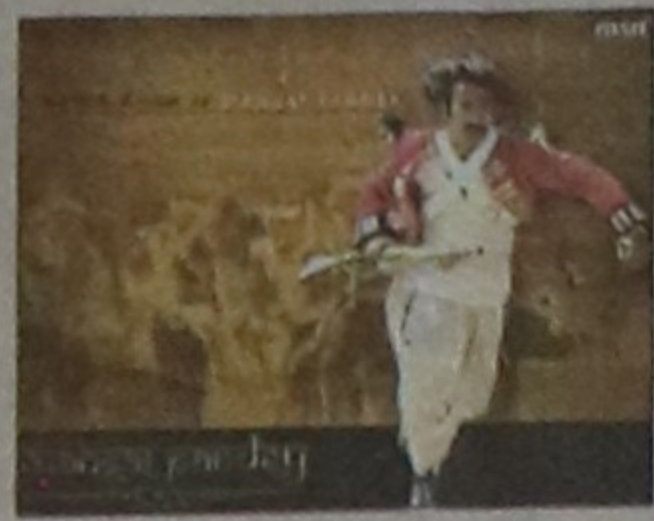


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Film Screening

Film: Mangal Pandey
Organiser: The High Commission of India
Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, H 35, Rd 24, Culsan 1
Date: January 12
Time: 6pm



Group Drawing Exhibition

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



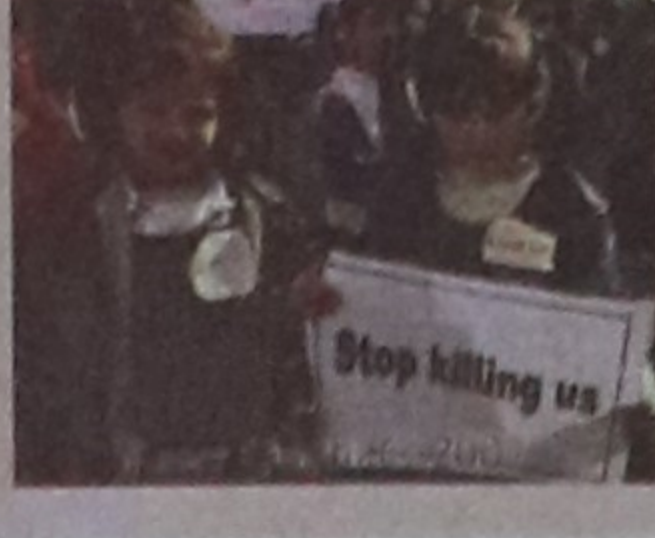
Solo Art Exhibition

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



Photography Exhibition

Condolence for the people of Gaza
Organiser: Iranian Cultural Centre
Venue: ICC, H 54, Rd 2/A, Dhanmndi
From December 30-January 12 (9am-5pm)



Manipuri dance enchants enthusiasts in port city

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Chittagong

Academy of Performing Arts, Chittagong organised a dance recital last Thursday. The event, "Manipuri Nritya Sandhya" offered an enjoyable experience to dance lovers of the port city.

Students of Academy for Manipuri Culture and Arts, an institute from Sylhet, staged a fine demonstration of the classical dance form at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC).

Munir Helal, member secretary of Academy of Performing Arts, thanked all contributors prior to the show. He said that though the academy mainly focuses on theatre, it has also been working on other art forms with a special attention to dance as it holds a key position in our culture.

Technical glitch in the sound system at the beginning stalled the performance but the audience waited patiently.

"Dosh Avatar Nritya" was the first composition performed by three students -- Chaiti, Juthika and Sandipa -- of the Academy for Manipuri Culture and Arts, Sylhet.

Ten incarnations -- Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Vamana, Krishna, Kalki, Buddha, Parshuram, Ram and Narasimha -- of Vishnu were depicted with graceful gestures in the piece.

"Bashonto Ras," usually performed as a part of "Rash Nritya," was presented next, featuring the traditional Manipuri forms like "Lashya". A group of students, with gliding and soft movements, acted out a scene where Lord Krishna meets with his beloved Radhika and the Gopis in Vrindaban on a moonlit night.

Students of the Sylhet-based institute also presented compositions titled "Goshtha Leela," "Pung Cholam," "Lai-Harauba," "Maibi," and contemporary pieces featuring two forms "Lashya" and "Tandava".

While the movements in "Lashya" are subtle and restrained, "Tandava" is more vigorous and forceful, demonstrated in "Pung Cholam" performed by four male students. The composition was accompanied with 'mridanga' and was received with rounds of applause from the audience.

The compositions were directed by M Shantana Devi, director of the academy.



Artistes of Academy for Manipuri Culture and Arts, Sylhet, staged a fine demonstration of the classical dance form at Theatre Institute Chittagong.



PHOTO: ZOBIAER HOSSAIN SHOBER

Chobi Mela V to begin on January 30

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Chobi Mela, Asia's largest and one of the most prominent photography festivals in the world will start from January 30, 2009. The announcement was made at a press conference yesterday at Drik Gallery.

Among others, Dr. Shahidul Alam, festival director, and Rezaur Rahman, curatorial director were present at the conference. Dr. Alam responded to various queries put forth by members of the press while Rahman went over the evolution and growth of Chobi Mela over the years.

This year the festival will continue throughout the month of February at several major galleries in Dhaka, open spaces like Karwan Bazar Underpass. There will also be two mobile exhibitions.

Like previous years, Chobi Mela V will feature works of Bangladeshi photographers as well as renowned artists from all over the world. Several maestros of the medium and photo enthusiasts will be joining the workshops and other programmes to be held during the festival.

The Daily Star, Prothom Alo, Channel i and bdnews24.com are media partners of the event.



Dr. Shahidul Alam (left) and Rezaur Rahman at the press conference.

A book club, 25 years on...



A rally of poetry enthusiasts in Mymensingh.

PHOTO: STAR

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Celebrating the silver jubilee of Bangladesh Book Club (BBC), a day-long programme was organised by the BBC local unit here. The programmes included a colourful rally, discussion, poetry recitation and staging of a play

on the Liberation War.

A colourful rally wound its way along the main spots of the town. The function was inaugurated by Sheikh Akram Ali, president of BBC.

A discussion was held at the Mukta Mancha of Mymensingh Sahitya Sangsad (MSS) with Habibur Rahman Sheikh, president of BBC local unit and editor of

Daily Jahan in the chair. Vice-Chancellor of Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) Dr Abdus Sattar Mondol was the chief guest while poet Mosharraf Karim, convener of MSS, Shahadat Hossain Khan Hilu, presidium member of the Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation were the special guests.

Poet Farid Ahmed Dulal, secretary of the BBC Mymensingh unit delivered the welcome speech.

The speakers said that poetry captures the essence of our emotions and reflects the aspirations of the masses.

In the view of the speakers there was much cause to celebrate BBC's milestone of 25 years. Now the challenge is to pave a smooth road for the organisation in the years to come. A nation can not progress without attention to its literature and every country seeks to develop its literary foundations, they added.

A high point was a play titled "Surjodhayer Agey", based on the Liberation War and staged by Genesis in Dhaka at MSS Mukta Mancha. The cast included Noor Hossain, Ratna, Raju, Shamsun Nahar, Rajib, Sahabuddin and Toufidul Alam.

I'm charmed by Shah Rukh

-- Aamir Khan

Aamir Khan on being a marketing monster, feeling powerful, doing bench presses, ganging up with Salman on Shah Rukh, handling flops and more:

What was it about "Ghajini" that made you want to do it?

Aamir: I found the Tamil version to be extremely engaging and entertaining. It intrigued me but I made up my mind when I met the director, AR Murugadoss. Frankly, I was completely taken in by his infectious positive energy and childlike excitement.

Has "Ghajini" been physically the most demanding film for you?

Aamir: Every film has its own demands but yes, "Ghajini" was physically daunting because I had to train very hard. I had to keep at it and not lose patience. I had an athletic body but the director wanted me to bulk up with eight packs, which was a challenge because I didn't know if I could achieve it. So, in a way, "Ghajini" made me resilient.

Post 26/11, do you think the timing of its release was unfavourable, especially keeping in view its violent content?

Aamir: Personally, the attack is far greater and serious an issue for me than the release of my film. That said I was very clear that if the film is good, it'll work. The collections prove it.

Do the film's thumping collections make you feel powerful?

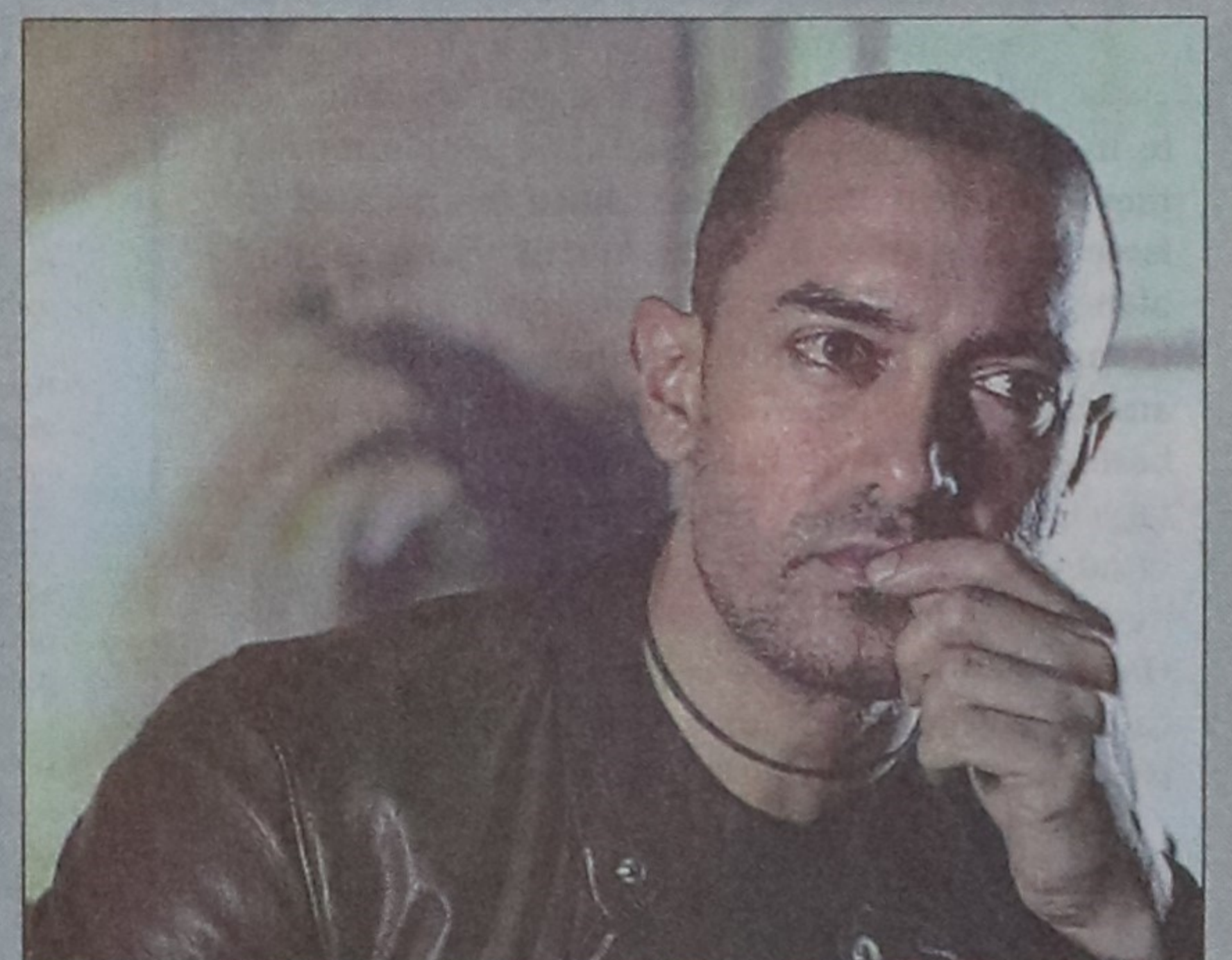
Aamir: Power doesn't figure in my hierarchy of needs. I won't use the word powerful; rather I'd say it makes me feel happy and blessed. When "Taare Zameen Par" reaches so many people and changes so many lives, I don't feel powerful but gratified.

When did you last feel powerful?

Aamir: (Thinks hard) I guess when I did my last set of bench press!

If "Taare Zameen Par" gets you an Oscar, maybe then you'd feel powerful?

Aamir: I'm not thinking of the Oscar. Right now, I'm focused on "Ghajini"



Aamir Khan

and "3 Idiots". If we make it to the final five nominations, which will be announced on January 22, then I'll think of the Oscar.

Shah Rukh and you have been taking digs at each other...

Aamir: We have high regard for each other. If you look at his interviews, you will see that Shah Rukh only talks about himself, makes digs at others and puts others down. He talks really big but he's a charming guy. I have no hesitation in saying that I'm charmed by Shah Rukh. It's just that media takes an extreme stand; it pits us as either enemies or as best friends. As for all our back-and-forth talks, it just shows that both of us have a good sense of humour.

In the 20 years that you've been here, has there been any shift in your guiding principle of making movies?

Aamir: Not at all. I've always done films I believe in. I've always had an emotional approach to my work. This is my life so I only want to do those films that I really want to be a part of. I've gone wrong quite a few times especially in the first six months of my

career after "Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak" when I signed every film offered to me. But they were all my decisions. I've learnt quickly from my failures.

What do you want your legacy to be?

Aamir: I'm very ambitious. I'd like to do work of the level people haven't seen before. I want to raise the bar as an actor, producer and director. I'd like to do films that would live on much after I'm no longer there. Even if someone sees "Lagaan" 200 years later, he should say, "Who's that guy, yaar?"

Is there any role you haven't done and are dying to attempt?

Aamir: I really find "Mahabharata" fascinating. I would love to play Krishna, who was tall and a born warrior. So, I don't think I fit the part physically but emotionally I do. I think the part I suit the best would be that of Krishna. When I was in KG, I had really chubby cheeks. Girls would find me cute and surround me. I also used to eat butter all the time so my mom would call me Krishna and the girls my 'gopis'.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

Purna wins hearts in Khagrachhari

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Some thousand spectators braved a bitterly cold day to attend a cultural programme held recently at Khagrachhari Police Lines.

Purna Kumar, the *Close up 1* singer who arrived from Dhaka, sang over 30 songs without a break. The singer was greeted by enthusiastic spectators who cheered him on till midnight.

Purna sang Bhawaiya, modern and regional songs on request from audiences including army officials, government officials, NGO personalities, reporters and a huge congregation of indigenous men, women and children.

Superintendent of Police Mohammad Qaiumuzzaman Khan organised the cultural evening. In his short speech at the conclusion of the function, Khan said he wanted to entertain the audience which included members of the police force. He expressed his readiness to pro-



Purna Kumar sings at the programme

PHOTO: STAR

more less known artistes.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) A.K.M. Khairul Alam, Sadar Zone Major Iftekar Ahmed, Brigadier (retd) Major Lokman, Additional Superintendent of Police

Osman Gani, engineer Pradeep Kumar, Khagrachhari Hill District Council Member Sanu Mong Marma and the spectators were enthused by the cultural programme.