

## 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, Dhik Gallery, Bengal Gallery, AF, GIB, British Council, Asiatic Gallery, Kalpana Bazar and Karwan Bazar underpass  
Date: Jan 30-Feb 20



**Theatre**  
Play: Jaiboti Konyar Mon  
Troupe: Dhaka Theatre  
Venue: National Theatre Stage, BSA  
Date: February 5  
Time: 6:30pm



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



## Chobi Mela V: The many shades of freedom

# Images from All Roads Film Project at Asiatic Gallery



(Clockwise from left) Photographs by Farzana Wahidy, Khaled Hasan, Rena Effendi and Alejandro Chaskielberg.

TAKIR HOSSAIN

Asiatic Gallery of Fine Arts is one of the venues holding exhibitions that are part of the ongoing 'Chobi Mela V'. The current exhibition at Asiatic Gallery features works of awarded photographers -- Alejandro Chaskielberg (Argentina), Rena Effendi (Azerbaijan), Khaled Hasan (Bangladesh), and Farzana Wahidy (Afghanistan) -- who participated in the National Geographic's All Roads Film Project.

Khaled Hasan is one of the promising photographers of our country. He completed his diploma from Pathshala, South Asian Institute of Photography. From the beginning, this gifted photographer has focused on portraying the woes of rural and urban folks. His photographs at the exhibition highlight the lives of people working in stone crushing industry. Khaled has been working on this subject for the last few years, intimately documenting the hard



working community of Jafong's stone crushing industry. The burning issue: what these workers must do to survive is also destroying their environment.

As an Afghan woman, Farzana Wahidy, had to endure much struggle



to learn and pursue photography. Her relentless endeavours and passion for the medium have earned her a certain position in the Afghan photographic circuit. Photography has not become a popular medium in Afghanistan yet. Farzana has

framed rare moments in lives of Afghan women in a conservative social structure. Her photos reveal the harsh lifestyle. The colour images are at times hazy but her language is thought provoking and stimulating.

Rena Effendi's photos zoom in on a distinct civilisation. Khinaliq is a tiny, remote village in Azerbaijan. Rena has captured the way of life in Khinaliq. The culture, traditions and lifestyle are vividly portrayed in the images. Urbanisation however, is destroying the uniqueness of this locale. Rena believes that natives want to uphold their individual lifestyle in a familiar setting. The colour images seem technique oriented and the play of light and shade gives an interesting look.

Alejandro Chaskielberg highlights unemployment and the culture of migration in an island close to Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. The island has gradually changed its individuality. The images are brimming with the joys and woes of the locals.

The shared, central theme of the images has been demonstrated with sensitivity towards the subjects, maintaining a close connection and employing techniques.

## Saraswati Puja celebrated joyously in Trishal

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh.

The students of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University in Trishal recently observed Saraswati Puja with a day-long celebration at the campus premises. The programme included an offering, Anjali, a musical soiree and a play.

Vice-Chancellor of the university inaugurated the event as chief patron. Among others, Chairman of Accounting Department Professor. Subrata Kumar Dey; Treasurer of the university Professor. Shafayet Hossain; Controller (In-Charge), Dr. Ataur Rahman and heads of other departments were also present.

In the inaugural session, the speakers said that Bangladesh is known for its communal harmony--a country where people of all religions, castes and creeds have lived peacefully side by side. As the speakers pointed out, religious occasions such as Saraswati Puja are not just a

celebration for the Hindus but also a part of Bengali culture. As an instance, they said that Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam was non-communal and had dedicated his entire life to uproot injustice, oppression and repression in society.

The most entertaining part of the programme was the musical soiree. The participants were Deepti Roy, Ashik Sarker, Sharmin Rezwan, Mamunul Islam and Shaki Rezwana, all students of the Music Department of the university.

A drama titled 'Chigitsha Sankat', written by Rahshekhar Basu, was also staged by the students of the Bengali Department. The actors were Romana Sharmin, Minakshhi Majumder, Abu Sayeem Md. Jamil, Atiqul Bashar, Hasanuzzaman, Nazmul Haque, Solaiman Kabir, Harun-ur-Rashid, Hedayetul Islam, Sirajul Islam, Ibrahim, Firoz Ahmed, Aswadur Rahman and Plabon. The anchor for the programme was Imran Sadek.

## Pitha Utsab whets visitors' appetite at RU

ABU KALAM RATAN, RU

The Fine Arts Department of Rajshahi University organised a day-long Pitha Utsab (cake festival) at the department premises on Sunday celebrating winter.

The event was inaugurated by department chairman Dr. Amirul Momineen Chowdhury.

A vibrant cultural programme, including songs, poem recitation and a traditional Bangali fashion show, was held at the Charukala Chatur on the occasion.

A huge turnout of students of Rajshahi University and

other institutions marked the fiesta.

Students asserted that the festival is an annual fixture so that they can participate in the event and prepare a wide variety of pithas.

Around 50 varieties of delicious deshi pithas whet the appetite of the visitors that included Naksi, Duth Kusli, Ras Chatai, Biscuit, Chhach, Buat, Goja, Golap, Dim Kusli, Samuk, Teel, Pati Sapt, Khejur, Ardh Chandra, Tara, Khirsa, Pushpo, Akhia, Surja Mukhi, Pakan, Narikal Borfi, Badam Halua, Dudh Puli, Mukh Pakon Pitha, Alu Pitha and more.

## Artistes demand resuming Nilphamari Shilpakala Academy activities



Cultural activists take a stand in front of the closed Shilpakala Academy.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Cultural activists of the district demanded resuming the activities of District Shilpakala Academy immediately. According to them, the academy has not functioned in the last seven years.

About one hundred cultural activists of the district met with the deputy commissioner of Nilphamari at DC office on February 2. The DC was given a memorandum. In it, the cultural activists mentioned that there is an inactive ad hoc committee to oversee the functions of the academy. The

memorandum added that there is no genuine representation of the local cultural activists in the committee.

An abandoned government quarter next to the collectorate building is being used as the Shilpakala Academy for sometime. The new academy building is still under construction. The ad hoc committee in charge of conducting the academy includes five members and is headed by the DC as its convenor. The deputy collector (NDC) is the member secretary of the committee. Other three members are construction contractors and influential political figures.

While talking to the local journalists, President of District Bhawaiya Academy, Md. Lutfar Rahman alleged that throughout the year, Shilpakala Academy building remains closed. Artists including singers, dancers, actors and instrumentalists cannot practice there.

Ahsan Rahim Manzil, convenor of the district Sammilito Sanskritik Jote, said that three members of the ad hoc committee are professional construction contractors with no cultural affiliation. They are in it solely for personal gains, he added.

Tagore artiste Al Masud Alal said that in the name of purchasing new musical instruments for the academy, the vested quarter invited auctions to sell the old instruments. But they misappropriated those instruments. No new instrument has been purchased yet, he said.

Local cultural activists claimed that renowned personalities of the country including Asaduzzaman Noor, Rathindranath Roy, Horolal Roy, Ajit Roy, Mahesh Chandra and others are products of the opulent cultural traditions of the district. But cultural practices do not get any encouragement and space for practice due to the involvement of individuals, who have no cultural affiliation, in the overseeing committee.

The DC Rashidul Hasan assured the cultural activists that he would look into the matter.

Among those present at the time of handing over the memorandum to the DC were district Bhawaiya Academy President Lutfar Rahman; Bashoree Sanskritik Sangstha Secretary Girish Chandra; Jalshiri Natya Sangstha Secretary Obaidur Rahman; District Udichi Vice-president Ataur Rahman; district Sammilito Sanskritik Jote's Convenor Ahsan Rahim Manzil; Bangabandhu Sanskritik Gosthi President Al Masud Alal and Nilphamari Itihash Parishad President Moni Khandokar.

## Street Theatre Festival in Barisal

RAFIQUL ISLAM, Barisal

The three daylong Barisal divisional 'Patha Natya Utsab' (Street Theatre Festival) was inaugurated in Barisal on February 2.

Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BGTF), Barisal Divisional branch, has organised the programme at Barisal Central Shaheed Minar premises. The festival includes streets plays and discussions. The programme was

dedicated to the memory of the late cultural icon Abdullah Al Mamun.

M. Hamid, chairman of BGTF, inaugurated the programme. The inaugural was attended by Advocate Shawkat Hossain Hiron, Mayor of Barisal City Corporation, as the chief guest and theatre personality Falguni Hamid as a special guest.

Faruk Hossain, convenor of the Festival Committee, delivered the welcome

speech. Syed Dulal, presidium member of BGTF, presided over the ceremony.

Cultural personality Nikhil Sen; theatre activist Mintu Bose and Kajal Ghosh, Barisal divisional organising secretary, discussed the different aspects of theatre and group theatre movement at the inaugural programme.

Fourteen troupes from Barisal, Jhalkathi, Bhola and Pirojpur districts are participating in the festival, organisers informed.



Young dancers perform at the inaugural session.

PHOTO: STAR