

CULTURAL FEAST

Rabindra Sangeet Soiree

Title: Rabindranath Gaane Mrityu Bhabna
Artists: Rezwana Chowdhury Banya, Laiza Ahmed Lisa and Muniruzzaman Chowdhury
Organizer: Unesco, Dhaka
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka
Date: August 02, at 7 pm

Sculptures and Drawing Exhibition

Title: Wound
Artist: Towfiqur Rahman
Venue: Gallery KAYA, House-20, Road-16, Sector-4, Uttara
Date: August 04-18
Time: 11:00am to 8:00pm

Photography Exhibition

Title: Nagar Sishu
Venue: National Institute of Mass-Communication, 125/A, Darus Salam, Mirpur
Date: August 01-03
Time: 7:00pm

Painting Exhibition

Title: Noriko Naito Exhibition
Organiser: GS Kabir
Venue: Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka
Date: August 1-7
Time: 2:00 pm-8:00 pm

Classical Music and Palagaan Performance

Organiser: Bengal Foundation
Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya, 175/F Road no-27, Dhanmondi
Date: Palagaan Ramayana-August 2
Time: 7:00pm

Theatre

Title: Jobbalika
Troupe: Padatik Natya Sangsad
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: August 2
Time: 7:25 pm

Title: Somoyer Proyojone
Troupe: Theater Art Unit
Venue: Mahila Samiti Auditorium
Date: August 2
Time: 7 pm

Documentary Film 'The Pulsating Hills' Joys and sorrows of indigenous people



A procession of young Buddhist monks

KAVITA CHARANJI

UNDULATING hills, verdant forests, swift running rivers, joyous people lighting candles to pay obeisance to Buddha. All these elements go to comprise the rich culture of the Chittagong Hill Tracts. (CHT). But behind the curtain is the story of deprivation and marginalisation, deftly captured on film recently by Zhanu Chakma, editor and director of The Pulsating Hills. The focus in the documentary film is on children.

Here are a few voices from the film, which recently won the Meena Children's Media Award instituted by Unicef:
'I went to the hospital for my child's treatment. But I had no money and had to return without treatment. The doctor diagnosed malaria and typhoid.'
-- Pari Pangkhwa, villager
'In the rainy season, it is very difficult to get to school. However we are keen to continue our studies and sports.'
--Donroe Mro, a student

Health and education remain major concerns for the indigenous people. In the film, Kolpona Tripura points out that she gave birth to her child Gitain at the hands of a mid-wife. Doctors and hospitals are in far flung areas -- some could be as much as six hours away. Many people rely on the medical camps set up by NGOs but these are few and far between. 'There are a few upazila health complexes but they don't have regular doctors. The doctors don't want to stay in those areas,' asserts filmmaker Zhanu. The lack of hygiene and safe

drinking water lay these people low as many become victims of contagious diseases. Deplorable communication facilities are another scourge.

Education is also top of the mind of these people. For one, there are few schools to cater to the needs of the hardcore poor. In the rainy season it becomes even more difficult for the children to negotiate the hazardous journey to their schools. 'In CHT the education situation is not at all satisfactory,' says Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma, chairperson of the CHT Regional Council. There are few teachers for the populace.

As Zhanu Chakma points out, in some remote areas the teachers come once a month to schools. True it would be easier to deploy teachers from the communities, he says, but the Mro and Kheyang communities don't have such teachers, while the Chakma, Tripura and Marma score higher on this front. The rural areas are particularly hard hit as many teachers can't communicate with their students and shun the alien lifestyle.

Lack of cultural activity such as music, art competitions, and dance in the rural areas is also a bane for the indigenous children. While cultural organisations such as Shishu Academy have district-based programmes, there are no similar programmes at the upazila level.

Despite this story of dire deprivation, The Pulsating Hills captures the scenic beauty and lifestyle of the resilient CHT people who remain joyous even in the face of adversity.

In Focus

Barisal Natok's commitment to theatre

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT, Back from Barisal

'Marching towards progress with values of Liberation War' is the motto of Barisal Natok, founded in 1972 by a small group of enthusiastic youngsters wanting to make a difference in society. Beginning in a small classroom in BM School with a few members, today the strength of the group is over 300 with an office of their own in Kalibari, Barisal. It is also a member of the Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation.

As one can deduce from the motto of the organisation, the group emphasises on plays based on the Liberation War. The group believes that theatre is an ideal

way to educate the masses and youngsters on their heritage. They also focus on social issues and responsibilities. Some of their more prominent plays include Jamidar Darpan, Nurul Deen-er Shara Jibon, Juddho Ebono Juddho and Juddho Swadhinita.

Most of the people who work with Barisal Natok are volunteers. While they earn a living through other means, they come together in their passion for acting. Hence they can only practice after regular office hours.

Barisal Natok stages free plays on momentous occasions such as February 21, December 16, March 26 and May 1. The group established the Barisal Natok Abritti Proshikhon Kendra way back in 1983 to help

children fine-tune their grooming and pronunciation. According to Palash Bala Manik, general secretary, Barisal Natok 'Clear and pure pronunciation is a must for a good theatre artist.'

While their work is mainly within Barisal, the Barisal Natok group has performed throughout Bangladesh. 'In a year we have two or three shows and over 30 short plays. We have had over 42 original productions since the group's inception,' asserts Manik.

Even though there's a funds crunch and the government is lackadaisical about extending support to such groups, Barisal Natok is going from strength to strength with its team of dedicated members.



A scene from Padmaboti Panchali, inspired from Monosha Mangol

'Brick Lane' film riddled with protests



A view of Brick Lane (top), Monica Ali



AHN, London

A protest against the film version of Monica Ali's book Brick Lane has culminated with Bangladeshi residents of east London calling for the overall cancellation of the movie, saying that the story line is 'full of lies.' AP sources reported.

The book is about a Bangladeshi woman living in a predominantly Bangladeshi immigrant neighborhood in east London. Last week, many residents opposed the on-location shooting of the movie. The studio making the movie then scrapped those plans because of what it described as security concerns.

Film Four, which is co-financing the movie, has said shooting was almost complete and that exterior shots would be filmed elsewhere. The movie stars Bollywood actor-director Satish Kaushik.

But now protesters say they want the film canceled altogether. A group of Bengali traders leading the protests say they are unhappy over how the book portrays people in the neighborhood.

Community leaders had attacked the book when it was published in 2003, describing its portrayal of Bangladeshis as insulting.

Book critics had hailed Brick Lane as opening a window into the Bangladeshi immigrant experience but it raised hackles in a tightly knit community sensitive to allegations of religious extremism.



Written by actress Bipasha Hayat, single episode TV play Chatushkon, will be aired on ntv on August 5 at 9:15pm. Chatushkon revolves around two young couples. Apurbo, Srabonti, Sweety and Hillol don the lead roles in the play. Chayanika Chowdhury directs the play

Mel Gibson in firestorm of bad publicity

Getting drunk and mouthing off is nothing new in Hollywood, but Mel Gibson's weekend arrest has plunged him into a crisis that few could have imagined two years ago.

Back then he described himself as a filmmaker guided by the Holy Spirit on his surprise blockbuster The Passion of the Christ, saying he hoped the film had 'the power to evangelize.' But that image has been shattered by news of his drunken-driving arrest Friday and the anti-Semitic and sexually insulting remarks attributed to him. The Associated Press reports that an official police report substantiates claims that Gibson made the remarks and threatened a deputy.

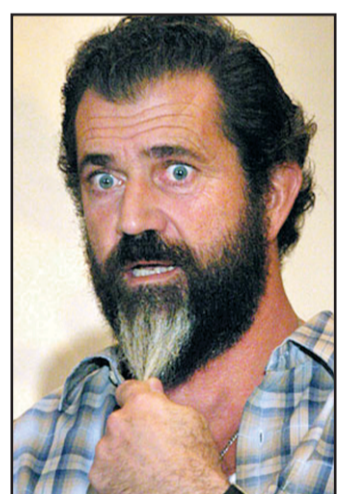
Many say Gibson will have to explain his comments beyond his publicist-released statement, which implied that his rant was just the booze talking. And some in the entertainment industry are calling for a boycott. Veteran media personality

and The View host Barbara Walters told viewers she would not see another Gibson film.

Producer Peter Guber, host of AMC's Sunday Morning Shoot-out and chairman of Mandalay Entertainment, says: 'The audience forgets more than they forgive.' He says Gibson will have little trouble attracting ticket-buyers to action films, thrillers or comedies, but could face difficulty drawing people to more thoughtful projects, particularly those dealing with religious or political themes that previously have earned him respect.

Gibson has remained quiet and out of sight since his arrest. 'He is in an ongoing programme of recovery,' says publicist Alan Nierob, who added that Gibson had no public appearances planned but may soon issue another statement.

Meanwhile, the arrest has been forwarded to the Los Angeles County District Attor-



ney's Office, which said Monday that it would decide this week whether to file charges. Penalties for a case like this could include a fine, jail time and a suspended license.

Source: USA Today

TV GUIDE

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

News Bulletin

BTv News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 8:00 pm. News (Bangla) at 8:00 am 1:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm. News (English) at 3:00 pm, 10:00 pm. Latest News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm. CHANNEL-i News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15am. Telecast of BTv news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm. ATN BANGLA News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11pm. News (English) 8:20am, 7:00pm. Telecast of BTv News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm. TARA BANGLA News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30pm, 7:30pm. Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm. Tara News Bangladesh (Bangla) at 9:30 pm. BBC WORLD Every hour on the hour

Table with columns for channel (BTv, CHANNEL-i, ATN BANGLA, ntv) and program details including time and title.

Table with columns for channel (CHANNEL-i, ntv) and program details including time and title.

PICK OF THE DAY section featuring Kanone Kushum Koli and Siddiqua Kabir's Recipe with images and descriptions.

Table listing various TV programs across different channels with their respective times.