

# Poush Mela: Urban winter celebration with a rural touch



Clockwise (from top): Alam Dewan and his troupe perform, costume jewellery and pitha -- treats for everyone

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**P**OUSH Mela Ujjapon Parishad organised the 10th Poush Mela (Winter Fair) at Ramna Botomul in Dhaka yesterday.

Poush Mela in the city was initiated in the Bangla year 1404 by the festival committee. For centuries Poush Mela has been a regular event in Bengali-dominated rural areas. Traditionally the month of Poush has been the month of festivals for Bengalis. Rabindranath Tagore introduced the traditional rural fair

for urbanites at Shantiniketan. With the desire to re-establish the bridge with the rural roots -- the pulse of Bengali national culture -- and to celebrate the rich heritage, the mela was brought to the city. The organisers hoped that the mela would help the urbanites become familiar with their roots and reinvent themselves, thus boosting the national identity.

This year the mela was back to its original venue at Ramna Botomul after four years. Early in the morning, Dr Nowzesh Ahmed inaugurated the Poush Mela by



lighting up an *aila*, an earthen pot of rice husk used by rural people to keep them warm during winter. Date juice, a winter delicacy, was served to the audience.

The daylong mela featured street plays, poetry recitation, songs, dance, instrumental music, traditional *pitha* (rice cakes) and other rural delicacies. Poush Mela drew a sizeable crowd.

The fair-goers were entertained by a number of cultural organisations, including Chhayanat, Udichi, Kranti, Muktadhara, Wrishiz, Nrityam, Bonhishikha, Dhrubotaan, Khelaghara and Srot. Noted artistes Mita Haq, Malay Kumar Ganguli, Chandana Majumdar and others rendered songs at the event.

Dr Anisuzzaman, chairman of the committee, presided over the inauguration. Biswajit Roy, member secretary of the festival committee spoke at the occasion. Golam Quddus, Mahmud Selim, Babul Biswas and others were also present at the mela.

Different stalls with their wide varieties of *pitha* and handicrafts contributed to the diversity of the arrangement.

**PHOTO STAR**



## TV Watch

### 'Preamble to Southasian' on Channel i



(L-R) Syed Manzoorul Islam, Sara Zaker, Prof Rehman Sobhan, Zafar Sobhan and Rubana Huq in the programme

Southasian, an organisation constituted of cultural activists, media personalities and filmmakers from all over South Asia, and Channel i are coming up with a one-hour weekly programme on South Asian issues from April onwards. As a preamble to this programme, Channel i will air a number of discussions on South Asia in the coming months, says a press release.

The first preamble will be aired today at 3:30pm. The discussants of the programme are Professor Rehman Sobhan, Syed Manzoorul Islam, Sara Zaker and Zafar Sobhan. The moderator of the programme is Rubana Huq. The lively discussion revolves around the pros and cons of South Asian identity and solidarity. The programme will be aired again on January 14, at 2am.

### R.E.M, Van Halen among Rock Hall inductees

Van Halen made a "jump" into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame recently along with Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five, R.E.M., the Ronettes and Patti Smith.

A panel of 600 industry figures selected the five acts to be inducted at the annual ceremony, to be held March 12 in New York.

"R.E.M. and myself in particular are really terrible at looking backward," R.E.M.'s lead singer, Michael Stipe, told *The Associated Press*. "I'm just really honoured that they thought of us."

Van Halen was the hard rock



Van Halen in the '90s

quartet led by guitarist Eddie Van Halen, outrageous lead vocalist David Lee Roth, and later, rocker Sammy Hagar, that put out hits such as *Jump* and *Dreams*.

Eddie Van Halen stood out with his blistering guitar solos; his feud with Roth led to Hagar's run with the band, which produced hits into the 1990s.

R.E.M. (Bill Berry, Peter Buck, Mike Mills and Stipe) was the quintessential indie rock band until breaking through to mass success in the early 1990s with songs like *Losing My Religion*.



R.E.M.

### Bollywood goes digital with 'Salaam-E-Ishq'

Set to release on January 25, *Salaam-E-Ishq* will be the first Hindi film to be screened digitally. So just what is digital technology, in this context? In simple terms, whenever a film projector runs a reel, it affects the quality of the film and after multiple screening, the reel begins to grain and fade. The digital format changes all that. There will be no degradation of quality even after extended use, and the picture quality is far superior. The audiences will however have to pay 10-15 percent of premium over the cost of the ticket. For those who like comparisons, the first Hollywood film to be screened using the digital format was *Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace* in 1999.

Source: Internet



Vidya Balan and John Abraham in the film

## TV GUIDE



### PICK OF THE DAY

#### Krishnopokkho

On Banglavision at 8:10pm

Drama

Cast: Humayun Faridee, Srabonti

#### CHANNEL 1

Shokaler Gaan

Shangbadpote

Bangladesh

Public Reaction

Tritioma

Citycell Taroja Kathan

Ebong Cinemar Gaan

Shangbadpote

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