

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Baishakhi Utsab

Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy premises
Date: April 14 to April 20
Time: 4:30 pm onwards



Baishakhi Mela

Organiser: Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation
Venue: Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre
Date: April 14 to April 24
Time: 10am to 8pm



Inter University Drama Festival '08

Organiser: IUB Theatre and Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: National Theatre Stage, BSA
Time: 6:30pm
April 16, Play: Konjush, Troupe: American International University Bangladesh



Film Screening

Title: 2nd Int'l Film Week '08
Organiser: Jahangirnagar Students' Film Society (JSFS)
Venue: Central Auditorium, JU
Date: April 16-22
April 16
5:30 pm Inauguration
6:30 pm Viva Cuba (Cuba)



Ushering in 1415

Chhayanat's Borshoboron at Ramna



Chhayanat artistes sing under the old ashwath tree

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Sweltering heat has taken over and mango trees are in blossom; and with a forceful nor-wester on the last night of the Bengali year 1414, Baishakh heralded itself.

Crack of dawn, Pahela Baishakh, 1415: Like every year, artistes of Chhayanat were getting ready for their big performance. As

daylight gradually became more radiant, notes of sitar and banshi mingled with the sounds of nature.

The borshoboron programme that was initiated by Chhayanat in the '60s (and has been held every year since then except in 1971) was a breakthrough phenomenon. It started a trend -- celebrating the Bangla New Year in the urban areas. Thanks to that initiation, Pahela Baishakh now enjoys the

same kind of grandeur in the cities as other major festivals like Eid or Durga Puja.

Over the decades the borshoboron has gone through changes: the arrangement has become greater; due a bomb blast in 2001 security has been beefed up at the Ramna Botomul -- now everyone has to walk through metal detectors. The informal nature of the celebration has

changed. As the choir now includes more singers and musicians (the stage currently has six tiers with senior artistes on the top level), the coordination has become more challenging; at times certain artistes sound off-key. But borshoboron is not about the demonstration of music prowess; people from all over the city come together to celebrate their Bangaliyana -- this programme is

the platform.

As noted media personality Aly Zaker -- who recited a poem at the borshoboron -- put it, "Despite the economic stress and food crisis, people have come to usher in the New Year. Our spirits are high and we all hope 1415 will bring about positive changes in every sphere."

Under the canopy of the mammoth ashwath tree that has witnessed borshoboron for about five decades now, Chhayanat artistes started with a rendition of Hridoy majhey tomar duaar kholar dhoni. ATM Jahangir sang Shoda thako anondey. A group rendition of Bhengechho duaar, eshechho jyotirmoy followed. Under the watchful eye of Sanjida Khatun the borshoboron continued.

The audience seemed engrossed in Mita Haque's emotive rendition of Aandhar rajani pohalo. People were still pouring in through the 'Uttarayan' and 'Arunachal' gates.

Sharmin Shathi Islam sang Akashey bhorer tara. Following recitation by Bhaswar Bandyopadhyay, Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury sang Chokhey amar trishna.

Khairul Anam Shakil's rendition of Ke duronto bajao jhad-er byakul banshi highlighted the essence of the season.

Sanjida Khatun's words summed up the borshoboron, "Here we discover ourselves yet again; we come together to celebrate our heritage. To proclaim an esteemed existence in the world, a nation must be well-rooted in its culture and traditions."

That sense of patriotism ran deep as Chhayanat artistes rendered Amar shonar Bangla and everyone sang along.

Surer Dhara's year-end programme



Young dancers of Nrityanandan at the programme

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To bid farewell to the Bengali year 1414 and usher in the New Year, Surer Dhara -- a music institution headed by renowned Tagore artiste Rezwana Chowdhury Bannya -- arranged their annual cultural programme on April 13 at the Lalmatia Girls High School. Held on the last day of spring, the programme celebrated the colours and gaiety of the season. The programme also marked the 15th anniversary of the organisation.

The venue was crowded as the programme started with the beats of dhol. The students of Surer Dhara settled on the stage under an old ashwath tree. The artistes were singing a Tagore song, Shob dibi ke shob dibi. Bashontey phool gantho -- another chorus rendition followed. Directed by Sharmila Bandyopadhyay, artistes of Nrityanandan dance school

presented a performance.

In her welcome speech, Rezwana Chowdhury Bannya said, "Surer Dhara arranges its annual cultural programme with a particular theme. Themes of programmes in earlier years were Tagore's musical dramas Balmiki Pratibha and Taser Deshi celebrating hundred years of patriotism in Bangla songs; songs of five poets; the evolution of Bengali songs in the last two hundred and fifty years and more. This year's theme is 'Rangiey diye jao jabar agey', a musical farewell to the ending year and welcoming a new one."

Chastened by legendary Tagore artiste Kanika Bandyopadhyay, Surer Dhara started its journey in 1992. Surer Dhara follows the ideologies of gurmukhi bida.

The programme included a wide range of songs on spring like Orey bhai Phagun, Aailo rituraj Bashontey, Keno mono bon-e maloti, Phagun hawaye hawaye, Aji dokhina duar kholo and more.

Alongside the young students of the institution, seasoned artistes Yaqub Ali Khan, Nasima Shaheen, Abu Bakar Siddiqui, Timir Nandi and others performed as guest artistes. Noted recitor Bhaswar Bandyopadhyay read from Tagore's Borsho Sheshey.

Between the songs and dances, eminent educationist Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed; artist Mustafa Monwar and the Norwegian Ambassador to Bangladesh Ingebjorg Stofring spoke at the programme.

With two big screens set in different corners of the venue, even those at a distance could enjoy the programme. There were stalls offering pitha and other refreshments. In the past few years the annual programme of Surer Dhara has become quite popular in this part of the city.

Warid Telecom was the sponsor of the event. Channel i aired the programme live.

Wrishiz Shilpi Gosthi's New Year celebration

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate the Bengali New Year, Wrishiz Shilpi Gosthi arranged a lively programme at the Shishu Park entrance on April 14. Mili Rahman, widow of the Birsrestha Matu Rahman, inaugurated the event.

The programme was dedicated to the Language Movement veteran and poet Mahbubul Alam Chowdhury and playwright Selim Al Deen. Singer Nargis Parveen; composer Pranab Ghosh; musician Abinash Chandra Sheel; writer Pranab Bhatta; journalist Bazlur Rahman; singer Sanjib Chowdhury and film actor Manna were also remembered at the programme.

Wrishiz honoured artiste Bipul

Bhattacharya of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, Band group Renaissance and Shanu Banerjee, general secretary of Cultural organisation Samaloy of India in the event.

Eminent folk artiste Mina Barua, artistes of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra Bipul Bhattacharya, Namita Ghosh, Malay Kumar Ganguli, Dr. Arup ratan Chowdhury, folk singers Kalam Boyati, Idris Boyati, Rashid Boyati, Araj Ali Boyati and others performed at the event along with the Ganasangeet artiste Fakir Alamgir of Wrishiz. Wrishiz's has been holding New Year special programme featuring music, dance and recitation at the same venue for the last 26 years. Baishakhi TV aired this year's programme live.



Fakir Alamgir (L) performs with the Band Renaissance

'Nokia Fusion Baishakhi Concert' at Gulshan Youth Club



Arnob (R) and James sing at the concert

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate Pahela Baishakh, Rupkotha Productions Ltd in association with Nokia, organised a concert at the Gulshan Youth Club ground on April 14.

Titled 'Nokia Fusion Baishakhi Concert', the event kicked off in the noon.

The first bands to perform were 'Karnival' and 'Biloy' -- both members of the Nokia Independents Artists Club (IAC). The IAC is an initiative by Nokia to promote upcoming music talents in Ban-

gladesh.

Bands 'Yaatri' and 'Oronyo' performed next. 'Raaga' performed their original song Brishiti. The band also sang the traditional Baishakhi song Esho hey Baishakh. 'Raaga' wrapped up the performance with their popular song Kothaye.

Artcell performed their songs - Chileykothar shepai, Bhul jonmo, Dukkhilo bilash, Odekha shorgo and Poth chola. The band also performed a cover of the Nazrul Sangeet Durgom giri katar moru.

Next on the stage was Arnob.

Arnob opened his performance with the song Onek duar, the opening song of his latest album Doob. Other songs performed by Arnob included Tomar jonyo and one of his most popular compositions Sheyebosheyachhey.

The concert also included a performance by Miles. Miles opened their performance with the song Chand tara. Other songs performed by Miles included Jatiyo sangeet-er ditiyo line, Neela, Dhiki dhiki and Firiye dao.

The last performer of the day was James. The rocker opened his

performance with the song Diwana diwana. James also sang Mira bai, Pagla hawar torey, Goponey priyar kachhey and Bhigi bhigi.

Apart from music, the audience was also entertained by shap khela and putul naach. Traditional food -- panta, ilish, pitha, Payesh and more were also available at stalls.

The event was well-attended one. Despite the scorching heat music enthusiasts thronged the venue.

Rtv and Radio Foorti were the media partners of the event.



The Mangal Shobhajatra brought out by the students and teachers of IFA (Institute of Fine Arts) drew people from all walks of life. With masks and huge papier-mâché creatures the rally turned into a carnival