


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

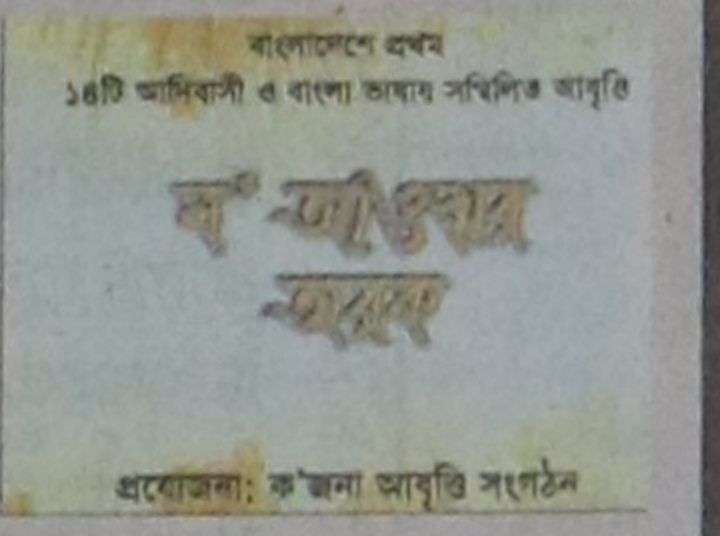
Ekushey Boi Mela '09
 Organiser: Bangla Academy
 Venue: Bangla Academy premises
 Date: February 01-28



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



Recitation of poetry in 14 Adivasi languages
 Title: Ma' Aoujhar Arok
 Organiser: Kajonia Abritti Sangathan
 Venue: TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University
 Date: February 8
 Time: 6pm



Documentary Screening and Musical programme
 Generating awareness on cancer
 Organiser: Mosabir Cancer Care Centre
 Venue: Biam Auditorium, 63, New Eskaton
 Date: February 6
 Time: 4:30 onwards



National Street Theatre Festival '09 ends in Barisal



PHOTO: STAR

The festival included street plays and discussions and was dedicated to the memory of the late cultural icon Abdullah Al Mamun.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The three-day Jatiyo Patho Natak Utshab '09 (National Street Theatre Festival) in Barisal ended on February 4.

Arranged by Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BETF), Barisal divisional branch, the festival was held at the Barisal Central Shaheed Minar premises.

The festival included street plays and discussions and was dedicated to the memory of the late cultural icon Abdullah Al Mamun.

Fourteen troupes from Barisal, Jhalkathi, Bhola and Pirojpur districts participated in the festival.

Malancha Natayam of Char Fashion, Bhola; Brojo Mohon Theatre; Kirtankhola Group Theatre and Barisal Natak of the city presented street plays on the last day of the festival.

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



"Adibashi Mela '09," a grand event featuring cultural traditions of the indigenous communities was held at Nabali Point, Cox's Bazar recently. The event was jointly organised by Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation and Channel i. Artistes of 12 ethnic groups took part at the event. The daylong "Adibashi Utsab" featured traditional songs, dances and more.

Washing away the sins

'Ganga Snan' in Chapainawabganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

The historic 'Ganga Snan,' a religious ritual of the Hindu community at Janhobi Muni Ashram of Tartipur Maha Shamsan in Chapainawabganj, ended amidst much festivity recently.

Hindu devotees of all ages thronged the venue to take a dip in the Pagla River -- a symbolic gesture, sought to wash away the sins. The event also attracted devotees from other parts of the country.

A daylong 'mela,' 'puja' and 'kirtan'

were held on the banks of the Pagla River. Around 500 stalls were set up at the fair premises. Traders from different parts of the country displayed their products at the 'mela.'

Sadhan Kumar Monigram, president of Tartipur Maha Shamsan Committee told The Daily Star that the ritual takes place during 'Shukla Pakhher Tithi' of Magh in the Bangla calendar. Every year thousands of devotees come here with the hope that this ritual would transform their lives for the better.



Hindu devotees of all ages throng the venue to take a dip in the Pagla River. PHOTO: STAR

Silver Screen

Rupantar Going beyond Mahabharat

JAMIL MAHMUD

Referring to the epic "Mahabharata," Abu Sayeed's latest film "Rupantar" follows 'the film within a film' genre. Young filmmaker Arif (played by Ferdous) wants to make a film titled "Gurudakkhina," based on the tragedy of Ekalavya.

The film, "Rupantar," randomly takes the audience into two different eras -- nearly 3000-year-old ancient India, where the Ekalavya tragedy unfolds and Arif's endeavour to visualise it in from a contemporary perspective.

Arif's film opens with a scene where legendary warrior and trainer Dronacharya is giving archery lessons to his famous disciples, the five Pandav brothers. Eager to learn the art of archery, Ekalavya (played by Mithun) suddenly appears and seeks the tutelage of Drona.

Drona refuses 'nishad kumar' Ekalavya because of



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his origin; Ekalavya belongs to a lower caste. However, the aspiring young warrior assumes Drona as his master and starts practicing archery in a deep forest.

After completing shooting indoors, Arif and his crew go to the outdoors. They select a Santal village to shoot the film.

One day, while shooting a scene of Ekalavya's archery practice, Arif is interrupted by two locals. He overhears them talking about the protagonist's incorrect archery technique. According to Santal

tradition, the thumb is useless in archery; the Santals use the index and the middle fingers instead.

This revelation perplexes Arif. As far as he knows, Dronacharya wanted Ekalavya's thumb, considered integral in archery, as his 'gurudakkhina' (tribute to the master). A confused Arif cannot decide what to do now, as the central theme of the film is Ekalavya's sacrifice.

Arif soon realises that he has to change everything. He makes major changes in the plot and starts afresh. He even changes the title of the film to "Rupantar."

Abu Sayeed won an award at Rotterdam Film Festival 2007 for the script of this film.

Performances by Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Shakiba and Santal actor Jatem Tudu in the film are noteworthy.

"Rupantar" premiered last weekend at Star Cineplex. It is one of the three films that received a government grant last year.

Oscar Nominee Spotlight: Sean Penn

The 48-year old Sean Penn might be easily ruffled off screen, but he hands in consistently stellar performances time after time.

The actor has won a previous Best Actor Oscar for his work in "Mystic River," and he is now nominated for the film "Milk," where he plays Harvey Milk, the first openly gay man to be elected to office in California.

Here's what the reviewers are gushing over:

Peter Travers, Rolling Stone:

"That Harvey's questing spirit not only lives but soars in this movie is a gift from Sean Penn, who plays him for real instead of for show. Penn is a lion of an actor, but the tenderness he radiates here is revelatory. Smouldering intensity wasn't Harvey's thing. A closeted Wall Street investment banker who came out politically about the same time he did sexually, Harvey



disarmed people with his ready charm, his bracing intelligence and his knack for helping the disenfranchised fight back.

"Penn uses makeup to lengthen his nose and look more like Harvey. He adopts a New York accent to get



Harvey's inflections. But the physical transformation is nothing compared to the way Penn gets at the core of the man, finding the source of his joy and pain. He disappears into Harvey with the artistry of an acting virtuoso. There's one word for Penn's perfor-

mance: phenomenal."

Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times:

"Sean Penn amazes me. Not long before seeing 'Milk,' I viewed his work in 'Dead Man Walking' again. Few characters could be more different,

few characters could seem more real.

"He creates a character with infinite attention to detail, and from the heart out. Here he creates a character who may seem like an odd bird to mainstream America and makes him completely identifiable."

Richard Corliss, Time:

"Penn dominates the film -- not in his usual way, by making brooding seem like a form of higher callisthenics. Penn here reins in his method bluster to locate the sweetness and vulnerability beneath Milk's assured persona.

"He becomes this character -- surely far from his experience -- with no italicising, no condescension, no sweat. This isn't an impersonation; it's an inhabiting."

Is there an actor in Hollywood braver than Sean Penn?

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

Emmy Awards to allow more nominees

The board of governors for the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences will increase the number of nominees permitted in 10 major categories for the primetime Emmy Awards, the board announced.

The academy will choose six nominees each in the categories of outstanding comedy and drama programmes, lead actor and actress in a comedy and drama series, and supporting actor and actress in a comedy and drama series; traditionally, five nominees were named in each group.

The governors also voted to streamline the nomination process, phasing out the blue-ribbon committees that weighed in on nominees in the performance and series categories. Emmy nominees for the 2008-09 season will be announced on July 16.

Source: Internet



The governors of the television academy will now allow six Emmy nominees, instead of five, to contend in categories like outstanding drama and outstanding comedy series.

Channel i and ETV Bangla announce new talent hunts



(From left) Shahidul Alam Sachchu, Faridur Reza Sagar and others at the press conference.

After the success of "Channel i Shera Kontho" and with "Khudey Gaan Raaj" nearing its end, Channel i is embarking on another talent hunt project, says a press release.

Channel i and Indian channel, ETV Bangla, will be jointly launching two new musical talent hunts -- "Sur Daria Epaar Opaar" and "Bagha Gayen." The programmes will feature participants from both Bangladesh and West Bengal, India.

The announcement was made at a press conference on February 3 in Kolkata. Faridur

Reza Sagar, managing director, Impress Telefilms Ltd and Channel i; Shahidul Alam Sachchu, who will be overseeing the Bangladesh part of the projects; Kaushik Dutta Sharma, head of ETV Bangla; Partha Sarathi Talukdar, senior producer of ETV Bangla and others attended the conference. Renowned Indian composer-singer Bappi Lahiri and Bangladeshi Tagore artiste Rezwana Chowdhury Bonna will be the two main judges on the shows.