

# A fete of classics

Celebrating timeless Bangla songs of last 100 years



(L-R) Khairul Anam Shakil, Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury, Shaheen Samad, Mita Haq and Chandana Majumdar rendering the national anthem



Sabina Yasmeen performing at the event



ITI Theatre Festival '06

Theatre: Creating Space for Harmony

"Bangladesh and UK can work out a bilateral agreement related to theatre" – Neville Shulman

Neville Shulman is a British theatre manager, director, producer, journalist and author. He is a fellow of the Royal Executive Society, a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and the Explorers Club.

Shulman is the president of the British International Theatre Institute, vice-president of the Drama Centre, an editor of the *Contemporary Theatre Review*, chairman of the Theatre Forum, member of the U.K. - UNESCO Culture Committee. He is involved with numerous charitable organisations. Shulman is also involved with entertainment industry. He is a director of Shepperton Film Studios, the biggest film studio in Europe. For his contribution and support to diverse forms of art, Shulman has received the title-- Commander of British Empire (CBE).

For the first time Shulman has come to participate in the ongoing theatre festival arranged by Bangladesh Centre of ITI. In addition to watching theatre, he has attended the Executive Council meeting.

Asked for his comment on Bangladeshi theatre, Shulman said, "To compete with global theatre, Bangladeshi theatre needs considerable improvement, particularly in presentation, acting and design. I think highly of their potential and enthusiasm, but I think they need proper training.

"Associate members of ITI can certainly join hands to develop the standard of theatre. Bangladesh and UK can work out a bilateral agreement related to theatre, as there is a very good relationship between the two countries. I believe that Bangladeshi theatre activists should keep in touch with their British counterparts through e-mail, participating in festivals to broaden their minds. Moreover, there are reputed educational institutions such as Goldsmith College of University of London, RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) and others, which provide quality education on theatre. Like many overseas students, Bangladeshi students should be allowed to study there. I think Bangladeshi theatre activists should keep on pushing for the collaboration and keep the dialogue going."

All is not lost in this era of internet and mass media, says Shulman, pointing to the enduring appeal of traditional, classical and experimental theatre forms in the UK. To quote him, "Theatre is self-funded in UK. All the directors, artists and designers of the mainstream theatre are professionals and they perform wonderful and diversified theatre in London. Besides, classical theatre like Shakespearean theatre, colourful experimental theatre and a good number of musicals are in full swing. The young directors are doing a lot of



Neville Shulman

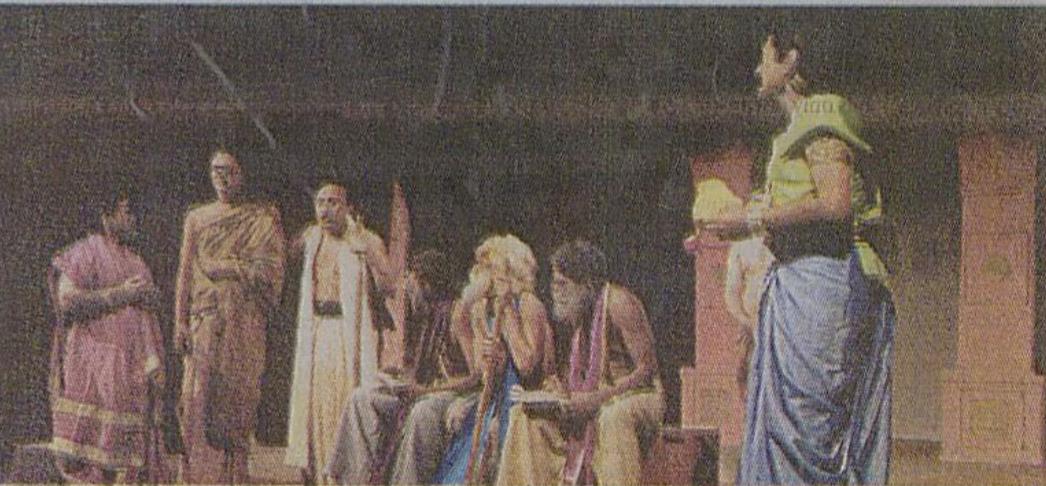
experiments on the classical theatre forms. Say for example, Theatre Complicite, a popular troupe, has reconstructed Shakespeare's comedy *Measure for Measure* with new dimension. Director of the play Simon Macburney has used multimedia to portray different actions.

Like the Off-Broadway theatre in the USA, there is Fringe in the UK. Shulman asserts that directors such as Richard Eyre, the ex-director of National Theatre Company, Michael Grandage, Michael Attenborough, and many others are promoting successful musicals. Besides new kinds of experimental theatre forms are developing each year.

Shulman further points out, "In August-September Edinburgh Theatre Festival and Edinburgh Fringe Theatre Festival take place. I recommend that Bangladeshi troupes try for Edinburgh Theatre Festival. It's not too expensive. Yes, it may be competitive, but when they will come back to Bangladesh, they will be enriched creatively."

Shulman has travelled extensively and has written many travel books based on his experiences. Neville Shulman Challenge Award is a prestigious competition in the UK.

**Today's attraction: Meemangchina, Mangula and Mrichchhakatik**



A scene from Mrichchhakatik

## Natya Utsab-2006

# Social themes in the limelight

JU CORRESPONDENT

Enthusiasm and festivity marked the week-long theatre festival, titled Natya Utsab-2006. Organised by Jahangirnagar Theatre (JT) to celebrate its 26th anniversary, the function began at the Jahangirnagar University (JU) campus on February 25 and runs up to March 3.

To articulate protest against crime, fundamentalism and a perennial unstable atmosphere both in social and cultural sectors, JT has arranged the programme with the slogan *Rukhe Daraap Apoghati Itilash*. Inaugurated by prominent dramatist Selim Al Deen the programme began with a colourful rally from Amar Ekushey premises. VC Professor Khandaker Mustahidur Rahman inaugurated the evening session.



One of the plays to be staged at the festival

The curtain of the festival goes up with the staging of the play *Chhayanot*, written by Utpal Dutta and directed by Ali Zaker, under the aegis of Nagarik Natya Sampraday. On March 26, JT will stage a play titled *Dewan Gazir Kishra*. Translated by Asaduzzaman Nur from the main script by Bertolt Brecht, the play portrays the precarious life of a film actor. Centre for Asian Theatre (CAT) will stage the play titled *The Lesson* on February 27. Written by Eugene Ionesco, the play has been translated into Bangla by Saidus Saqlayeen. Mejreema Reuter is the director of the play.

JT will stage *Manush*, written by Javed Mahmud and directed by Ashekul Islam Probal, the following day. The theme: How man is pitted against machines.

*Golapjan*, a play by Theatre Art

Unit, will be staged on March 1. Written by Mohammad Abu Taher and directed by S M Soaliman the play is about the lifestyle of an aged woman living in old Dhaka. Nagarik Natyangon Ensemble will stage the play *Mrechchhakatik* the following day. Jamaluddin Hossain directs the play, while Mohit Chattopadhyaya translates it into Bangla from the main script by Shudrak.

The festival will round off with the reunion of the members of JT on March 3. A *gharao adda* (informal meeting) will be held on the day.

JT will also host a reception to Kamaluddin Nilu and Professor Aminul Islam on February 27 and March 1 for their contribution to theatre and education respectively. The programme will be held at 7:00pm at Muktamanch (Amphitheater) each day.

belief and tradition. Rashid Haroon is the director of the play.

Golam Shafiq's play *Mangula* is on the oppression on the Hajong community, an ethnic minority on the verge of extinction, living on the border region of greater Mymensingh and Sylhet. Palakar will stage *Mangula* at the Experimental Theatre Stage. Aminur Rahman

Mukul is the director of the play. Nagarik Natyangon Ensemble will stage Sanskrit playwright Sudrak's classic *Mrichchhakatik* at Mahila Samity Stage. *Mrichchhakatik*, translated by Mohit Chattopadhyaya, is a love story. Jamaluddin Hossain directs the play.

BY ERSHAD KAMOL

## TV GUIDE

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

### BTV

News: Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am; 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 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) at 11:30 pm.

### CHANNEL-i

News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:15 am.  
Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

### ATN BANGLA

News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 11:00 pm.  
News (English) 8:20am, 7:00pm.

Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

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Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

### TARA BANGLA

News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30 pm, 7:30 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

### News Bulletin

### BTV

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### BBC WORLD

Every hour on the hour



### PICK OF THE DAY

### Alo-e Bhobon Bhora

On Channel-i at 7:50 pm

Aly Zaker talks to eminent personalities of the country regarding their lives, philosophies, achievements and the current socio-political issues.

Tonight's guest: Dr Naiila Khan