



Theater

# A festival for a cause



Actors of Dhaka Padatik performing in the play, *Inggit*

ERSHAD KAMOL

It is almost a year and a half since the 37-day theatre carnival titled Dhaka Drama Festival-2004 was held by the Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BGRF). Starting today, the group has organised another 10-day festival in Dhaka at the Experimen-

tal Theatre Stage of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. The title of the festival is "For the welfare of Mujibur Rahman Dilu and other theatre activists". The programme is a fundraiser for the treatment of the popular theatre activist Mujibur Rahman Dilu, who has been suffering from GBS. Included in the theatre festival

are 10 top popular stage plays of Dhaka: *Inggit*, a Dhaka Padatik production, *Projapati*, a Natyakendra production, *Gharjamai*, a Dhaka Theatre Mancha production, *Bhaddarmok*, a Natyachakra production, *Binodini*, a Dhaka Theatre production, *Kanjush*, a Loko Natya Dal production, *Circus Circus*, a Prachyanat production,

*Nitya Puran*, a Desh Natok production, *Raktakarobi* a Nagorik Natya Samradaya production and *Raarang* a Aranyak Natya Dal production. The festival will wrap up on December 12.

Keramat Moula is the convener of the festival committee.

**Preview:**

As part of the drama festival arranged by the Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BGRF), Dhaka Padatik will stage *Inggit*, directed by SM Solaiman, at 7 pm at the Experimental Theatre Stage at Shilpakala Academy.

Dhaka Padatik's plays revolve around people who are struggling for their livelihood. S M Solaiman's satirical play *Inggit* is no exception to this trend. In the play, the dramatist focuses on people who confront social discrimination and calls for a change. In the play, he mocks our education system, politics, administration, cinema, and the government. The play ends with a satirical puppet show. Jamil Ahmed is the set designer while Aminur Rahman Azam is the light designer of the play.

# A melange of art and music

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

As the days get shorter, nights get longer and we can feel the wind turning from south to north, it's for sure that winter is almost here. During these winter seasons when the harsh weather of summer is no more, people are seen to attend outdoor events frequently. During these months we turn back to our roots, we attend more folk music shows and hum to ourselves, some favorite songs by Lalon Shai like *Milon hobey koto deeney... amar moner manusher shoney*.

It seems like artist Kalidas Karmakar had a similar thought during his recent exhibition at Alliance Francais, Dhaka in Dhanmondi. The organisation held a solo art exhibition of paintings by Kalidas Karmakar. The exhibition was held from November 17-November 30, 2005. The title of his exhibition was *Alluvial Pain and Salvation*.

One would be easily confused while entering the exhibition hall, as the paintings were accompanied by a group of folk musicians playing live music on the side. Lying in the center of the hall was the statue of a dead man, covered with a white cloth surrounded by lit candles. When asked about why



Artistes performing folk music at the exhibition

he had such a set up, Karmakar explained with a smile, how his paintings of alluvial pain and salvation were connected to the music. Alluvial soil means the fertile soil that is carried by the flood plains of Bengal. The soil being very fine and fertile contribute to better crop cultivation. Bengla folk music is the music

of our common people, of the soil that these people are made of, simple yet rich in productivity. His paintings convey an exact message where he skillfully expressed happiness, grief, simplicity and tranquility of the countryside of Bengal. Most of his paintings had figures of human faces with illuminated

variations. There was this one of a man with three eyes and long hair and the other of an old woman with a very blank expression.

Enthusiastic art lovers crowded at the exhibition and indulged in folk music which fitted the message conveyed by the artworks of Kalidas Karmakar.

## Din Bodoler Gaan on Channel-i



Eminent cultural personalities on the set of the show

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate our month of Victory, Wrishez Shilpi Goshthi is presenting a 25-minute-long musical programme on *Gono Sangeet*. The programme, titled *Din Bodoler Gaan*, is being aired on Channel-i at 6:30pm everyday beginning from December 1 to December 15. *Gono Sangeet* (songs of the

masses) played a key role in inspiring the freedom fighters and the masses in our country during the Liberation War. The programme will zero into their songs, experiences as well as other information on them.

The discussants in various episodes of *Din Bodoler Gaan* are: Kalim Sharafee, Mahub Alam Chowdhury, Shamsuzzaman Khan,

Mohsin Shostro Paani, Mridul Kanti Chakravarty, Dr Zahid Hossain Pradhan, Golam Kibriya, Amanul Haque, Golam Mohammad Idu, Mutlub Ali, Abu Bakar Siddique, Mofidul Haque and Golam Quddus. Besides Wrishez Shilpi Goshthi, other organisations participating in the programmes are Udichi Shilpi Goshthi, Kranti Shilpi Goshthi, Srijan and Bibartan.

## Upcoming

# Bidrahi Padma set to make big waves on small screen

KHALID-BIN-HABIB

Filmmaker Badal Khandokar's new venture, *Bidrahi Padma* is set to hit the small screen soon. The film will be premiered on Eid-ul-Azha on ntv. This is the first film production of ntv. The film has an impressive star cast with Ilias Kanchan, Popy, Riaz, Shams Shumon, Dr Ejaz and Shahidul Alam Shachchu, among others.

*Bidrahi Padma*, a novel written by Askar Ibne Shaikh, narrates perhaps one of the most remarkable stories about the rural Muslim and Hindu communities of East Bengal (now Bangladesh) in 1925. Shaikh is particularly remembered for writing social plays. He has closely observed the livelihood of a rural community living in the *chars* of the riverside. This group is dirt poor and does not have the resources to buy properties on the mainland. Rioting, killing and abuse of women are regular features in the *char* areas. Many live in fear of the zamindars and their *lathial bahini*. The film also deals with teachers, fishermen, farmers, weavers, boat-makers and folk-singers.

Talking about his unique approach and directorial techniques, Badal says, "My intention was not to differentiate this film from that of the others. The aim is to convey the script to the viewer in the



Riaz and Popy in a dramatic scene from the movie

best manner. I've tried my level best to capture what the author had etched out in the original story."

Adds Badal, who has had a long and successful innings in the Dhallywood film industry as a director of romantic films, "*Bidrahi Padma* has all the ingredients of a commercial entertainer - star value,

social issues and mushy romance. In the film I have tried to capture the scenic beauty of the river Padma. I've also tried to depict the on screen relationship between Riaz and Popy in a passionate way. For the first time Popy has enacted a widow's character in this film. To my contentment, she skillfully underplayed the

character. Shams Shumon reveals his acting skills, while Riaz delivers an outstanding performance. I consider people as my main subject. It was really a good opportunity for me to work with the people who live on the banks of Padma."

Asked about the technical angle in the film, Badal says, "We have

very few post-production facilities in the country. Filmmakers often have to go abroad to develop their films and for the subtitles, so that they can have a quality print. *Bidrahi Padma*, is a slick production in that sense -- made with a sizeable budget and an impressive star cast. This film is replete with high quality picture and sound, something that is unfortunately not noticeable among most commercial Bangla films. The special effects were done on the sets. In addition, we have even changed the style of taking the shots. I used hi-tech wide grade lens camera, which is not available in our country. The digital cinema technology delivers pictures with incredible clarity and vibrant colours, thus provides a quality viewing experience. The advanced digital cinema sound technology recreates true movie theatre sound."

Not surprisingly, Badal is upbeat about the response to his latest oeuvre. As he says, "I love to work on realistic issues and genuine concerns of the masses. In a nutshell, *Bidrahi Padma* contains wholesome entertainment in a glossy package. This movie will hopefully make a favourable impact on the audience."

## Exhibition

### Srishtir Ullashey attracts viewers



Art works by Md Mofidul Alam Khan

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Artist Md Mofidul Alam Khan's solo exhibition of wood cuts, sketches, screen prints, block prints, batik, tapestry and posters, titled *Srishtir Ullashey* was recently held at the Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts.

Alam has created unique tones through his spectacular works in different mediums. His compositions, forms, lines, combination of subjects and colour selection deserve plaudits.

The artist has received rave media reviews for featuring our tradition, heritage, landscapes and others in wood cuts. Among his wood cuts on display, *Shimanto*, *Bharshamya*, *Michhil*, *Binnyash*, *Bijoy*, *Mayajal* and *Bangladeshi Aitijho* are amazing.

His works on batik, titled *Nritya*, feature his childhood memories, serenity of rural Bangladesh and other facets of life.

## Certificate giving ceremony of Nagorik Natyangan Ensemble

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

A certificate giving ceremony for the participants of a three-month course was held at the Experimental Theatre Stage yesterday. The organiser was Nagorik Natyangan Ensemble (NNE).

Eminent poet, litterateur and dramatist Syed Shamsul Haque was the chief guest at the event. The special guests were theatre personality Ataur Rahman, Professor Manzurul Islam, SM Mohsin and Professor Shafi Ahmed.

Kalim Sharafi was the chairperson of the programme. After the certificate giving ceremony, the successful participants staged a play, titled *Sab Kuchh Jhut Hai*, written and directed by Golam Sarwar.



Artistes rehearsing for *Sab Kuchh Jhut Hai*

## 420 Petticoat Lane

### A film about Bangladeshi students in London

STAR REPORT

*420 Petticoat Lane*, a telefilm about Bangladeshi students in London, is to be released in London early December. This is the first time a film has been made on Bangladeshi students in London.

The story revolves around a group of students living at 420 Petticoat Lane. Shafiq, a student from Bangladesh, is dazzled by the fact that he is finally in London, the city of his dreams. He is welcomed to East London by Rahat, the ever-optimistic busybody who seems more interested in making money than studying. At 420 Petticoat Lane, we also find everyone's favorite: Genius da, a responsible and yet comical character who holds everyone in their places.

Then there is Opu, who is studious and ambitious and who also has affairs of the heart. Adding colour to the story is Tisha and Sally who live in the flat above, and who in their own distinct styles, are out to win the world. The story captures the complex, hard and sometimes comic, side of life in the Bangladeshi student community.

*420 Petticoat Lane* has been produced by Londone Filmz, a company recently floated by writer and journalist Muneera Parbeen and popular TV presenter and actor Anif Islam. This is their first production, and marks the directorial debut of Muneera Parbeen. The film has been produced in association with Redmark Films.



The cast of the film