

Drama

# Reinterpreting history

Dhaka toasts Teesta Parer Brittanto

TAWFIQUE ALI

THEATRE admirers flocked in numbers in the evening of February 19 at the National Museum auditorium where Chelana presented Teesta Parer Brittanto as part of the on going ITI Theatre festival.

The play develops around the inhabitants on the bank of river Teesta; their way of life, sorrows and happiness and their tradition. Exploitation and manipulation of these easy-going people at the hands of jotdar (Feudal lords) have found a poignant expression in course of the story's progression. The play also reveals a lethargic indifference of politics when the local MLA says, "I feel drowsy--- when I sit in the house." But as a whole the play captures a complete panorama of life lived by rustic but simple peasant class people surviving the Teesta's rage and cruelty.

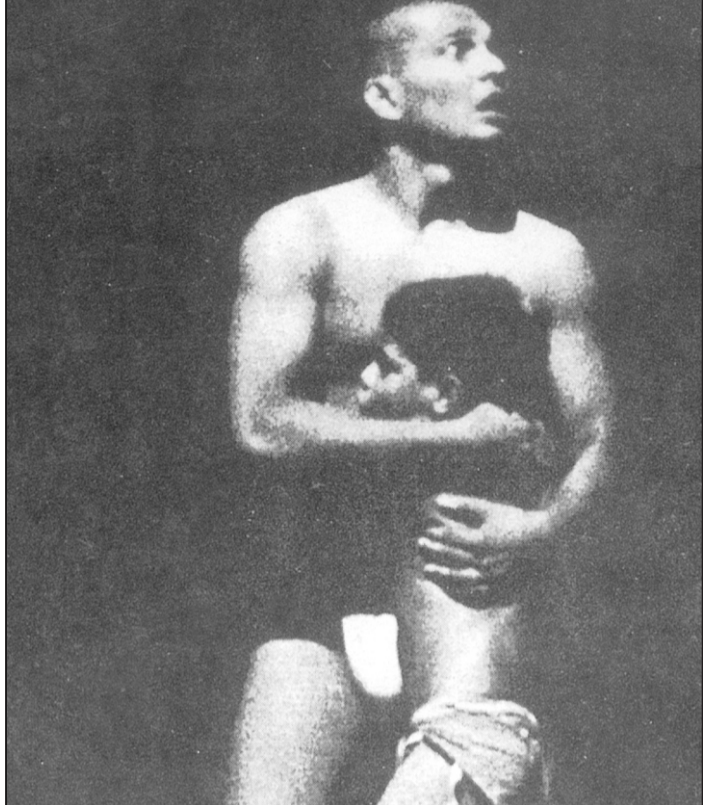
Suhas comes to the banks of Teesta as a land settlement officer for operation Barga. Now a bureaucrat, who once joined the Naxalite movement. He has a dream of a total peasant revolution and today he is assigned to execute the project of land reforms. After having reached the locality Suhas observes there is one who is rather mysterious. He silently follows out all the commands and materializes desires of Goyanath Jotdar: he carries the Hakimis chair on his head, cleans relentlessly its legs, swiftly climbs a tree to pluck the map

flown away by wind. He is raked except for a slip of cloth around the waist.

Suhas ponders who is this are like man is. Suhas finds his language inadequate to make any sense. During a land survey Suhas notices the elusive entity named Bagharu in the crowd. Suhas feels Bagharu does not belong there, in fact, he is a misfit to belong anywhere.

Does this mean that the Bagharus are incapable of entering into dialogue with other Bagharus? Are they really so alienated, so lonely?

At the very beginning, while wading through a river with the local MLA on his shoulders, Bagharu had requested the elected representative to give him a human name. Towards the end, ten years after the talk with the MLA, Bagharu is left with just a monosyllabic utterance, a word that he employs as a fixed reply to all questions: No. No, he isn't anything, he isn't Rajbonshi, he isn't English, he isn't of any party, and he has no festoons or flags. His presence is constructed by innumerable absences, silences which can neither be mapped nor measured. At a time when the entire world is undergoing rapid changes, it seems only Bagharu is holding forth: trapped in a dead past, he remains where he always was. It's as though Bagharu is the last specimen of some prehistoric human; having outlived his own time he lives



The last sequence of the play

simultaneous in two time zone; though placed in the present, he has no dealings with it. No matter how momentous the contemporary upheavals are, nothing effects, nothing touches or moves him. Yet there isn't a single incident that occurs on the banks of Teesta which does not inevitably draw him in; be it Operation Barga, the flooded waters, a procession demanding Kamtapur or Teesta barrage, he is to be found everywhere.

Though he subscribes to no faith, has no affiliation of sorts, he still reaches the nerve centres of all conflicts without fail. And thus, he creates ruptures, blanks that can not be filled or shored up. Himself a gap he produces gaps. Precisely because he can not be fitted anywhere his silent presence cuts into pieces all connecting threads, keeps in abeyance all possible resolutions. Bagharu is negation personified. And this 'negative essence' ceaselessly intervenes, interrupts steady flows, and makes messy all a priori designs. The society and the state keep him outside of history and for the same reason he remains irrepresible, he 're-turns' again and again to point towards the unrealised potentials of history, towards open-ends.

The play has been adopted, dramatised and directed by Suman Mukhopadhyaya from a novel by Debesh Roy. The central character of Bagharu has been played by Sakar Debnath, Suhas by Supriyo Dutta, MLA by Mihir Banerjee and Gayanath by Gautam Mridha.

After the play was over the entire troupe, more particularly Sankar Debnath (Bagharu) received a standing ovation from the audience. Ramendu Majumder's closing remarks "creating an extraordinary character like Bagharu requires diligence, devotion and dedication to the art of acting," succinctly to describe Sankar Debnath's performance.



Debesh Ray



Suman Mukhopadhyaya

Book Launching

# A personal story of 1971

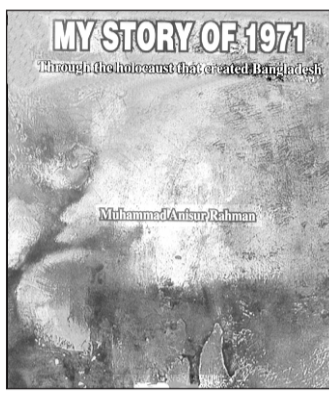
M. Anisur Rahman's book on liberation war launched

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

INDIA was partitioned in 1947 and the split nation of Pakistan conjoined the eastern and Western sections of the subcontinent in which Muslims formed the majority.

Although people of the then East Pakistan formed majority of the Pakistani population and despite East Pakistan's being resourceful in many ways, West Pakistani ruling elites took the upper hand. Right from the beginning Pakistani rulers tended to show colonial attitudes towards East Pakistan and neglect culturally, socially and economically. The first blow came in 1952 when Urdu was declared national language. In defense of their native tongue, Bangla, the youth took to the streets. The Language Movement evolved into demands for political autonomy for East Pakistan. The result was massacre, resistance, and the creation of the new nation of Bangladesh in 1971 through a bloody struggle. Prof. M. Anisur Rahman gives a personal account of the horrific incidents that he witnessed during the war of liberation.

colleagues is recounted. From India he flew to the United States in May and visited first an American friend of his in Long Island Professor Robert Geise whom he had cabled from Dhaka in March before the crackdown asking him to write to Washington figures about the impending genocide. The file of Professor Geise presenting his letters to Washington and response to them and of his initiative to mobilize his students to help Bangladesh refugees in India is presented. This file along with a letter to the author



My Story of 1971: Through the holocaust that created Bangladesh By Anisur Rahman

during his stay in India from Professor Wassily Leontier of Harvard University to whom also he had sent a cable before the March 25 military crackdown. Presents evidence that Washington had been warned on the impending act of genocide by the Pakistan military before the act took place.

From Long Island the author went to Harvard where his wife and children joined him via India and thereafter to Williams College, lobbying for the cause of Bangladesh while researching and teaching. His story of this period includes quotes from the many letters he received during this time from family and friends in exile in Calcutta and directly from Dhaka giving first hand accounts of events during the war of liberation, and extracts from his wife's diary as well. The story concludes with a short account of the author's trip to Calcutta and into a Bangladesh in December when the joint command of the Indian army and Bangladesh liberation forces moved in and liberated the country.

The account includes transcript of a tape-letter that the author collected at Harvard, by an American consultant who traveled the interior of the country by boat in May 1971, and that describes in vivid details the carnage of the Pakistani military in the places traveled. Recollections of four members of the author's family, one of them living in Karachi at that time, are also annexed.

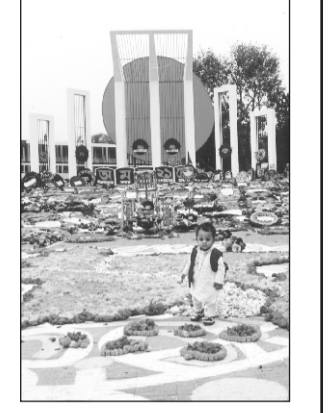
The book has been introduced by Dr. M Tariq Siddiqi, Vice-Chancellor of the Quaid-i-Azam University at Islamabad, Pakistan, and carries a foreword by Dr Ashok Mitra, former Economic Advisor to the Prime Minister of India.

Well-known economist Professor M. Anisur Rahman was trained at Dhaka and Harvard University. He taught at Dhaka University and at the Islamabad University at Rawalpindi, Pakistan where he founded its Institute of Social Sciences and the Department of Economics. Joining the first Planning Commission of Bangladesh after liberation of the country Anisur Rahman got involved with self-reliant grassroots development initiatives in the country stimulated by the fire of the Liberation war and advocated self-reliant development of the country in a framework of egalitarianism and popular mobilization. With the change of leadership in 1975 when grassroots mobilization in the country got into troubles Rahman had to embrace exile again. In 1977 he joined the International Labour Office (ILO) in Geneva and initiated and directed a global programme on Participatory Development providing leadership in this field on a world scale. He retired from the ILO in 1990 and has since then been based in Bangladesh, continuing to advocate an honourable path of self-reliant development for the country.

Anisur Rahman is also well-known as a singer teacher and researcher of songs of Rabindranath Tagore.

The book is the 2nd publication of Liberation War Museum and has recently been launched at the Bangla Academy on the occasion of Ekushey Book Fair. The book is priced at Tk. 200 and will be available at most of the leading book shops and at the Liberation War Museum.

RECOMMENDATIONS



Ekushey Programmes

On the occasion of Ekushey February - 'International Mother Language Day' many organisations has scheduled programmes throughout the day.

Podatik Natyia Shangsad has organised an art competition for the children and daylong cultural programmes at the Zainul stage of the Institute of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka. Professor A K Azad Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor, University of Dhaka will inaugurate the occasion as chief guest.

Bulbul Lolitokala academy has organised discussion and cultural programmes at the Wiseghat central auditorium starting at 10:30 in the morning. There will also be a poster exhibition and competition by the department of fine arts at 12p.m.

**Solo exhibition**  
A solo exhibition of artworks by Dilara Begum Jolly has started at the Gallery 21. The exhibition will continue everyday from 10a.m. -- 8p.m. till February 26.

Art Exhibition

A solo art exhibition by Faruk Ahamed was inaugurated on February 17 at the Divine Art Gallery, Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel.

The exhibition will remain open everyday from 10a.m. - 8p.m. till February 26.

Music of Water

On the occasion of Convocation 2001 of Jahangirnagar University, Centre for Nature Photo Study (CNPS) organised a solo photography exhibition by A M M Ikram titled Music of Water at the Jahangirnagar University auditorium, which started on February 16.

The exhibition will remain open everyday from 10a.m. to 5p.m. till February 26.

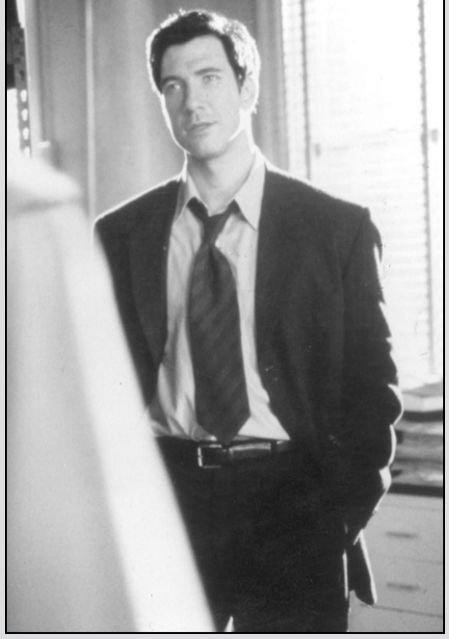
# TV GUIDE

PICK OF THE DAY



**Ekushey special drama Ongkar on Ekushey television tonight at 9.** For financial problem a young man marries a rich but dishonest lawyer's dumb daughter. Though the money was an important fact, he also loved his wife. But his colleagues at the office created some problems in his life. Once he buys a harmonium for his younger sister. This creates an eagerness in his wife for speaking and singing. But she gets more inspiration from the procession of 1952's Language movement. Written by Ahmed Safa and directed by Abu Sayeed the drama stars Azizul Hakim, Opi Karim, Mamunur Rashid and many more.

Khaj (Rishi, Kimmi Katkar, Naseeruddin Shah) 12:30 Hit Ya Hit Ya Fit 1:00 TSN 1:30 Small Wonder 2:00 Meri Saheli 2:30 Saans 3:00 Shagun 3:30 Gharwali Uparwali 4:00 Kyunki Saas



The Practice on Star World at 12 midnight.

Hasna Mat 9:00 Siski 9:30 Kaun Banega Crorepati 11:00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi 11:30 Aaj Ki Baat 12:00 Shagun 12:30 Telebrands 1:00 Kahani Ghar Ghar Ki 1:30 Star Movie Show: Raaz Ki Baat (Simi Grewal, Sujit Kumar) 4:30 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi 5:00 Saans 5:30 Meri Saheli

**STAR GOLD**  
8:30 Bollywood News 9:00 Hamrahi (Rajendra Kumar, Jamuna) 12:00 Geet

**STAR**  
Fugitives 9:00 Drama : Jailbait 10:45 Drama : When A Man Loves A Woman 1:00 Comedy : Stakeout 3:00 Action : Private Wars 5:00 Action : Quiet Fire 7:00 Hollywood Action Night : Illegal Entry 9:00 Action : Shoot To Kill 11:00 Comedy : Three Fugitives 1:00 Comedy : Ruthless People 3:00 Action : Dick Tracy 5:00 Comedy : Bill And Ted's Excellent Adventure



Two Guys A Girl And A Pizza Place on Star World at 10p.m.

Bahar 12:30 Bawre Nain (Raj Kapoor, Geeta Bali) 3:30 Bollywood News 4:00 Jesus (Jaylalitha) 7:00 Geet Bahar 7:30 Rang Birangi Devi (Sanjeev Kumar, Nutan) 10:30 Bollywood News 11:00 Nadiya Ke Par (Dilip Kumar, Kamini Kaushal) 12:30 Nadiya Ke Par (contd...) 2:00 Geet Bahar 2:30 Jesus (Jaylalitha) 5:30 Nadiya Ke Par (Dilip Kumar, Kamini Kaushal)

**STAR MOVIES**  
7:00 Comedy : Three

McBeal 8:00 The Practice 9:00 Friends 9:30 Star News 10:00 2 Guys A Girl 10:30 Maggie Winters 11:00 Ally McBeal 12:00 The Practice 1:00 2 Guys A Girl 1:30 Maggie Winters 2:00 Ally McBeal 3:00 Creflo Dollar Daily 3:30 Kenneth Copeland 4:00 Life In The World With 4:30 World News 5:00 Grace Under Fire 5:30 Mork & Mindy 6:00 Murder Call 7:00 43rd Annual Grammy

**HBO**  
6:30 Her Alibi 8:30 Uncommon Valor 10:45 With Water Summer 12:30 Lorenzo's Oil 3:15 Memphis Belle 5:30 Lean On Me 7:45 Deep Core 9:30 Cinema Secrets Ep 11 Ticket To The Stars 10:00 Parenthood 12:30 Assassins 3:00 Memphis Belle 5:15 Deep Core

**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 Lonely Planet II 9:30 Beyond 2000 10:00 Next Step 10:30 Go For It! 11:30 Intimate Escapes 12:30 Wild Discovery 1:30 Medical Detectives I 2:00 Medical Detectives I 2:30 Medical Mysteries 3:30 Eyewitness II 4:00 ESPU 4:30 Outer Bounds I & II 5:00 Without Warning I 5:30 Lonely Planet II 6:30 Popular Mechanics for Kids II 7:00 Pop Sci 7:30 Wild Discovery 8:30 Blue Reef Adventures 9:00 Oceans of Mystery 9:30 Discover Magazine 10:00 The Quest 10:30 Airborne 11:30 Discovery Profile Series 12:30 Wild Discovery 1:30 Blue Reef Adventures 2:00 Oceans of Mystery 2:30 Discover Magazine 3:00



Shekorer Shondhane on Ekushey television at 8:30p.m.

The Quest 3:30 Airborne 4:30 Discovery Profile Series 5:30 Medical Mysteries

**CARTOON NETWORK**  
6:30 The Road Runner Show 7:00 The Smurfs 7:30 The Popeye Show 8:00 Dexter's Laboratory 8:30 Ed, Edd n Eddy 9:00 The Powerpuff Girls 9:30 Batman The Animated Series 10:00 Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries 10:30 Garfield & Friends 11:00 Tiny Toon Adventures 11:30 Tom & Jerry Kids 12:00 The Little Lulu Show 2:12:30 Scooby Doo Where Are You? 1:00 The Smurfs 1:30 The Road Runner Show 2:00 Tiny

**TCM TURNER CLASSIC MOVIES**



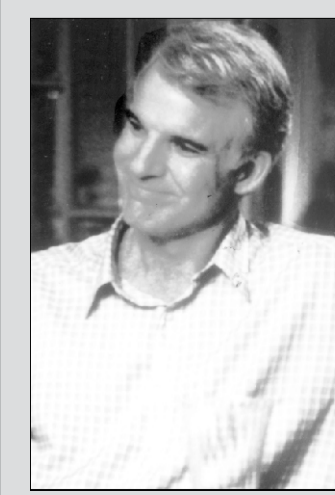
Maggie Winters on Star World at 10:30p.m.

**BTV**  
Morning Session  
6:00 Opening Announcement 6:15 Live telecast from the Central Shahid Minar on the occasion of Ekushey February - 'International Mother Language Day' Evening Session  
3:00 Opening Announcement 3:20 Special programme for the children on the occasion of Ekushey February - 'International Mother Language Day' 4:00 Khabar 4:05 Documentary by Film and Publication Directorate 4:50 Amar



Shobar Hridoye Bangla on Ekushey television at 10p.m.

Ekushey'r Anushthan (repeat) 5:20 Chetonyay Ekush 6:00 Khabar 6:10 Special musical programme on the occasion of Ekushey



Parenthood on HBO at 10p.m.

February 7:00 News Headlines 7:05 Discussion programme on the occasion of Ekushey February 8:00 News in Bengali 8:30 Special drama Ekushey February on the occasion of Ekushey February - 'International Mother Language Day' 9:00 News Headlines 9:45 Mritunjoiy Ekush: magazine show on the occasion of Ekushey February - 'International Mother Language Day' 10:30 News in English 11:00 Documentary show on Shahid Minar 11:30 Khabar / The News 11:45 Close Down



Ally McBeal on Star World at 11p.m.

Drishhti 3:00 Ekushey Headlines 3:05 Drama Series: Choto Choto Dheu 3:30 Nazrul Geeti 4:00 Ekki Neel Jaama 4:30 Expedition to the Animal Kingdom 5:00 Bauliana 5:30 Special Drishhti 5:50 Akjer Potrikay 6:00 Ekushey Headlines 6:05 Special Mon Mon re Amar 6:30 Charidike 7:00 Bolte Chai 7:30 Ekushey News 8:00 Ekusher Gan 8:30 Shekorer Shandhane 9:00 Drama : Ongkaar 10:00 Sobar Haridoye Bangla 10:30 News : Live Telecast from BTV 11:00 Ekushey Late Night News

**CHANNEL-i**  
7:00 Ekusher Gane 8:00 Din Protidin 8:40 Ekusher Special Prog. 10:20 Prioy Ma Prioy Mathri Vasa 10:40 Vasha Amar Ahongker 11:15 Amadher Ahongker 11:50 Akattorer Dinguli 12:00 Drama : Vhorer Surjo 12:40 Bar Bar



Ally McBeal on Star World at 11p.m.

Fire Asi 1:15 Tele Film: Amadher Bangsodhar 2:20 Bangla Cinema : Ka Kha Ga Gha (Razzak/Kobori) 6:10 Suvo Sandha 6:20 Prioy Ma Prioy Mathri Vasa 6:40 Vasha Amar Ahongker 7:15 Amadher Ahongker 7:50 Akattorer Dinguli 8:00 Drama : Vhorer Surjo 8:40 Bar Bar Fire Asi 9:15 Tele Film : Amadher Bangsodhar 10:20 Bangla Cinema : Ka Kha Ga Gha (Razzak/Kobori)

**BBC WORLD**  
6:00 BBC News 6:30 World Business Report 7:00 BBC News 7:30 Asia Today/Asia Business Report 8:00 BBC News 8:30 Asia Today/World Business Report 9:00 BBC News 9:30 Asia Today/Asia Business Report 10:00 BBC News 10:30 Hardtalk 11:00 BBC News 11:30 Talking Movies 12:00 BBC News 12:30 Hospital 1:00 BBC News 1:30 Hardtalk 2:00 BBC News 2:30 Reporters 3:00 BBC News 3:30 Hardtalk 4:00 BBC News 4:30 Italian Feast 5:00 BBC News 5:30 Reporters 6:00 BBC News 6:30 Hospital 7:00 BBC News 7:15 World Business Report 7:30 Click Online 8:00 BBC News 8:30 Hardtalk 9:00 BBC News 9:30 Asia Today 10:00 BBC News 10:30 Face to Face 11:00 BBC News 11:15 World Business Report 11:30 Holiday 12:00 BBC News 12:30 World Business Report 12:45

World Sport 1:00 BBC News 1:30 Hardtalk 2:00 BBC News 2:30 Top Gear 3:00 BBC News 3:30 World Business Report 4:00 BBC News 4:30 Asia Business Report/World Business Report 5:00 BBC News 5:30 Asia Business Report/Asia Today

**CNN**  
4:00 CNN This Morning 4:30 Asia Business Morning 5:00 CNN This Morning 5:30 Asia Business Morning 6:00 CNN This Morning 6:15 Asia Business Morning 6:30 Asian Edition 6:45 Asia Business Morning 7:00 CNN This Morning 7:30 Moneyline 8:00 Larry King Live 9:00 World News 9:30 World Sport 10:00 World News 10:30 Showbiz Today 11:00 World News 11:30 Q&A (replay) 12:00 World News 12:30 World Report 1:00 World News 1:30 World Sport 2:00 World News 2:30 Insight 3:00 Larry King Live (replay) 4:00 World News 4:30 Biz Asia 5:00 Asia Tonight 5:30 World Sport 6:00 World News 6:15 Asian Edition 6:30 Biz Asia 7:00 World News 7:30 The Artclub 8:00 Asia Tonight 8:30 World Sport 9:00 World News 9:30 Business Unusual 10:00 World News 10:30 Biz Asia 11:00 World News 11:30 Q&A South Asia 12:00 World News 1:00 CNN Hotspots 1:30 World Business Today 2:00 World News 2:30 Q&A News 3:00 World News Europe 3:30 CNN Newroom

**STAR PLUS**  
6:00 Tu Tu Main Main 6:30 STAR Geetmala 7:30 Hit Ya Fit 8:00 Cine Jharokha 8:30 Good Morning India 9:30 Star Morning Show :