

RECOMMENDATIONS

Art competition

April 18-20
Gandaria Kisholaya Kachi-Kanchar Mela, a national children-juvenile organisation, displays the works of Grameen Phone Zainul-Kamrul International Children Drawing Competition 2003 at the Nalinikanta Bhattachari Gallery of the National Museum. On April 20 the First Secretary of the Norwegian Embassy will distribute prizes among the winners.

Exhibition

April 01-29
Russian Cultural Centre has arranged a photo and stamp exhibition on aviation and cosmonautics to celebrate the International Day of Cosmonautics and Aviation at the center's library.

April 04-24

On the occasion of its fifth anniversary, the Bengal Foundation, is holding a solo exhibition by artist Jean Dometti. The show will remain open for all from 12 pm to 8 pm everyday.

Film show

April 05-26
The Indian High Commission will screen films *Bobby*, *Hungama* and *Aankhen* on April 19, 20 and 21 as part of its regular bi-weekly film show programme. Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, Gulshan-2. Time: 6 pm.

Sculpture

April 13-30
British Council Bangladesh holds a bamboo sculpture exhibition at its compound at 5 Fuller Road. The display presents works of 9 sculptors and two traditional bamboo artisans. The display remains open from 10 am to 7 pm daily.

Condolence



PHOTO: AFP

This undated movie still shows Indian film actress Soundarya. The Indian movie star, campaigning in upcoming elections, was among four people killed on April 17 when their aircraft crashed after take-off near the southern city of Bangalore, police said. Soundarya, 32, was a leading light in Telugu-language cinema who has starred in more than 85 films. The Culture Desk grieves at her premature death.

Celebration

Baishakhi carnival at Sunbeams School

Students present an impressive show



Young performers clad in colourful Bangali outfits presented a lively cultural show

KAVITA CHARANJI AND AFSAR AHMED

SHUBHO Noboborsho--the parents, children and teachers greeted each other for the Pahela Baishakh at Sunbeams School recently. Both the junior and senior school staged cultural shows, which are a feather in the cap for this well established educational institution. The junior school turned into an *aarong* (village fair) where terracotta vied for place with children's toys, glass bangles, *nagordola* (Ferris-wheel), and traditional foods such as *pitha*, *ghol*, lime water, *luchi* and *bhaji*. Traditional sweets like *batasha*, *kadma*, *naru* and *hawai mithai*--new delicacies for the city kids--sold like hot cakes. Even the *alta* and henna corner was crammed with the young girls and their mothers.

The cultural events of the junior school were well appreciated. Seleena Mustafa, extra-curricular activities in-charge gave us a vivid idea of the function and said, 'This kind of festival will help our students to learn traditional values.'

Dressed in traditional red and white saris and colourful kurtas with brilliantly painted faces, the little children began the morning with the famous Nazrul Sangeet *Tora Shor Joyoddhani Kor* and other songs of nature. The last performance by the children was Tagore's popular Baishakhi song *Esho Hey Baishakhi*. As soon as the programme ended, the children ran off to the *nagordola* and enjoyed the day.

Watching the function of these young children, was Nishat Nawal, a parent of a

nursery child. In her words: 'This is a special day which children love to celebrate with their friends.'

The senior section of Sunbeams School also presented a cultural programme. Leena Kabir, the Bangla teacher, gave the welcoming speech and reiterated the importance of this day. With their rendering of *Bartha Premer Aborjona*, a notable Tagore song, the students ushered in the new year. Some of the notable items were *Megh bithin khoro boishakey* by Uzma Samad, *Amar Je Shob Dite Hobey* by Zaariyat and Tahsina and dance performances on several popular songs. Other highlights of the day were recitation of poems by Tagore and Shukumar Ray.

The latter half of the programme was based on the open stage concept. Through this medium, the students showed their talent in songs, dances, recitation and acting. They also rendered Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Sangeet, Gano Sangeet. Other features were patriotic songs and songs of the yesteryears. A highlight of the programme was the fusion

says: 'Today, all Bangalis irrespective of religion--come together to celebrate this festival. This is one occasion which crosses all barriers. In that sense Pahela Baishakh is an apolitical festival.' The students are equally enthusiastic about this day. Says Zayema Sarwar, a student of Class Eight: 'We look forward to this festival the year round.'

Older children like Samera and Tanjeb, O level students who are to go to India and Venezuela respectively for further studies, give their perspective on the new year. They say they enjoy this festival better than that observed by the West. To quote them: 'We have a course in our school called Bangladesh Studies. This subject helps us to get acquainted with our own traditions.'

Clearly, the younger generation has lost none of its enthusiasm for Pahela Baishakh. It is heartening to know that despite being swamped by western culture, a whole new generation in Bangladesh will observe this festival with verve in the years ahead.



The Baishakhi Mela in the Sunbeams School premises displayed a wide range of handicrafts

Around the world



PHOTO: AFP

Senegalese percussionist Doudou Ndiaye Rose with his group plays on April 16 on the island of Goree during the opening of the Dakar-Goree Jazz Festival which runs until 19 of this month.

Book launch

Renewed awareness of our past

In the present age of globalisation, it has become a necessity for our people, especially the younger generation, to be aware of our long history, rich culture and varied heritage. A renewed awareness of our past will endow our people with a sense of pride in their national heritage.

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) initiated a project for publication of a book on our national culture and heritage a few

years back. Twenty five well-known personalities were approached to write on the different aspects of our life, culture and heritage. The book, titled *Bangladesh National Culture and Heritage*, has been published recently, says a press release. It offers the readers a comprehensive picture of the history, society, culture and life of the Bangladeshis.

The launching ceremony of the book is on April 19, 2004 at 4 pm at the Dhaka Sheraton Hotel.

Channel click

New drama serial starts on Channel-i

HARUN UR RASHID

YOUNG director Aranya Anwar seems to have stepped further towards establishing his partnership with writer Pranab Bhatta. After making *Asroy* that was aired on the anniversary of Channel-i, the duo now present a drama serial--a planned long drama serial they call it. Titled *Keboli Raat Hoyer Jaay*, the 52-episode serial is starting today on Channel-i at 7:50 pm. The serial will be aired twice a week on Mondays and Thursdays.

The premiere show of the drama took place at the Spectra Convention Centre on April 17. Including the writer and director, performers of the drama--Dolly Jahan, Saleh Ahmed, Dipa Khondoker, Mir Sabbir and others were present at the ceremony. Besides, some of the popular cultural figures like Kumar Biswajit, director Masum Reza and Abdun Noor Tushar, also attended the programme. Two episodes, No. 1 and 15, were screened at the premiere.

Although Pranab Bhatta has chalked out the plot, Aranya Anwar has also collaborated with the writer in scripting the drama serial.

Keboli Raat Hoyer Jaay is the story of a middle class family consisting of a father and mother, and their three offspring. The father is a retired school-

master. The eldest son Imtiaz has just joined the business as a contractor after completing his university education. The only daughter Barsha is a final year university student and the youngest son Imran, has gone to the dogs well before graduation.

Barsha seems to be the only one concerned about Imran. In the first episode, she is seen interrogating

company with cadres who always carry arms. One day Imran's house is raided by the police for arms. However, Imran manages to escape.

Barsha's university friends include Sohel who shares his secrets only with his roommate Javed.

Shashimi Sarkar seems to be the most mysterious character. She has many connections in the upper strata of the society and helps people like Imtiaz get business contracts using those influences. She takes money in return. Actress Dipa Khondoker has portrayed the character very well.

The cast of the drama serial also has Saleh Ahmed, Dolly Jahan, Fakhrul Hasan Boiragi, Lucky Inam, Mahfuz Ahmed, Tanvir Sweety, Tushar Khan, Shahidul Alam Sachchhu, Mir Sabbir, Sumaiya Shimu, Shahriar Nazim Joy, Ahsan Habib Nasim, Tisha, Hridi Haque and others.

Aranya Anwar has already secured a strong position in the arena of TV drama in the country. Recently BTV aired his drama serial *Janak* that earned huge audience popularity. Besides, he wrote a play with a solo performance by Humayun Faridi for the erstwhile ETV. The play, *Dara*, however, was not aired as the channel was closed. Masum Reza who has seen the play highly praised the drama.

With *Keboli Raat Hoyer Jaay*, viewers will get another mirror view of the society.

The crisis of the story stems from Imran's activities. The family members seldom meet him as he leaves the house much before anyone wakes up and returns home after everybody is asleep. He keeps

Imran one night after he returns home. She also discovers Imran to be addicted to drugs.

There are other characters too. The housemaid Kulfti falls in love with Abu Bakar, a shop owner. There

is a *chanachur* vendor Razzak who also loves Kulfti. Their activities provide a good amount of comic relief.

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