

Adibashi Loko Utsab in Rajshahi

Highlighting cultural diversity and harmony

AHSAN HABIB, back from Rajshahi

INDIGENOUS cultural diversity in Bangladesh was celebrated with music, dance, photo exhibition and discussion at the *Adibashi Loko Utsab* held recently in Rajshahi. The aim was to encourage harmony by incorporating their language and ethnic identity.

The three-day event, jointly organised by Jatiyo Adibashi Parishad and Ashtha, was held at Bhubon Mohon Park, Rajshahi with the slogan 'Amader bhasha o porichoye jago Bangladesh'. Renowned litterateur Hassan Azizul Haque inaugurated the festival while advocate Sultana

Kamal attended as chief guest. Anil Marandi of Jatiyo Adibashi Parishad presided over the programme. Participants from different ethnic groups -- Santal, Oraon, Munda, Mahali, Mandi, Rajbangshi, Rajoar, Bhumali -- from Dinajpur, Naogaon, Natore, Chapainawabganj, Rajshahi, Bogra and Gazipur, and representatives of civil society and mass media took part in the celebration and showed support for the solidarity. Bengalis, the majority, also joined the *utsab*. "We have to embrace diversity and come together as one" -- was the theme of the festival. According to Rabindranath



Rabindranath Soren speaks at the programme



Indigenous artistes perform at the festival

Soren, general secretary of Jatiyo Adibashi Parishad, the festival was a point of convergence to share their strong, proud and lasting culture with the wider community. "The festival will contribute to enhance cultural self-expression and interaction. Hopefully it will also bridge the cultural gap between people of different ethnic identities in the country," he said. The festival further called for constitutional recognition of their ethnic identities. Performers at the festival represented both traditional and modern aspects of indigenous cultures. Traditional *dong* dance and music,

karam dance, *dasai* dance and *jhumur* (also called *jhumer*) dance performance along with modern songs and theatrical performance were attempts to identify and showcase the heritage as well as the significant shift that has been going on within indigenous cultures. Five-discussion sessions titled 'Whose Language? Whose Culture?? Whose State???' 'Globalisation vs Freedom', 'Indigenous Peoples' Art, Literature and National Conscience', 'Contribution of Indigenous people in the Liberation War' and 'Water-Forest-Land Rights of the Indigenous Peoples in

Bangladesh' were held during the festival. Pavel Partha, A K M Masud Ali, Sharmeen Murshid, Ayub Hossain and Professor Saidur Rahman Khan presented the keynote papers respectively. *Mrittika*, a magazine on issues regarding indigenous communities arranged a photo exhibition titled *Bolshal Bringni Mandirang* (Mandis of sal forest) highlighting the culture, lifestyle and struggles of Mandis in Madhupur, Tangail. The festival ended with a colourful rally.

Satyajit Ray film session from April 23

To commemorate the 16th death anniversary of Satyajit Ray, the Rainbow Film Society, in association with the Indian High Commis-

sion, Dhaka, is organising a seminar and a film session from April 23 to 25 at Sufia Kamal Auditorium of the National Museum, says a press

release.

Cultural activist Mofidul Hoque will present a keynote paper titled 'Agantuk by Satyajit Ray: the director's philosophy' at the seminar to be held on April 23 at 5:30pm. Poets Asad Chowdhury and Rabiul Hussain and cultural personalities Ali Ahmed and Asaduzzaman Noor will take part in the discussion. Syed Marghub Murshed will preside over the seminar while Sarvajit Chakravarti, Deputy High Commissioner of the Indian High Commission will attend as special guest.

In the film session, 12 films of Satyajit Ray will be screened daily at 11am, 2pm, 4pm and 6pm. The films include *Pather Panchali*, *Aparajito*, *Apur Sansar*, *Agantuk*, *Kanchenjunga*, *Charulata*, *Asani Sanket*, *Jana Aranya*, *Aranyer Din Ratri*, *Hirak Rajar Deshe*, *Shakha Prashakha* and *Ghare-Baire*.



A still from Agantuk

Film premiere 'Turup': A portrayal of our society

FAYZA HAQ

The premiere of the short film 'Turup' was recently held at Alliance Francaise. The event marked the inauguration of the newly renovated auditorium at Alliance Francaise.

Through the depiction of playing of cards Jobayer Ahmed, the director, sought to portray the socio-economic scene of our country. This is journalist Jobayer's first attempt at filmmaking. He has studied extensively and read whatever he could on films on the internet. At times the incidents in the film portrayed the selfishness of people such as the man playing cards in a club, while his wife is in the midst of child birth. The film, made on a shoe string budget, used finances gathered from a enthusiastic coterie of friends.

There are about 30 actors and they include Jobayer's friends and

people around him: "They've never acted before but it doesn't appear so seeing the film," Jobayer says. "The film is just to give myself a sense of satisfaction -- doing something on my own, after studying films for over five years," he adds. The script has been written by Ruhual Amin. Jobayer has been involved in Abdullah Al Mamun's theatre group, "Theatre Bailey Road" for four years. He has a passion for Russian films and loves Charlie Chaplin films too. In addition, he is an ardent admirer of Ritwik Ghatak. He believes that Bangladesh art films will do well in the next 10 years due to the dedicated efforts of newcomers in the field.

The film is episodic and does not follow a plot. Ruhual Amin, the scriptwriter says that he, Jobayer and Bitop Das Gupta, the art director, had been planning on such a film for some time. "There are many

sections in our society. In the film we see rickshaw pullers, educated, young students, family members in a middle class family--all united by the element of passion for playing cards." It brings in episodes like a grandfather who plays cards for 40 years and claims that cards are his entire existence. It portrays a housewife playing with her family until she realises that her milk was being burnt in the kitchen, while she was engrossed in her cards. It includes teenagers calling their friends on the phone, when the parents are away, and arranging a session of cards.

The story line is fragmented and brought together by the element of cards. The film neither condemns nor praises the card playing. The background music could have been more subtle, while the repeated use of colloquial language seemed harsh to the ear at times.



Two Bangladeshi documentaries *Minute Camera* and *Camera O Jibon* by Shahiduzzaman Badal have been selected for screening at the 1st Bangladesh film festival to begin at Dallas, USA, today-- says a press release. The four-day festival will highlight works by Bangladeshi filmmakers and directors. A total of 50 feature films, short films and documentaries are to be screened at the festival

All eyes on the wedding of the year!

Abhishek and Rai to tie the knot today

The much awaited colourful wedding ceremony of Indian cine-star Abhishek Bachchan and Aishwarya Rai is scheduled to be held today(Friday). Bachchan residence Prateeksha (await) is all set to host the wedding of Bollywood's most eligible bachelor and the most beautiful woman in the world Aishwarya Rai.

Superstar Amitabh Bachchan's home here resembles a fortress ahead of the Aishwarya-Abhishek wedding. However, the family wants it to be a private affair with every visitor being given a thorough once-over and curious passers-by promptly shoosed away by security guards.

During her wedding ceremony, Aishwarya Rai will wear a traditional hand-embroidered sari with intricate gold work on her wedding day, said the actor's favourite designer.

Neeta Lulla said, she designed the sari and a red and gold embroidered flowing skirt and cropped blouse for the actor to wear at a *mehendi* ceremony on Wednesday. Lulla told Mumbai-based DNA newspaper that while she had



Aishwarya and Abhishek: Actors turned mates

designed some of Rai's outfits, the actor would also wear a sari created

by famous Indian designers Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla.

The pre-marriage party, which kicked off on Wednesday, featured songs, dances and skits by close friends and relatives. Both Rai and Bachchan had practiced a dance routine they performed during a musical ceremony on Thursday. Bachchan's friend and Bollywood heartthrob Hritik Roshan is also expected to entertain guests.

A red and blue air-conditioned tent with huge mirrors is being readied in a garden adjoining the Bachchan's suburban family home for what is billed as India's "wedding of the year."

Wedding cards, embossed with two entwined 'As' and accompanied by a box of chocolate meringues, have been sent to a select few in the Bachchan inner-circle, including industrialist Anil Ambani and his wife, filmmaker Karan Johar and actor Anupam Kher, The Times of India reported.

An invitation to the Bachchan wedding appears to be so coveted that it has split the Indian film industry into haves and have-nots--those invited and those not invited. Indian media said a

noticeable omission from the guest list was Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan, with whom the elder Bachchan has a running popularity battle, revealed in their recent veiled digs at each other.

Bachchan, 31, and Rai, 33, have worked together in at least five movies. Both have been romantically linked in the past to other Bollywood stars.

In their latest hit movie *Guru*, Rai played the supportive wife to Bachchan who portrays a man from a small Indian village who strives to become a top industrialist. The film is based on the life of Dhirubhai Ambani, founder of Reliance Industries, one of India's top conglomerates.

A former Miss World, Rai has acted in more than 30 movies and is known overseas after having starred in several commercials for cosmetic companies.

Bachchan comes from a famous Bollywood movie family his father, Amitabh, and mother, Jaya, is among India's best known actors.

Source: Internet

An artiste bares her soul

Krishnokoli's debut album 'Shurjey Bandhi Basha'

KARIM WAHEED

Kazi Krishnokoli Islam aka Krishnokoli is not new to the creative sphere. Born and raised in Khulna, she was introduced to the world of music by her mother, Meherun Nesa. Krishnokoli trained under Shadhon Ghosh (Tagore songs) and Basudeb Biswas (classical music). She enrolled in Chhayana in 1998 and was a student in the Rabindra Sangeet Department for three years. Currently, the artiste works in the audio-visual media. She is working on a script for a TV play and writing, composing two songs for a film.

Krishnokoli's debut album *Shurjey Bandhi Basha*, produced under the banner of Bengal Music Company Ltd, was launched recently. All songs in the album have been written, composed and performed by Krishnokoli; music arranged and mixed by Ornob.

Dedicating the album to her mother, the artiste hints at why she decided to call her album *Shurjey bandhi Basha*. In her childhood naiveté, she used to ask her mother what becomes of people after death and her mother used to say they become stars in the sky. When she asked what her mother would become, the response was: "I'd be the sun."

The highpoint of the album are the lyrics. Krishnokoli's grip over articulating her childhood adventures, endless fascination with nature, experiencing solitude and yearning for that elusive euphoria, have resulted in eight beautiful songs. They are more like poetry. Poetry that effortlessly walks on tunes and weaves sublime imagery.

The opening song *Dubi dubi* takes one back to the carefree days of childhood. Those who were fortunate enough to grow up outside the concrete jungles, would relate to the artiste's experience. As Krishnokoli reminisces: "...Swimming in the deep pond, I used to feel like a mermaid... My dark complexion would often let me down, yet (I) used to believe I was just as pretty as nature."

Bodhua takes the listener to the Sal forests, in the Santali domain. Unmistakable elements of the 'Jhumur' genre are intoxicating and so are the words: *Jonak joley chikmik chikmik korey, buk-er moddhay jhod othey...* Enunciation of the "chikmik chikmik" would make one fall for with this number.

Melancholy strums of guitar set the mood for *Shatkahon*. The song turns from pleasant to remarkable in the last stanza: *Beder nouko bandha-Mohuar dol, bukey chuuri mukhey hashi chokhey nei chhol...*

Hant-tey hant-tey is a song for the lonesome way-



Kazi Krishnokoli Islam

weary. The state of solitude and juggling random thoughts are articulated through *Hant-tey hant-tey eka nudi, thuk-tey thuk-tey jachhey duurei, bhabnagulo goragori, khachhey mathaye khachhey badi...*

The album ends with *Bhalobesho ekbar* -- perhaps the artiste's ode to her mother. Krishnokoli breathes life into words: *Chhuey chhuey dekho amar e haad, chhuey chhuey shekho e ki...chokh diyechhi priyo bondhu, shey chokhey dekho prithibir roop e ki...* Her mother's eyes and body (for medical studies) were donated.

Some may compare Krishnokoli's songs to those of Moushumi Bhowmick or Lopamudra Mitra. However, it wouldn't be fair to unnecessarily judge or label these songs in which the artiste has bared her soul to the audience. Ornob's deft music arrangement deserves a special mention for complementing the lyrics and not overshadow them.

'Panchyo Kobir Gaan' on Channel i

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Channel i will telecast *Panchyo Kobir Gaan*, a musical programme featuring songs of five great poets of Bengal --

Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Atul Prashad, Rajanikant Sen and Dwijendra Lal Roy, at 4:30pm, today. Five music videos, featuring their songs will be telecast. Noted singers Rezwana

Chowdhury Bonna, Ferdous Ara, Shimul Yusuf, Khairul Alam Shakil and Sadi Mohammad have rendered the songs. The programme is directed by Afzal Hossain.



Rezwana Chowdhury Bonna and Ferdous Ara perform at the programme



A scene from the film

'Grindhouse': An epic homage to '70s B-movies

If you've got a taste for blood and three hours to kill, *Grindhouse* is for you.

It's an epic homage to '70s B-movie kitsch from longtime friends Robert Rodriguez and Quentin Tarantino, who each wrote and directed an entire feature-length film and asked buddies to pitch in with fake trailers in between (the one from *Hostel* director Eli Roth is especially inspired).

The name comes from the fact that theatres would grind out double and triple features of blaxploitation (black exploitation) flicks, badly dubbed kung fu movies, salacious sex romps -- the kind of giddy schlock Rodriguez and Tarantino grew up loving and since have made a career of copying.

Whether or not you prefer this particular flavour of cheese, and many film geeks do, it's worth seeing simply because there's nothing else like it. It's not just a movie, it's an event, one that demands your attention and perseverance. You can't get up to go to the bathroom or grab a soda in between features. You wouldn't want to anyway -- much of the allure comes from the details, the filler, the scratched-up promos with their dated graphics and warbly sound.

If nothing else, *Grindhouse* transports you to another place and time. Rodriguez and Tarantino have yet to create a truly original film, but they're masters of recreating genres. And while they've plowed this ground countless times before between the *El Mariachi* trilogy, *Pulp Fiction* and the *Kill Bill* movies, *Grindhouse* represents the formidable strength of their combined knowledge and abilities.

The movie comes on like absolute gangbusters with the Rodriguez segment, *Planet Terror*, about a plague that

spreads through a small Texas town, turning people into puss-riddled, blood-spewing, zombie-like predators.

Marley Shelton and Josh Brolin play husband-and-wife doctors trying to stave off the infection at a hospital, while barely bothering to save their marriage.

Meanwhile, a group of vigilantes tries to take back the town, led by Freddy Rodriguez as a gunslinger known as El Wray, and Rose McGowan as a go-go dancer named Cherry Darling (of course), who loses a leg and gets a machine gun in its place.

McGowan's dramatically sexy features are ideal here; she's a girl who knows she's gorgeous but has enough of a sense of humour to play with her own image.

Planet Terror is a total blast -- funny, gloriously gory and over the top. The intentionally trashed footage and supposedly missing reels add to the authentic charm -- as if the audience truly is watching a movie that has barely survived being trucked from town to town and unspooled over and over.

Then comes Tarantino's contribution, *Death Proof*. And it's so typically verbose of him, it nearly kills all the momentum that had built over the previous two hours.

Kurt Russell simmers menacingly as a grizzled drifter named Stuntman Mike, who likes to stalk women with his muscle car. (Russell, the veteran of such John Carpenter films as *Escape From New York* and *The Thing*, also exudes just the right vibe.) Among his targets are McGowan (again), Rosario Dawson, Tracie Thoms, Mary Elizabeth Winstead and real-life stuntwoman Zoe Bell, who is truly a specimen to behold.



A scene from the film

But first his potential victims talk. And talk, and talk. What Tarantino's trying to do is lull you in -- place them in a comfort zone with these women through the rhythms of their discussions -- just to yank you out of it with the film's climactic and truly dazzling car chase, which is a marvel of staging and timing.

Until then, though, it ends up feeling just plain boring -- an unfortunately inane letdown after such a thrilling build-up. Nevertheless, *Grindhouse* is still a must-see. Just to say you survived it.

Source: Internet