

### Solo Exhibition

**Title:** Rhythm in Nature  
**Artist:** Professor Hamiduzzaman Khan  
**Venue:** Galleri Kaya, H 20, R 16, S 4, Uttara  
**Date:** March 7-21  
**Time:** 11am-8pm



### Festival de Théâtre Français

**March 13-20**  
**Organiser:** Alliance Française de Dacca, Natuke, Fame School and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy  
**Venue:** Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy  
**Date:** March 16, **Time:** 7pm  
**Play:** Ghar Jamai



### Solo Art Exhibition

**Title:** Unmasked  
**Artist:** Tenzin Dorji (Bhutan)  
**Venue:** Samatata Art Gallery, House 4, Road 95, Gulshan 2  
**Date:** March 14-28



### 2nd International Music Festival

**Organiser:** The Centre for Education, Creative and Performing Arts, Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO, Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation  
**Venue:** Main Auditorium, Bangladesh National Museum  
**March 15-16, Time:** 06:00 pm



## 2nd International Music Festival gets underway

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The second International Music Festival commenced on March 14 at the Shaheed Ziaur Rahman Auditorium of the National

Museum. The event is organised by The Centre for Education, Creative and Performing Arts in association with the Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO (BNCU) and Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

(ISESCO). Artistes of Bangladesh and Iran performed on the first day of the festival.

Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Adviser, Ministry of Education, Government of the People's

Republic of Bangladesh, was the chief guest at the event while the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dhaka, S. M. A. Faiz, was the special guest. Azad Rahman, Chairman of the The Center for Education, Creative and Performing Arts, delivered the opening speech followed by Dr. Md. Mahmudul Hassan, secretary of BNCU, who was called upon on stage to give the welcome speech. German artiste Elise Schmidt, Iranian Cultural Counsellor Dr. Reza Hashemi, and ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran Hasan Farazandeh also spoke at the event.

After the inaugural ceremony, the musical programme started with the rendition of the song *Gyano Jyoti jalao* written by Azad Rahman, by artistes of the host country, followed by *Milon hobe koto din-e* by Lalon artiste Manohar Shah. The Iranian artistes were next on stage, who enthralled the audience with their soulful music and strong beats. When they finally finished their performance the audience was in high spirits and marked their exit with a huge round of applause.

Artistes from India, Bangladesh, Germany and Iran will be participating in the festival, which will end today.



Artistes present the inaugural song at the programme

PHOTO: STAR

## Adivasi Cultural Festival '08

Six indigenous troupes showcase traditional art forms

JAMIL MAHMUD

On the second day (March 14) of the three-day long Adivasi Cultural Festival '08, artistes of six indigenous communities showcased their traditional art forms at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Troupes included Santal, Marma, Tanchanga, Khyang, Mandi and Cha-Janagosthi highlighted their lifestyle and ritual through the performances.

The programme started with the performance of Santal artistes. They rendered the *Kolshi* dance and the dance with *Dhol*. Traditionally Santal people arrange the *Dhol* dance at the wedding ceremony. A troupe of the bride's family and a troupe from the groom's family compete with one another through this dance. Cha-Janagosthi, minorities of the tea gardens of northern-eastern part of Bangladesh, performed song, *Jhumur* dance and traditional *Lathi* dance (dancing with a piece of wood). Usually Cha-Janagosthi arranges the *Lathi* dance to celebrate the *Dol Utsab*.

Artistes of the Mandi community rendered a group song. The theme of the song was the unification of all minorities. They also



PHOTO: STAR

Artistes of indigenous communities perform traditional art forms at the festival

performed 'Delang Mangnipinna'. *Delang Mangnipinna* is one of their popular dances, which they perform to pay tribute to the souls of the deceased.

Artistes of the Marma community staged excerpts of mythical

musical-drama 'Manari Pankhum' and *Pakha* dance. The *Pakha* dance is one of their popular dances, which they arrange in the Sangrai (new year programme).

Artistes of the Tanchanga community rendered couple of songs and performed a group dance.

Artistes of the Khyang community performed *Jhum* dance and other dances to mark New Year and *Nabanna Utsab*.

Before the cultural programme, a brief discussion was organised at the venue

## Daylong Ashtokalin Kirtan presented

ERSHAD KAMOL

A daylong *Ashtokalin Kirtan* featuring *leelas* (basic emotion of love, called *bhava-bhakti*, seeks to take an experience common to all human beings and transform it into a vehicle for salvation) done by Lord Krishna during the eight *prohars* (period) of the day was presented at Sri Sri Barodeswari Kalimata Temple, Rajarbag, Madartek.

Three professional *Kirtania* troupes, namely, Kabita Ghosh and her troupe, Polish Biswas and his troupe and Gopesh Mohanto and his troupe presented eight *leela* segments-- *Jagoran Rashodgar*, *Ghoshtho Leela*, *Shurjo Puja*, *Uttor Ghoshtho*, *Sri Krishner Roop Barmona*, *Akkhik Abhisar*, *Rash* and *Alosh*-- through music-dance-drama form.

Each segment of *leelas* began with a long duration presentation of *ashon bondona* (paying respect to guru, parents, Nitai, Gaoro and Radha-Krishna) based on *ragas* suitable for the very moment of the day. The interesting part of *ashon bondana* is improvisation of *talas* by rhythm instruments such as *kortan*, *khol* and *dhol* with the vocal.

Subsequently the narrator begins a narration of the *leela*. Doing that the narrator introduces a new story of the *leela* section in music form. Narrating



PHOTO: STAR

Kabita Ghosh and her troupe (top) and Gopesh Mohanto and his troupe perform to a receptive crowd

the story the narrator enacts the roles of different characters and develops the story in a dialogue form. Moreover, to communicate to the audience, the narrator improvises in line with the contemporary customs during the narration of myth.

USP of *Ashtokalin Leela* is incorporation of *rasa* (aesthetic sentiment), the essence of the ritualistic art form, of the characters in a particular sequence by the narrator. Throughout the performance the narrator plays with different *rasa* and *raga*.

At the break of dawn on March 14, the *Ashtokalin Kirtan* began with presentation of *Jagoran Rashodgar* featuring awakening of Radha-Krishna from the *Alosh* after feeling the ecstasy, as the six-day *Namamrito Kirtan* ended, featuring *Alosh* (sleep) followed by *Rash Leela* (ecstasy) at same time at the same venue. The *Jagoran Rashodgar* segment of the *Ashtokalin Leela* was presented by Kabita Ghosh and her troupe from Sathkira.

The *Ashtokalin Leela* presentation ended by staging *Rash* (featuring Krishna entering in the soul of Radha) and *Alosh* (featuring sleep of Radha-Krishna after experiencing ecstasy in *Rash*) sections of *leelas* by Gopesh Mohanto and his troupe at dawn, yesterday.

troupe presented *Shurjopuja Leela*, where Radha, deceiving her mother-in-law Jotila and sister-in-law Kutila, goes to meet Krishna at Brindaban promising them that she is going to Brindaban to worship the sun god.

*Shurjopuja Leela* was followed by *Uttor Ghoshtho*, in which Krishna with his companions returns home with cattle. This section of *leela* was presented by Kabita Ghosh and her troupe.

Radha narrates the beauty of Lord Krishna in the *Krishner Rupbarmona* section, presented by Polish Biswas and his troupe. The troupe also presented *Akkhik Abhisar* section of *leela*, where Radha meets Krishna at night.

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NADIA SARWAT

*Stories of Change*, a 55-minute documentary by young filmmakers Kamar Ahmad Simon and Sara Afreen that portrays the challenging lives of five successful women, was premiered on March 14 at the Russian Cultural Centre.

A panel discussion followed the screening where human rights activist Hameeda Hossain, media personality Samia Zaman and filmmaker Tareque Masud discussed several aspects of the documentary. Professor Firdous Azim, of BRAC University was the moderator of the event, which included a brief open discussion for the audience.

Produced by The Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Programme of Development Studies programme, BRAC University, *Stories of Change* is an endeavour to present an artistic documentation of the research conducted by the organisation.

Through the five protagonists of the documentary, *Stories of Change* follows the paths and lanes women have to traverse to live their dreams. Through the camera of Bayezid Kamal, the film travels through Bangladesh; through its hills, rivers and lanes, and through generations, following the narratives of Champa Chakma, Dipaly Goala, Bilkis Akhter Sumi, Kamal Rani Ray and Begum Rokeya, as they meet life's challenge, clear their path and reach their goals. The protagonists were also present at the premier show.

Champa Chakma from Rangamati, the 16 years old spin bowler of Bangladesh National Women's Cricket Team that won the ACC championship in 2007, tells her story in her simple words. How she dreamt to be the most unusual one from her context, and the struggle she

had to wage to enlist herself in the national team as a member from the ethnic minorities, comes to the audience in ariving manner.

In the same way, the documentary move on to the life of Dipaly Goala, the 22 year-old school teacher and field worker who works among the tea labourers of Lakatura tea estate, Sylhet. From a tea labourer's family, Dipaly came out to be a teacher and today dreams that her students will go up to high school one day.

Bilkis Akhter Sumi is a pioneer photojournalist from the traditionally conservative Sylhet, confident enough to push her way through the crowds with her camera. Kamala Rani Ray from Sirajganj proves herself equal to a man, maintaining the family jewellery business at Chandaikona Bazaar to look after her sisters after her father's death.

Begum Rokeya (60 years old), the eldest of the five protagonists has travelled through a long way after her marriage broke up and now is a successful social activist engaged in creating opportunities for other women like herself.

"All of the five women put a challenge to the society through their lives. Their individual efforts provide an example to many," Hameeda Hossain noted.

Samia Zaman said, "The first thing the women have to do is to drop the expectation to be the 'good girl' of society, as we find the protagonists do in the documentary."

Appreciating the idea of the documentary Tareque Masud said, "The craft of uniting the elements of research with filmmaking, in a way that both are mutually benefited, is really admirable in this documentary. We are looking forward to seeing hundreds of stories instead of five in the future."

*Stories of Change* is the debut documentary of Simon and Sara. Bari Siddiqui did background music of the documentary and Sheikh Razibul Islam is the photographer.

