

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

### Musical Soiree

Title: Songs and Poems of the Four Winds  
Artist: Shamila Roy  
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dacca, 26, Mirpur Rd, Dhanmondi  
Date: January 5  
Time: 6:30pm



### Group Drawing Exhibition

Title: Rhythmic Lines  
Venue: Asiatic Gallery of Fine Arts, Nimtoli, Ramna  
Date: January 3-15  
Time: 12pm-8pm



### Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Stimulated Luminescence  
Artist: Juneer Kibria  
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27, Dhanmondi  
From January 5-14 at 12-8pm



### Photography Exhibition

Condolence for the people of Gaza  
Organiser: Iranian Cultural Centre  
Venue: ICC, H 54, Rd 8/A, Dhanmondi  
From December 30-January 9 at 9am-5pm



## Hopes, goals and ambitions

In conversation with Close Up 1 champion Liza

MAINUL HASSAN

"And the winner is...Liza."

"When I heard my name being announced, it took a while to register. I went running to the MC Putul Apu and asked her if she was calling me," said Sania Sultana Liza, recalling the moment when she was crowned the winner of "Close Up 1 2008". The grand finale was aired live from Bangladesh-China Friendship Convention Centre.

The Daily Star caught up with the young singer recently. Liza talked about her experiences in "Close Up 1", her ambitions and more.

"I had an inherent interest in music since childhood. Noticing that, my father encouraged me to take music lessons. I started training at the age of seven. My first teacher was M.A. Hye. He taught me the basics," said Liza.

"When I saw the first season of 'Close Up 1', I was simply amazed. I made up my mind that I'd take part in the contest," she added.

"I couldn't take part at the second 'Close Up 1' but when the third season of the talent hunt approached, I was



An ecstatic Liza (left) waves at fans and well-wishers after winning the "Close Up 1 2008" title.

"I can remember the day clearly. My SSC exams were on. It was on April 9, 2008 and I had my Accounting exam. I rushed to Amir International Hotel in Mymensingh where the 'Close Up 1' auditions were being held, straight from the exam. It was already 4 pm and my turn was in the morning, so I

had already missed my turn. That's not all. By that time the auditions were almost over, and people at the gates were reluctant to let anyone in.

"After waiting for a while, I was frustrated and just wanted to go home but my father said, 'you've waited this long for this opportunity. You can certainly wait a little longer.'"

"For almost an hour I was standing outside, then they let me in and I auditioned. And that's how it all began," said Liza about her initiation in "Close Up 1".

Liza continued: "I'll always cherish my days at 'Close Up 1'. I had the greatest time there; I learnt so many things -- the most important being discipline. At the camp everything was done in an organised manner. We were taught how to make proper use of time."

Speaking of the finals, the up and coming singer said, "Everyone, including I, was a bit nervous. We knew the finale would be aired live. There was no room for errors, as no editing can be done on a show aired live; millions would be watching. So, yes, the pressure was tremendous."

"Music is my passion, it is something without which I'm not complete. But my studies are also important. I'll try my best to continue pursuing both," said the young singer.

"In time I want to become an accomplished artiste. I want to be a Chartered Accountant as well, and hope for blessings from everyone," said an ambitious Liza.

## Rajneeti O Shushashon-e Nari on ATN Bangla

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Sixth episode of the talk show "Rajneeti O Shushashon-e Nari" will be aired today at 6:20 pm on ATN Bangla. The programme focuses on women's participation in politics and good governance.

This episode of the talk show deals with issues such as post-election scenario, security in a changed political condition, roles of politi-

cal parties, success of female candidates at the election, women voters, participation of women MPs in the parliament and more. Dr. Zerina Rahman Khan, Department of Public Administration, Dhaka University and Sultana Kamal, Executive Director of 'Ain O Shalish Kendra' will be guests on tonight's show.

Hosted by Shamim Reza, the show is directed by Sabina Bari Lucky. Fuad Chowdhury is the Executive Producer of the programme.



Sultana Kamal (left) and Dr. Zerina Rahman Khan with the host (centre) of the show.

## French actress Isabelle Huppert to lead Cannes film jury

France's Isabelle Huppert has been appointed as the president of the jury for the 2009 Cannes Film Festival.

The star, whose career spans four decades, succeeds Sean Penn as the head of the panel. The jury selects the winner of the coveted Palme d'Or prize.

Huppert said she was "very glad and very proud" to be part of the event scheduled to be held in May.

She has twice won the prize for best actress at the festival in the south of France -- in 1978 for "Violette Noziere" and then for "The Piano Teacher" in 2001.

Fourteen of the films in which she has starred have been entered for competition in Cannes.

Huppert has twice served as a member of the jury and becomes the fourth woman to head it, in the festival's 62nd year.

"I've had a long relationship with Cannes and

this next meeting will definitely seal my love for the festival and thus for global cinema," said the 55-year-old.

The festival's artistic director, Thierry Fremaux, told the AFP agency that her appointment was a tribute "to someone who has put her popularity to the service of artistic cinema, and has worked with young directors and admiring foreign filmmakers."

Source: Internet

## Bollywood gears up for big budget releases in 2009

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Powered by the success of two movies featuring the two leading Khans -- Shah Rukh and Aamir -- at the fag end of the year 2008, Bollywood has stepped into the New Year with lots of hopes on an array of big-budget movies to set the box office on fire.

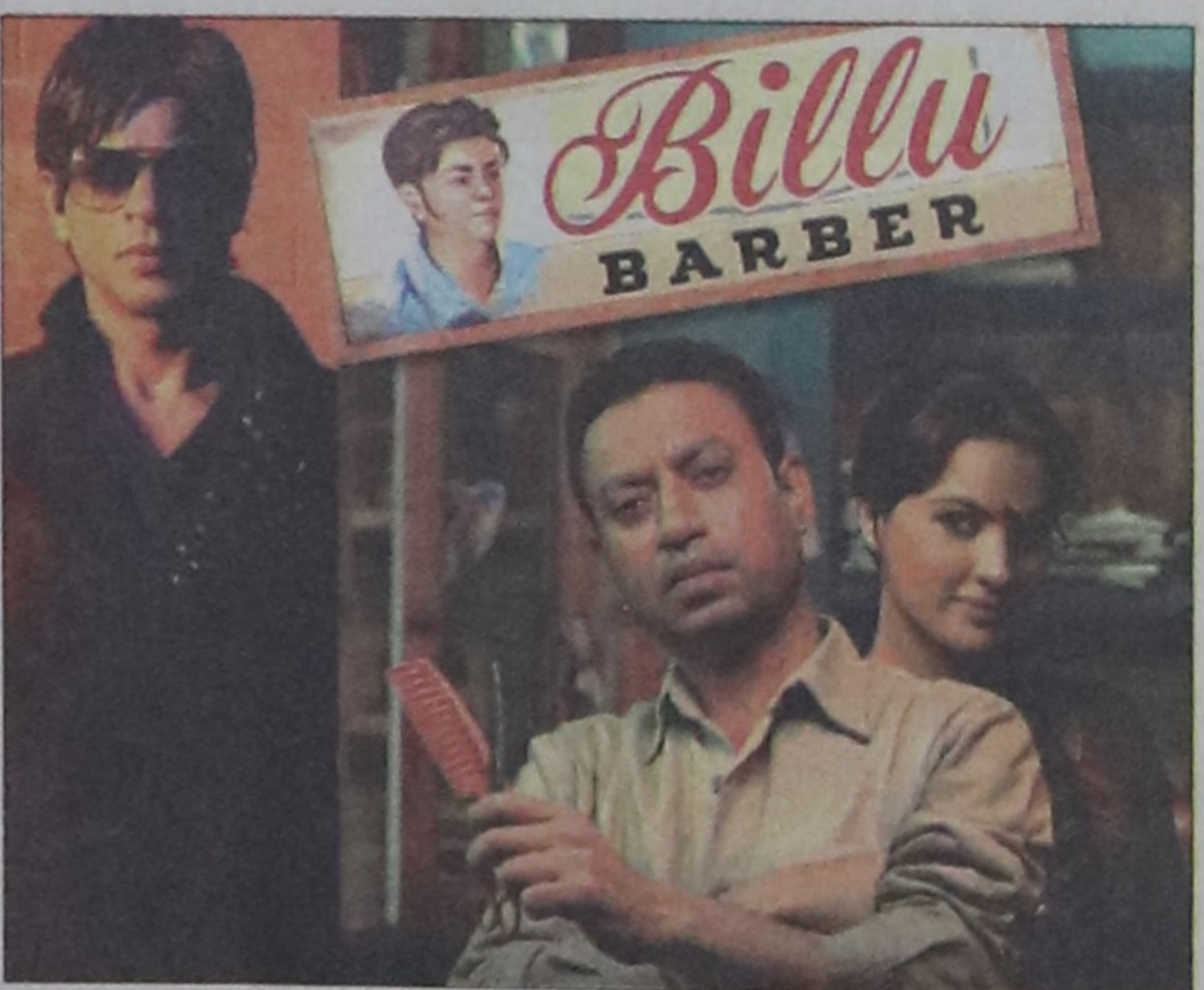
Three Bengali films by internationally acclaimed directors Buddhadeb Dasgupta and Rituparno Ghosh are also slated for release in 2009. While Dasgupta comes up with "Janala", Ghosh will give us "Kalponik" and "Abohoman".

The strong ticket collection of Shah Rukh-starrer "Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi" and "Ghajini", which sees Aamir in the lead role, in the last two months of the previous year has ushered in strong optimism in the industry which hopes to be back on its feet soon after liquidity crunch hit the Bollywood in the second half of 2008.

The first six months of the New Year will have nearly a dozen big-budget multi-starrer movies lining up Shah Rukh, Aamir, Salman Khan, Akshay Kumar, Abhishek Bachchan and Hrithik Roshan.

They year begins with Akshay Kumar and Deepika Padukone's "Chandni Chowk to China" which is an action comedy about a naive cook from Delhi's Chandni Chowk locality who is mistaken for a reincarnation of an ancient peasant warrior by residents of a village in China.

Akshay Kumar's recent releases are estimated to have earned more than Rs 500 crore at the box office and also



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plays lead roles in two more movies to be released this year -- "Kambakth Ishq" opposite Kareena Kapoor and "Blue".

One of the most anticipated Bollywood films of 2009 will be Shah Rukh's home production "Billu Barber", a remake of a hit Malayalam movie, and Karan Johar's "My Name is Khan". Both films will star Shah Rukh.

Directed by Priyadarshan, "Billu Barber", which also stars Irrfan Khan and Lara Dutta, will be seen with keen interest by Shah Rukh's fans to find out if the actor's magic works as Tamil film industry super star Rajinikanth's remake of the same film last year

failed to click at the box office.

"Billu Barber" is the story of friendship between a top film star played by Shah Rukh, and a common man played by Irrfan, and is set for release in the first quarter of 2009.

Aamir Khan too will be in spotlight with Rajkumar Hirani's "3 Idiots", which is based on writer Chetan Bhagat's bestseller English novel "Five Point Someone", and "Dhobi Ghat". In "Dhobi Ghat" that marks the directorial debut of the actor's wife Kiran Rao, Aamir plays the role of a painter. Hirani's film sees Kareena as the heroine.

Besides, Aamir has his home pro-

duction "Delhi Belly" featuring his nephew Imran who had made his debut last year with successful "Jaane Tu Ya Jaaney Na".

Salman, who had a bad spell in 2008 at the box office, will try his luck this year in "Main Aur Mrs Khanna" opposite Kareena and in "London Dreams" with Ajay Devgan and newcomer Telugu actress Asin who shot into limelight with her Hindi film debut in Aamir-starrer "Ghajini".

Abhishek, whose performance in "Dostana" last year earned good reviews, features in Rakesh Om Prakash Mehra's "Delhi 6" and Hrithik appears in his home production "Kites" and Zoya Akhtar's directorial debut "Luck By Chance".

Besides the big budget movies, there is this year Ashutosh Gowariker's "What's Your Rashee" in which actress Priyanka Chopra is reportedly playing 12 roles depicting as many star signs.

Buoyed by the success of his debut as an actor in "Rock On" last year, filmmaker Farhan Akhtar is appearing again on the screen in his sister Zoya-directed "Luck By Chance" which is expected to hit the screens on January 30.

The plot of the film is centred on Bollywood and how people from different walks of life go to Mumbai to make it big in an industry where luck often plays a bigger role than hard work. Produced and distributed by Big Pictures, the movie also features Juhi Chawla, Konkona Sen Sharma, Rishi Kapoor and Dimple Kapadia.

## Swapnochura on Banglavisión tonight

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

TV serial "Swapnochura" will be aired tonight on Banglavisión at 9:45 pm. Written by Fazlul Haque Akash, the serial is directed by Fazlur Rahman.

The central character of the serial is a charming, babbling housewife named Aparna. Her intentions revolve around her family's happiness. Other major characters in the serial are

Shayan and Bobby. Their affair is on the verge of breaking up and vengeance drives Shayan to get intimate with Arefin to make Bobby jealous.

Meanwhile Aparna is in search of a potential husband for her sister-in-law Shaila. At times through hilarious incidents and at times bizarre, the serial depicts elements from lives of both middle-class and affluent families.

The cast of the serial includes Mir Sabbir, Sumaiya Shimu, Anisur Rahman Milon, Ejazul Islam and Zakaria Shaikhin.



Srabonti and Joy in "Swapnochura".

## Baul songs at Pitha Mela in Tangail



Mohammad Jasim (2-R) and his troupe perform 'Baul' songs at the 'Pitha Mela'.

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Amidst much festivity, a 'Pitha Mela' was held in Tangail town last Saturday. 'Lalon', a literary and cultural organisation of Haji Abul Hossain Institute of Technology (HABHIT), organised the event at Tangail Shaheed Minar premises.

Teachers and students of the institute set up a total of 13 stalls -- displaying 50 kinds of 'pitha' including 'Bhapa', 'Puli', 'Patishapta', 'Chittoi',

'Dudh Chittoi', 'Nakshi', 'Jamai Kuli', 'Narkeli Puli', 'Labanga Latika', 'Bhaja Kuli', 'Chandrapuli', 'Mukhsala', 'Shamuk', 'Jhinuk', 'Pata', 'Bou Kuli', 'Khaj', 'Golap', 'Projapoti' and more -- at the fair.

Tangail Deputy Commissioner Maksudur Rahman Patwari inaugurated the programme and later spoke at a discussion. HABHIT Chairman Sanwar Hossain presided over the event. Tangail Superintendent of Police Abdul Mannan and HABHIT

Principal A.M. Shafiuddin Ahmed also spoke on the occasion.

Speakers praised HABHIT for holding the 'mela' and urged them to organise such programmes every year to encourage traditional practices and heritage.

At the concluding session of the 'mela', a cultural programme was held where HABHIT students performed solo and group renditions. Artiste Mohammad Jasim and his troupe performed 'Baul' songs.