

exhibition

How the War was Won

Muktijudhho seen by international press and photojournalists

By Fayza Haq

THE War We Forgot", a photographic exhibition opened at the National Museum yesterday. It included historic images of the internationally renowned press and other photographers who were in Bangladesh during the country's Liberation War in 1971. The curators of this exhibition were Robert Pledge, the President of Contact Press Images and World Press Retrospective and Dr Shahidul Alam of Drik who was also the Festival director of 'Chobi Mela'.

Shamsur Rahman, Meghna Guhathakurta, Saeeda Kamal, Sirin Banu Mital and Shaheen Rezanor of Projonomo '71 jointly opened the exhibition.

The exhibition included the works of Abbas, Bruno Barbey, Henri Bureau, David Burnett, Raymond Depardon, Horst Faas (Associated Press), Michel Laurent (Associated Press), Mark Godfrey, Don McCullin, Mary Ellen Mark, Marc Riboud, Marilyn Silverstone, Christian Simonpietre, Penny Tweedie, Aftab Ahmed, Kishore Parekh, Rashid Talukder and Bal Drishnan.

When Dr Shahidul Alam was searching for photos of Bangladesh's war heroes in 1994, and was in the Paris office of Sipa, Goksin Siphagiolog brought back for him numerous slide folders. These were



Photo: Aftab Ahmed/Drik

the first colour photographs of the Muktijudhho that Dr. Alam had ever seen. All the source of news at that time was Swadhin Bangla Radio. Later that month, in the garden of a house in Arle, Dr Alam met Don McCullin who was enthusiastic about an exhibition that the former had in mind. He found inspiration

also with the photographer Abbas at Manila. He also studied the pictures of the magazine provided by Michele Stephenson. He later picked up more evidence of his subject at Kuala Lumpur, Dubai, Delhi and other cities and also spoke of his plan with David Burnett whom he met at Amsterdam at a World Press Jury. He also shared his idea with Robert Pledge of Contact Press Images.

Working on the project in the subcontinent, Dr. Alam met Swapan Parekh, the son of Kishore Parekh, during the launching ceremony of The Critical Mirror in Amsterdam. He put his father's negatives together and had them ready for the special exhibit.

Dr Alam's subjects were the people in the Bangladeshi villages who fought in the war and have so far been unsung.

Dr Alam says, "One of the bloodiest wars of this century took place 29 years ago, with more innocent people killed than in the Nazi concentration camps. In less time than it takes for a baby to be born, a population of mostly farmers, men women and children who had never held guns before, fought a trained army of 93,000 soldiers, and gave birth to a new nation. While in the West, the Concert for Bangladesh raised millions of dollars, and the US and Soviet Union flexed muscles at each other, the news of what was happening except for what

passed through the guerrilla grapevine was not available to Bangladeshis. Only after 16th December, people slowly discovered the corpses of the intellectuals, the mass graves, the torture cells, that the Bangladeshis began to reconstruct what had been happening to them. But the world knew. Though many stayed silent, and others took sides based on political convenience, the images of the holocaust were produced by some of the finest photojournalists of the world. Many met for the first time in Bangladesh. Some made their mark because of the way they documented this war."

Dr Alam adds, "Some have died. Others are now household names. Some have chosen oblivion. But many of the images remain in the archives of Time Life Building, with agencies that distribute the work and in personal collections, with children who have retrieved the work of the dead parents. Though the war, while it lasted, was widely covered in the media, this, one of the most significant events of the 20th century, was never put together as a serious visual collective. The sceptics say that the war was won too close to Christmas and the media moved on to other stories. Others feel it was a war amongst two poor nations, where little was at stake for the economic powers. Bangladesh itself, ravaged by the



Photo: Kishore Parekh/Drik

war and with subsequent political turmoil, never found itself in a stable enough situation to reconstruct its own history, and not everyone wanted the story to be told.

"We are presenting to the rest of the world a fragment of Bangladesh's history, a history which must be told. For many who have sacrificed their lives for their freedom, for those who have been left behind, and who live with the pain, for the perpetrators of the crime who must be confronted with their deeds, and

for the youth to know the birth pangs of their nations."

Meghna Guhathakurta said on exhibition, "War usually conjures up images of violence, cruelty, despair and destitution. Muktijudhho in 1971 was no exception. Yet behind the desolate houses, the demolished bridges, the armoured tanks, the huddled tents sheltering war weary refugees lies the story of ordinary people. These are people whose daily lives have been ravaged by the winds of war, and at the same time for whom war remained the only means through which to regain their dignity and fulfil their dreams."

"Muktijudhho was a time when the ordinary people, almost overnight, became a soldier, and this was the time when these soldiers were the last hope for a nascent nation. It was also a time when nine months of

occupation by the Pakistan army forged terror in the eyes of women and children witnessing death or fearing rape. It was a time which sculpted the wrinkled faces of the aged with a pain too deep for tears. It was a time when the meadows and flowing rivers of Bangladesh were strewn with the carcasses of those whom one had revered and loved in their dreaming and waking hours. Muktijudhho was such a time, which one could never recount in one sitting or one novel or one exhibition."



A guerilla leader in Dacca, Bangladesh, beats a victim Dec. 18, 1971 during the torture and execution of four men suspected of collaborating with Pakistani militiamen accused of murder, rape and looting during months of civil war. (AP Photo/Horst Faas, Michel Laurent)



Photo: Rashid Talukder/Drik

Recommendations

Anniversary

The Central Kachi-Kanchar Mela plans to celebrate birth anniversary of Shilpa-Charya Zainul Abedin, Poet Jasimuddin and Scientist Dr Abdullah Al-Muti Sharafuddin through elaborate programmes. A painting competition will take place on January 19 and a poetry recitation session on January 20, while a two daylong science fair will be held on January 19 and 20 at the premises of the Central Kachi-Kanchar Mela at 37/A Segunbagicha.

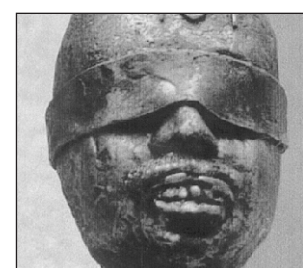
Poet Shamsur Rahman and renowned artist Kalam Mahmud will be present as guests of honour and distribute prizes among the successful participants on January 26 at the auditorium of the Central Kachi-Kanchar Mela.



Exhibition

Selected Indonesian exhibitions titled Images from Antara News Agency, The Children of Timore Lorosa'e and The Transfixed Spectator are being held at the Gallery Chittrak, House # 21, Road # 4, Dhanmondi.

The exhibition will run till January 14 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. everyday.



Art exhibition

Alka mathur and Naresh kapuria's joint show opens at Bengal Gallery on January 18. Alka Mathur is a familiar name in the Dhaka art circle. These two artists together promise a mind stirring show for the city's gallery-goers.

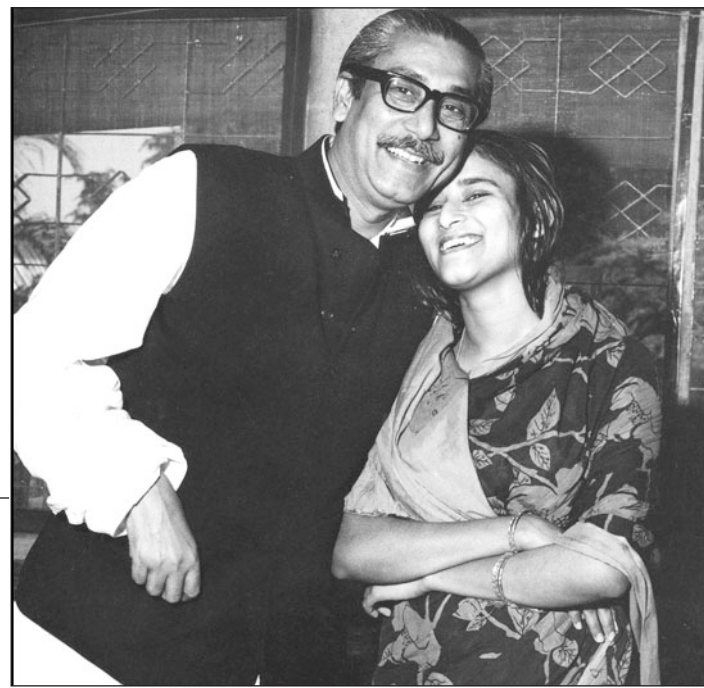


Photo: Bal Krishnan/Drik

TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



The X-Files

Tonight on Star World at 9:30p.m.

The X-Files, winner of the 1995 and 1997 Golden Globe Award for Best Drama Series, and a four-time Emmy Award nominee for outstanding Drama Series, return for its sixth season following the box-office success of the first feature film based on the series. Celebrated by critics in three US since its premier and a consisting ratings winner on television, The X-Files has also become an international phenomenon. The show's conspiratorial tone and blend of paranoia, horror and edge-of-the-seat suspense have helped to make it the number one series worldwide.

Kids Sunday 10:30 Janata Ki Adalat 11:00 Chupa Rustom 11:30 Chalti Ka Naam Antakshri 12:30 Family Fortunes 1:00 Musafir Hoon Yaron 1:30 Mirch Masala 2:30 Mail Milap 2:40 Star Sunday Matinee: 6:00 Shrimati Sharma

DISCOVERY CHANNEL

6:30 Eyewitness II 7:00 In Care of Nature 7:30 Outer Bounds I&II 8:00 Without Warning I 8:30 Wings 9:30 Let's Dance/There's No Food Like My Food 10:00 Crocodile Hunter's Croc Files II 10:30 Popular Mechanics for Kids 11:00 So You Want To be? 11:30 Real Kids, Real Adventures 12:00 Splat II & III 12:30 Lonely Planet V 1:30 Discovery Profile Series 7:30 Vital Breakthroughs 8:30 Lifeline 9:30 Science Frontiers 10:30 Discovery Showcase 11:30 Discovery Profile Series 12:30 Vital Breakthroughs

1:30 Lifeline 2:30 Science Frontiers 3:30 Discovery Showcase 4:30 Discovery Profile Series 5:30 21st Century Medicine

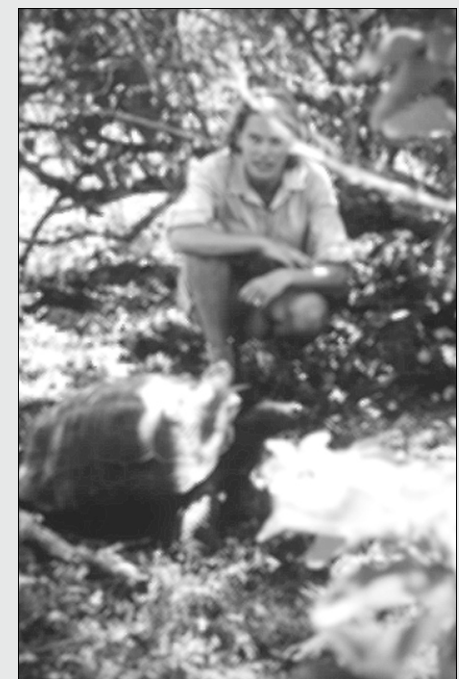
CNN

4:00 World News 4:30 World Sport 5:00 CNN World View 5:30 Inside Asia 6:00 World News 6:30 The Artclub 7:00 CNN World View 7:30 World Beat 8:00 Larry King Weekend 9:00 CNN World View 9:30 Style with Elsa Klensch 10:00 World Report 11:00 World News 11:30 Inside Asia 12:00 World News 12:30 Your Health 1:00 World News 1:30 World Sport 2:30 Diplomatic License 3:00 Larry King Weekend 4:00

World News 4:30 Ebizasia 5:00 World News 5:30 World Sport 6:00 World News 6:30 CNN Hotspots 7:00 World News 7:30 Business Unusual 8:00 World News 8:30 CNNdotCOM 9:00 World News 9:30 World Beat 10:00 World News 10:30 CNN India dot COM 11:00 Style South Asia 11:30 Ebizasia 12:00 World News 12:30 Style with Elsa Klensch 1:00 CNN India dot COM 1:30 CNNdotCOM 2:00 World News 2:30 The Artclub 3:00 World News 3:30 Diplomatic License

AXN

6:00 I Dear You 7:00 Action Heroes 8:00 Steam Detective 9:00 Highlander the Raven/The Flame 10:00 Farscae II/Vitas Mortis 11:00 I Dear You 12:00 VIP II/Big Top Val 1:00 Movie: Blind Terror 3:00 Highlander the Raven/Love & Death 4:00 Steam Detective 5:00 Action Heroes 6:00 I Dare You 7:00 Farscae II/Vitas Mortis 8:00 Movie: Flatliners 10:00 Walker's World 11:00 Highlander the Raven/Love and Death 12:00 Movie: Flatliners 2:00 18 Wheels of Justice 3:00 Silk Stalking V/Sudden Death



Walker's World on AXN tonight at 10

Paper 5:15 Young At Heart 7:15 Michael 9:30 Stop! Or My Mom will Shoot 11:15 The War 1:45 The Exorcist 4:15 The Papers



Martial Law on Star World today at 2:00p.m.

BTV
3:00 Opening Announcement
3:20 Open University
4:00 Khabar
4:05 Animation Film: Animal Show
4:30 Nutrition Facts 4:45 Alor Payra: Magazine programme for the children
5:20 Health Information
5:25 National Television Debate



Sharashari, guest Abdul Ahad Chowdhury, on Ekushey television tonight at 10:25

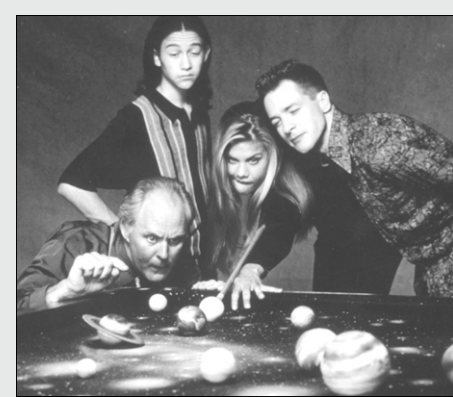
Competition 6:00 Khabar 6:10 Taruchaya: Folk song programme
6:30 Programme from Chittagong station 7:00 Mati O Manush
Programme on agricultural development
7:25 Bhraman: A programme on local tourism
8:00 News in Bengali 8:20 Geeti Bichitra: Musical programme
9:00 Drama Serial: Road No Noy Bari No Choy 9:30 Film Show: Team Night Rider
10:00 News at Ten 10:20 Chayachanda 10:45 Dristi O' Srishiti 11:30 Khabar/ The News

STAR GOLD
8:30 Rahein Na Rahein Hum 9:00 Aradhana 12:00 Geet Bahar 12:30 Sunday Noon Show

11:45 Close Down
EKUSHEY TV
12:00 Ekushey News Headlines
12:05 Ajker Potrikay
12:15 Bangla Movie: Gorjon 2:30 Dristi
3:00 Ekushey News Headlines 3:05 Na 3:30 Shofol Jara Kemon Tara 4:00 Chirontoni 4:30 Expedition to the

STAR WORLD

6:00 Morris Cerullo
6:30 Space Island
7:30 Lassie
8:00 Google
8:30 JAG
9:30 Nash Bridges
10:30 The Pretender
11:30 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's The Lost World
12:30 Ally McBeal
1:30 The Practice
2:00 Martial Law
3:30 World Championship Wrestling
Thunder 5:30 Crown and Country
6:00 Travel Asia
6:30 Baywatch
7:30 The Simpsons
8:00 3rd Rock From the Sun
8:30 Star News Focus Asia
9:30 The X-Files
10:30 Star Trek The Next Generation
11:30 TV Com



3rd Rock From The Sun on Star World tonight at 8

Massey Saheb 3:30 Geet Bahar 4:00 EK Raaz 7:00 Geet Bahar 7:30 Sunday Blockbusters: Ziddi 10:30 Beete Hue Din 11:00 Dil Daulat Duniya 12:30 Dil Daulat Duniya (Cont)
2:00 Geet Bahar 2:30 EK Raaz 5:30 Dil Daulat Duniya

STAR MOVIES

7:00 Comedy: The Impostors
9:00 Action: Y2K
11:00 Thriller: Snake Eyes
1:00 Comedy: Ill Be Home For Christmas
3:00 Star Kids Club: Emest Saves Christmas
5:00 Action: Moving Targets
7:00 Sunday Action Mgamovie: 6 Days 7 Nights
9:00 Action: Rambo First Blood
2 11:00 Comedy: The Impostors
1:00 Action: Raw Deal
3:00 Action: Alien Intruder
5:00 Celebrity Profile: Sharon Lawrence

BBC WORLD

6:00 BBC News
6:30 This Week
7:00 BBC News
7:30 Holiday 8:00 BBC News
8:30 USA Direct 9:00

6:00 Kuchha Papad Pucca Papad 6:30 Star Geetmala 7:30 Good Morning India 8:30 The Sword of Tipu Sultan 9:30 Fox

BBC News 9:30 Correspondent ex World Review
10:00 BBC News
10:30 India Tomorrow
11:00 BBC News
11:30 India Business Report
12:00 BBC News
12:30 Mastermind India
1:00 BBC News
1:30 Face To Face India
2:00 BBC News
2:30 This Week
3:00 BBC News
3:30 Global Sunrise
4:00 BBC News
4:30 Click on Line
5:00 BBC News
5:30 USA Dir
6:00 BBC News
6:10 Bubble Trouble/Shock Royal
Global Sunrise 7:00 BBC News
7:30 Dateline London
8:00 BBC News
8:30 Top Gear
9:00 BBC News
9:10 Inside/Moral Combat
Global Sunrise 10:00 BBC News
10:30 India Business Report
11:00 BBC News
11:30 Holiday
12:00 BBC News
12:10 TBA/Royal Collart
1:00 BBC News
1:30 USA Direct
2:00 BBC News
2:30 Tate Mod/Rhock Royal
Global Sunrise 3:00 BBC News
3:30 Top Gear
4:00 BBC News
4:30 Asia Business Report/Reporters
5:00 BBC News
5:30 Asia Business Report/Asia Today

STAR PLUS

6:00 Kuchha Papad Pucca Papad 6:30 Star Geetmala 7:30 Good Morning India 8:30 The Sword of Tipu Sultan 9:30 Fox