

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

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



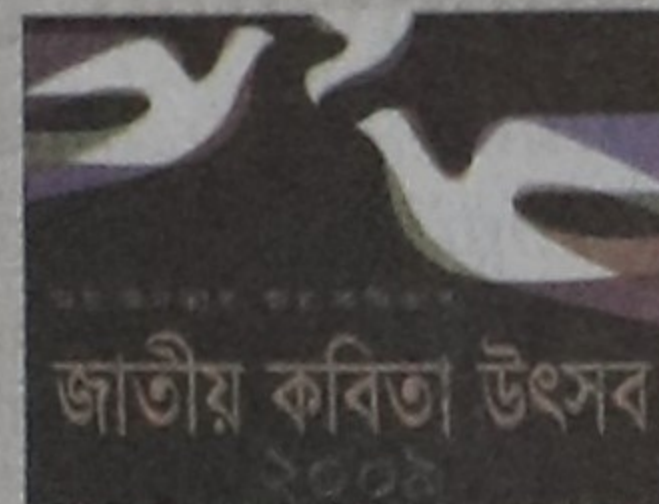
Chobi Mela V
19th Festival of Photography, Bangladesh '09
Theme: Freedom
Venues: National Museum, BSA, Drik Gallery, Bangal Gallery, AF, GIB, British Council, Asiatic Gallery, Kalpana Boarding and Karwan Bazar underpass
Date: Jan 30-Feb 20



Solo Photography Exhibition
Title: Kalo Teep
Photographer: Shah Sazzad
Venue: Chhobir Haat, opposite of Charukala, DU
Date: February 13-20

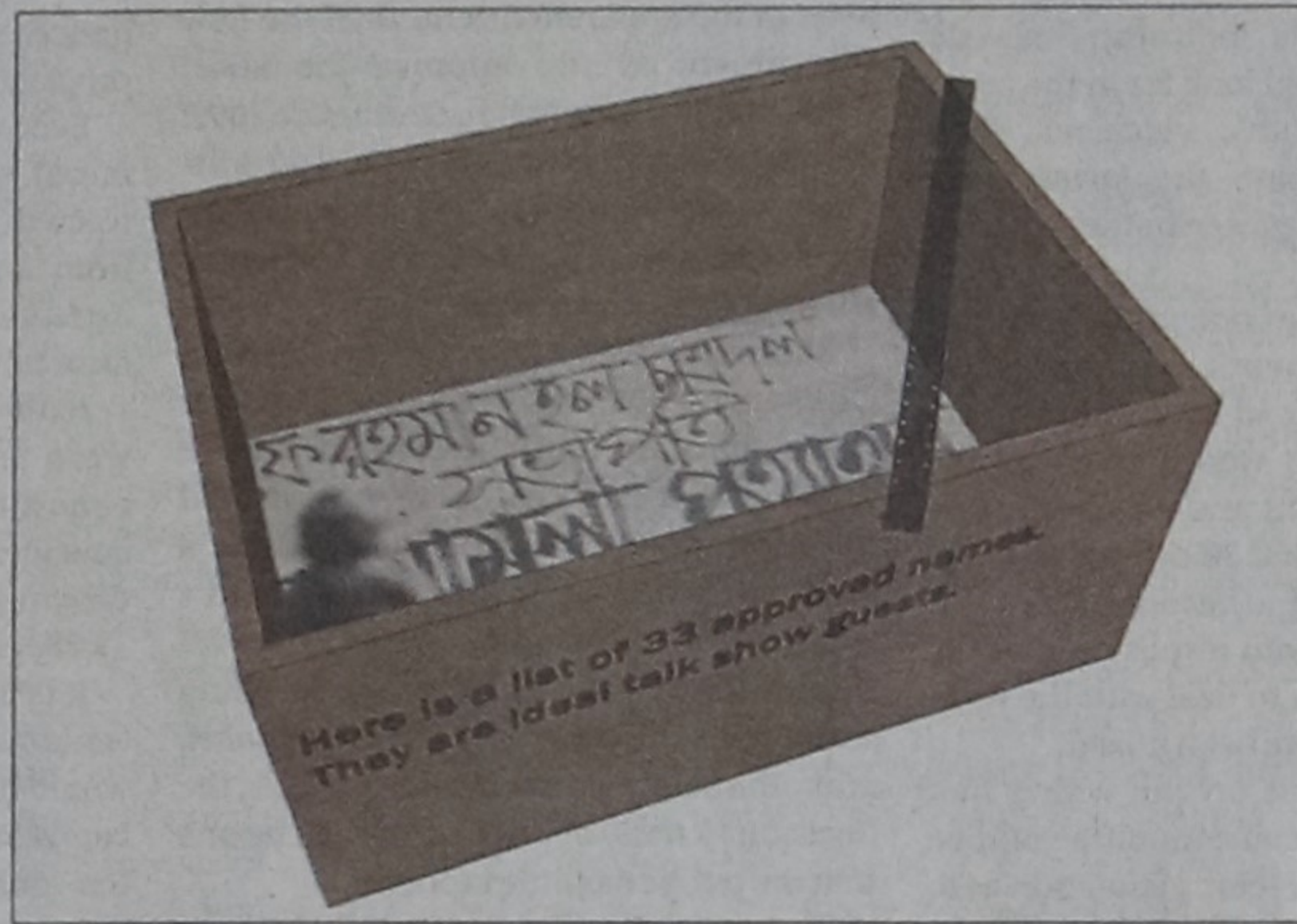
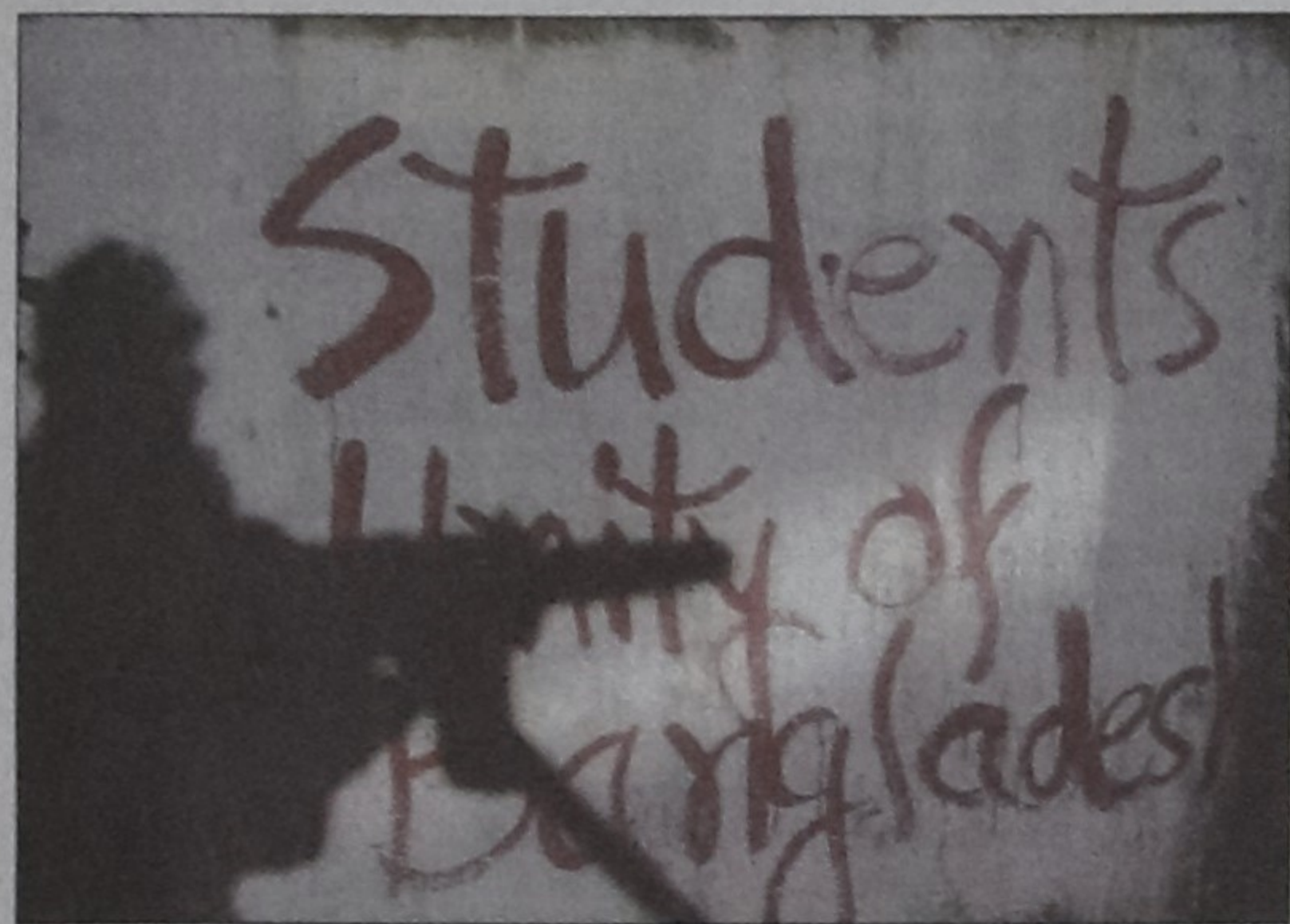


National Poetry Festival
Organiser: Jatiyo Kabita Parishad
Venue: Central Public Library, Dhaka University
Date: February 18-20



Chobi Mela V

Naeem Mohaiemen takes a look at fear mongering



Naeem Mohaiemen's installation is an investigative look at the continuing fear-based rhetoric and loss of human and citizen rights.

JAMIL MAHMUD

Naeem Mohaiemen's photo installation "Ondro, Guarding Who, Against What" is one of two installations at the ongoing Chobi Mela V. The other is Camille Zakharia's "Marking." Both installations are being held at the National Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Mohaiemen's project has been curated by Zaid Islam. The installation is an investigative look at the continuing fear-based rhetoric and loss of human and citizen rights. Eight coffin-size boxes are placed in a labyrinth-like pattern on the corridor of National Art Gallery. Each box covers different sub-

jects with captions on its body.

Within a fluorescent glow, the installation features Rangas Bhaban, Bijay Sharani and Dhaka University campus.

Speaking on his installation, Mohaiemen said, "My works are symbolic representations of the inconsistencies in society. The day after the state of emergency was lifted, I saw a homeless woman drying her clothes on a barbed wire barricade. A sweet fleeting moment. But a few days later, the same barricades were back in action. Demands to show ID, the sudden stop and search, the rummaging inside your camera bag, the interrogation..."

"Think tanks, seminars, conferences, talk shows, and newspapers, everyone has an opinion on this

century's obsession. Will democracy remove the barbed wire barricades and midnight checks on Dhanmondi Bridge?"

Apart from photography, Mohaiemen is also involved in writing and filmmaking. His works have been showcased at Gallery Chittrak, Asiatic Society, Finnish Museum of Photography, Karachi VM Gallery and NY Exit Art.

Mohaiemen's published works include "Collectives in Atomised Time" (with Doug Ashford, Idensitat, Spain), "Islam & Hip-Hop" (Sound Unbound, Miller ed., MIT Press); "Why Mahmood Can't Be A Pilot" (Nobody Passes, Bernstein ed., Seal Press) and "Beirut: Illusion of Silver Porsche" (Men of Global South, Jones ed., Zed Press).

25th anniversary of short and alternative film movement

Four-day film screening begins at Public Library

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of short and alternative film movement in Bangladesh, a four-day screening titled "Short and Alternative Film Festival" was inaugurated at Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library on February 18. The festival, arranged by Chalachchitram Film Society, also marks the 25th anniversary of two pioneering Bangladeshi short films -- Morshedul Islam's "Agami" and Tanvir Mokammel's "Hulia."

Short films made in the initial stages of the movement as well as contemporary acclaimed feature films are being screened at the festival.

A.T.M. Fazlul Karim, secretary, Ministry of Information, inaugurated the festival. Among others, Rasheda K Chowdhury, adviser to the last Caretaker Government; Morshedul Islam and Dr. Ashekur Rahman Khan, executive president and president of Chalachchitram

respectively, spoke at the inaugural ceremony. Later "Agami" and "Hulia" were screened.

At the programme, Chalachchitram honoured noted filmmakers Tareque Masud and Tanvir Mokammel, two frontrunners in the arena of short and alternative film movement, for their contribution. Filmmakers -- representing the successive generation of the short and alternative film movement -- Mostafa Sarwar Farooki and Amitav Reza handed over crests to the seasoned auteurs.

Throughout four days, 19 short and full-length films by reputed and promising filmmakers will be screened. The list includes "Antarjatra," "Mukrir Gaan," "Nodir Naam Modhumati," "Tajuddin Ahmed: An Unsung Hero," "Biswaraner Nodi," "Swapnodanay," "Chaka," and "Ekatturer Jishu."

Today six films -- "Iti Salma," "Rupantar," "Aparajita," "Chaka," "Bikal" and "Swapnodanay" -- will be screened from 3pm onwards.



Screenings of "Agami" and "Hulia" opened the "Short and Alternative Film Festival" being held at Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library.

"Hridoye Mati O Manush" turns six

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Channel i's acclaimed agricultural programme "Hridoye Mati O Manush" is turning six on February 21. On the occasion a press conference was held at Channel i's Siddeshwari office yesterday.

Faridur Reza Sagor, managing director, Channel i and Impress Telefilm Ltd and Shykh Seraj, director, news, Channel i were present at the conference.

In an effort to promote agriculture and establish the rights of farmers, "Hridoye Mati O Manush" started its journey on February 21, 2004. Hosted by Shykh Seraj, each episode of the programme offers an in-depth analysis of a certain topic. So far channel i has aired 243 episodes of the programme.

As part of the anniversary celebration, Channel i will be conferring the "Krishi Padak 2009" to Afazuddin, a farmer from Natore, for his contribution in pioneering husbandry of

medicinal plants at his native village Kholabaria.

Afazuddin started a garden of medicinal plants in 1975. Initially he used these for the treatment of his family members. Inspired by his success, his neighbours and fellow villagers started following him. Today the major source of livelihood in Kholabaria village is medicinal plants. Several rare and uncommon plants offering cure to many diseases can be found here. Everyday tons of plants, fruits, flowers and roots make their way from the village to several parts of the country.

The award will be presented on April 10, at a colourful ceremony at Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre.

Channel i started presenting the "Krishi Padak" from 2006. Previous winners of the award are -- Haripad Kapali (2006), Kartik Pramanik (2007) and Syed Keramat Ali (2008).

"Hridoye Mati O Manush" is aired on Channel i every Saturday at 9:35pm.

Rajrupa's solo sarod recital



Rajrupa (right) was ably accompanied by Swarup Hossain on tabla at the sarod recital.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Rajrupa Chowdhury, born in Kolkata, started her 'taalim' in sarod at the tender age of five under the aegis of Siddhartha Roy Chowdhury. She secured the first class first position in her Masters in Instrumental Music from the Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata, in 2006. The virtuoso sarod player now lives in Dhaka.

Recently Rajrupa had a solo sarod recital at the residence of Abul Khair, chairman of Bengal Foundation. She was ably accompanied by Swarup Hossain on tabla. A gold medal recipient from the MS University of Baroda, Swarup received 'taalim' from the late Pandit Sudhir Kumar Saksena under a Bengal Foundation scholarship.

The recital opened with an 'alaap,' 'jod' and 'jhala' in "Raaga Desh". This was followed by "Vilambit Gat" and "Madhyalaya Gat" in "Malkosh." A brief rendition in "Bhimpalasi" ended the performance. Rajrupa's devotion was apparent in her complete immersion in the presentation. The melodic development of the various ragas was handled with great care. The progressive journey to different 'laya' and complex patterns was immaculate. A great deal of restraint was apparent in the use of specific ornamentation. Rajrupa's improvisations bespoke her extensive 'taalim' and tireless 'rewaz.'

Language competition by HSBC and Prothom Alo



About 800 students from 32 institutions of Barisal, Bhola, Jhalkati, Barguna, Patuakhali, Pirojpur and Faridpur districts participated in the competition.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Final round of the Bangla Language Competition titled 'Bhasha Protijogita' (Barisal zone) ended in the town with a vow to promote the mother language.

Professor M.D. Nurul Amin, principal of Barisal Model School and College and freedom fighter Ferdous Kamaluddin Mahamud, jointly inaugurated the event last Monday at the school premises.

"This programme should encourage youngsters to set their priority to the

mother language," said Professor Nurul Amin at the inaugural session.

The professor added that one cannot be a true patriot without loving one's own language.

The competition, aimed at testing an individual's knowledge of mother language, was jointly organised by Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited and the daily Prothom Alo.

About 800 students of 32 institutions of Barisal, Bhola, Jhalkati, Barguna, Patuakhali, Pirojpur and Faridpur

districts participated in the competition.

The contest included multiple-choice questions on Bangla grammar and language. Among the contestants, 52 students in four categories won prizes in the final round.

Professor A.K.M. Abdur Rob, convener of the competition committee; Mazabul Alam, divisional commissioner; cultural personality Nikhil Sen; Sazzad Sharif and Arun Basu, deputy editor and assistant editor of the daily Prothom Alo, were also present at the programme.

Innovation | Aronney: Theatre on a tree

ANWAR ALI, Rajshahi

A troupe of Rajshahi Theatre artists returned home after overwhelming a sizeable audience in Behrampore of Murshidabad district, India, staging a unique play on a tree.

Invited by Indian cultural organisation, Jugagni, the Rajshahi Theatre group joined a five-day drama festival in Behrampore recently. The objective was to merge folk and urban theatre traditions of West Bengal and Bangladesh.

A number of organisations staged plays at the festival. Indian print and electronic media highlighted the play staged by Rajshahi Theatre, titled "Aronney."

Kabir Liton, playwright and drama instructor of Rajshahi University Teachers and Students Cultural Centre (TSCC) has written the script and also directed "Aronney" -- designed to be performed on a tree.

"In Behrampore, we found a huge banyan tree on the bank of Bhagirathi river, near Krishnanath College Ghat. On February 8, we staged the play. The audience responded with encouragement and rounds of applause," said



The play, staged on a tree, was the talk of the town in Behrampore, India.

Kabir.

"Theatre reflects life. If the story of life can be narrated from a platform that is alive, it should have a positive and sustaining impact," the young playwright said about his innovative idea.

"After developing the idea, we first staged the play on a mango tree at Rajshahi University in 2005," said Kamaruddin Sarker, president of

Rajshahi Theater. Sarker plays the role of a political leader in "Aronney."

The play features six human characters and three animals.

The play zooms in on characters who are disillusioned by double standards in urban life, and go to a forest in search of peace. Once in the forest, they contemplate modernising the site. It all goes downhill onwards.