

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Group Exhibition of Masks
Title: Mukh O Mukhosh-2
Venue: Galleri Kaya
Date: January 16-25
Time: 11am-8pm



Solo Ceramic Art Exhibition
Title: Dissolved Past and Present
Artist: Debashish Pal
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dharmundi
Date: January 17-26
Time: 12pm-8pm



Group Art Exhibition
Artists: Mainul, Mehedi, Babu, Safin & Tama
Venue: Shilpangan Art Gallery, H-26, R-3, Dharmundi
Date: January 20-28
Time: 10am-1pm and 5-8pm



2nd Children's Film Festival '09
Organiser: Children's Film Society Bangladesh
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbag
Date: January 24-30
Time: 11am onwards



Beaivváš Sámi Theatre of Norway performed in Dhaka

The Frost Haired and the Dream Seer: A dream-play with a message for humanity

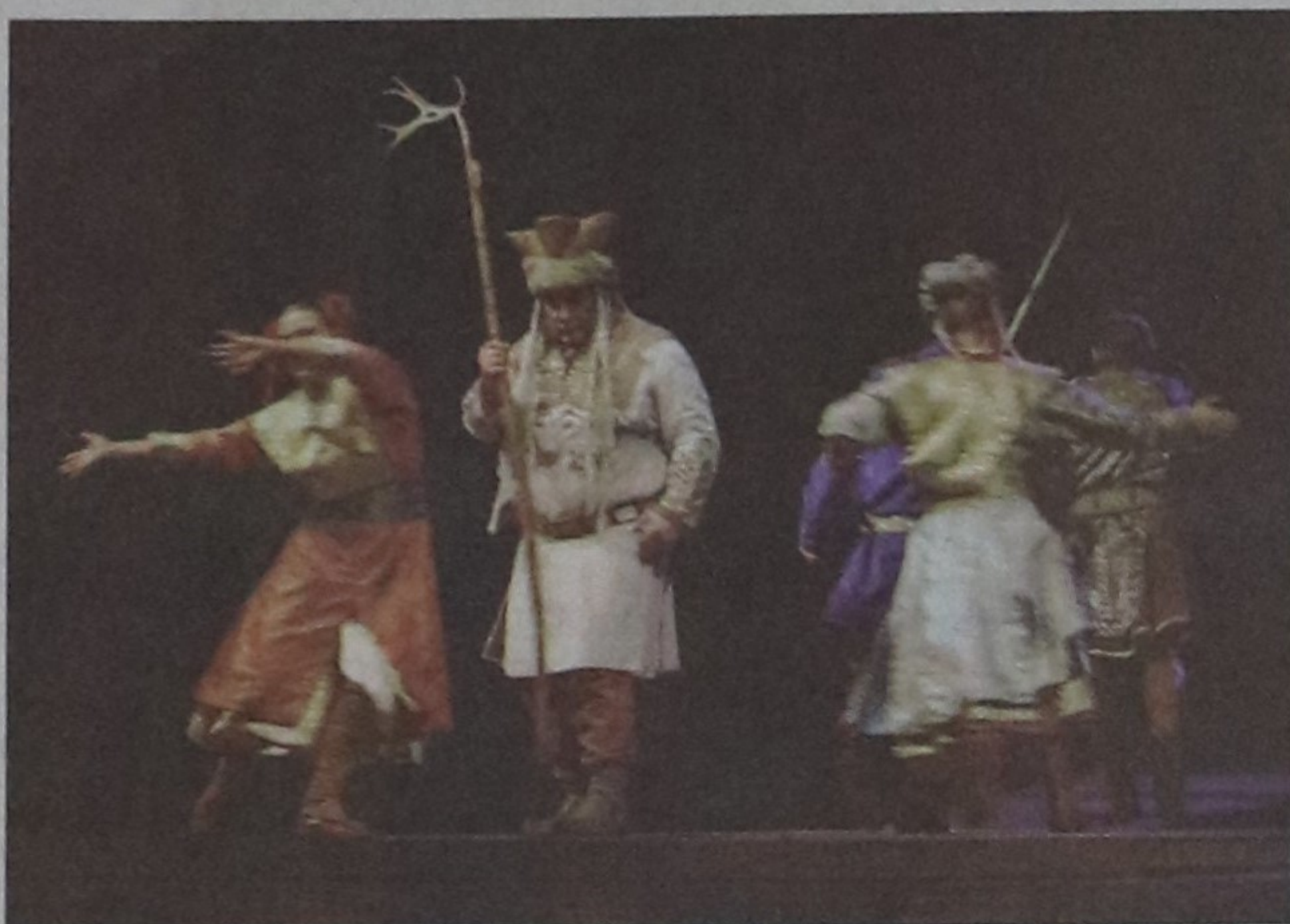
NADIA SARWAT

It was an astonishing theatrical experience for the Bangladeshi audience to have a glimpse in the world of the Sámi, the indigenous people of Arctic Europe. Centre for Asian Theatre (CAT) in collaboration with Beaivváš Sámi Theatre, the first Sámi theatre in Norway, provided an unique opportunity for theatre enthusiasts of the city to enjoy the play, "The Frost Haired and the Dream Seer." The play was staged at the National Theatre Stage of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on January 23.

The Sámi, often referred to as "Lapps" in English, are people whose homeland is now divided between four states: Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia. Their estimated number is between 60,000 to 80,000, with the majority living within Norway. Traditionally the Sámi have been nomads, their livelihood based on reindeer husbandry and fishing.

After centuries of attempts at forced assimilation by national governments and Christian missionaries, Sámi language and culture were threatened with extinction by the middle of the 20th century. But the existence of an indigenous minority that had been disregarded and repressed for centuries has managed to draw the attention of the world through their active protest and thus succeeded in restoring the Sámi's pride in their culture and identity.

Established in 1981, Beaivváš Sámi Theatre aims at strengthening Sámi identity through the production of plays of professional quality in Sámi language, as well as promoting Sámi culture in



Scenes from the play.

PHOTO COURTESY: SAIKAT MOJUMDER



Norway and abroad.

"The Frost Haired and the Dream Seer" is the only play written by the great Sámi poet, Nils Aslak Valkeapää (1943-2001). Inspired by 'yoik', the traditional Sámi vocal music, and noh, a Japa-

nese form of musical drama, the play is a dialogue between a young reindeer herder and an old, frosty-haired man who visits him in his sleep with a special message. The old man tells the young herdsman to open up his

senses and gain strength and knowledge from nature. In poetic terms and songs, he opens up the young man's eyes to the necessity for us humans to continue our interaction with, dependency upon, and most importantly

respect for nature. Man must never forget that he is only a small part of nature, of life, of the universe.

For the Bangladeshi audience, an English translation was projected on stage. But the audience did not fail to communicate with the melody of the numbers of 'Yoik' used in the play, which were equally as descriptive as word.

The play is directed by Haukur J. Gunnarsson while Indra Lorentzen is the choreographer and co-director of the play. Music is composed by the playwright Nils Aslak Valkeapää himself. Egil Keskitalo and Nils Henrik Buljo play the characters of the frost haired and the herdsman respectively.

H. E Ingebjorg Stofring, Ambassador, of Norway in Bangladesh was present as chief guest at the event and noted theatre personality Ataur Rahman, President ITI, Bangladesh, was present as guest of honour. "After watching the play, an extraordinary experience as it was, I felt that, we, the human beings, are all trying to stretch our time on earth through our wisdom and activities. Watching the play, I sensed that our experiences are quite similar, indeed we are all the same," said Ataur Rahman in his speech. On behalf of the entire cast and crew of the play, co-director Indra Lorentzen and actor Egil Keskitalo spoke at the event. Beaivváš Sámi Theatre honoured theatre personality Kamaluddin Nilu, chief advisor of CAT and Mosharrar Hossain Tutul, secretary general of CAT.

The performance was part of the Asian tour by the Beaivváš Sámi Theatre.

Three-day Rabindra Sangeet by Dakkhini Rabindra Sangeetangan

JAMIL MAHMUD

Cultural organisation Dakkhini Rabindra Sangeetangan has arranged a three-day musical soiree featuring Tagore songs. The event at the auditorium of National Music and Dance Centre, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, began on January 23.

The soiree features performances by noted and upcoming Tagore singers. On the first day, nine artists including Mita Haque, Anup Bhattacharya, Sazid Akbar, Rokaiya Hasina, Naima Ali and Fahim Hossain Chowdhury gave performances.

create niche for the upcoming Tagore artistes.

Apart from upcoming artistes, noted artistes like Rokaiya Hasina, Sazid Akbar and Mita Haque rendered a number of familiar songs at the programme. Rokaiya Hasina rendered "Amar ja achhey", "Madhur dhoni baje" and "Durey kothay". Sazid Akbar rendered "Laho laho tuley laho" and "Eki maya lukao kaya".

Mita Haque rendered "Praney khushir tuphan", "Akash bhora surja tara" and "Shudhu tomar bani noy".

Noted singer Fahim Hossain Chowdhury, who is also the president of Dakkhini, was the next performer. He rendered three songs including "Aamar poran jaha chay" and "Kon



Mujibul Quayyum performs at the programme.

PHOTO COURTESY: SAIKAT MOJUMDER

Artiste Mujibul Quayyum began the soiree with a rendition of Tagore's romantic song "Prem eshechhilo". He also rendered the popular number "Amar hiyar majhey" and "Jibone marone shimana chharaye".

Naima Ali performed next. She rendered three songs, including "Tomay gaan shonabo" and "Ki sur baje aamar kaney". Shafiqur Rahman Khan rendered "Aji hey nabin sangsari" and "Tomar kache".

Since its inception in 1995, Dakkhini Rabindra Sangeetangan has been working to promote traditional music, especially Tagore songs. The organisation's main objective is to

shubhakhanyan".

Noted Tagore singer Anup Bhattacharya was the last performer of the day. He wrapped up the first day programme with three songs including "Tomar aamar ei biraher" and "Tar hridoy banshi".

The second day (January 24) programme featured performances by artistes Abdul Wadud, Mahadev Ghosh, Azizur Rahman Tuhin, Salma Akbar, Auditi Mohsin, Mini Kader and Fahim Hossain Chowdhury.

Today's programme will include performances by Mahiuzzaman Chowdhury, Bulbul Islam, Golam Haider, Nargis Chowdhury, Shama Rahman and Pijush Barua.

Taj Mahal wows Julia Roberts

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Hollywood's Oscar-winning "Pretty Woman" Julia Roberts is wowed after a visit to the 17th century monument of love, the Taj Mahal, on Thursday.

Accompanied by her cameraman-husband Daniel Moder, the 41-year-old actress was awed by the Taj as she simply said "beautiful" as she gazed at the white marbled monument and had a close look at the structure for nearly half an hour, admiring the intricate designs and engravings in it.

Initially, the crowd at the Taj Mahal seemed to overlook her but when a handful of tourists recognised her, Roberts was flooded with requests to be photographed with them. However, she politely refused.

A few days before reaching Agra, Roberts, along with her family including two of her three children, visited India's Pink City, Jaipur and spent time at a luxury hotel on the



The actor before love's historic symbol.

outskirts of the capital city of the desert state of Rajasthan.

It was purely a private visit to India by the actress and her family and when in the hotel she did not want her privacy to be disturbed in any way, leaving instructions to hotel management to allow only senior managers to take care of their comforts.

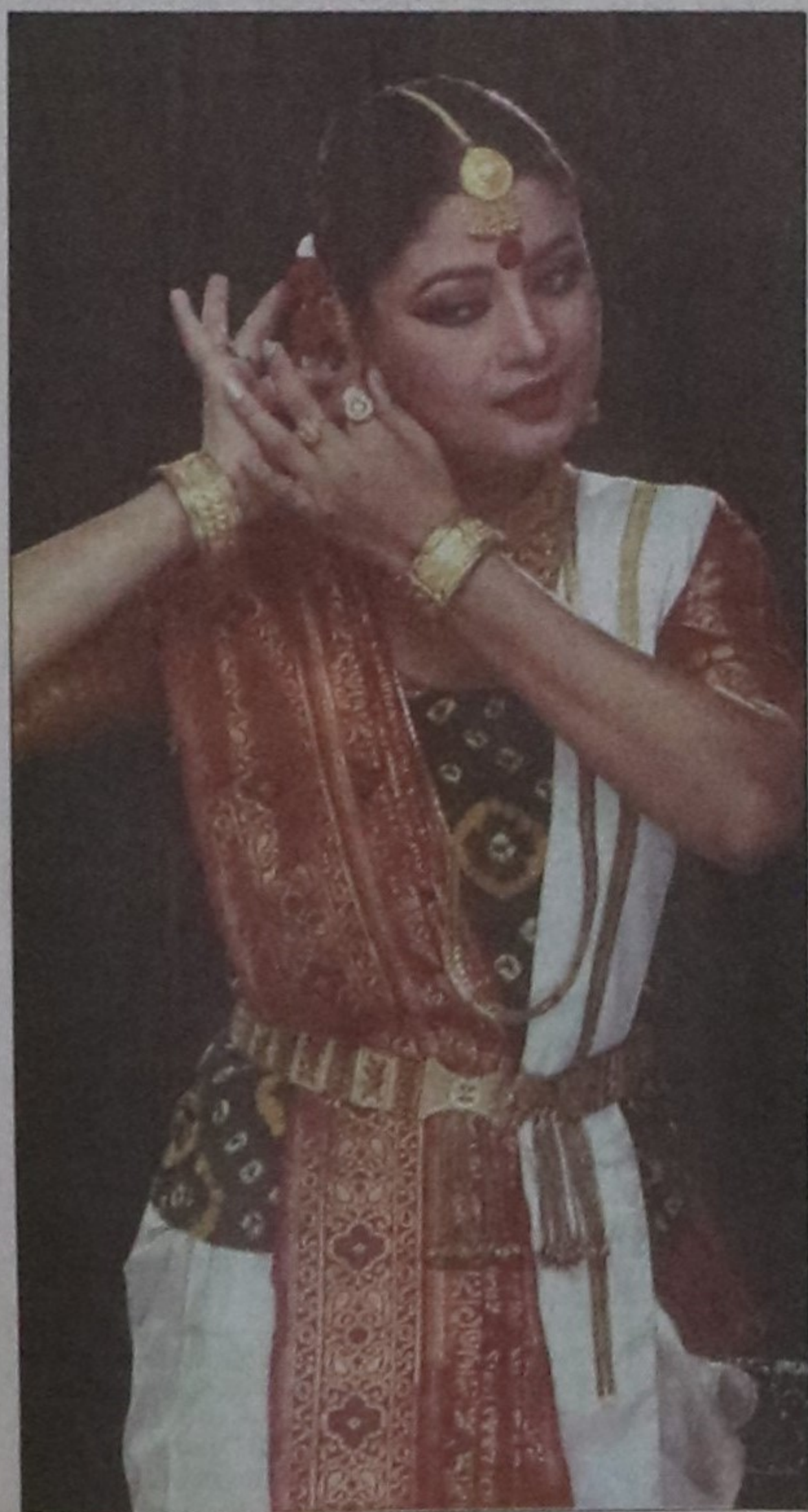
Roberts shot into fame in early 1990s by acting in romantic comedy "Pretty

Woman" opposite Richard Gere and won the Oscar for best actress in the year 2000 for her role in "Erin Brockovich".

She also starred in films like "Notting Hill" opposite Huge Grant, "Runaway Bride", again opposite Gere, and "My Best Friend's Wedding" which inspired Bollywood version "Aaj Mere Yaar Ki Shaadi Hain".

Tête-à-Tête

Munmun Ahmed: First person singular



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Popular danseuse Munmun Ahmed got together with The Daily Star recently. The conversation veered to her views on dance, life and other matters.

What is your real self?

Like most people I am very ordinary and consider myself one of the masses. People may think that I am a little arrogant but in reality I am very down to earth. And, yes, I am very professional in my workplace.

What is your motto of life?

I want to stay alive in a healthy state of mind. It is the most important thing to wish for.

Do you have any regrets about being a dancer?

I never ever felt that way. I can feel that I am at this position today because I learned how to dance and practiced to become an eminent artiste. I live my life with honour because of this dance.

Hidden talents?

I can recite from the "Puthi", which is widely known as "Puthipath". I

received the first prize in the competition titled Jela Shanshkritik Rajani in 1980. Besides, I can render spiritual songs a little.

Any weird experience?

I was preparing to perform in a show in Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel several years back. Although I had short hair that time the performance demanded long hair. One relative of mine, who was pretty amateurish in the art of make-up, fixed my hair for me. I wore a wig knotted with my original hair. But when I started to perform on stage my wig fell down as I whirled around. It was quite embarrassing and an unforgettable experience.

Favourite hobby?

I really enjoy moving around places. Besides, I like to read all kind of books like fictions, literature and special articles on dance and music. I love the short stories of Rabindranath Tagore.

Any dream that came true?

I had a chance to perform with the sons of my guru Pandit Birju Maharaj, Ram Mohan Maharaj and Krishna Mohan Maharaj, who are

also great dance artistes. It was just like a dream-come-true to me. I also had an opportunity to share the same stage with legendary dancer Shashwati Sen that was also a great memory for me.

Secret of your success...

It is obviously practice, perseverance and dedication. I passed many days when I didn't even have sleep and practiced till dawn.

What do you think came first: The chicken or the egg?

I think both can be true. Sometimes I feel if there were no egg there would have been no chicken and vice versa. So I think it is wise not to argue about it.

What if you are asked to act in the lead role of any mainstream Bangla film?

Maybe I can give it a try, if I am asked to. Actually I was asked to act in movies many times but I never felt like doing it. I also got an offer to act in Hindi movies once. But I always preferred to concentrate on my dancing career.

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