group of folk dancers from Bangladesh will participate in a dance festival in Rome and Sicily.

Kasturi also dons the hat of a Bharatnatyam teacher. She teaches the dance form at the Green-dale International School as well as at her Nataraj Academy (with 15 students). 'Unlike other institutes, my students can practice a whole day. I want my students to develop an equal love for dance as me,' says Kasturi.

And that's not all. Twice a year she makes her way to Kolkata, more specifically her revered Bharatnatyam guru Thankamani Kutty, to refine her creative skills. 'I go to learn new items from guruji such as Natraj Anjali, Shiva Astakam,



Kasturi Mukherjee

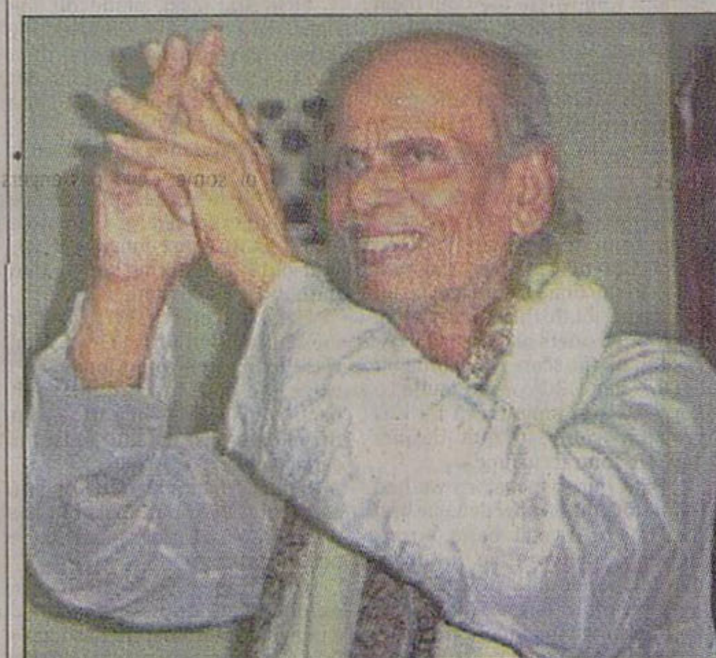
Natanam Adinam and others,' says an enthusiastic Kasturi. Explaining her preceptor's forte, she says, 'I am a great admirer of her dance and teaching styles. She keeps in mind that I am from Bangladesh. Though the distance between the airport (near where I stay) and guruji's house in Gariahat is a one and a half hour drive, I feel highly motivated to make this journey.'

Kasturi firmly believes that folk dance is a popular medium in Bangladesh because it speaks to people with rural roots. Talking about this genre, she says that there is a wide and appealing variety of folk dances--among them Dhan Kata (performed in the harvest festival), fishermen's and snake charmers' dance.

Folk dances score over classical dances such as Bharatnatyam, she asserts, because the songs are in Bangla, while in the latter the language is unfamiliar. However, she strongly believes that all dances are based on the classical art.

Kasturi has her favourites in Bangladesh's dance firmament. Among the folk dancers, she mentions the names of Kabirul Islam Ratan and Sohail Rahman, while she also appreciates Minu Haque's Odissi dance.

Far from sitting back and taking a breather, Kasturi has ambitious goals for the future. Her dream is to expand her academy and make room for 100 students. Her message for upcoming talents: 'Love your art and take pains to perfect your technique.'



Apon Aloy, a talk show on ntv has attained popularity among the TV viewers. The programme presents the biographies of eminent personalities and their contribution to the nation. Politics and social issues are also discussed in the TV show. Today's episode features Baul maestro Shah Abdul Karim's achievements as well as his views on contemporary issues. The show will be aired at 6.50 pm tonight.

Bhober Hat-e Lavlu-Masum duo's new venture

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

On the heels of the successful TV serial Romger Manush, playwright Masum Reza and director Salahuddin Lavlu are making another serial, Bhober Hat-e. Like its predecessor Romger Manush, the 104-episode serial Bhober Hat-e also depicts the colourful lifestyle of rural denizens. This time the play relates the story of two brothers who have cut off ties for 25 years. However, the brothers' offspring seek a family reunion.

Several of the actors of Romger Manush, such as ATM Shamsuzzaman, Wahida Mallick Jolly, Salahuddin Lavlu, Bonya Mirza and others are also performing in Bhober Hat-e. Fazlur Rahman Babu, Meer Sabbir, Chanchal and others are the new additions to the team.

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



Romijer Ayna
On ntv at 08:20 pm
Genre: Drama
Cast: Mustagisur Rahman, Tinni, Janny



The Fugitive
On HBO at 08:30 pm
Genre: Action / Thriller
Cast: Dennis Quaid, Dina Meyer, Jason Isaacs

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

News Bulletin

Table listing news bulletins for various channels: BTv, CHANNEL-1, ATN BANGLA, ntv, and BBC WORLD.

Table listing TV programmes for CHANNEL 1, ATN BANGLA, and ntv.

Table listing TV programmes for ntv, Rtv, and STAR PLUS.

Table listing TV programmes for STAR WORLD and NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC.

Table listing TV programmes for DISCOVERY CHANNEL.

Table listing TV programmes for STAR SPORTS and TEN SPORTS.