

## Film Screening

Film: Swapnabhumi (The Promise Land)  
Director: Tanvir Mokammel  
Venue: Bangladesh Film Centre, 160, Lake Circus, Kalabagan  
Date: March 1  
Time: 3pm, 5pm and 7pm



## Solo Sculpture Exhibition

Title: Rejuvenation of Womanhood  
Sculptor: Habiba Akhter Papiya  
Venue: Zainul Gallery, Institute of Fine Arts, DU  
Date: February 25-March 2  
Time: 12pm-7pm



## Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: Expressions of My Senses  
Artist: Anil Karim Bhuiyan  
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, House 10, Road 9, Dhanmondi  
Date: March 3-12



## Solo Exhibition

Title: Epitaph To My Soul  
Artist: Biplob Biprodas  
Venue: Radius Centre, Bay's Galleria, 57, Gulshan Avenue  
Date: February 29-March 15



# Dotara maestro Abinash Chandra Sheel remembered

## CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) arranged a memorial programme to pay tribute to the renowned dotara player Abinash Chandra Sheel at the National Music and Dance Centre, BSA on February 28. Speakers discussed the life and works of the dotara maestro at the programme. A cultural programme followed the discussion.

Director of National Music and Dance Centre, BSA, Sunil Chandra Das gave the welcome speech. Director General of BSA, Kamrul Hasan, ndc presided over the discussion. Noted folk singer Indra Mohan Rajbongshi; M. A. Khaleque and lyricist Hasan Mattiur Rahman reminisced on Abinash Sheel and his accomplishments.

Among others, Mannan Hawladar, director of Research and Publication Department, BSA; Ashutosh Sheel, elder brother of the late Abinash Sheel and Arup Kumar Sheel, son of Abinash Sheel spoke at the programme.

At the cultural programme, members of the Kanai Lal Sheel Shilpi Gosthi performed several folk songs. Ajit Kumar Sheel and Arup Kumar Sheel, sons of Abinash Sheel, played dotara at the programme.

Abinash Chandra Sheel passed



Indra Mohan Rajbongshi speaks at the programme

away on December 6 last year at the age of 54. He was the youngest son of dotara maestro and music composer Kanai Lal Sheel. He represented Bangladesh as a

member of the cultural teams performing in Canada, France, England, Sweden, Norway, Japan and South Africa.

Abinash Sheel was a Freedom

Fighter. He was also a member of the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra. He joined Bangladesh Betar as a staff artiste but later resigned from the job.

PHOTO STAR

## Street Theatre Festival '08 begins today

The weeklong Street Theatre Festival '08 starts today at the Central Shaheed Minar premises, says a press release. Eminent cultural personality Asaduzzaman Noor will inaugurate the festival at 4 pm.

Bangladesh Patha Natak Parishad (BPNP) is the organiser of the festival. More than 50 member troupes of BPNP from all over the country will stage their productions at the weeklong festival.

Noted theatre troupes of Dhaka including Aranyak Natyadal, Subachan Natya Sangsad, Theatre Art Unit, Prachyanat, Dhaka Padatik as well as Spandan from Jessore, Nabashikha from Sylhet, Bogra Theatre, Chetana Natya Gosthi from Rangpur and others will perform.

Everyday seven to eight theatre troupes will stage their productions at the festival. Everyday the programme will start from 4:30 pm and continue till 8:30 pm.

## UNESCO Book Exhibition '08 ends

## CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To mark the International Mother Language Day, National Association of UNESCO Clubs in Bangladesh arranged a two-day long book exhibition in collaboration with the UNESCO Dhaka office at the Central Public Library.

Adviser to the Ministries of Primary and Mass Education; Women and Children; Cultural Affairs Rasheda K. Chowdhury inaugurated the exhibition on February 27.

A discussion was held which was presided over by the Education Secretary M. Mamtazul Islam. Among others, UNESCO Country Director Malama Meleisea;

UNESCO Commission Secretary Dr. M. Mahmudul Hasan; Acting Editor of the daily *Ittefaq* Rahat Khan; noted litterateur Selina Hossain; President of National Association of UNESCO Clubs in Bangladesh Gias Kamal Chowdhury and Secretary General of the organisation Mahub Uddin Chowdhury spoke at the programme.

Approximately 3000 books, posters, CDs, reports and journals on education, science, drugs and HIV/AIDS, culture, women's rights, history, heritage and architecture published by UNESCO were on display at the exhibition.

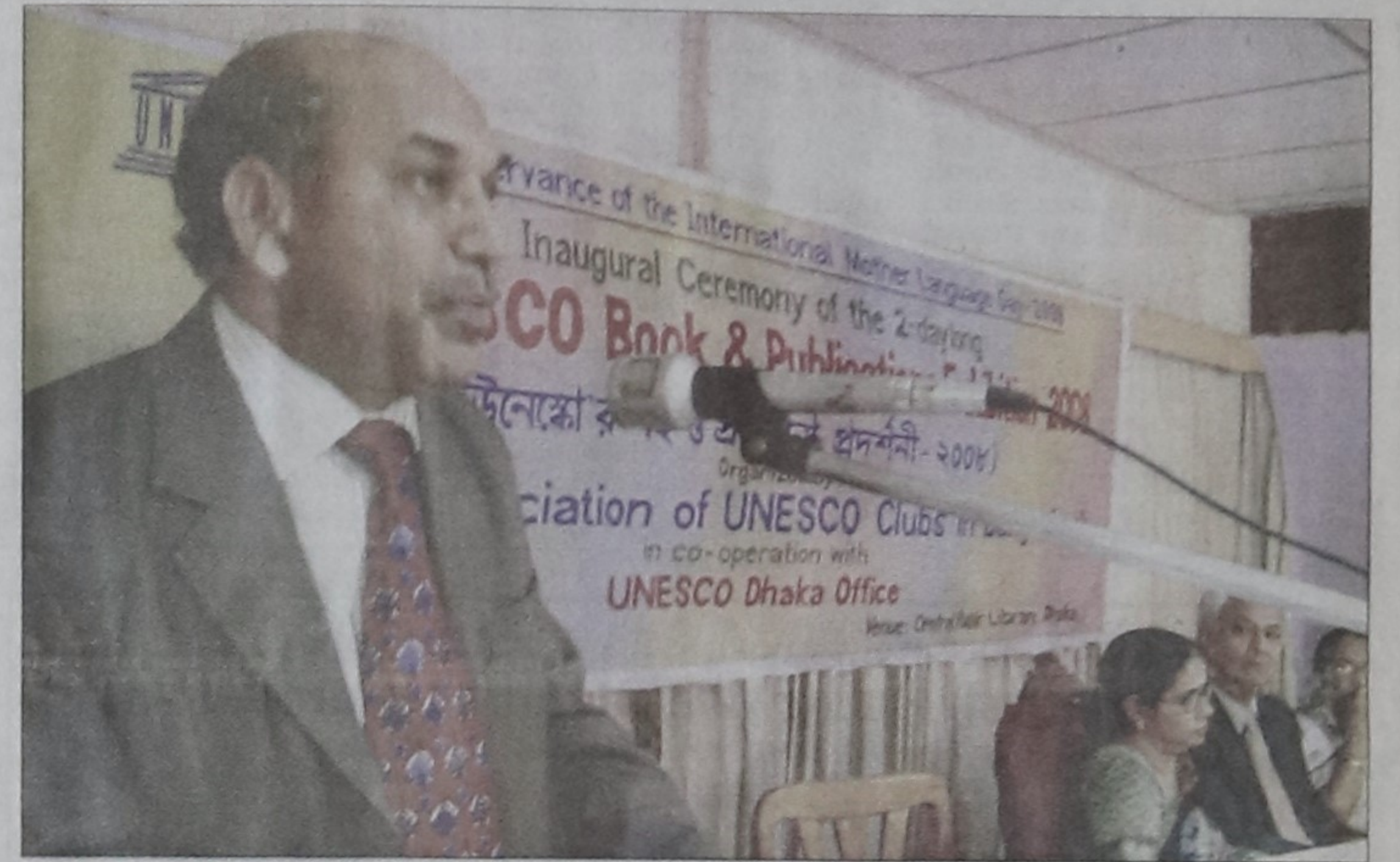
A tribute to our Languages: Collection of World Poems, published by Meghdut in association

with UNESCO was available at the exhibition, informed Mahub Uddin Chowdhury.

Several notable books on archaeological sites in Bangladesh including *Kantajee Temple: An Outstanding Monument of Late Medieval Bengal* by Professor M.M. Hoque and Dr. Seema Hoque; *Mosque Architecture in Bangladesh* by Dr. Abu Sayeed M. Ahmed and *Selected Hindu Temples of Bangladesh* by Babu Ahmed and Nazly Chowdhury were displayed at the exhibition.

An art competition for children on the theme of 'mother language' was also held as part of the exhibition.

The exhibition ended on February 28.



Education Secretary M. Mamtazul Islam speaks at the book exhibition

## Felicitation and cultural programme in Sirajganj

## OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sirajganj

"To ensure a better future for our next generation, people from all walks of life should join hands and fight corruption, as they did during the Language Movement in 1952 and the Liberation War in 1971," said Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin.

Matin was speaking as the chief guest at a reception and cultural function to felicitate notable personalities. Ekok Sangho arranged the programme recently on the occasion of its 41st anniversary at the Haimobala High School premises in Sirajganj town.

Matin further said that people from all backgrounds and creeds got involved in the Language Movement and the Liberation War. The spirit of nationalism is desperately needed now to create the ideal Bangladesh.

Referring to the issue of trial of the war criminals, the Language Movement veteran said that the

people who collaborated with the enemy during the Liberation War should be punished. We should all voice our opinions so that actions against the war criminals are taken immediately, he urged.

The list of the personalities honoured by Ekok Sangho included Abdul Matin; politician Saiful Islam; eminent journalist and cultural personality Kamal Lohani, politician and freedom fighter Anwar Hossain Ratu; M. Hafiz Uddin Khan; Professor M. Q. K. Talukder; Captain Humayun Reza; poet Mohon Raihan; Bulbul Islam; Shakila Zafar; Tauquir Ahmed; Zahid Hassan Pulok; Konokchapa; Mohammad Masud Rana; Motahar Hossain Talukder (deceased); Mirza Muraduzzaman (deceased); Amir Hossain Bhulu (deceased); Shafikul Aziz Mukul (deceased) and Abdul Latif Mirza (deceased).

Renowned artists of radio and television performed dances, songs and plays at the event.



Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin speaks at the event

PHOTO STAR

## Eric Clapton receives North Korean invite

North Korean officials have invited noted artiste Eric Clapton to play a concert in the communist state, a diplomat at the country's embassy in London said last Tuesday.

Clapton is the first western rock star to be invited to the isolated nation.

The diplomat confirmed reports in the British media that Clapton had been officially invited to Pyongyang - the first such invitation to a Western rock star to the isolated nation.

"Eric Clapton is a well-known musician and guitarist, famous throughout the world," said the official. "It will be a good opportunity for Western music to be understood better by Koreans."

Clapton's North Korean debut may not be imminent, however.

Spokeswoman Kristen Foster said the 62-year-old musician had not agreed to play any dates in the country.

"Eric Clapton receives numerous offers to play in countries around the world," she said. "There



is no agreement whatsoever for him to play in North Korea, nor any planned shows there."

North Korean authorities have long shunned rock and pop music, although Kim Jong Chol, the Swiss-educated son of national leader Kim Jong Il, is reportedly a Clapton fan.

Recently North Korea has begun to build tentative cultural ties with the West. The New York Philharmonic played in Pyongyang last Tuesday, and North Korean State Symphony Orchestra is due to perform in London and the English city of Middlesbrough in September.

The *Financial Times* reported the invitation to Clapton was in return for the Korean orchestra's British tour.

Clapton is regarded as one of rock's greatest guitarists, with a string of hits since the 1960s including *Layla*, *Cocaine* and *Tears in Heaven*.

Source: Internet

## Film in focus

## "The Counterfeiters" proves it's no fake

With recent offerings ranging from *Downfall* to *The Pianist*, it is hard to imagine a tale about the Holocaust that has not been told before.

Yet, despite its well-worn subject matter, Austrian Best Foreign Language Oscar winner *The Counterfeiters* manages to tell an unexpected and riveting story.

The film is the remarkable story of Jewish prisoners, all expert forgers or printers who were forced to take part in a Nazi operation to produce hundreds of millions of fake dollars and pounds.

In an audacious attempt to win the war, the Nazis planned to flood Britain and the U.S. with the phoney currency to weaken their economies and also help the German Reich's cash-strapped treasury. In exchange for helping to print the fake money, the inmates lived a luxurious life in the heart of the Sachsenhausen camp.

*The Counterfeiters* is the latest in a wave of German and Austrian films which address their countries' darkest hours with supreme skill and confidence.

This skill is reflected in the rising number of accolades garnered by the filmmakers both home and abroad. One example is *The Lives of Others*, which won last year's Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film with its treatment of the Stasi - or secret police - in 1980s Communist-era East Germany.

*Good Bye, Lenin!*, a comedy-drama about the fall of communism in East Germany, was another worldwide hit in 2003, winning 31 awards including the César for Best European film.

And *Nowhere in Africa*, a film about German Jewish refugees fleeing to 1930s Africa, also won the foreign-language Oscar winner Oscar in 2002.

For *The Counterfeiters* Austrian director, Stefan Ruzowitzky, who was born in Germany and whose grandparents were Nazi sympathisers; this was a movie he had to make.

"I always felt I should make a statement about this period of time," says the director, who also adapted the screenplay from *The Devil's Workshop*, a wartime memoir by Adolf Burger.

Ruzowitzky describes the film as

a "caper and adventure movie, a tale of morality set in a concentration camp".

At the heart of *The Counterfeiters* lies an agonising and complex moral dilemma. The men in the workshop know that if they succeed in their task, they will help the Nazis win the war. However, if they use delaying tactics, they risk execution.

Ruzowitzky says by using elements of suspense and drama to create a tense thriller, he hoped the film would be relevant to a younger generation who sometimes feel detached from the events of the Holocaust.

"I definitely didn't want to make a history lesson," Ruzowitzky told CNN a few days before the Oscar ceremony.

"It's impossible to make a Holocaust movie for today's audience because it's impossible for them to identify with these people. I feel their situation is too extreme.

"But in the case of the counter-

feiters, they are living under very privileged circumstances. They have enough to eat, good clothing, and they have the luxury of being able to make moral decisions so I feel it's possible for the audience to identify.

"What I wanted to do was raise universal questions, issues that still apply today."

*The Counterfeiters* know that not far from them is a concentration camp where people are starving to death and getting killed and they don't know how to deal with that morally.

"Are you allowed to play table tennis when right next to you people are being tortured to death?" he asks.

Ruzowitzky says the film also represent interesting parallels to present-day lives.

"This can be compared to our situation. We are living in rich, peaceful, wealthy communities and we know about all the poverty in the world. Can one take an all-

inclusive holiday when nearby, people are starving?"

Since winning the Oscar, Ruzowitzky has become, virtually overnight, something of a star in Austria, where opera, classical music and the theatre have traditionally had more public support than films.

"Everyone is hysterical in Austria right now. I'm having my 15 minutes," he says.

As he took the first Oscar for an Austrian film, Ruzowitzky paid tribute to past Austrian filmmakers in his acceptance speech at the Oscars. "There have been some great Austrian filmmakers working here," he added.

"Thinking of Billy Wilder, Fred Zinneman, Otto Preminger, most of them had to leave my country because of the Nazis, so it sort of makes sense that the first Austrian movie to win an Oscar is about Nazis' crimes."

Source: Internet



A scene from *The Counterfeiters*