

Technicians work on the 24 channel Soundkraft K2 mixing board. (Inset) The Shilpakala Academy experimental theatre.

Lights, sound and ready for action

FAIZUL A TANIM

The new experimental theatre of Shilpakala Academy is a milestone in the development of art and culture related infrastructure in the country.

Its two new auditoriums, with seating capacities of 300 and 750 respectively, are marvels of state-of-the-art technology and the lighting and sound systems in particular, are sure to become top attractions once the theatre is opened to a bigger audience.

Each auditorium has proper acoustics and hi-tech light management system. The theatre's computerised operating system (O/S) illusion120 is capable of providing an input of 120 lights at a time on the stage. Although there are 177 different light options available, 72 of those can be displayed at one time.

"The O/S works in different playback systems within which Manual (Feeder O/S) is widely used. The others are Memory and Playback O/S (Time). There is the Multipurpose Follow light system as well which has beam angle of light reducing and amplification technique as part of its characteristics," informed Mohammed Jasim Uddin, light designer of Shilpakala Academy.

"As different drama and theatre groups will be using the theatre, various combinations of light and sound would be made available to them. The interested parties only have to provide the floor plan, layout (bar) regarding light, script (with light cues) and dimmer division to the operator of the Academy and everything will be taken care of," added Jasim Uddin.

The halls are equipped with a 24 channel Soundkraft K2 mixing board. With compressor, noise reducer and other equipment, sound editing has a high level of technical excellence. Wireless communication system between the sound panels, stage performers is also hi-tech.

"The acoustics of the halls are perfect. Anyone standing at any point in the hall can hear to each and every beat clearly. The sound effects will be roaming and will give a digital surround effect. Such technology will definitely improve each act and is sure to give the audience pleasure," said Tariqul Islam of the academy's sound section.

Apart from the technical brilliance, the ambience and room décor makes the experimental theatre one of the most ostentatious cultural venues in Dhaka

More cinemas on way out

After Modhumita Cinema, one of the oldest in the capital decided to close down, more movie houses are on their way out because of downturn in busi-

Purnima, Ananda and Chhanda at Karwanbazar and Farmgate are currently on the pack-up list.

The cinema authorities blame booming business in pirated VCD and DVD for the low turnout of moviegoers. Movies of low quality and poor taste have also created a strong aversion in the audi-

Purnima, Ananda and Chhanda are awaiting Rajuk's permission to reconstruct commercial high-rises knocking down the movie theatres.

Purnima that started its journey in 1988 with the screening of 'Biswasghatak' has a seating capacity of

Ananda started in 1972 with an English film 'Liberation' has a seating arrangement for 1,134.

Chhanda, established in 1980 with 1,134 seats, premiered with 'Chutir

Meantime, audience resentment against Bangla films runs high. "Why should we watch trash," said Hafiz, a white-collar official of a multi-

national company. "This is the first time I went to a movie house and I did not like it. To me, it is logical to watch movies on computer,' $said\,Mohsin, a\,college\,student.$

But movie houses cannot afford screening the latest English films because of high rental charge.

"Very few films had a full house

audience in recent times," said an Ananda Cinema official. "But there is still a good market for foreign films and good old time Bangla films.

"I only come to watch movies during film festivals or when old Bangla movies are screened," said Hamida Khatun, a

Purnima held the Indian Film Festival in 1994 and International film festivals in 2000 and 2004. These attracted good audiences, officials said.

"I come to watch movies once or twice a year if they are good ones," said Shahid, a 40-year-old whole seller from Karwanbazar

Abul Kamal Azad, manager of Ananda and Purnima, said: "Nowadays only 10-15 percent of seats get filled up when a Bangla movie is on show.'

Saiful Islam Chowdhury, President of Motion Picture Exhibitors Association, said, "The Film Development Board should build a sound complex with Dolby digital laboratory so that better

quality movies can be produced.'

"The government should allow screening of a limited number of films from the subcontinent to bring back the audience," he added.

KMR Monzoor, President of Bangladesh Producer Distributors Association, said, "We need people educated in the appropriate field to make good films. Universities should offer degrees on the film industry.



Swadhinata Stambha back on track

Construction work of the Swadhinata Stambha (Independence Monument) at the Suhrawardy Udyan is set to restart within the next couple of months after a gap of over two years.

The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecnec) has approved a revised plan of the stalled project in its August 25 meeting and officials believe work could resume

"We will place the revised project proposal to the cabinet's purchase committee for approval. Construction work could begin on completion of necessary formalities," Prof. Rezaul Karim, state minister for Liberation War Affairs told the Daily Star over

" I am personally looking after the matter and hopefully we can finish the job by the end of this year."

Sources said almost 60 percent of the monument's work had been com-

pleted when complications arose due to alleged irregularities in the project. The Awami League government

initiated the construction of the 81 crore taka project in 1998. However, with the inclusion of a 150 feet high glass tower which was not part of the original plan, in the design, the project's overall cost shot to Tk. 171 crore

Any project with a budget over Tk. 25 crore must have the approval of the government's purchase committee.

bypassed that rule also. A case has been filed with the Bureau of Anti-corruption accusing nine persons including the former Project

Director AKM Shahiduzzaman for

But the monument apparently

giving a work order that went over the 8.99 per cent limit, according to Liberation War ministry sources. The BNP-led four party alliance government suspended the construction just after taking office. Now the

authorities want to ensure no further controversies in the revised proposal. "We want to proceed with all necessary approvals so that there are no fresh

complications," said Rezaul Karim. The revised proposal includes an

alternative tower instead of the glass one and could be erected without any addition to the Tk. 81 crore budget. Sprawling over an area of 67 acres,

the monument will honour all martyrs and war heroes of liberation struggle from 1948 to 1971.

It will house an underground theatre, an underground museum and a 157-seat audio-visual auditorium, which will be free for the public. The complex will also contain a display gallery, a boundary wall and a decorative fountain.

To facilitate construction the government handed over the project to the Ministry of Liberation War Affairs from $the\,Ministry\,of\,Public\,Works.$

healthouting,taxicab&traintiming

HEALTH

Hospitals Heart

National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD). - 9130800, 9122560-59

Burn **Dhaka Medical College Hospital** Burn Unit-8626812-6

Cancer

National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4 861455-9

Diabetes

Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5. 8616641-50

Mother & Child Care Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62

Azimpur Mother & Child Health

Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980 Eye Islamia Eye Hospital-9110794,

9119315 National Eye Hospital-8117202, 8114807

Dental Dental College -9002035

Orthopaedics National Orthopaedics (Pangu)

Hospital- 9114075, 9112150

General Dhaka Medical College Hospital-

8626812-6 Rushmono General Hospital-8317819 Holy Family Hospital-83111731-25 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital-8612550-4, 8614545-9 Bangladesh Medical College &

Hospital- 8115443, 9118202.

Shamarita Hospital- 9131901

Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800, Salimullah Medical Collage Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6 **Cholera Research Hospital** (ICDDRB)- 8811751-60 Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135

Blood Bank

8614040

Red Crescent Centre- 9116563 Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040 Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061. 7310061,7319022 Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital-8626812-9

Eye Bank Sandhani International Eye Bank-

Ambulances For Dead Body Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail

9336611, Gandaria 7319808, Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,

MARKET CLOSED ==

Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday Elephant Road-Friday Bishal Center-Friday Baitual Mukarram Market-Friday Polwell Market-Friday BCS Computer City-Friday Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday. Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday Stadium Market-Friday Bangabazar Market-Friday National Museum-Thursday Ahsan Manzil--Thursday. New Market-Tuesday Gausia Market-Tuesday

Mouchak Market-Sunday Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesdeay Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday Eastern Plaza-Sunday Farmview Super Market-Sunday Muktijuddha Jadughar-Sunday

Dhaka Zoo-Sunday

Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

Yellow Cab Navana 9558065 Salida 9344477, 0171620881 Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191 Cab One 7113282-3 Nihon 8624741-2 Orion 9347277 Anudip 8125285 and 8127611 Capital 9352847

Union 8130485 Kool 0171826731

Black Cab

Cab Ex 9358401 Cabline 8321162 JBS Cab 019364575 Sajan 018126036 Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611

R-Cab 8914782 Star Cab 9571919

Shihab 018202477 & 018228675

KGN 8620011

Cab One 7113282-3

Palki 0171052500

Jatri 0171540074

Nipun 9572277

Cab I 7113282

TRAIN TIMING

Subarna Express Mahanagar Prabhati Mahanagar Godhuli Parabat Express Joyantika Express **Upaban Express** Tista Express

Ekata Express

Upakul Express

Agnibeena Express

Leaves Dhaka at 4:30 pm Leaves Dhaka at 7-30 am Leaves Dhaka at 3-15 pm Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm

Leaves Dhaka at 6-40 am Leaves Dhaka at 12-45 pm Leaves Dhaka at 9-45 pm Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm Leaves Dhaka at 8-00 pm

Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm

Reaches Chittagong at 10:35 pm Reaches Chittagong at 1-55 pm Reaches Chittagong at 10-55 pm Reaches Chittagong at 6-40 am Reaches Sylhet at 2-30 pm Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-15 Reaches Noakhali at 5-00 am Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm

LIBRARY & INFO-



Central Public Library- 8626001-4, Shishu Academy- 9564128 Shilpakala Academy- 8614673 Bangla Academy- 8619550 Islamic Foundation- 9550280, 9556407

Nazrul Institute- 9114602 Ford Foundation-8116133 Alliance Française-8611557 Information Resource Center, The American Center - 8813440-4

British Council- 8618867-8, 8618905-7 **Community Development Library-**8113769, 8113604

Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka-

9126525-6 **Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library**- 8615096 The Russian Cultural Centre-9116314, 9118531, 9118314 Drik Photo Gallery- 9120125,

8112954, 8123412 Press Institute of Bangladesh (PIB) 9330081-4