

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Musical Soiree

Artists: Nargis Chowdhury, Bulbul Islam and Fahim Hossain Chowdhury
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Padatik Sangest Sangsad
Venue: National Music and Dance Centre, BSA, Date: April 4, Time: 7:15pm



Dhaka Padatik Natya Utsab '08

Organiser: Dhaka Padatik
Venue: National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: April 2-11
Time: 5:30pm everyday, April 3, Play: Nimajjan, Troupe: Dhaka Theatre



Dance Recital

Organiser: Department of Dance and Music of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: Music and Dance Centre, BSA
Date: April 1-3
Time: 6:30pm everyday



Anushilan Natya Utsab

Organiser: Anushilan Natyadal
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA
Date: April 3
Time: 7pm
Play: Rarang
Troupe: Aranyak Natyadal



Promising dancers perform at Shilpakala Academy



ERSHAD KAMOL

Though for the last three years the Department of Dance and Music, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) has been arranging dance programmes to promote promising dancers of the country, for the first time the department has arranged a talent hunt programme.

The three-day programme was inaugurated by the Cultural Adviser Rasheda K. Chowdhury at the Dance and Music Centre of the academy



A participating dancer performs on the first day of the programme (left), judges Minu Haque, Rahiza Khanom Jhunu and Deepa Khandokar evaluate the performance

on April 1. Upon evaluation of the performances, the talented dancers will be selected to perform at BSA's upcoming programmes at national and international level.

Fifty-two young dancers from different corners of country are participating at the programme. Most of the participants are from Dhaka. Promising dancers from other districts such as Chittagong, Khulna, Jessore, Kushtia, Pabna, Bogra, Jamalpur, Narayanganj, Manikganj, Patuakhali, Rajbari and Thakurgaon are also participating. A panel of seasoned dancers including Rahiza Khanom Jhunu, Minu Haque and Deepa Khandokar are evaluating the young artists.

Fifteen dancers performed on the opening day. Mukta Bhattacharya from Chittagong presented Bharatnatyam and Joshita Sanjana Urvi from Dhaka performed Kathak. Rest of the participants presented semi-classical and folk dance. Other artists performing on the opening day were: Rowshan Ara Rubi, Rumpa Das Mishu, Fatema Alam, Tuntun, Anika Fairha Mahmud, Afrida Kaisar, Farhan Mahmud

Quashfee, Tasmin Subah, Aqliza Laizu, Nusrat Zahana Nisha, Shamima Zerin, Anwesha Siraj and Shamme.

Prior to the performances a discussion was held. Director, Department of Dance and Music, Sunil Chandra Das delivered the welcome speech. Rasheda K. Chowdhury was the chief guest and dancer Golam Mostafa Khan was the special guest. The discussion was presided over by Director General (DG) of BSA, Quamrul Hassan, ndc. Dancer Shaju Ahmed also spoke at the programme.

Discussions appreciated the current initiatives taken by BSA, in particular the DG, to promote our traditions. Adviser Rasheda K. Chowdhury said, "Our rich traditional art forms are on the verge of extinction due to the aggression of satellite culture. Kudos to BSA for taking some notable initiatives to promote our culture."

DG Quamrul Hassan said, "It's our duty to mould and nurture young talents. We hope the renowned dancers will collectively help us to organise even better programmes."

Dhaka Padatik Theatre Festival begins

"Jalodash" staged on the opening day

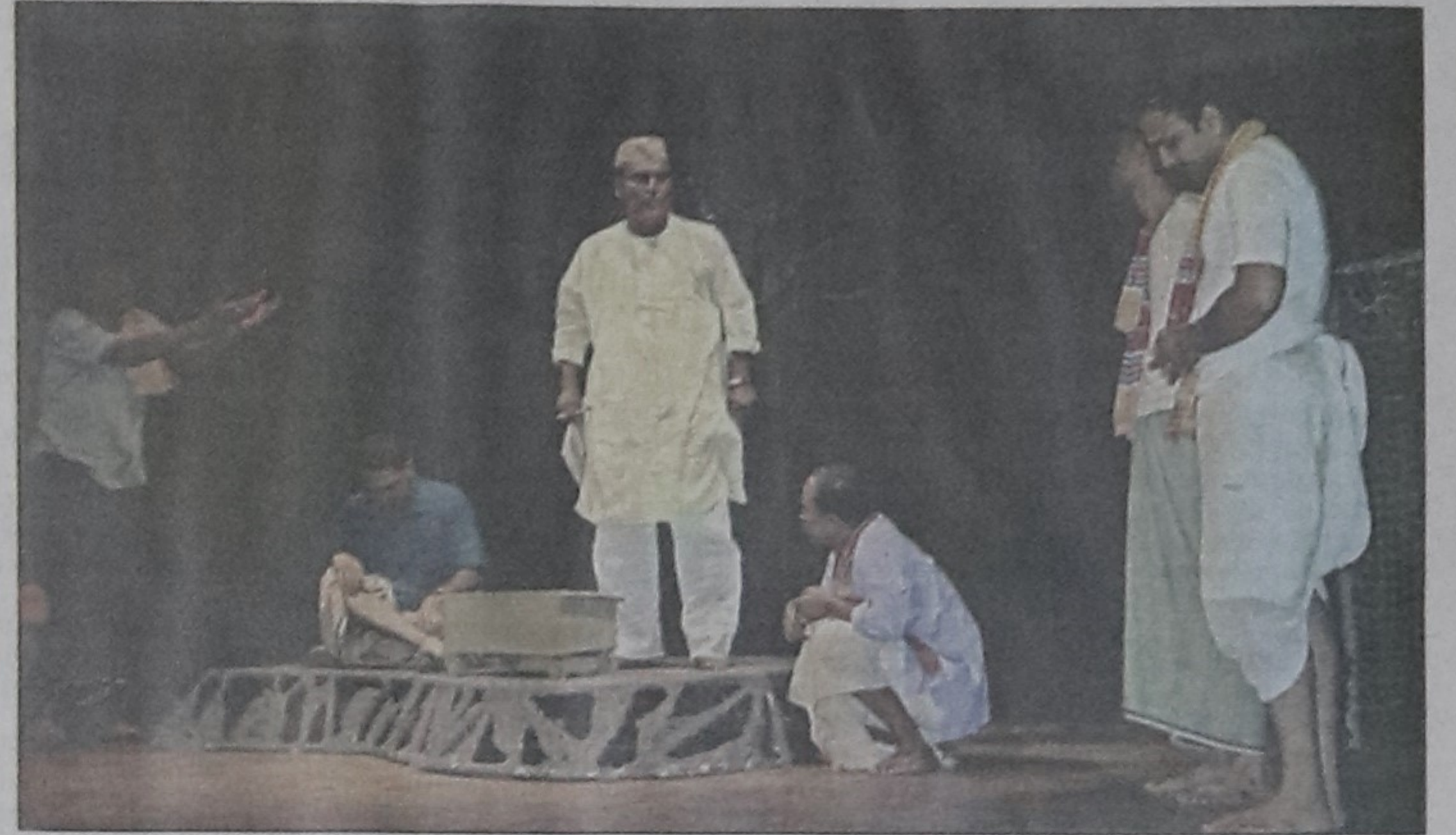
CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate its 28th anniversary, Dhaka Padatik has arranged a 10-day long theatre festival. The festival began yesterday at the National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) in which five local and two Indian troupes will stage nine plays. Eminent playwright Syed Shamsul Haq inaugurated the festival.

Plays included at the festival are: *Jalodash*, *Nimajjan*, *Kanjush*, *Chhayana* and *Shonkranti*. Indian troupes -- Anik and Loko Kristhi -- will stage four plays at the festival. Anik will stage *Samayer Aborte* and *Trityo Bashonto*. And Loko Kristhi will stage *Ihai Shotya* and *Hing Ting*.

On the opening day of the festival Dhaka Padatik staged *Jalodash*.

Written by Harun-ur-Rashid and directed by Nader Chowdhury, the play features the plight of the fisherman community and brings to light the various ways hoarders manipulate and exploit these people. *Jalodash* also touches the issue of exploitation of the poor by



Actors of Dhaka Padatik in the play *Jalodash*

several NGOs in the name of "community development".

Fundamentalism and complexity of village politics appear as an undercurrent in *Jalodash*. Many of

these unfortunate ones leave their ancestral profession, many lean towards crime while many are forced to relocate and several die as consequences.

Jalodash is a remarkable tragedy in Bangla that analyses and portrays the mode of oppression and the predicaments of the proletariat class.

Weeklong theatre festival in Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A seven-day-long theatre festival featuring plays by the prominent dramatist Golam Ambia Nuri was inaugurated in Tangail on March 29.

The festival is being held at the Bhasani Hall. Natya Forum is assisting in staging the plays. Culture Affairs Adviser

Rasheda K. Chowdhury inaugurated the festival.

Among others, Additional Deputy Commissioner of Tangail, Yousuf Ali; Superintendent of Police (SP), Tangail, Abdul Mannan and acting Chairman of Tangail Municipality, Zafar Ahmed also attended the inaugural programme.

Earlier, a colourful procession was brought out in the town.

Barnabali of Dhaka staged the play *Isa Khan* on the opening day of the festival. Shawdesh Natyadal, Tangail staged *Protikhhito Manush* on the second day of the festival (March 30).

On March 31, Tangail Coronation Dramatic Club staged *Adhpora Shanki*. Sanket Natyadal, Tangail staged *Kumarkhalir Char* on April 1 and

Tangail Theatre staged *Baktolir Porir* yesterday.

Today Nagar Natyadal, Tangail will stage the play *Nishan Boyati*. *Pahar Indrajani*, a dance-drama, will be staged on the concluding day (April 5) of the festival.

Noted cultural personalities of the country are expected to attend the discussion held every day at the festival, organisers said.

Audition round of "Channel i Shera Kantho" begins in Chittagong and Barisal

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The preliminary audition round of the talent hunt *Channel i Shera Kantho '08* will begin in Chittagong and Barisal from tomorrow (April 4). Competitors registered in these divisions should attend the audition round on April 4, 5 and 6. Twenty judges in ten booths will evaluate the contestants' performances from 9am to 5pm.

With the slogan *Gaane...Awaz tolo praney*, the talent hunt kicked off on March 8. As of now, over 80,000 contestants have registered. Along with the audiences' votes, the two iconic singers of the country -- Sabina Yasmin and Runa Laila -- will select the winner of *Channel i Shera Kantho* in the final round.

Dividing the country in seven zones, the preliminary audition round will be held individually in each zone. The ten finalists will be awarded with special prizes and Impress Audio Vision will release their audio albums.

Media personality Afzal Hossain is the project director of *Channel i Shera Kantho*.



Noted singers Sabina Yasmin and Runa Laila will select the winner of *Channel i Shera Kantho* in the final round

Asad Chowdhury, Amjad Hossain and Anwara Syed Haque receive Uro Shishu Shahitya Puroshkar '08

Eminent filmmaker, director and actor Amjad Hossain, psychiatrist and author Dr. Anwara Syed Haque and poet Asad Chowdhury have received this year's Uro Shishu Shahitya Puroshkar organised by Bangladesh Shishu Shahitya Sangstha, says a press release.

The awards have been given for the best three publications for children at the Ekushey Boimela this year. These are *Bhooter Rani Himani* by Amjad Hossain, *Tutuler Maa Gachh* by



Amjad Hossain

Anwara Syed Haque

Asad Chowdhury

Anwara Syed Haque and *Chandu Chor O Raja Chakar* by Asad Chowdhury.

In the previous years, Uro Shishu Shahitya Puroshkar were conferred to eminent

litterateurs such as poet Shamsur Rahman, Ekhlisuddin Ahmed, Rabeya Khatun, Humayun Ahmed, Selina Hossain, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, Ali Imam, Imdadul Haque Milan, Anisul Haque and others.

Bangladesh Shishu Shahitya Sangstha aims to promote children's literature in the country. The award includes a cheque for Tk 15,000, a certificate and a crest. Soft Drink Company Uro Cola is the sponsor of the award.

Helen Mirren to play Mrs. Tolstoy



Helen Mirren and Christopher Plummer will star together in *The Last Station*, a biopic of Russian lit giant Leo Tolstoy. Michael Hoffman's movie, based on the Jay Parini's 1990 novel, will cover the last year of Tolstoy's life. Plummer is playing Tolstoy and Mirren will play his wife Sofia.

Mirren and Plummer replace the previously announced Mr and Mrs Tolstoy -- Anthony Hopkins and Meryl Streep. The High profile cast also includes James McAvoy and Paul Giametti, both of whom are presumably brushing up their rolling Russian vowels. No such problem for Dame Helen, AKA Illiana Lydia Petrovna Mironova.

Source: BBC

Radharaman Utsab '08 at TSC

JAMIL MAHMUD

Students United For Research in Musical Activities (SURMA), an organisation devoted to collecting and preserving rural art forms, arranged "Radharaman Utsab '08" to draw attention to the works of the bard Radharaman Dutta (1834-1915) at the TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University (DU) on April 1.

Highlights of the programme were renditions of Radharaman songs and *Dhamail* dance by the artists of SURMA and Sunamganj Radharaman Parishad.

An essay titled *Radharaman Dutta O Tar Gaan* by Saima Ahmed was presented at the programme. The essay briefly addressed Radharaman's works, his devotion to lord Krishna and his message of eternal love. According to the essay, Radharaman was inspired by *Shahajiya Vaishnavism*. He never learnt music from masters;

yet managed to leave behind a legacy of classics that are being rediscovered by contemporary artists. *Krishnaleela Kahyo* and *Padma Puran* are among his notable works.

The essay suggests that Radharaman was also inspired by Sufism, which he expressed through his songs and works. Apparently the bard used to compose songs during prayers.

The essay also says that *Dhamail* dance, a popular performing art form of the northeastern region, was developed by the bard. *Dhamail* dance is usually performed at weddings.

Poet Sabir Ahmed Chowdhury and Professor Zaheda Ahmed discussed on the essay. Former finance minister Abul Mal Abdul Muhit was the chief guest at the programme.

Professor Mridul Kanti Chakravarty, chairman, Department of Music and Drama, DU and

director of SURMA presided over the programme. Professor Chakravarty said, "So far we have been able to collect nearly two thousand songs of Radharaman but we are speculating there are more." Professor Chakravarty has been doing a research on Radharaman for several years.

Over the last hundred years, Radharaman's songs have become an integral part of the culture and traditions of the northeastern Bangladesh. Members of SURMA and Sunamganj Radharaman Parishad rendered some of the classics written and composed by the bard including *Bhramar koiyyo giya*, *Prano shokhirey oi shon kadambo toley*, *Kalaye pranti nilo*, *Karey dekhabo moner dukkho* and *Amar bondhu doyamoy* at the programme.

Artists of the two organisations also performed *Dhamail* dance.



Artistes perform *Dhamail* dance at the programme

PHOTO: STAR