

When the Christmas spirit beckons with cakes and cookies

FAYZA HAQ

WHO doesn't respond to the tunes of "Silent night, holy light" and "Rudolf the red nosed reindeer"? Bangladesh, always a friendly place for people of all denominations, celebrates Christmas with due fervour. Eid and Victory Day have just passed by, and New Year is knocking at the door. It's time for chocolates, cakes, cookies, uninhibited laughter and camaraderie with Christmas pies and pot roast.

With music of the carollers in the backdrop and the tapping of the feet to music, people will consume hot chocolate and eggnog with glee. The impact of the British influence cannot be harmful at this juncture, when the season is a globally accepted one -- as far as China and

Finland.

Cards and gifts have been exchanged with the Christmas spirit -- of the past, present and future. The home and hearth, with three generations of merry-makers will partake of the fruit-cake along with glazed pears and oranges with their inviting white icings.

With the "Ho-ho-ho" of Christmas cheer, and the tinkling piano in the living room, there is the partaking of meals -- as always before in history at peacetime and even in times of desperation and chaos. Yes, the cyclone has come and gone, but the feeling of joy and contentment of the season is shared. The blessed and fortunate will share their meals with those out in the cold, the less fortunate ones.

Visiting some of the outlets of cakes and



pastries, one finds the bakeries ready for the Christmas season at least a week ahead. They even have the requisite multi-coloured balloons, funny caps, bunting and paper whistles just as the sweet-meat makers were well-equipped for the recent Durga Puja and Eid, so are the bakeries, and just not the five star hotels -- which are winking with their fairy lights and the Christmas fare.

Talking to the employees of outlets like Mr. Baker, Cooper's and King's Confectionery, based in the heart of Dhaka, and examining their displays behind the neat and well-lit showcases, one sees and learns of the cakes of modest sizes and various shapes that make the mouth water and tempt one to search one's purses for the necessary cost for the young nephews, nieces and friends' and neighbours' children. As if from the pages of Dickens's "Christmas Carol" or Trollope's "Vanity Fair" the plum puddings

and gateaux plus other scrumptious pastries beckon one and all. Even the names of the products are so imaginative and lyrical like "Viennese swirls" and "Turkish delights".

The cake decoration include brown realistic logs with curling icing around them, cheeky reindeer, egret snowmen, complete with carrot noses and eyes, Santa Claus with his bulging bag of goodies, leprechauns with their conical hats and green doublets. Sometimes they even appear like the cake homes of "Hansel and Gretel" from Grimm's fairy tales of yore. The biscuit parcels are cute and tempting too, and they come in both sweet and savoury packs. Father Christmas comes in the form of hard dark chocolate slices.

One doesn't have to be in Europe or the US to feel the Christmas spirit. The Dhaka ambience at the confectionaries can create the right mood just as well.

Protest against War Criminals through poems

Pijush Bandyopadhyay's album of recitation launched

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Renowned cultural personality Pijush Bandyopadhyay recently launched his recitation album titled *Tui Razakar*, a collection of poems expressing wrath against the war criminals. The album launch took place at the Liberation War Museum. The artist dedicated the album to the Sector Commanders of the Liberation War.

Air Vice Marshal (retd) and Deputy Chief of Staff, Bangladesh Liberation Forces, A.K. Khondkar Bir Uttam; former Army Chief, Lt

General (retd) Harun-ur-Rashid; General Secretary of Sammito Sanskritik Jote, Golam Kuddus; trustee of Liberation War Museum, Akku Chowdhury; Commander of Sector-5, Lt General (retd) Mir Shawkat Ali Bir Uttam, psc; Commander of Sector-3, General (retd) K.M. Shafiqullah Bir Uttam, psc and Commander of Sector-4, Major General (retd) C.R. Dutta Bir Uttam and others were present at the event.

"The nation now demands the trial of the war criminals. I believe Pijush Bandyopadhyay's album

will further strengthen this call by inspiring people to protest against the war criminals. He sets an example for the cultural activists, indeed," A.K. Khondkar said. Others spoke in the same vein.

"As a freedom fighter, cultural activist and citizen of this country, I have the responsibility to educate this generation on the accurate history of our Liberation War. *Tui Razakar* is an effort towards that. I dedicate this album to the Sector Commanders, the valiant leaders of our Liberation War," said Pijush Bandyopadhyay.



Pijush Bandyopadhyay (R) with guests at the album launch

PHOTO: STAR

Exhibition Silent Witness

NIVEDITA RAITZ VON PRENTZ

Unassuming young artist, Shyamal Roy Chowdhury's first solo exhibition ended recently at the Art & Soul Gallery. Growing up amidst violence in Dhaka's Shyampani neighbourhood, Shyamal's exposure to art was extremely limited. A most resonant childhood memory was a bedtime story told by his father, of a fat man fighting ghosts, an image he tried visualising and committing to paper.

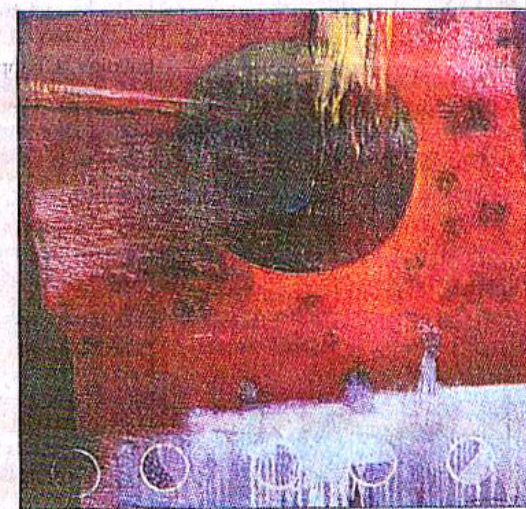
Realising his limited academic potential, Shyamal turned to art early on during his school years. He painted pharmacy delivery vehicles and tried his hand at wedding *alpona* to earn pocket money for art supplies. Noticing his commitment, his mother enrolled him at the Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts. Here, Shyamal shone and was the recipient of many awards. He went on to display his work at the 1994 National Exhibition aged 18, two years short of the participation age, a tough first call, he admitted. Soon after, Shyamal moved on to the Narayanjan Charukala to further his artistic education, where he graduated First Class First in 2003.

Apart from conventional painting, Shyamal undertook all the terracotta artwork for the temple built at the Ramakrishna Mission in Old Dhaka in 2004, being especially pleased with the fibreglass Nataraj on the front facade.

In 2005, Shyamal received a scholarship from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations to read for a Masters in Fine Arts, which he recently completed from Kolkata's Rabindra Bharati University. He would welcome a systemic change, as many face problems during their post graduate education, where experimentation is an integral part of the learning curve. To this end, he too, initially encountered difficulties vis-à-vis his conceptual Masters work. His mentors, artist Jogen Chowdhury and Professor Sovon Som advised him to seek inspiration from Kolkata's galleries, but Shyamal was ultimately influenced by a multi-styles

and concepts workshop he attended in Delhi.

During his Masters, Shyamal began experimenting with a doll motif in his paintings. His object was to reduce realism, removing elements of the doll's anatomy by increasing colour and texture. "I found that the doll was disturbing the canvas and tried to break free from the old school, old techniques. The eye is like a camera aperture, and I was attempting to adjust the circular space, to make a sharper image." There is



Art work by Shyamal Roy Chowdhury

vibrant imagery behind the choice of the doll.

Of his most memorable exhibitions, Shyamal mentioned a 2002 contributory show in Japan organised by artist G S Kabir, of four Bangladeshi and four Japanese artists, where his paintings, "were very much appreciated."

The writer is a freelance contributor

CULTURALFEAST

Warid Caller Tunes Campaign Grand Finale Concert

Venue: Kalabagan playground, Kalabagan, Dhanmondi
Date: December 28
Time: 2:30 pm
Entry passes will be available with zero prepaid connections purchased from Warid Sales & Customer Service Centres

Art Exhibition

Title: RETROSPECT
Artists: Shaoli Hoque and Aadi Hoque
Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, House 26 Road 3 Dhanmondi
Date: December 25-31
Time: 5pm-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Victory Day
Artist: Proshanta Karmakar Buddha
Venue: Shilpagan Art Gallery
Date: December 14-28
Time: 10:30am-8pm

Special programme "Boro Din Keno Boro" on ATN Bangla



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate Christmas Day, ATN Bangla will air a special programme for children titled *Boro Din Keno Boro* at 11:30 am, today. The programme will feature dance, songs and conversation with children. Liton Adhikary Rintu has directed the programme.

TV play "Dadima O Kichhu Shalik" on Channel-i

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

TV play *Dadima O Kichhu Shalik*, featuring Ferdousi Majumdar, Humayun Faridce and Mita Chowdhury will be aired this evening at 7:50pm.

The play follows an elderly woman who is visiting her son's family during Eid. The children question their parents' decision to let the grandmother live in an old home. *Dadi Ma o Kichhu Shalik* is written by Masum Reza and directed by Arif Khan.



Tagore's "Chokher Bali" on Channel 1 tonight



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Channel 1 will air a special tele-film *Chokher Bali* at 11:15 pm tonight. Ahmed Shahabuddin has written the screenplay and Aranya Anwar has adapted it from Rabindranath Tagore's novel.

Before she could experience marital bliss, Binodini becomes a widow. The young widow goes to live with Mahendra's mother and adolescent wife. Mahendra and Binodini have a history. The former once turned down a marriage

proposal from the latter's family. Binodini becomes friends with Ashalata, Mahendra's naïve wife. Trouble brews when Mahendra realizes that he is infatuated with Binodini, an educated, freethinking woman. The web gets more tangled when Mahendra's best friend Bihari gets involved as well. Relationships develop and crumble and lives change forever. But can one change the norms of society and time?

Mahfuz Ahmed, Tarin and Chandni play lead roles.

Musical programme Ontorototo Aaj Gaan-er Rhuban on ntv

As part of the Eid-special programmes, ntv will telecast a musical show today, featuring the divas Sabina Yasmin and Runa Laila. Titled *Ontorototo Aaj Gaan-er Rhuban*, the programme features solo and duet performances by the two icons. Directed by Arif Khan the programme will be aired at 3:50 pm.

ON AIR

PICK OF THE DAY



Shesh Bikeley
On Banglavisat on 08:15 pm
Single Episode TV play
Cast: Tauqir Ahmed, Aupi Karim



Shei To Elo Phirey
On ntv at 11:15 pm
Single Episode TV play
Cast: Purnima, Shubho

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, 9:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:15 am.

ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11 pm.
News (English) 8:20 am, 7:00 pm.
Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00 am, 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

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

BANGLAVISION
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 2:00 pm, 6:30 pm, 7:15 pm, 10:30 pm.
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 4:00 pm.
News Headlines (English) at 8:05 pm

Rtv
News (Bangla) at 10:15 pm, and 12:15 am

ntv
News (Bangla) 7:30 am, 12:02 pm, 2:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 1:00 am

ETV
News (Bangla) 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 11:00 pm

BTV
09:05 Swapno
11:15 Musical Programme
11:40 Dance Programme
12:30 Tele-film: *Bhul-er Tila*
06:10 Drama: *Prokilo*
Shundori Patri Chai
07:15 Shure-y Shure-y
Chhuye Jai
08:30 Drama: *Trish Bochor Por*
09:00 Drama Serial: *Shongshaptak*
10:30 Special Programme

ATN BANGLA
09:15 *Amra Korbo Joy*
10:30 *Roshik Na Hole*
11:05 Special Programme:
Boro Din Keno Boro
12:10 Musical Programme:
Eid Anondo Gaan
01:15 Bangla Feature Film
04:40 Tele-film: *Eklon*
Shukhi Manush
05:00 *Grangorjer Khabor*
07:45 Drama: *Shundor Ali*
Imtiaz O Onnona
08:50 Drama: *Shaheb*
10:45 Drama: *Purnota*

CHANNEL-i
09:50 *Gramenphone Trilo*
10:45 Tele-film: *Pro Sado*
Golap
12:35 Tele-film: *Ochin*
Pakhi
02:35 Tele-film: *Kobi O Ekl*

Meve
05:20 *Mon-er Moto gaan*
06:00 Special Programme
07:50 Drama: *Dadi Ma O Kichhu Shalik*
09:35 Drama: *Ekdoshay Bhoshopoli*
11:30 Drama: *Shrey Shomudro Boro*
Bhabobshay
12:00 *GramenPhone*
Aker Shangbadpoto

ETV
11:30 *Jodi Emon Hoto*
12:30 Special Programme
01:30 Bangla Feature Film
04:30 *Rhythm and Dance*
05:15 *Pro Sabina*
05:45 *Ekusher Shondhya*
06:15 Quiz Show: *SMS Mania*
07:30 *Golden Moments*
08:00 *Nishi Kutum*
09:30 Tele-film: *Shesh Bikeley Alo*
01:13 *Ei Ami Shel Ami*

ntv
10:05 Bangla Feature Film
01:05 Entertainment Show:
Baran
02:30 Drama: *Na Joo Na*
03:15 Musical Programme:
Ontorototo Aaj Gaan-er Rhuban
05:20 Talk Show:
Sompoko
06:45 Musical Programme:
Swapnoghuri
08:10 Drama: *Haal*

CHANNEL-1
09:50 *Gramenphone Trilo*
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03:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
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06:00 Rodeny
06:30 The Simpsons
07:00 Hope & Faith
07:30 Friends
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08:30 Beyond The Break
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