

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Musical Soiree

Title: Barshay
Organiser: Dakkhini
Rabindra Sangeetangan
and Bangladesh
Shilpakala Academy
Venue: National Music and
Dance Centre, BSA
Date: July 19, Time: 7pm



Theatre

Play: Khona
Troupe: Subachan Nattya
Sangsad
Venue: Experimental
Theatre Stage, BSA
Date: July 18 and 23
Time: 7pm



Exhibition of the Art of Nakshi Kantha

Celebrating 30th anniversary
of Aarong
Title: Stories of Stitches
Venue: Plaza, National Art
Gallery, BSA
Date: July 16-19 (Inauguration
on July 15)
Time: 4:30 pm



Musical Soiree

Title: Srotar Ashor
Artists: Chandana
Majumder, Shamin Shathi
Islam, Nirhor Chowdhury and
Alakananda Subrita
Organiser: Chhayana
Venue: Chhayana Sangskriti
Bhaban
Date: July 17, Time: 7:15pm



In Conversation Actor-turned-director Mahfuz Ahmed on his current projects



Tarin (left) and Mahfuz in a scene from *Neel Molat*

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Popular actor Mahfuz Ahmed will be seen in the TV play *Neel Molat* tonight at 12 am. During a brief conversation, the actor talked to *The Daily Star* (TDS) about the play, his recent activities, plans and more.

TDS: Despite being one of the most popular actors, currently you are working less. Any particular reason behind this?

Mahfuz: No matter how talented a person is, one has his/her limitations. Sometimes, you find repetition in your own work. Even Rabindranath Tagore was afraid of this. I'm not working much as an excuse to cover my limitations.

TDS: You are directing the serial *Amader Nurul Huda* at present. Several other TV plays directed by you were well appreciated. What

are your next ventures?

Mahfuz: Currently I'm considering two new serials -- *Tomader Dua-e Bhalo Achhi Maa* and *Choita Pagal*. The former is based on the tragedies in the lives of expatriate Bangladeshis. I'm also doing something for the next Eid. After that I'll start working on the projects.

TDS: On the occasion of ATN Bangla's anniversary, special TV play *Neel Molat* will be aired tonight, with you in a central role. Then there will be the famous Mahfuz-Tarin pair after a long interval. Tell us more about the play.

Mahfuz: The audience will have to find out more on the play tonight. I enjoy working with director Chayanika Choudhury. I want to work more with her.

TDS: Apparently there is some tension between you and writer-

director Humayun Ahmed. You are one of his favourite actors, but recently he has expressed some resentment about you in one of his writings. Besides, he is casting Zahid Hassan in his major project now. What is your reaction?

Mahfuz: Where there is love there will be resentment. Humayun Ahmed has expressed as much resentment as the affection he has shown for me previously. Perhaps it is my limitation that I could not work with him.

TDS: You are spending more time abroad, participating in events there. But apparently you do not like it...

Mahfuz: I think it's hard for us to enjoy leisure in the country. After working tirelessly for a stretch, I feel like taking some time out in a place where no one knows me. I need some exclusive "me time". And that'd be the reason.

Eleventh anniversary of ATN Bangla

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

ATN Bangla, the first satellite TV channel in Bangladesh, turns twelve on July 15. Starting its journey in 1997, the channel keeps on contributing to the media through its various activities such as telecasting programmes in Europe, converting into digital from analogue, introducing the concept of "mega serials" in the country and even achieving A prestigious Emmy award.

On the occasion of its 11th anniversary, ATN Bangla will air special programmes today. *ATN Desher Aaina*, a musical programme featuring *Gambhira* songs will be aired at 10:30 am. Featuring a musical troupe from Chapainawabganj, the programme is directed by Sharful Alam. Through the typical musical conversation between *Nana* (grandfather) and his *Nati* (grandson), the successful journey of ATN Bangla will be illustrated in the show.



Zahid Hassan (left) and Mou in *Swapnopuron*

Directed by Fakhrul Abedin and Faisal Mahmud and hosted by Munni Saha, live Talk Show *Hot Seat* will be aired at 11:05 am.

Special telefilm *Swapnopuron* will be aired at 2:40 pm. Written

by Imdadul Haque Milon and directed by Zahid Hassan, the telefilm features Zahid Hassan, Mou and Tomalika in the lead roles.

Special TV play *Look-alike* will



A scene from the play *Look-alike*

be aired at 8pm. Written by Anisul Haque and directed by Shakal Ahmed, the play features Tauquir Ahmed, Moushumi Biswas, Dilara Zaman and others.

Special programmes also

include a variety show *Paanch Phoron*, a production of Fagun Audio Vision directed by Sanjida Hanif; TV play *Neel Molat* written by Rounok Hasan and directed by Chayanika Choudhury, and more.

Asaduzzaman Noor speaking at the inaugural programme of the newly built 20 Miles-The Studio. Located at Ashulia, the facility is said to be equipped with state of art infrastructure, including online editing, offline editing and more with 24-hour electricity support, according to a press release. A sister concern of Asiatic Marketing Communications Limited, the studio was inaugurated recently. Currently the shooting of *Sisimpur* is on at the studio. The ceremony was attended by celebrities and media personalities. Aly Zaker, Sara Zaker, Jayanto Chattyopadhyay, among others, spoke on the occasion.

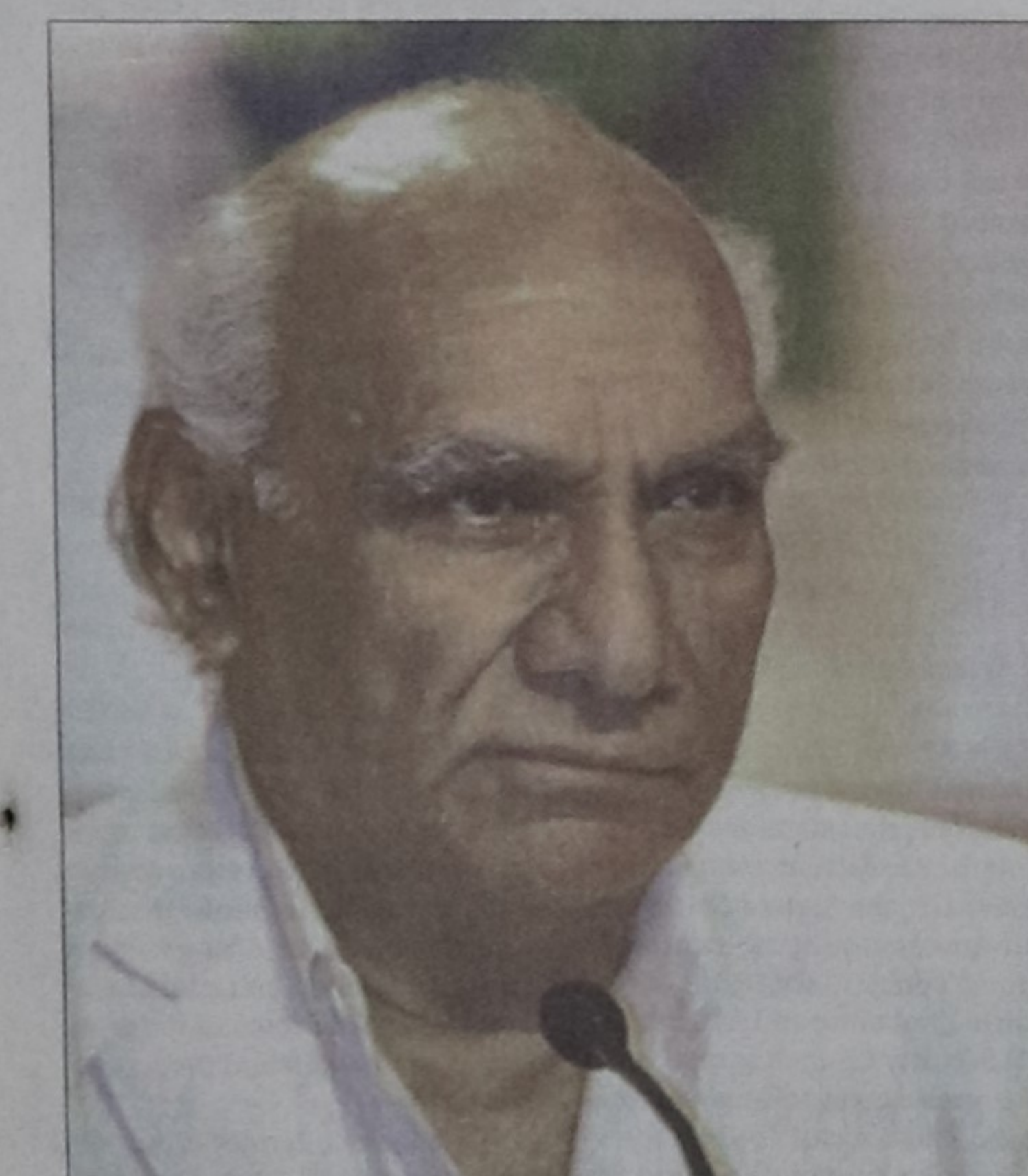


Shakespeare recovered

A 17th-century Shakespeare volume valued at \$30 million, stolen from a university a decade ago, has been recovered. The Associated Press reported. On Tuesday police officers in England arrested a man in connection with the theft. The arrest followed an incident two weeks ago when a man brought the book, a First Folio from 1623, the first collection of Shakespeare's plays, to the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington to have it authenticated. Members of the library staff alerted the F.B.I. The volume had been taken in 1998 from the Durham University library, along with six other works. It remains at the Folger, but plans are being made to return it.

Source: The New York Times

French honour for Yash Chopra



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

From a boy who would go about barefoot in Jalandhar, Punjab (India) to recipient of France's highest civilian honour is definitely a defining moment for Bollywood's undisputed "King of Romance" Yash Chopra.

And why not? After nearly half a century in Hindi commercial cinema as a director and producer, 75-year-old Chopra is just the fourth Indian to receive the "Officier de la Legion d'Honneur", the French government's highest award whose past winners are master director Satyajit Ray, super star Amitabh Bachchan and mel-

ody queen Lata Mangeshkar. And when Chopra stepped forward to receive the honour at a function here from the French Ambassador to India Jerome Bonnafont on the evening of July 5, the veteran maker of hit romantic movies was clearly overwhelmed by the occasion.

"I'm overwhelmed by this honour. It has been a long journey for me in the film industry. It's a humbling experience for a boy who used to walk barefoot in Punjab dreaming of making it big one day in the industry," said Chopra who gave the audience hit films like *Silsila*, *Deewar*, *Lamhe*, *Veer Zara*, *Dil To Pagal Hai*, *Kabhi Kabhi, Darr* and *Chandni*.

Conferring the honour, Bonnafont said Yash Chopra has "shaped today's Indian film industry and he is the embodiment of Indian cinema and Bollywood in particular and has always been helpful in building bridges between Indian and French entertainment industries."

The director-producer, who is also the founder of Bollywood's major production house Yash Raj Films, has shot several of his films in Paris, the most recent being *Jhoom Barabar Jhoom*.

Chopra has seen the best of times and worst of times in his career. For instance, the latest movies from Yash Raj Films including *Tashan* and *Thoda Pyaar Thoda Magic* did not do well at the box office. But Chopra is unfazed. "If my films aren't doing well, there must be something wrong with them. I won't blame the audience for that."

"The audience today is too discerning to be led up the garden path by attractive packaging. Stars and technology cannot guarantee the success of a film. We need good stories and scripts," said Chopra.

The filmmaker is not the one to be distracted by the success or otherwise of a film. "One learns from mistakes and moves on," he said.

Chopra said he wanted to "experiment" with films like *Chak De India* and *Dhoom* and it clicked. But not all experiments succeed all the time, he is quick to add. And he takes everything in his stride. It is this attitude which has seen him survive in the cut-throat competition of Bollywood for 49 years.

Even at the happiest hour of his life, Yash Chopra cannot forget his past and his brother B.R. Chopra. "But for my brother, I would not have been here talking to you," he said when the French Ambassador pinned the medal on his chest.

Yash Chopra said it was B.R. Chopra who brought him to Mumbai and today was being missed due to ill health.

Cultural programme highlighting community health service

SHANTIMOY CHAKMA, Rangamati

Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser, Barrister Debashish Roy said that many areas in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) remain untouched by development and people of these areas are deprived from all kinds of government facilities, including healthcare, water supply and sanitation. Roy said this at a certificate giving ceremony for the local Community Health Service Workers. He was the chief guest at the function that also included a cultural programme. The event was held at the Rangamati Tribal Culture Institute.

Roy said, "Healthcare in CHT is not satisfactory, as it does not always reach the people at the grassroots level." "Healthcare is one of the fundamental rights. But the scenario in CHT is different. Around two-third of the people living in remote, inaccessible areas -- mostly the indigenous communities -- in CHT are deprived of nominal healthcare," he added.

Expressing his satisfaction over the ongoing UNDP-RHDC (Rangamati Hill District Council) joint programme, providing healthcare, Roy said that this initiative would help reduce

malaria in the area and can save many lives.

He urged the Community Health Service Workers (CHSW) to generate awareness on proper healthcare among the people as part of the initiative.

Among others, Chairman of CHT Regional Council, Jyotirindra Bodhipriya Larma; acting Rangamati Brigade Commander Lt Col Md. Masud Razzak and Deputy Commissioner Md. Nurul Amin also spoke on the occasion.

In 2006, UNDP in a collaborative step with the Rangamati Hill District Council started the healthcare project to ensure basic health service to the people in the hilly region. Primarily, six upazilas -- two each in Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari -- have been included under the programme.

Some 100 women (in first and second bases) have been trained on community health service and they have already treated around 11,000 malaria patients in the hill districts, according to UNDP sources.

Later, a cultural programme was held at the same venue where indigenous artistes performed traditional songs and dances.

Million dollar babies for Angelina

Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie has given birth to twins, a boy and a girl, her doctor at a hospital in southern France said on Sunday.

Oscar winner Jolie, 33, had the twins by caesarean section on Saturday evening at the Lenval hospital on the glamorous Promenade des Anglais waterfront drive in Nice. Actor Brad Pitt, the twins' father, was at her side.

The girl, named Vivienne Marcheline, weighed 2.27 kg (5 lbs) while her brother, Knox Leon, weighed 2.28 kg. Marcheline was the first name of Jolie's mother, also an actress, who died of cancer last year.

"The parents and the babies are in excellent health. Everything is fine," Jolie's doctor, Michel Sussmann, told Reuters. He said the c-section had been planned for a long time but the date was brought forward "for medical reasons."

The doctor said Jolie was under epidural and was able to speak to a "perfectly calm" Pitt, 44, during the birth.

"They were very happy," Sussmann said. Asked what Pitt was doing during the birth, he said: "He was looking at what I was doing. He was my assistant. No, that's a joke."

Jolie arrived at the Lenval hospital in late June by helicopter from the Provence villa where she and Pitt had been staying with their four other children -- Maddox, Pax, Zahara and Shiloh.

A frenzied crowd of photographers and camera crews camped outside the building on Sunday, sweating in the humid heat.

Eager for the opportunity to promote himself and his city, Nice Mayor Christian Estrosi arrived at the hospital to sign the birth certificates in a smart suit and wearing full make-up for TV interviews despite the sweltering conditions.

"I congratulate the happy parents, the most famous couple in



Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt

the world, who have chosen our city for this happy event... The newborns are, history will not forget it, real Nicols, citizens of Nice," a beaming Estrosi said, holding up the birth certificates in a blaze of camera flashes.

News of the celebrity births spread like wildfire in the streets and markets of Nice, where residents and tourists were keen to congratulate and advise the A-list parents.

Newspaper *Nice Matin*, which broke news of the birth on Sunday, reported the couple had sold exclusive rights to the first photographs of the twins to an unnamed U.S. magazine for \$11 million and would give the money to charity.

Canadian tourist Heather

Langfield said she was shocked at the hype surrounding the birth. "It's ridiculous. It's just two people that just had two kids and they're making far too much out of it," she said.

The celebrity couple, known in the media as "Brangelina", moved into a 17th century villa in Provence, France, earlier this year, with paparazzi descending on the village of Correns when news of their arrival leaked out.

Jolie, star of current hit movie "Wanted", and Pitt, of "Ocean's Eleven" fame, went public with their relationship after acting together in the 2005 film "Mr. & Mrs. Smith."

Source: Reuters