

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Story of Stitches: The Art of Nakshi Kantha**  
Exhibition celebrating 30 years of Aarong  
Venue: Plaza, National Art Gallery, BSA  
Date: July 16-29  
Time: 11am-7pm, (Fridays 3pm-7pm)



**Classical Music**  
Artists: Haripada Sutradhar (vocal), A. K. Chakravarti (vocal) and Mritunjay Das (flute)  
Organiser: Shudho Sangeet Proshar Goshthi  
Venue: SEL Centre, 29, West Panthopath  
Date: July 31  
Time: 7pm



**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
Title: Perception II  
Artist: Subrata Das  
Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi  
Date: July 25-August 6  
Time: 9am-12pm and 5pm-8pm (Saturdays 5pm-8pm)



**Film Screening**  
Title: Russian Film Diversity  
Organiser: Dhaka University Film Society  
Venue: Russian Centre of Science and Culture, House 51, Road 7, Dhanmondi  
Films: House of Fools  
Director: Andrei Konchalovsky  
Diamond Arm  
Director: Leonid Gaidai  
Date: July 28, Time: 3:00 pm onwards



## Rain songs of 'Panchokobi' at National Museum



Clockwise (from top-left) Papia Sarwar sings and Sadi Mohammad on the harmonium, Shaheen Samad and Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury perform at the programme



JAMIL MAHMUD

Cultural organisation Dakkhini Rabindra Sangeetangan in association with Connecting Dots and Sampri arranged a musical soiree titled *Aapon Gaaney Matao Bhuban* at the Shaheed Zia Auditorium, National Museum on July 26. Noted singers performed songs on rain at the programme.

Tagore singer Fahim Hossain Chowdhury started with his rendition of four songs including *Strabongagon toley*.

Educationist Mustafa Nurul Islam inaugurated the programme. Though prior to the performances the organisers informed that the programme would feature songs composed by the 'Panchokobi' (Rabindranath Tagore, Dwijendra Lal Roy, Rajanikant Sen, Atul Prasad Sen and Kazi Nazrul Islam), the artists mostly selected Rabindra and

Nazrulsongs.

Artiste Shaheen Samad sang three Nazrul Sangeet and a song of Atul Prasad. Her repertoire included *Megh medur baroshaye*, *Rumjhun rumjhun* and *Neend nahiaakhipatey*.

Between the performances, artiste Jayanto Chattopadhyay's narratives from backstage helped the audience understand the context of the songs.

Artiste Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury and Auditi Mohsin rendered Rabindra Sangeet. Their renditions included *Godhuli gaganey meghe*, *Ke tumi momo anganey*, *Ogo shaotali chihely* and *Aaji jharer raatey*. They also rendered songs of Rajanikant and Atul Prasad.

It should be mentioned that among the five poets, Rajanikant Sen never wrote a song on rain, though Mahiuzzaman rendered *Aami akriti adham* at the programme. Noted Tagore singer Sadi

Mohammad was the next performer. Sadi's voice sounded a bit of dimmed at the programme. Perhaps, that's why he rendered only two songs -- *Moh-e-ki dwidha rekhey geley choley* and *Borsha aailo*.

Next, Sadi invited renowned Tagore singer Papia Sarwar to come to the stage. Papia Sarwar rendered two songs -- *Aaj kichhutei jay na* and *Bondhu raho shathe*. Her impeccable rendition of the latter accompanied by violin, made an impression on the audience.

Noted Nazrul singer Khairul Anam Shakil was the last to perform at the programme. He rendered two Nazrul Sangeet -- *Shonar-o hindoley* and the overly familiar *Shaono raatey jodi*. The programme wrapped up with a rendition of the Atul Prasad song, *Srabon jhulatey badal dolatey*, rendered by Shakil.

## Udichi Shilpi Goshthi remembers Samudra Gupta

GOLAM MOSTAFA JIBON, Sirajganj

A musical soiree was held in Sirajganj town last Friday, remembering eminent poet Samudra Gupta, who passed away recently.

Udichi Shilpi Goshthi arranged the programme and Sree Kamol Sangeet Bidyalay provided financial assistance. The programme was held at Sirajganj University College auditorium.

Ferdous Robin, district correspondent of Channel-i, Principal of Sree Kamol Sangeet Bidyalay and Vice-president of Udichi Shilpi Goshthi inaugurated the programme.

A one-minute-silence was observed in honour of Samudra Gupta.

Ashif Imran, a local artiste performed songs on different



Samudra Gupta

themes including love, nature and patriotism at the programme. During the songs, child artistes danced on the stage.

The programme was conducted and instructed by Moinul Islam Limon, Sheikh Mahmudul Momen Shamim and Hirok Goon.

## Shilpa Shetty turns producer, alcohol brand ambassador

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Actress Shilpa Shetty may have been absent from Bollywood limelight for quite some time but she says it does not mean that her career is not going anywhere. In fact, according to the actress, her hands are full with assignments. Shetty has joined the likes of Bollywood superstars Shahrukh Khan and Aamir Khan to turn producer to make "good commercial cinema", doing a movie with Sunny Deol, launched a vodka brand and her own DVD containing lessons in Yoga, preparing for a Hollywood film and waiting for the telecast of her next television show.

Draped in a red dress, the tall actress, who was in Delhi last week to become the brand ambassador of a vodka brand, said that this is the first time an Indian woman would be endorsing alcohol and she liked the idea.

Replying to a question, Shetty said that while she was not encouraging the youth to take up drinking, "I would definitely champion the cause of responsible drinking." The questions she

however did not answer is that who decides "responsible drinking" and how she can preach Yoga and endorse an alcohol brand at the same time.

Be that as it may, the actress said she was launching her home production whose first offering would be a romantic comedy to be directed by Manish Jha to go on the floor later this year.

Shetty said it was wrong to conclude that she is turning a film producer because her career as an actress was going nowhere. She insisted her experience as an actress would come in handy to make her home banner a successful name in the film industry.

The actress denied reports that she was leaving Bollywood and settling abroad, particularly in Britain where she became a hit after her victory in the controversial reality TV show "Big Brother".

"I was offered to host TV shows, films and serials in the UK. But I could not devote my full time there because of my commitments in Bollywood", Shetty said.

Also denying that she is going to act in a James Bond movie, the actress said she preferred to work in India and live like a first class citizen rather than as a struggling

actor abroad.

"My last films 'Metro' and 'Apne' were successful and people recognised me as an actor. What more could I want?" she said.

However, what Shetty did admit was that she was going to feature in a Hollywood project but declined to disclose details of it as it was at scripting stage.

She said she had rejected several international project offers and returned to Bollywood to further her career here.

Her next movie is "The Man" opposite Sunny Deol and she plays the role of a violin player. She is taking lessons in playing what she terms as the "toughest" musical instrument.

A fitness freak, Shetty said her Yoga DVDs have drawn an "overwhelming" response in Britain where "celebrity fitness DVD is a norm".

She said Yoga was the main reason behind her glow and fitness. "I had suffered spondylitis a few years ago because of too much stress and overwork and routine practice of Yoga helped me overcome that problem", she added.



Shilpa Shetty

## Saving Pompeii from the ravages of time and tourists

Citing threats to public security and to the site itself, the Italian government has for the first time declared a yearlong state of emergency for the ancient city of Pompeii.

Nearly 2,000 years after Mount Vesuvius buried Pompeii under pumice and steaming volcanic ash, some 2.6 million tourists tramp annually through this archaeological site, which is on UNESCO's World Heritage list.

Frescoes in the ancient Roman city, one of Italy's most popular attractions, fade under the blistering sun or are chipped at by souvenir hunters. Mosaics endure the brunt of tens of thousands of shuffling throngs and sneakers. Teetering columns and walls are propped up by wooden and steel scaffolding. Rusty padlocks deny access to recently restored houses, and custodians seem to be few and far between.

This month the government drafted a retired lawman, Renato Profili, the former prefect of Naples, to map out a strategy to combat neglect and degradation at the site. Profili has been given special powers for one year so he can bypass the Italian bureaucracy and speedily bolster security and stop the disintegration.

The hope is that many houses and villas now closed to the public and exposed to looting and vandalism will soon be opened and protected.

"Pompeii is a calling card of Italy for foreigners, and it's important



A visitor at the temple of Apollo in the ancient city of Pompeii.

that their impression be positive," said Italy's culture minister, Sandro Bondi. He directed Profili to crack down on "blatant abuses" like unlicensed tour guides and the souvenir vendors who aggressively approach tourists.

Bondi also said that Profili would explore "new forms of innovative management" in which private sponsors might be recruited to finance improvements.

Government red tape is blamed for some of the inefficiencies at

Pompeii. "If I have to fix a broken wall," said Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, the superintendent of the ruins, "I first have to put out a tender for an architect to evaluate the damage."

"Then I have to put out a tender for a company to fix the wall. Then I have to see if I have enough money in my budget to pay for the repair, and then finally the work begins."

"If he can bypass all that, it would be very positive."

"Is there an emergency? I don't know, I've always been very clear

about the problems at Pompeii," Guzzo added. "The situation here is so immense that ordinary means haven't been able to control it."

The 109-acre ruins, about an eighth the size of Central Park (50 more acres or so are underground), are severely understaffed. Workers are prone to wildcat strikes that can leave visitors standing outside locked gates. Local criminal organisations must constantly be kept at bay when bids are solicited for maintenance work or for oper-

ating public concessions at the site.

Still, Guzzo said he had made some progress since he assumed his post in 1995. Visitors now have access to 35 percent of the ruins, compared with 14 percent when he first arrived. He admitted, however, that this improvement was "a drop in the bucket."

Ticket-sale proceeds and financing from the European Union and local governments have not met Pompeii's bottomless financial needs. "Modern cities are constantly plagued by unforeseen expenses," said Giuseppe Proietti, the culture ministry's secretary general. "Just put that in the context of an enormous ancient site exposed to the elements."

That chronic shortfall has brought suggestions that investors should operate Pompeii. The ruins should "be put in a condition where people can best appreciate their beauty because that's money to the area," said Antonio Irlando, an architect and the president of a local conservation group that meticulously monitors Pompeii's cracking walls, falling stones, abandoned work sites and flaking intonaco, the thin layer of plaster on which a fresco is painted. "This is an area with high unemployment and that shouldn't be the case, because it has an immense patrimony."

Source: Internet