

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Ekushey Boi Mela '09
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy premises
Date: February 01-28



Chobi Mela V
Int'l Festival of Photography, Bangladesh '09
Theme: Freedom
Venues: National Museum, BSA, Dhaka Gallery, Bengal Gallery, AF, GIB, British Council, Asiatic Gallery, Kalpana Boudhary and Karwan Bazar underpass
Date: Jan 30-Feb 20



Solo Flute Evening
Artist: Ustad Asadul Islam
Organiser: Rotary Club of Dhaka Premier
Venue: Shahid Zia Auditorium, National Museum, Shahbag
Date: February 6
Time: 8:30pm



Documentary Screening
Generating awareness on cancer
Organiser: Mosabbir Cancer Care Centre
Venue: Bham Auditorium, 63, New Eskaton
Date: February 6
Time: 4:30 onwards



Theatre for the masses

National Street Theatre Festival 2009 begins



Actors of Sanchalak Natya Charcha Kendra, Munshiganj stage the play "Potla" on the first day of the festival.

NADIA SARWAT

No set, no costume, no star actors. At the Central Shaheed Minar premises, actors of Sanchalak Natya Charcha Kendra, Munshiganj were staging the play "Potla," a short, comic play with a strong social message. The audience was not limited to the so-called "theatre enthusiasts"; street vendors and passers-by flocked to see the performance. Known as "theatre for the masses," the National Street Theatre Festival began at the Central Shaheed Minar on February 1.

With the slogan "Abhay bajey hridoy majhey," the weeklong festival has been organised by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation. The organisation has been holding this festival every year, since 1985, from the first day of February - the month that marks the Language Movement. This year's festival is being held simultaneously in six divisions of the country.

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad inaugurated the festival. M Hamid, chairperson of BGTF, presided over the event while eminent theatre per-

sonalities Asaduzzaman Noor, Nasiruddin Yousuff, Mannan Hira Liaquat Ali Lucky and Jhuna Chowdhury spoke at the inaugural. Convenor of the festival, Akhtaruzzaman welcomed the audience. Prabir Sarder, member secretary of the Festival Committee, presented the declaration of this year's festival.

"Cultural activists and artistes of the country play a significant role in uniting the people during every movement. Street theatre itself always tries to take on this responsibility. We are determined to devote our endeavours to ensure human rights through representing the plight of the masses in our plays," said the declaration.

"In the past years, we've had to struggle just to get the permission to hold the event at Shaheed Minar. As the nation has demonstrated its disapproval of the war criminals and fundamentalists through the last election, this is the victory of the people that we are celebrating at this festival," Asaduzzaman Noor said in his speech.

"This festival has become a tradition, a national event, and credits go to the untiring efforts of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation,"

Nasiruddin Yousuff said. He demanded the attention of the government to ensure the security at the Shaheed Minar premises so that the cultural activities here can be carried out without hindrance.

M Hamid noted that street theatre festival has been working as a political tool in generating awareness, in the sense that the plays boldly address issues like autocracy, fundamentalism, terrorism and more.

On the first day of the festival, "Khek Shial" by Aranyak Natyadal; "Normedh" by Subachan Naty Sangsad and "Lali" by Abayab Natyadal were also staged.

A total of 35 theatre troupes from Dhaka and other areas are participating at this year's festival. Four plays will be staged everyday from 4 pm onwards, till February 7. The festival is also being held at Abdullah Al Mamun Stage in Faridpur; Zia Haider Stage in Bogra; Selim Al Deen Stage at Central Shaheed Minar, Sylhet; Zia Haider Stage at DC Hall, Chittagong; Abdullah Al Mamun Stage at Central Shaheed Minar, Barisal and Selim Al Deen Stage at Central Shaheed Minar, Bagerhat.

'Ekushey Book Fair' begins in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Marking the month of the Language Movement, a two-week Ekushey Book Fair began in Pabna from February 1, amidst much festivity.

Ekushey Book Fair Celebration Committee, Pabna has organised the programme at Pabna Town Hall premises. Cultural programmes and competitions are highlights of the programme.

A painting competition was held at the book fair premises on Sunday. Over 100 students from various schools of the district took part in the competition. The competition was held in four categories. The primary level students took part in the competition in 'Ka' and 'Kha' groups, while school and

college level students took part in the 'Ga' and 'Gha' sections.

A recitation competition was held yesterday, followed by music and dance competitions. The theme of the competitions is 'Language Movement,' said Gopal Sanyal, president of Pabna Drama Circle, who is also a member of the Ekushey Book Fair Competition sub-committee.

According to the organisers, 34 stalls have been set up at the fair. "This fair has become an annual feature of the cultural activities in the district," said Sultan Ahmed Buro, president of Ekushey Book Fair Celebration Committee.

The fair is to be formally inaugurated on February 5, by Dilip Barua, Minister for Industries.

High School Debate Festival in Kushtia



Debaters participate at the Festival.

PHOTO: STAR

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

The two daylong Second High School Debate Festival ended in Kumarkhali, Kushtia yesterday. A total of 25 high schools in Kumarkhali upazila took part in the festival.

Kumarkhali upazila administration arranged the festival with financial assistance from Kumarkhali Foundation.

Chairman of Jessore Education Board, Professor Ekram Ali Sheikh inaugurated the festival on Sunday.

Rabiul Islam, chairman of Kumarkhali Foun-

dation, presided over the programme.

Principal of Kushtia Government College, Professor Qader Hossain Choudhury; Kushtia Deputy Commissioner, Abul Kalam Azad; Kushtia Police Super, Mosleh Uddin Ahmed; Chief executive of Kushtia Zilla Parishad, Dharendra Nath Sarkar; Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Kumarkhali, Md. Nuruzzaman; Kumarkhali upazila Awami League (AL) president, Zahid Hossain Zafar; Daily Bangladesh Barta editor, Abdur Rashid Chowdhury and Trusty of Kumarkhali Foundation, Sufi Faruq Ibne Abu Bakar were present at the programme.

Kung Fu Panda sweeps Annie Awards

"Kung Fu Panda" pulled out all its martial arts moves at the 36th annual Annie Awards, where it was named best animated feature.

The DreamWorks Animation feature dominated Friday's awards ceremony at UCLA's Royce Hall in Los Angeles, presented by ASIFA-Hollywood, the Los Angeles chapter of the International Animated Film Society.

"Panda" won the top prize over such other nominees as the critical favourites "WALL-E" and "Walt With Bashir" and swept the feature film categories with 10 trophies, topping Pixar's "Ratatouille" run last year, when it earned nine Annies, including best feature.

Additionally, DWA's "Secrets of the Furious Five," a 24-minute short that appears on the "Panda" DVD, took four awards in the TV production/shortform categories, and Activision's "Kung Fu Panda" game won the award for best video game.

Since the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences set up its best animated feature category in 2001, the Annie winner has gone on to score the animation Oscar every year except for



"Kung Fu Panda" swept the feature film categories with 10 trophies at the 36th annual Annie Awards.

two years ago, when the Annies opted for "Cars" but the Academy chose "Happy Feet."

Rounding out the top prize recipients, Aardman Animations' "Wallace & Gromit: A Matter of Loaf and Death" was named best animated short subject.

ShadqMachine's "Robot Chicken: Star Wars Episode II" was honoured as best animated TV production, while Nickelodeon's "Avatar: The Last Airbender" won the prize for best TV production produced for children.

"Futurama: The Beast With a Billion

Backs," from the Curiosity Co. and 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, was victorious in the home entertainment category, and Duck Studios' "Heart" ad for United Airlines was the TV commercial prize winner.

The "Panda" awards parade to the winner's podium continued throughout the evening. It included a directing award for John Stevenson and Mark Osborne, writing honours for Jonathan Aibel and Glenn Berger, animated effects for Le-Ming Lawrence Lee, character animation for James Baxter and storyboarding for Jen Yuh Nelson.

Dustin Hoffman, who plays kung fu master Shifu in "Panda," earned the award for voice acting in a feature film.

Nico Marlet took home two awards for character design, for "Panda" and "Secrets." Tang Heng also was a double winner for production design on both projects. And Hans Zimmer and John Powell also were recognized twice, for "Panda's" music and the "Secrets" score, where they were joined by Henry Jackman.

Source: Internet

Daniel Radcliffe Invites Obama Girls to Hogwarts



They've already been invited to hang with Hannah Montana, now Malia and Sasha Obama also have the chance to meet Harry Potter.

Describing President Barack Obama as "everything the rest of the world liked about America and now likes again," Harry Potter star Daniel Radcliffe offered to show the first daughters around Hogwarts.

"I'd like to take this opportunity to issue a public invitation to the Obamas that if their daughters would like a private tour of the Harry Potter set, I would be honoured to be their personal tour guide," Radcliffe told The Daily Beast.

Radcliffe, who will soon begin filming the final installment in the Harry Potter series, Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, said he was "so proud and happy" for America, calling Obama "both Martin Luther King and JFK." Added the actor, "He is a symbol of progress which is what we dig about this country. What you love about England is all the old buildings and such. The traditions. I love that, too. But this is what we want from you."

The actor also weighed in on Twilight star Robert Pattinson's recent claim that girls would choose Radcliffe over Pattinson.

"I can safely say ... they would not. That they do not," Radcliffe said. "He is the much prettier and can be much more charming. And he can do that thing of being sultry and sexy. Rob can just sort of stand there and look at something and start to smoulder. And I just can't do that. I'm a natural fidget."

Source: Internet

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