

# Twist and Shout All The Way

Benson & Hedges stages Twist & Shout concert at the National Army Stadium

By Nafid Imran Ahmed

**T**HIS weekend was a special one for the music buffs of the country. They all gathered at the Army Stadium to enjoy the performances of some of the most talented singers of the country, along with the performance by an internationally acclaimed band. One after another Benson & Hedges has been successfully organizing concerts for the present generation music lovers. The most recent is the two-day long Twist & Shout concert, jointly organised by Antar Showbiz Ltd, which was held on December 3 and 4. This time the concert had a noble purpose - the proceeds from the sale of the tickets will be donated to the Red Crescent Society.

Four musical groups performed on the first day. Satellite TV anchor Maharrab Apu invited musical group Dreamland on stage to perform first. They gave their best shot and were able to move the audience a little bit. At first the concert premises was not too crowded, but as the show progressed the place started to fill up and when Nagar Baul took the stage there were almost ten thousand spectators on the ground.

As Nagar Baul started off with their popular number 'Koitha Achey', the fans started screaming and suddenly the concert became lively. One after another they mesmerized the audience with 'Sultana Bittana', 'Lace Fita Lace', 'Mannan Miyan Titash Malam', 'Pakhi Ure Ja' and many other celebrated songs. With the two new hands in the band they performed well. After a short break for the 'Aajan', bandleader James came up to the microphone and dedicated their song 'Raater Tora' to his mother.

This time not only the sound and lighting enthralled the audience, but the special video team led by video director Ringer enchanted them too. They put up big screens on both sides of the stage and projected the whole show after the sun went down, so the people who were far away from the stage could also see and enjoy the show as much as the front row audience.

The next to come was Miles. It was a great day for them as well; they were celebrating their 20th anniversary. They took the stage very cheerfully and started off with 'Jala Jala'. They sang 'Tomar Chokhi Amar Sesh



Dreamland performing at the Twist & Shout concert

*Thikana* and dedicated it to all the people present at the concert whose birthday falls on the same day.

With Brian Adams's 'Back To You' they started singing a bunch of English numbers and went on with Deep Purple's 'Highway Star', 'Guns N' Roses's 'November Rain' and a few more.

The audience loved their performance and sang along with them.

Drummer Turja and keyboardist Manam performed solos during breaks, which were very appreciated by the enthusiastic audience. After singing

their super hit number 'Chand Tara' and 'Firte Dao' they were short in time and had to finish early. They finished with the World Cup Cricket '99 famed song by Ricky Martin 'The Cup of Life'. The audience went wild dancing and singing along with them.

The master attraction of the evening was yet to come. The internationally famed Pakistani Sufi music group Junoon. It took a while to get all their instruments tuned up. The anticipation was making the crowd crazy. They waited all day for

this and a few minutes seemed like years. The crowd shouted as they made their way on stage. The three men came on stage and thanked the organizers for giving them the chance to perform in Bangladesh for the second time before the Millennium. They did not keep their fans waiting any longer and started with the number 'Doost'. The crowd enjoyed the music of the group and sang along with them. In the middle of the number, they divided them into two groups, people in the front were in group A and the back were group B and they asked them to sing along with them, one group at a time, so that you can judge which group sings louder - a very clever way for making the audiences sing along with them. The crowd sang their lungs out. Junoon then, played 'Damadam Maast Kalandar', 'Mera Mahi', 'Khudi', 'Pyaar Bina' and a few more from their first and second released album. These songs were played and sung with such dexterity that the audience loved it. Even better was their 'classical' style and the way they played with ragas and sargams. The spectators went absolutely out of control when they started their world famous number 'Sayonee', but they maintained a limit and did not let the concert be spoilt by their roudy behaviour. Junoon gave them what they wanted to listen to and from what it looked like, they also enjoyed performing. 'Bulleya', a new number was performed next which was followed by the last number of the evening 'Yaar Bina'.

The second day concert included performances by LRB, Confusion, Ark and of course Junoon.

It was really a great teamwork by Benson & Hedges and Antar Showbiz Limited - they were really able to make the audience 'Twist & Shout' all the way long.



A section of the gigantic crowd at the Benson & Hedges Twist & Shout concert

— Star photo by Amran Hossain

festivals

# Rudro Mela - Inspiring and Festive

*Rudro Muhammad Shahidullah, the most gifted poet of the seventies died a premature death at the age 36 remains an epitome of youthful inspiration*

By Nadine Murshid

**A**JO Balashay Lasher Gondha Pai, 'Bhora Phoshoy Bukey Jodi Mrityu Hoy Dukhyo Nai', 'Jatir Potaka Khamchey Dhorechey Shei Purono Shokun' - the man who wrote this is no more, he left the face of this earth way back in 1991, but he is present in the hearts of many, in the minds of whom he touched. Rudro Muhammad Shahidullah is one name which evokes a sense of patriotism, passion, and even love, love for the man who left the word when he was only 36.

Ever since his untimely death, Rudro mela has become a part of the nation's curriculum every year. Organised by a few close friends and his family, it serves as a reminder of the poet who left behind a trail of memories.



Rudro Muhammad Shahidullah

This year, the 'mela' started with an art competition held at the Institute of Fine Arts on November 19. This was followed by a discussion on Rudro and an exhibition of his belongings. This was inaugurated by photographer Rashid Talukdar on December 2. Thereafter, the main 'Rudro Mela' was inaugurated by Gaziul Huq. Poet Muhammad Nurul Huda, Ashim Saha, Kamal Pasha Chowdhury, Rudro's friend Isaak Khan, Sarkar Ali Azgar and Nishat Khan spoke on the occasion among others about Rudro, his life and his work.

The fair which was first inaugurated by Late S. M. Sultan is now a tradition. It has become a part of life and it keeps the memory of a marvelous poet alive. 'He is still alive, alive in the hearts of those who knew him, even after his death. It is an honourable task that Poet Nurul Huda, Isaak Khan, Sarkar Ali Azgar, Kamal Pasha Chowdhury, Ashrafuzzaman, Dr. Saifullahand Rishit Khan has undertaken. The consistency with which they have been arranging the 'mela' is noteworthy - this is an example of the love and devotion that Rudro evokes.'



Visitors at the Rudro Mela

— Star photo by Amran Hossain



Bardhaman House

# Keeping The Spirit Alive

Bangla Academy celebrates its 44th founding anniversary

By Abdus Saboor

brated its 44th founding anniversary on December 3, 1999 at the academy premises.

The programme started with paying floral tribute at the Central Shahid Minar at 10am. The main programme included the welcome speech by Syed Anwar Hossen, director general of Bangla Academy at 4pm. The programme was presided over by Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid and the founding anniversary speech was given by Selina Hossain.

At the very beginning, Bangla Academy started its activities with four sectors - research section, translation section, adaptation and publication section, and cultural section.

From the very beginning in 1955, the academy set up the Bangla Academy library. At present the library is rich with

many antique and rare collections. The academy also publishes six magazines. They are Bangla Academy Potrika, Uttaradhikar - a quarterly, Dhan Shaliker Desh, another quarterly, Bangla Academy Bigyan Potrika, Bangla Academy Journal in English, and Lekha, the monthly.

The institution has introduced Bangla Academy Award in Literature since 1960.

The speakers on the occasion hailed the UNESCO decision to celebrate 21st February as International Mother Tongue Day.

This year's founding anniversary speech 'Sanskriti O Amar Ekushey' was delivered by Selina Hossain. With a brief chronology of our language movement, she expressed her deep gratitude to our language martyrs. Professor Khan

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