

RECOMMENDATIONS

Exhibitions

**December 22-January 04**  
A solo exhibition of oil paintings by artist Mohammad Fakhru Islam is going on at the Bengal Gallery (Bengal Shilpaloy, House 275/F, Road 27, Dhanmondi). The display will remain open for all from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

**December 26-January 04**  
Artist Shamsul Alam Azad holds a solo painting exhibition at Gallery Chitrak (Road 4, House 21, Dhanmondi R/A). The exhibition will remain open for all from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm everyday.

**January 8-22**  
The Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts will hold a solo exhibition, titled Evidence of artist Mohammad Eunos, featuring his works on oil, acrylic paints and acrylic sheets, starting from January 8 at the gallery premises. The show will remain open for all from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm everyday.

**January 4-15**  
A joint exhibition titled Buthan an Act offering by Kama Wangdi, Deepa Islam, Jashim Uddin Xeon and Yannick Jooris will be inaugurated on January 4 at the gallery of Alliance Francaise at 6:00 pm. The show will remain open for all from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Recitation festival

**January 2-3**  
Recitation group Swanan has organised a recitation festival O Alor Pathojatri Ekhaney Themo Na, at the Natmandal auditorium of Dhaka University. Swanan will award celebrated reciter Jayanto Chattapadhaya with 'Golam Mustafa Honourary Medal' and recitation group Kanthashilon with 'Nazim Mahmud Honourary Medal'.

**January 2**  
Swanan will perform Nakshikatha at 6:00 pm at the Natmandal auditorium of Dhaka University.

**January 3**  
Swanan will perform two recitation production titled O Alor Pathojatri Ekhaney Themo Na and Kon Puration Praner Tany.

Anniversary

**January 1**  
Nagorik Natyangan Ensemble observes its 10th anniversary on January 1. In the previous nine years the group staged 8 plays and three street theatres. Nagorik Natyangan Ensemble is going to establish a branch for the rising stars named "Nagorik Natyangan Children Ensemble."

Celebrity couple

# "The spirit of activism was strongly imbibed in us"

Aly Zaker and Sara Zaker talk to Fayza Haq of The Daily Star

**Aly Zaker, a well-known theatre personality, and his wife Sara, give their assessment of themes, techniques and equipment of local plays.**

**The Daily Star: Has there been a change in the themes of the plays? How much of the themes are social activism and political statements and how much entertainment?**

**Aly Zaker:** If we look at the past of the theatre practitioners we will see in our past has a strong bearing on activism. Not one single theatre person who started his/her journey in theatre after '71 was ever detached from the immediate past of freedom movement. The spirit of activism was strongly imbibed in us. The same cannot be said about the young lot who are joining the forces of theatre today. They are there to

play are mostly socially if not politically charged. Besides, we must not lose sight of the fact that the stage is a mirror of the society. Therefore, the characters reflect whatever happens in the society as, of course, interpreted by the artist/s.

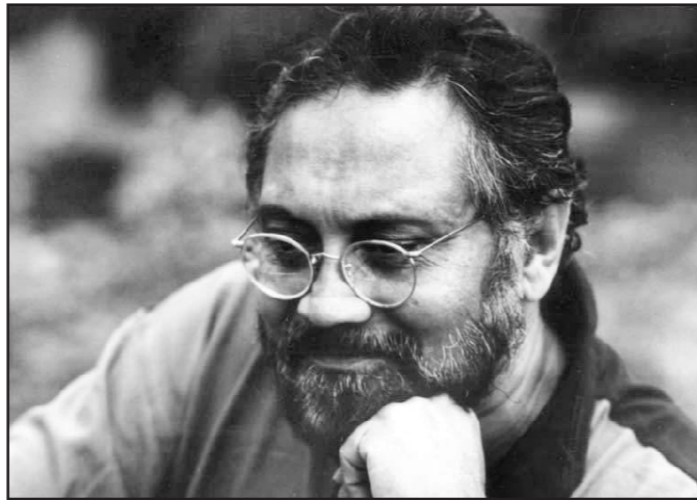
**TDS: How do the Bangladeshi plays rate vis-à-vis the Kolkata ones?**

**AZ:** The language of both countries is Bangla and the class differences/struggles within the two societies of Bangladesh and West Bengal are similar yet the plays and dramatic presentations of Bangladesh and Kolkata are different because they are made and presented in two vastly different socio-political environments.

One cannot sweepingly compare the two genres of plays. Especially if one has to rate the two it becomes an even more difficult task. We may dare add a rather general comment if we have to, which is that the plays of Bangladesh are either verse based or narrative and plays of West Bengal are more likely to be archetypal social dramas. This is a general comparison and the exceptions in either case are there. Also plays of Bangladesh tend to be more in the colloquial language or dialects.

**TDS: What are the new techniques and equipment in plays? What are they doing to match those of the advanced world?**

**AZ:** Technically we are not at all equipped the way the advanced world is. Having said that the plays in Bangladesh never quite relied on the technical excellence. It has always been an actor director dependent practice. In fact a recent practice, in some isolated cases, of huge stage constructions have caused considerable logistic problems because of lack of storage facilities. We have to remember we



Aly Zaker

are in the practice of a poor man's theatre because of lack of money in theatre per se.

If we had had the necessary equipment of light, sound and stage construction, we would, in all probability, have done a technology savvy job. Many technically skilled people have more than necessary experience and ability here.

**TDS: What kind of plays are hits and which ones don't work in Bangladesh?**

**Sara Zaker:** The plays that are well-made, work. And ones that are sloppy, do not work. Many theatre people say that the lack of a star cast does not spell success. This, unfortunately is not true. We have seen plays work--plays which did not have a single star cast. Once the audience is in the auditorium she/he does not look for the star. They want to enjoy a good, well-acted, well-made play.

**TDS: Has there been much use of the recent theatre festivals in town?**

**SZ:** One does always judge the festivals for its use. Theatre groups with much effort and voluntary hard work organise festivals. These efforts speak for the energy that runs the show. Having said that, we wish the theatre groups who organize these festivals would design a theme for their

festivals. With an overarching theme the audience would be exposed to a variety of performances and would be able to compare and analyze. It does not seem that organisers of festivals are always keen to think in this line.

**TDS: What kind of changes would you have liked to see in the theatre scene?**

**SZ:** A change in terms of thought and practice of the Art. A versatility. Stronger women voices.

**TDS: What are the kind of roles that Aly and Sara and you have been playing and is this what you want to do?**

**SZ:** We have been doing our bit in acting, direction and organising activities. But we have not been able to make theatre our only focus which is why, personally, we feel frustrated. It has been some time that we have not made a difference with a new play. It is time we did that.

**TDS: How do you interact with one another as professionals and as a couple?**

**SZ:** The two entities are different. One does not interfere with the other. I cannot, as a spouse, have any advantage, for example, as an actor when I am acting under the direction of my spouse. In fact the personal relationship should be left outside once we enter work.



Sara Zaker

make a profession in theatre and related fields. One could expect a good portion of the plays would, in that case, not be political or based on activism. But I presume the roots of the "activism based theatre practice" has gone deep which is why till today one would see that the

Celebration

# Poet Al Mujaheedy turns sixty-two

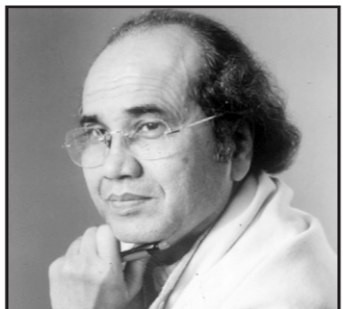
SULTANA RAHMAN

He loves to play with words and rhythm, talks about the nature and people of the country and is thus in the truest sense a son of the soil. Though he passed many years translating his thoughts into beautiful verses, Al Mujaheedy, one of the leading poets of 60s, still claims to be young at heart. The Daily Star wishes the poet all the best as he turns 62 today.

Al Mujaheedy has ventured with

poetic sensibility acquiring new dimensions into uncharted thematic grounds. His maturity and fame grew with the advancement of time and he has gradually come to be recognised as one of the major poets of Bangladesh. Last year he was awarded 'Ekushey Padak 2003'--the highest award in the field of literature in the country.

Al Mujaheedy's themes encompass patriotism, love, humanity, nature, eternal human relation, optimism, pessimism and liberation war.



Al Mujaheedy

By profession a journalist, Mujaheedy started publishing poems as early as 1952 and has so far published 52 books of poems. Being a celebrated poet, he is also known as a novelist and a multi-linguist. He has been the literary editor of the Daily Ittefaq for decades.

The poet was in jail for many years for his leading role in student national politics during the Pakistan period and was a valiant freedom fighter during the War of Liberation.

Drama festival



## Preview--Golmatha Chokhamatha

ERSHAD KAMOL

German dramatist Bertold Brecht's play has been translated by Abdus Selim and titled *Golmatha Chokhamatha*. In fact, Bertold Brecht adapted the play from Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. But the theme of Brecht's play is not based on the inherent naturalistic problem of human beings as in *Measure for Measure*, rather it is based on class struggle which is Brecht's ideology regarding plays. The setting of *Golmatha Chokhamatha* is a small country called Yahoo. The regent of Yahoo hands over the power for a month to Vomborn. The temporary ruler of that country invents a new theory to divide the rebellious peasants. At last, in *Golmatha Chokhamatha*, the playwright has presented the oppression of the poor peasants in the hands of the feudal lords which, Brecht considers as the eternal problem of the world. Israfil Shahin is the director of the play. Sajid Khadem is the set designer while Nazrul Islam is the light designer. Nagorik Natyangan will stage the play today at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Library Auditorium.



A scene from Golmatha Chokhamatha

## Cultural activists speak out

Many renowned cultural activists of the country are coming to enjoy plays in the drama festival *Rhidoi Tane Rhidoi Pane* arranged by Nagorik Natyangan at the Public Library Auditorium. Professor Zillur Rahman Siddique says, "I had a role to play in the inauguration ceremony since I announced the opening of the festival. I have never watched any play by Dandik before. Whenever I get the opportunity I will go there to enjoy the plays." Jayanto Chattopadhyay, a prominent recitor and actor, is very pleased with Nagorik Natyangan. He says, "Look, there are many

groups in BGTF but how many of them are really active? Despite not being a part of BGTF, Nagorik Natyangan has arranged such a big festival. I really appreciate that." S. M. Mohsin, the director of drama section of Shilpakala Academy says that he is coming to the Public Library as in the festival he is getting the chance to watch many plays. Professor Shafi Ahmed, the ITI member, is a frequent visitor to the festival. He says, "Drama is a part of my profession. So, whenever I get a chance to watch any play, I enjoy it."

Exhibition

## Forty-five countries to participate in the 11th Asian Art Biennale



CULTURE DESK

The 11th Asian Art Biennale will begin on 15th January 2004 at the Osmani Memorial Hall. The function will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia.

Forty-five countries are participating in the Biennale, including Australia, Bhutan, China, India, Japan, Nepal, South Africa, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan, United Arab Emirates and the host country Bangladesh.

Subir Chowdhury of the Shilpakala Academy that is organizing the function, says, "We began the biennales with Asian countries but since the last four occasions we have included Pacific regions, that is Australia and New Zealand, and African countries. Middle Eastern countries have been included in Asian countries. The Russian Federation too is participating as an Asian country. 66 countries that we had invited, 45

have so far agreed to participate in the programme."

Asked in what way this biennale will be different from those that have taken place before, "One can't really say that until all the entries come. So far, Japan, Iran and Vietnam have sent in their entries. The purpose of the biennale is to promote Asian and African countries which have been ignored so often as they belong to the under developed regions. I believe that if we have a combined platform, we can promote our art works in a more positive way."

Talking about whether the biennale tends to only increase the number of participants each time, or improve the standard and expand the variety of work, Subir Chowdhury says that judges of each country decide on the work that is sent here but Shilpakala Academy lays stress on the fact that the promising work of the younger generation should come too.

Dwelling on the noted art works that will be on display, Subir

Chowdhury says that Japan's work will be something different again. This will comprise of a robot and should be something new and of great interest for the younger generation.

Touching on the problems faced by the Shilpakala Academy in arranging the vast and varied art exhibition, we are told that there is not enough space and the new gallery at Shilpakala Academy is not enough: the art works will also be displayed at Osmani Memorial Hall and at the National Museum. More space is required to display the works properly and this is not forthcoming. The paintings and sculpture work will be crowded as before. The National Museum and Osmani Memorial Hall do not have adequate facilities that one expects from proper art galleries: all they can offer is space. We were told that the funds are not enough for a full-fledged international exhibition. The countries sending the exhibits have to bear the expense of transporting the art pieces and if artists wish to participate in the exhibition they will do so at their own cost. Shilpakala Academy will bear the local expenses but no more.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> January there will be an international seminar on "The Duality of Asian Art: the ethnic and the global" which will discuss the prospects of Asian art straddling the ethnic as much as the contemporary global. Dr Kaiser Huq, Professor, English Department, DU, will present the keynote paper.

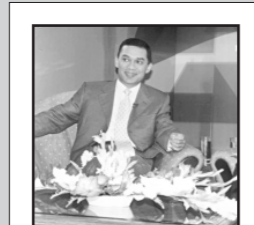
## TV GUIDE

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 9:40 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:10 pm, 4:00 pm, 7:00 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.  
Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm.  
**CHANNEL-i**  
Breakfast News 07:15 am, 9:00 am  
News (Bangla) at 7:15 pm, 9:00, 10:30, 12:15 am.  
Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.  
**ATN BANGLA**  
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 12:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm.  
Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.  
Latest News (Bangla) at 09 a.m, 10:00 a.m, 11:00 a.m, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm, and 8:00 pm.  
**ntv**  
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:02 pm, 6:30 pm, 9:45 pm.  
News (Bangla) 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm.  
**TARA BANGLA**  
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm, 9:30 pm.  
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

**BTV**  
07:35 Suprohat Bangladesh  
08:25 Selected Modern Songs  
09:15 Anya Bhuvan: Sea Is Green  
12:15 Sangbad Potrer Pata Theke  
01:05 Jibon Bangladesh Moron Bangladesh  
02:05 Cartoon Show: Samurai X  
02:30 Open University  
03:05 Bangla Film  
05:30 Ityadi  
06:35 Jiboner Alo  
07:05 Gana Khatey Kroy Probidhan  
07:30 Film Show: The New Adventures of Superman  
08:30 Drama : Hay Midas  
10:30 Gaan Guli More  
**CHANNEL-i**  
07:30 Classical Music  
08:00 Musical Show  
09:45 Tritia Matra



A special interview of Tareque Rahman, Senior Joint Secretary General of BNP, will be telecast today at 9:35 pm on Channel-i. It is his first interview with the electronic media.

12:00 Chithi Pelam  
12:30 Ebong Cinemar Gaan  
05:45 Jato Pod Tato Mot  
06:10 Music Plus  
06:45 Amar Chhobi  
07:55 Drama of the Month: Nishobhey Honon  
09:35 Special Interview with Tareque Rahman  
**ntv**  
08:30 Nazrul Songs  
09:00 Sports World  
09:30 Ei Shomoy  
10:02 Potrikar Khabor  
10:30 Dhakar Cinema: Madhumita  
01:30 TVC  
02:30 Band Music/Fashion Show  
03:00 Drama Serial: Ebong Ami  
03:30 Shurer Jolsha  
04:30 Drama Serial: Chena Chena Layey  
05:02 Mofassal Shingbad  
05:20 Ithasher Ei Diney  
05:25 Ke Korbe Bajimat  
06:00 Apnar Jigyasha  
06:35 Shubho Shondhya  
06:55 Crime Watch  
08:00 Drama Serial: Ronger Manush  
09:10 Drama: Ektur Jonyo  
11:15 Ithasher Ei Diney  
11:20 Din Darpan  
12:00 Ei Shomoy  
12:30 Ek Najarey Shirsha Khabor  
12:35 Band Music/Fashion Show/Cine Gaan  
01:30 Drama Serial: Ronger Manush  
02:00 Shangkriti Ei Shoptaho  
02:30 Drama  
03:30 Priyo Mukh  
04:30 Crime Watch/  
Khorbor Shondhoney  
05:00 Nazrul Songs  
05:30 Apnar Jigyasha

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

**STAR MOVIES: 10:30 pm. Cop.** Genre: Thriller. James Wood, Lloyd Ann Warren, Charles Durning, Lleydy Hopkins, a hard-boiled American police detective is on the trail of a mass murderer who is victimizing women in Los Angeles. The pursuit leads him through a world that has become his own natural habitat - a nasty world of crime, drugs, prostitution and male hustlers where "innocence kills" and continued exposure corrupts. Paradoxically, it's also a world of love, secret admirers, romantic feminist poets and modern chivalry.

**AXN: 11:30 pm. Red Sonja.** Genre: Fantasy / Action / Adventure. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Brigitte Nielsen, Sandahl Bergman. The tyrant Gedren seeks the total power in a world of barbarism. She raids the city Hablac and kills the keeper of a talisman that gives her great power. Red Sonja, sister of the keeper, sets out with her magic sword to overthrow Gedren. The talisman's master Kaidor follows to protect her. Of course they fall in love - however Red Sonja's power bases on the oath to never give herself to any man...

**ATN BANGLA**  
10:15 Talk show : Annotristee  
10:50 Musical prog : Danob  
12:40 Musical prog : Uro  
1:20 Teli film : Baundelay  
4:20 Islamic prog : Sundor  
5:10 Film magazine : A  
5:50 Islamic prog : Islamee  
6:25 Talk show : Annotristee  
**7:40** Musical prog : Pop Show  
**8:15** Drama serial: Chandrabote  
**8:50** Reporting prog: Prekhhaprot  
**9:25** Mega serial: Bazpakhe  
**10:35** A Special prog : Of Happy New Year : Nuton Dener Sapno  
**12:20** Bengali feature film : Priyogon  
**AXN**  
11:00 Movie: Hard Target  
01:00 Movie: Octopus 2

PICK OF THE DAY



**The Mask of Zorro**  
On XAN at 8:30 pm.  
(Genre: Action / Western / Adventure / Romance)  
Antonio Banderas, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Anthony Hopkins in early 19th century Mexico the masked swordsman hero Zorro was a champion of the people against the tyranny of Spanish rule. Unfortunately, on the eve of his greatest triumph, the liberation of Mexico, Montero learns of Zorro's secret identity as Don Diego de la Vega and attacks the rebel in his home leaving him imprisoned.

03:00 Movie: Mission Impossible  
05:30 Movie: Clear And Present Danger  
08:30 Movie: The Mask Of Zorro  
11:30 Movie: Red Sonja  
01:30 Movie: Mission Impossible  
**STAR MOVIES**  
09:15 Air America  
11:15 Prince Of Darkness  
01:00 American Girl  
02:30 Code 11-14  
04:00 Dracula: Dead And Loving It  
05:25 Jurassic Park Iii  
07:00 Kiss Of The Dragon  
08:35 Bowfinger  
12:15 Deadly Little Secrets  
01:45 Beaches  
**STAR WORLD**  
1:30 Mac Gyver  
2:30 Oprah Winfrey Show  
3:30 Bold And Beautiful  
4:30 Sabrina The Teenage Witch  
5:00 Two Guys And A Girl  
5:30 Knight Rider  
6:30 The Simpsons

7:00 Home Improvement  
7:15 Friends  
8:00 Just Shoot Me  
8:30 Roswell  
9:30 Dark Angel  
10:30 Love Shack  
11:28 Star Asia Travel  
11:30 Baywatch  
**STAR PLUS**  
3:00 Kabhi Aaye Na Judai  
3:30 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi  
4:00 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii  
4:30 Kahiin To Hoga  
5:00 Kaahin Kissi Roz  
6:00 Hum Saath Aath Hain  
6:30 Fox Kids  
7:30 Kunkum - Pyara Sa Bandhan  
8:00 Shaka Laka Boom Boom  
8:30 Kyun Hota Hai Pyarr  
9:30 Kasautii Zindagii Kay Saara Akaash  
10:30 Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii  
11:00 Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi  
11:30 Kahiin To Hoga  
12:00 Kaahin Kissi Roz  
**NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**  
12:00 Toyota World Of Wildlife S3  
1:30 Animal Inventors  
2:30 The Making Of 1 Giant Leap  
3:00 One Giant Leap  
3:30 Croc Chronicles  
4:30 Tropic Gothic  
5:00 Cheating Death (Aka Dangerous)  
6:00 Return To The Wild  
6:30 Sea Stories  
7:00 Dogs With Jobs  
7:30 Toyota World Of Wildlife  
8:00 National Geographic Special  
8:30 People's Planet

10:30 Wild Dog Wilderness  
11:30 Cheating Death (Aka Dangerous)  
**STAR SPORTS**  
9:00 Harsha Unplugged (R)  
9:30 English Premier League Highlights (R)  
10:30 Strongman World Cup 2003 Highlights (R)  
11:30 This Is The Pga Tour (R)  
12:30 English Premier Football League 2003/04  
Middlesbrough Vs Manchester United (T)  
2:30 Harsha Unplugged (R)  
3:00 India Vs South Africa/West Indies Hero Cup Semifinal & Final H/Ls (R)  
4:00 England Vs India World Cup Semifinal H/Ls (R)  
5:00 India Vs West Indies World Cup Final H/Ls (R)  
6:00 Samsung Ratings Year In Review (R)  
7:00 Asian Festival Of Speed  
8:00 Sportsline (L)  
8:30 Espn Big Fights : Kings Of The Ring (T)

9:30 English Premier League  
Archive Programming  
10:30 Sportsline (R)  
11:00 Australia Vs India 3rd Test, Day 5, Highlights (T)  
**ESPN**  
12:00 Goals! (R)  
12:30 Hitz (R)  
1:00 Australia Vs India 3rd Test, Day 5, 1st Session (R)  
3:00 Australia Vs India 3rd Test, Day 5, 2nd & 3rd Session (R)  
7:30 Cricket Programming  
Samsung Ratings Year In Review (R)  
8:30 Sportscenter India (L)  
9:00 Wrestling Apple Crush (R)  
9:30 Australia Cricket 3 Test Series Melbourne, Australia Australia Vs India 3rd Test, Day 5, Highlights (T)  
11:00 Sportscenter India (R)  
11:30 Samsung Ratings Year In Review (R)



ntv: 9:10 pm Ektur Jonny. Drama; Shams Suman, Tajin Ahmed.