

## CULTURAL FEAST

Anniversary  
Programme

Organiser: Bangladesh Udichi  
Shilpigothi  
Venue: National Theatre Stage,  
Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy  
Date: October 29  
Time: 4pm onwards

Documentary  
Launching

Venue: LGED Bhaban, Main Building,  
Hall Room, Agargaon  
Date: October 28  
Time: 8am-2pm

## Art Exhibition

Title: Still-life  
Artists: Six eminent artists of Bangladesh  
Venue: Galleri Chitrak, Road 4, House  
21, Dhamondi  
Date: October 27-November 10  
Time: 10am to 8pm

World Film Manifestation  
Programme

Title: Documentary for life  
Organiser: Dhaka University Film  
Society  
Venue: Goethe Institut Bangladesh,  
House 10, Road 9, Dhamondi  
Date: October 29 & 30  
Time: 3:00pm onwards

## Three Short Plays

Plays: Sanki, Janlob and Platform  
Organisers: Space and Acting  
Research Centre  
Venue: Goethe Institut Bangladesh  
Date: October 26 & 28  
Time: 7pm

Gazi Sadekul  
Islam passes  
away

Veteran activist of the Bangladesh group theatre movement and poet, Gazi Sadekul Islam (Khasru) passed away last Friday. He was 67.

Gazi Sadekul was born on October 21, 1940 in Sholohgar village of Srinagar Thana, Munshiganj. A student of History department of the Dhaka University, he began his career as a journalist. In the '50s, he began creative writing in both English and Bengali.

He has acted in several TV and radio plays and also penned a few plays. Among the plays he has acted in, *Meghe meghe bristi*, *Jonaki joley*, *Bhalobasha DotCom* etc. are noteworthy.

His *Kulkuwani* will be held at his residence, on October 29, House 6/2 Road no. 1, Shyamoli, says a press release.

## In conversation

## Nadira Begum: Popularising and preserving bhawaiya songs

ERSHAD KAMOL

THOUGH Nadira Begum is capable of performing the different genres of Bangla songs, the artiste has made a name for herself as a *bhawaiya* (a folk genre) singer. For years she has been enlisted as a 'Grade A' artiste in radio and TV. The current president of the Bhawaiya Academy, Nadira Begum is also working on a compilation of authentic *bhawaiya* songs. This year Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy has honoured the singer for her contribution to the folk genre.

Growing up in a musical environment, Nadira's first 'guru' was her father A.K.M. Abdul Aziz, a classical and folk singer on radio. According to Nadira, "I began taking music lessons from my father at an early age. Eventually I fastened *nara* (a traditional ceremony of becoming a disciple of a mentor) and started training under Ustad Nizamuddin Khan."

She received a gold medal for rendering a *bhawaiya* song when she was a school student. In Nadira's words, "I had to compete with college students. The song I rendered was *Oki gao tulo, gao tulo, moishal bondhure*."

Nadira also took extensive classical music lessons from renowned ustad including as Akhtar Sadmani, Narayan Chandra Boshak, Fazlul Haque and Umed Ali Khan. Receiving tutelage from Ustad Umed Ali Khan was one of the most exciting experiences of her life, according to Nadira.

The way it happened: "In 1970, I was selected as a member of the government delegation to perform at a cultural programme titled *Nouroz* in Afghanistan. I was the



PHOTO: STAR

only participant from East Pakistan. The other members of the team were renowned singers and ustad including Umed Ali Khan, Mehdi Hassan, Kishwar Jahan and others. I rendered *Dhiko dhiko dhiko moishal re* and *Allah Megh de pani de* at the programme. The audience seemed to enjoy the *bhawaiya*, specifically the second one which is widely popular in Bangladesh. The following morning Ustad Umed Ali Khan, who was also the mentor of Mehdi Hassan, offered me his mentorship. I learnt a few *thumris* from him."

Nadira Begum was enlisted as a radio artiste back in 1960s. During the initial stage of her career she

used to render all genres of songs including *ghazal*, *geet*, Nazrul sangeet and folk songs. However, after the Liberation War, she predominantly sang *bhawaiya* songs at radio and TV programmes. Why? Says the artiste, "I was told that there are several quality singers in other genres of music, but accomplished singers in the *bhawaiya* genre were few and far between. And the audience seemed to enjoy my rendition of *bhawaiya* songs."

"Initially I felt that labelling me as a 'bhawaiya' singer' was kind of a marginalisation. But, now, I have no qualms; I'm proud to be a *bhawaiya* singer."

Nadira Begum and other

## Generating awareness on eye diseases

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

To generate awareness on eye diseases among the rural people, Grameney Advocacy Centre Sita in Sadar Upazila, organised a cultural programme at the Renaissance Girls High School here recently.

The event was held on the occasion of World Sight Day. Baul artistes Fazlul Haque, Joymal Abedin, Jibon Chandra Das and Rajkumar performed at the programme.

The artistes rendered songs, addressing the various causes of eye diseases and how the rural people can take preventive measures. Hundreds



Local artistes perform at the event

## Jackie Chan flexes his vocal muscles

Jackie Chan has flexed his vocal muscles for the Olympics. The 53-year-old actor, best known for his daredevil stunts, has recorded *We Are Ready*, the official countdown song to the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics.

He spent three hours recording the song during a recent trip to Beijing. Chan said in a blog entry on his Website last Wednesday.

Chan, star of the *Rush Hour* movies, dabbles in music and has released several albums.

He praised the lyrics of the Mandarin Chinese song composed by Peter Kam, who won a Silver Bear award for best film music at the Berlin Film Festival last year.

Olympic organisers have also recorded a second Chinese version sung by more than 100 pop stars, Kam said.

He told *The Associated Press* in a phone interview that an English version of the song may be recorded.

Chan said in an earlier blog entry that he got goose bumps when he attended the official

researchers of the Bhawaiya Academy have been working on the genre for several years. Apart from the central office in Dhaka, the academy has seven branches in the north Bengal districts.

Commenting on the genre Nadira says, "Lives of the common people have been portrayed remarkably in *bhawaiya*. The genre has been evolved by the locals of North Bengal and some areas of India since the 12th century, though legendary singer Abbas Uddin popularised the genre among the urbanites. An interesting facet of the genre is that though most of the lyricists are men, the frequent theme in *bhawaiya* songs is the solitude of women."

The singer further adds that there is a difference between *bhawaiya* songs composed and written by the bards of Bangladesh and those of India.

On the hurdles of researching and collection of *bhawaiya* songs, Nadira says, "Like it happens with most other oral traditions, maintaining the authenticity of lyrics and tunes of *bhawaiya* songs is challenging. Except a few educated ones like A.K.M. Abdul Aziz, lyricists and composers of *bhawaiya* songs are illiterate *garoona*, *moishals* and *mauhuts*. One particular song can exist in several forms and it is difficult to trace the authenticity. After collecting the songs from the root level sources, we get them scrutinised by a panel of experts."

As a member of government delegation, Nadira Begum has rendered *bhawaiya* songs in countries including China, Japan, Australia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Egypt.

Jackie Chan



one-year countdown event in Beijing on August 8.

"The ceremony made me very emotional and I said to myself, 'That's our China, that's our day!' I felt this moment belonged to our China, this moment belonged to us," he wrote.

Source: The Associated Press

## Soovas Dutta and Hiren Dey win Fazlul Haq memorial awards

## CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Film director Soovas Dutta, won the Fazlul Haq memorial award this year for direction. Hiren Dey, a cine-journalist won a similar award. Each received Tk twenty-five thousand, a certificate and a crest. Novelist Syed Shamsul Haq and artist Quayum Chowdhury were chief guests at the programme which was held at a local hotel on October 26.

The certificates were given by Quayum Chowdhury, Syed Shamsul Haq presented the crests while Rabeya Khatun gave away the cash prize.

The Fazlul Haq memorial award was first introduced in 2004 by his wife, novelist Rabeya Khatun, in memory of her husband. Poet and journalist Fazl Shahabuddin and Ahmad Zaman Chowdhury won the award in 2004.

The committee awarded noted film director Chashi Nazrul Islam and eminent writer Humayun Ahmed in 2005; Saidul Anam Tuul and Rafiquzzaman in 2006.

Fazlul Haq is considered among the pioneers of cine journalism in Bangladesh. In 1950 he brought out a cine based publication named "Cinema". During the sixties he made a film for children named "President" which



Soovas Dutta(R) and Hiren Dey(L) seen with Syed Shamsul Haq and Rabeya Khatun at the programme

and journalist Ahmad Zaman Chowdhury. With out their support I could have never become what I am today." He also thanked the organisers for recognising him.

Writer Anisul Haq, director Amjad Hossain, Rafiquzzaman, director Chashi Nazrul Islam, Atiqul Haq Chowdhury, daughter of Fazlul Haq, Keka Ferdous; Muhammad Jahangir and others spoke at the occasion recalling their memories of Fazlul Haq.

The programme was presided over by Rabeya Khatun.

## BCRA awards bring together stars of film and television

## CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

In recognition of the contribution in different areas of entertainment in the year 2006 Bangladesh Cultural Reporter's Association (BCRA) gave awards at a grand ceremony at the Plenary Hall of Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre on October 26. In presence of many stars of film and television, the award giving ceremony virtually became a get together for them.

Actors, directors, singers, music directors and journalists were awarded in 63 categories at the ceremony. The awards were on films censored in 2006, TV plays, telefilms, commercials, audio albums and cultural reports published in newspapers.

Renowned actor Razzak was the chief guest at the occasion while president of National Press Club Shawkat Mahmud, BFUJ secretary general Abdul Jalil Bhuyian, DUJ president Altaf Mahmud, president of Bangladesh Film Club Ltd. KMR Manjur and chairman of Amicus Group Khondoker Mahmudur Azad were the special guests. President of BCRA Monirul Islam presided over the programme.

Fazlul Haque, one of the pioneers of cine journalism - editor of first film magazine in the country *Cinema* and the director of first children's film made here, were awarded 'A Tribute to Excellent Contribution to the Industry and Cine Journalist Award 2006'.

Award for best film went to *Aina*, while *Rikshawalar* was adjudged the best director for the film *Aina*.

Prem was awarded the best commercial film. Kabori



Sarwar was adjudged the best director for the film *Aina*. Maina received the best actor award (male) while Nipun won the best actor award (female). Dighi received the best child artiste critics' award.

Mir Sabir was selected as the most popular TV actor for his performance in *Dui Kuthuri Ek Doroja* and DA Tayer was awarded the best actor for *Aponnash*.

Award for best female model went to Prova and the best male model was Kazi Jamaluddin.



Mir Sabir

## ON AIR

## PICK OF THE DAY



Prothom Shokal  
On ATN Bangla at 9:20pm  
Drama Serial  
Cast: Tony Dais, Tania



The Grudge 2  
On Star Movies at 7:00pm  
Genre: Horror  
Cast: Sarah Michelle Gellar, Amber Tamblyn

## 12:00 Shongbad Pratidin

## HISTORY CHANNEL

09:30 War against Al Qaeda

10:30 Castro

11:30 The Resident Patient

12:30 Mission

01:30 Freemasons Under-

ground

02:30 Mysteries of Freemason

03:30 Muscle Cars

04:30 Witch Hunt

05:00 Joseph McCarthy

09:30 Attila the Hun

10:30 Salem Witch Trials

11:30 Witches

12:00 Nach Balye 3

12:00 Sambaran

## STAR PLUS

09:30 Krishna Kathaiyan

10:30 Star Voice Of India

01:30 Beabut

07:30 Nach Balye 3

08:30 Saibara

09:30 Prithviraj Chauhan

10:00 Baa Bahoo Aur Baby

10:30 Aek Chabhi Hal Padoss

11:30 Mein

12:00 Nach Balye 3

12:00 Large Sharks

01:30 Total Towns

02:30 Tasmania: Land of

Devils

03:30 According To Jim

04:30 How I Met Your Mother

12:30 The Office

05:30 The Simpsons

06:00