

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

AHSAN HABIB

P OUSH Mela Udjapon 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 Nowazesh 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, Muktaadhara, Wrishiz, Nrityam, Bonhishikha, Dhrubotaan, Khelaghar 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.



Music

Laura: A pop singer with classical inclination

FAYZA HAQ

Fariba Omar, better known as Laura to music lovers, 22, has been a professional singer for a decade. For a long time she's been composing her own songs in Bangla, guided by her emotions and experiences. She is inspired by her father, Omar Khalid Rumi, who has been with several bands since the Liberation War, and her mother, Rokeya Sultana, the well-known artist. She had received lessons in classical music from *ustads*, as a child. Her first professional performance was at the age of seven -- when she sang in public with her father. However, such appearances were on again and off again, due to pressures of her formal schooling.

She says that there is much more to band music than what is presented in Dhaka. Laura says, "The lyrics and accompanying music by The Beatles and The Rolling Stones, for instance, have much more mass appeal, even today, to the younger generation. Yes, The Beatles and such parallel bands have had more financial backing -- but that's not all. Nowadays, what we're presenting with modified songs of the past -- re-mixes and more -- wax pale before the legendary bands of yesteryears." Even if we don't discuss them, she says, they're always at the back of our minds, she says. We're going towards a more positive aspect of music, she adds.

Laura mentions that she has written songs at every transition of her life. Her personal experiences are reflected in her songs. The songs in her last album include *Chakri*, *Amarmon* and another album

which is due to come out shortly, has five of her own including *Tomar amar*. Apart from these two albums, which were joint efforts with Rumi, her videos are aired on almost all local TV channels.

Asked to give her opinion on run of the mill, mediocre modern songs, that may camouflage any lack of symphony, Laura shies away from dwelling into that, and presents a charming, spontaneous smile; and as an alternative reply, says, "I'm not really sure on that one".



Talking about western masters like Beethoven, Mozart and Chopin, Laura says that normally people consider Bach "heavy", but even his compositions -- especially the meditative ones -- inspire her the most. "The time when they composed music was also the time when music revolved around the seven notes -- whether you consider "do-ray-me-fa-so" or "sa-re-ga-ma". Her pithy comment about them is "They're the boss, and we're the sauce."

How did she step into the music world? When she was about six, her father, Rumi, had a band and a studio for recording, she says. She was curious about what happened at the studio as she wasn't allowed inside. Slowly the curiosity turned into passion, and she picked up the words of Cliff Richard's *Living Doll* -- and sang it at a New Year's party with the band, Chaos. She became their vocalist. Currently she has a contract with Sheraton to play and sing three times a week for three months. Laura also sings regularly at Alliance Francaise, and has made numerous appearances on TV.

CULTURAL FEAST

Art Work and Calligraphy Exhibition

Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Embassy of The Islamic Republic of Iran
Venue: National Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka
Date: January 8-17
Time: 11:00pm-7:00pm

Documentary Screening

Organiser: Bengal Foundation
Venue: Chittagong Theatre Institute, KC Dey Road, Chittagong
January 13
10am onwards
Art Junction
An Allegory of Self-exploration: A documentary on Nazlee Laila Mansur
Serenade of Rain: A documentary on the artist Kazi Ghiyasuddin
12pm onwards
Introspection: A documentary on Swapan Choudhury
Sudurer Pathik: A documentary on Rokeya Sultana
Excavating Time: A documentary on Dilara Begum Jolly.

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'



Vidya Balan and John Abraham in the film

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

TV GUIDE

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

News Bulletin

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) 11:30 pm. (To be telecast on all Bangla channels).

CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00am, 2:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 12:15 am.

ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11pm, 12:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 10:30pm, 4:00pm, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

ntv
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 6:15 pm, 9:30 pm.
News (Bangla) 7:30 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm.

CHANNEL 1
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 12:00pm, 2:30pm, 6:30pm, 7:30pm, 10:00pm, 12:30am.

BANGLAVISION
News (Bangla) at 8:00am, 2:00pm, 6:00pm, 7:15pm, 10:30pm.
News Headlines (Bangla) at 9:00pm

RTV
News (Bangla) at 7:00am, 3:00pm, 7:15pm, 10:00pm.
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:30am

ATN BANGLA

10:30 Talk Show: *Annayodishti*
Drama: *Shokal Shondha*
11:05 *Shurer Madhuri*
12:15 *Shatidin*
12:45 *Eider Bajna Bajey Re*
02:30 Magazine Programme: *Shobar Jonno*
03:45 *Shesh Okhor*
04:20 *Grameenphone Nari O Rajniti*
06:20 *Gondhoraj Samsung*
08:00 *Cine A Ha*
08:40 *Mega Serial: Laal Neel Beguni*
09:20 *Drama Serial: The New Sabuj Opera*
09:20 *Mega Serial: Ek Jonomey*

CHANNEL i

08:30 *Shokaler Gaan*
09:30 *Shangbadpotre*
09:30 *Bangladesh*
09:45 *Public Reaction*
09:50 *Tritiomatra*
12:30 *Citycell Taroka Kathan*
01:05 *Ebong Cinemar Gaan*
01:30 *Shangbadpotre*
01:30 *Bangladesh*
01:45 *Public Reaction*
02:40 *Magazine Programme: Shath Rang*
04:05 *F M Method*
04:25 *Shooter Shondhaney*
05:30 *Dumitir Birudhey*
06:00 *Bangladesh*
06:00 *Nirbachon 07*
06:20 *Drama Serial: Shath Goenda*
07:50 *Drama Serial: Bhober Haat*
09:35 *Hridoye Mati O Manush*
10:00 *Drama Serial: Nishidho Bonobhumi*
12:00 *GrameenPhone Aker*

Shanbad Potro

ntv
08:35 *Aajker Shokal*
09:00 *Megh Bolechhey Jabo Jabo*
09:30 *Right Click*
10:05 *Apon Aloy*
10:30 *Aktel Hip Hip Hurray*
01:05 *Muktangan*
02:35 *Megh Bolechhey Jabo Jabo*
03:15 *Tomader Pelo*
04:25 *Nupur*
05:15 *Din Dorpon/litashar Ei Diney*
05:20 *Alokap*
06:20 *Shubho Shondha*
06:50 *Shangskriti Ei Shoptaho*
08:25 *Drama Serial: Ramijer Aaina*
09:10 *Drama: Prio Porinam*
11:25 *Din Dorpon*

CHANNEL 1
08:40 *Shuprobhat Bangladesh*
09:30 *Fusion for Baul*
10:00 *Mot Motantor*
10:30 *Telefilm: Nimagnotay Srot*
03:30 *Drama: Ek Ticket e Dui Chhobi*
04:30 *Drama Serial: Godhuli Belay*
05:15 *Shoptaho Sheshey*
06:00 *Sag Bela*
06:30 *Top News*
06:45 *litashar Path Dhorey*
07:00 *Bishwa Jurey Shath Din*
08:15 *Drama Serial: Shurney Boshobash*
09:00 *Shondhi Khoney*
09:30 *Drama Serial: Godhuli Belay*

Rtv

PICK OF THE DAY



Krishnopokkho
On Banglavisian at 8:10pm
Drama
Cast: Humayun Faridee, Srabonti

Flight of the Phoenix
On Star Movies at 8:45pm
Genre: Action/Adventure
Cast: Dennis Quaid, Miranda Otto

09:05 *Aj Potrikai*
09:10 *Children's Programme*
09:35 *Ami, Tumi, Ar.....*
10:00 *Aakash Ki Chhoya Jay*
10:30 *Drama: Shunno*
01:35 *Chhobi*
03:45 *Alok Dhara*
06:00 *Bangla Feature Film: Ei Mon Tomake Dilam*
06:30 *Ajker Bangladesh*
08:50 *Musical Programme: Citycell R music*

BANGLAVISION
10:10 *Talkshow: Apnar Kichhu Bolar Achhey*
11:10 *Drama Serial: Dokhinayon*
12:10 *Drama Serial:*

06:45 *The Fugitive*
09:30 *Are We There Yet?*
11:30 *The Goonies*
01:45 *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*

STAR MOVIES
09:15 *Around The World In 80 Days*
11:15 *Panic Room*
01:05 *Back To The Future*
03:00 *Agent Cody Banks 2: Destination*
04:40 *Star Wars: Ep. iii - Revenge Of The Sith*
07:00 *Dark Water*
08:45 *Flight Of The Phoenix*
10:40 *Sixth Sense, The*
12:30 *8 Mile*

HBO
10:45 *Criminal*
12:30 *Resident Evil: Apocalypse*
02:30 *The Manchurian Candidate*
05:00 *Anaconda*

09:00 *V First Day First Show- Starplu*
09:05 *V Trailers - Star Plus*
09:30 *V Trailers - Star Plus*
10:00 *V Trailers - Star Plus*
10:30 *Akkad Bakkad Bambe*
11:00 *Sonpari*
12:00 *Golu Ke Goggles*
12:25 *Bolly V - Star Plus*
12:30 *V Trailers - Star Plus*
12:55 *V First Day First Show- Starplu*
01:00 *Musafir Hoon Yaaron*
01:30 *Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Dhoom*
01:55 *V First Day First Show- Starplu*
02:00 *V Trailers - Star Plus*
02:25 *Bolly V - Star Plus*

02:30 *Kalash*
03:00 *Kahaani Ghar Ghar Ki*
05:00 *V Trailers - Star Plus*
05:25 *V First Day First Show- Starplu*
05:30 *Krishna Kathaiyen*
06:30 *Mickey Mouse And Friends*
07:00 *The Legend Of Trazan*
07:25 *Bolly V - Star Plus*
07:30 *Golu Ke Goggles*
07:30 *Honda13th Star*
07:30 *Screenredcarpet*
08:30 *Lucky*
09:00 *Prithviraj Chauhan*
09:30 *Baa Bahoo Aur Baby*
10:30 *Aek Chabhi Hai Padoss Mein*

STAR WORLD
08:30 *Most Haunted*
09:30 *The Apprentice*
10:30 *The Bold And The Beautiful*
12:30 *The Kumars At No. 42*
01:00 *Travel Asia*
01:30 *My Wife And Kids*
02:00 *The King Of Queen*
02:30 *Two And A Half Men*
03:30 *Malcolm In The Middle*
04:00 *Criminal Minds*
05:00 *Desire: Table For Three*
06:00 *Hope & Faith*
06:30 *Ghost Whisperer*
07:30 *The Simple Life*
08:30 *Tna Xplosion*
09:30 *World's Most Amazing Videos*
10:30 *Enterprise*
11:30 *Fashion House*

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
08:30 *Winning Teams*
09:30 *Born Wild*
10:30 *Hidden Buddha*
11:30 *Strictly Asian Ballroom*
12:30 *Cyber War*
01:30 *Guardians Of Angkor*

02:30 *Monkey Business*
03:00 *Macaws*
03:30 *Lightning*
04:30 *Going To School In India*
05:00 *Cindy, Chipper, Hope*
05:30 *Big Bang*
06:00 *Blue Whales*
06:30 *Collision On The Runway*
07:30 *Rated W*
08:30 *Killer Leopards*
09:30 *Vultures: Death Watch*
10:30 *Hollywood Science*
11:30 *Countdown To Terror*

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
08:30 *Wild Discovery*
09:30 *Discovery Spotlight*
11:30 *Animal Camera*
12:00 *Amazing Baby Videos*
12:30 *African Adventures*
01:00 *Meerkat Manor*
01:30 *Wild West*
02:30 *Massive Engines With Chris Barrie*
03:00 *Beyond Tomorrow*
03:30 *Serengeti Is Alive*
07:30 *Wild West*
08:30 *Discover India*
09:30 *Sacred India*
10:30 *How Do They Do It?*
11:30 *Serengeti Is Alive*

STAR SPORTS
08:30 *Tna Badshah (Wrestling)*
10:20 *Tna Impact (Wrestling)*
11:30 *Scoop - Phi Special (Field Hockey)*
12:30 *The Ubs Golf Club (Golf)*
01:00 *Fei Equestrian World (Horse Raci)*
01:30 *Wrc Magazine Show (Auto Racing)*
02:00 *Australian Open*

03:00 *Highlights 1997*
03:00 *Australian Open Official Film 20*
04:00 *2007 Euromilhoes*
04:30 *Dakar (Auto Rac*
04:30 *Nike Football Locker Room (Socce*
05:00 *Football Asia (Soccer/Futbol)*
05:30 *Gillette World Sport 2006 (Inter*
06:00 *Commonwealth Bank Series 2006-07*
06:30 *Ashes Legends (Cricket)*
08:30 *Club Epl (Soccer/Futbol)*
08:55 *English Premier Football League*
11:00 *Club Epl (Soccer/Futbol)*
11:10 *English Premier Football League*

ESPN
09:30 *Here We Go (Soccer/Futbol)*
10:30 *Sportscenter Week In Review (Spo*
11:00 *Hitz (Cricket)*
11:30 *Close Encounters (Cricket)*
12:00 *First Edition (Soccer/Futbol)*
12:30 *Close Encounters (Cricket)*
01:00 *Castle Test Series (Cricket)*
04:30 *Great Finishes (Cricket)*
05:00 *Castle Test Series (Cricket)*
09:30 *English Premier Football League*
11:00 *Final Score (Soccer/Futbol)*
11:30 *English Premier Football League*