

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

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



Exhibition
On February 21
Title: Dili & Others
Organiser: Bangladesh Heritage Foundation & Bangladesh Research and Publications
Venue: Billa Auditorium, H 22, Rd 7, Dhanmondi
Date: February 20-28
Time: 10am-8pm



Programme on Ekushey
Organiser: TSC, Dhaka University
Venue: TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University
Date: February 21
Time: 4pm

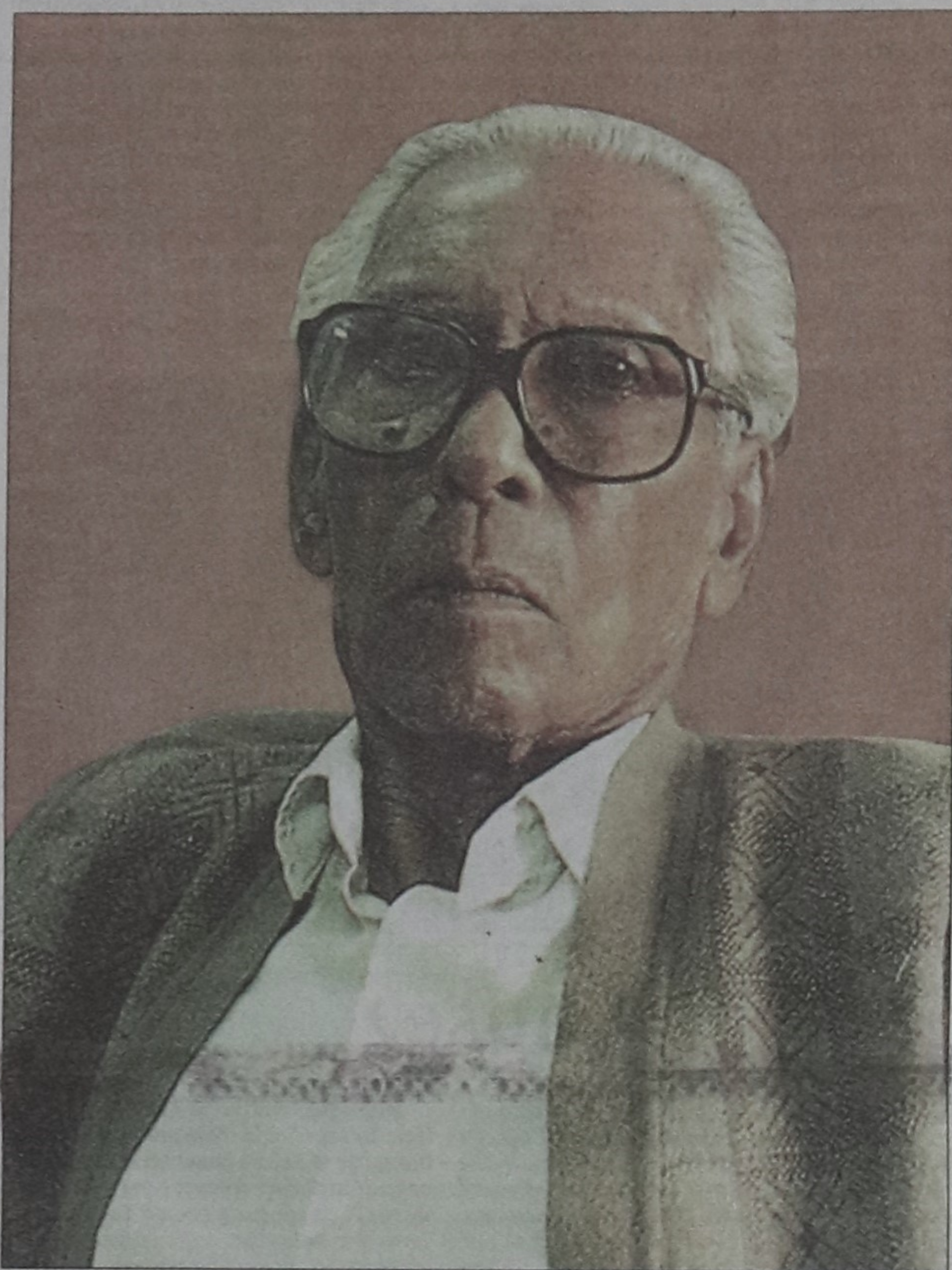


11th Padatik-Ekushey Cultural Festival '09
Organiser: Padatik Natya Sangsad Bangladesh
Venue: Bangladesh Shipakala Academy
Date: February 21
Time: 10 am onwards



An indomitable spirit

Homage to Abdul Latif



Abdul Latif had the amazing ability to write lyrics and compose tunes at a moment's notice.

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

Years ago, prominent cultural figures hailing from Barisal, were invited over for the centennial celebration of Brojo Mohon College, popularly known as BM College. The ship was to start at 6 pm

and we hurried for the Sadarghat terminal.

Everyone seemed in a jovial mood. Abdul Latif, Papya Sarwar, Jewel Aich, Khairul Alam Shobuj, Nawazish Ali Khan, KS Firoze, Latifa Helen and myself could barely conceal our excitement

as we boarded the ship. Chandradwip, an organisation of Barisal, had arranged this memorable programme. That trip now seems all the more significant as this was the last time I had the opportunity to interact with Abdul Latif, whom we affectionately

called "Latif bhai."

I first met him in the 1960s. The then-president of Pakistan, Ayub Khan was to pay a visit to the Dhaka radio station at Shahbagh. Massive preparations were underway to put up an impressive show. As the youngest group of artists at the station, we were also preparing for a live performance and were training under Latif bhai. The ever-buoyant Latif bhai was to teach us rhymes and spiritual songs.

On weekends we used to rehearse at the big studio no. 6 at Shahbagh. Eminent composers Abdul Ahad, Samar Das and Latif bhai were training us for the final show.

The spirited Latif bhai was a wizard when it came to children's songs. Latif bhai in his white pyjama-panjabi, a cigarette at the corner of his mouth, riding his Vespa to work, was a familiar sight. "Tora chashney kichhu karo kachhey, Khodar madat chhara," "Imaan ekota srinkhola ei niye shudhu potho chola," the rhythmic songs "Ek shiyaley randhey barey," "Laal jhuti kakatua," "Jhor elo elo jhar," "Ailo deya nishaley" and many more were composed in the simplest form to match the spirit of the young singers.

His on stage performances never failed to captivate us. He sang as he spoke -- with a booming voice, and in high spirits. He was equally emotional, pious and sensitive. His tunes were varied but always had a touch of the folk element. He was also a master in 'puthi paath', the traditional art of reciting folklore -- hardly heard nowadays.

He had the amazing ability to write lyrics and compose tunes at a moment's notice. The story runs that one of his

timeless songs was written in a similar fashion. While on his way to office he had a sudden inspiration to write a song on the Language Movement. He hurriedly came back home. On a piece of paper, he scribbled the words "Ora amaa mukher kotha kaira nitey chaye." This was in the year 1952. The song was soon on everyone's lips, the message of the song forthright and strong.

Rathindranath Roy would often sing this song at Ekushey programmes. The emotionally-packed song would evoke passion amongst the audience every time. Abdul Alim's most popular numbers "Duarey aishachhey palki," "Por-er jaiga por-er jomin," and many more incomparable songs were composed by Abdul Latif. On the whole he composed over 1500 songs.

He was also a mentor to eminent artistes such as Ferdousi Rahman, Nina Hamid, Indramohon Rajbangshi, Rawshan Ara Masud, Mina Barua and many more.

Latif bhai declined the "Tamgha" title given by the Pakistan government. He was honoured with Ekushey Padak in 1979 and the Swadhinata Padak in 2002.

Latif bhai met with an accident after which his health started to deteriorate. Voice choking with emotion, he would often tearfully glance at the harmonium, unable to sing his favourite songs.

On the whole, however, Latif bhai was a content man. He was bestowed with numerous awards for his outstanding contribution to music, but through it all, he managed to secure the most prized award of all -- a place in the hearts of his countrymen.

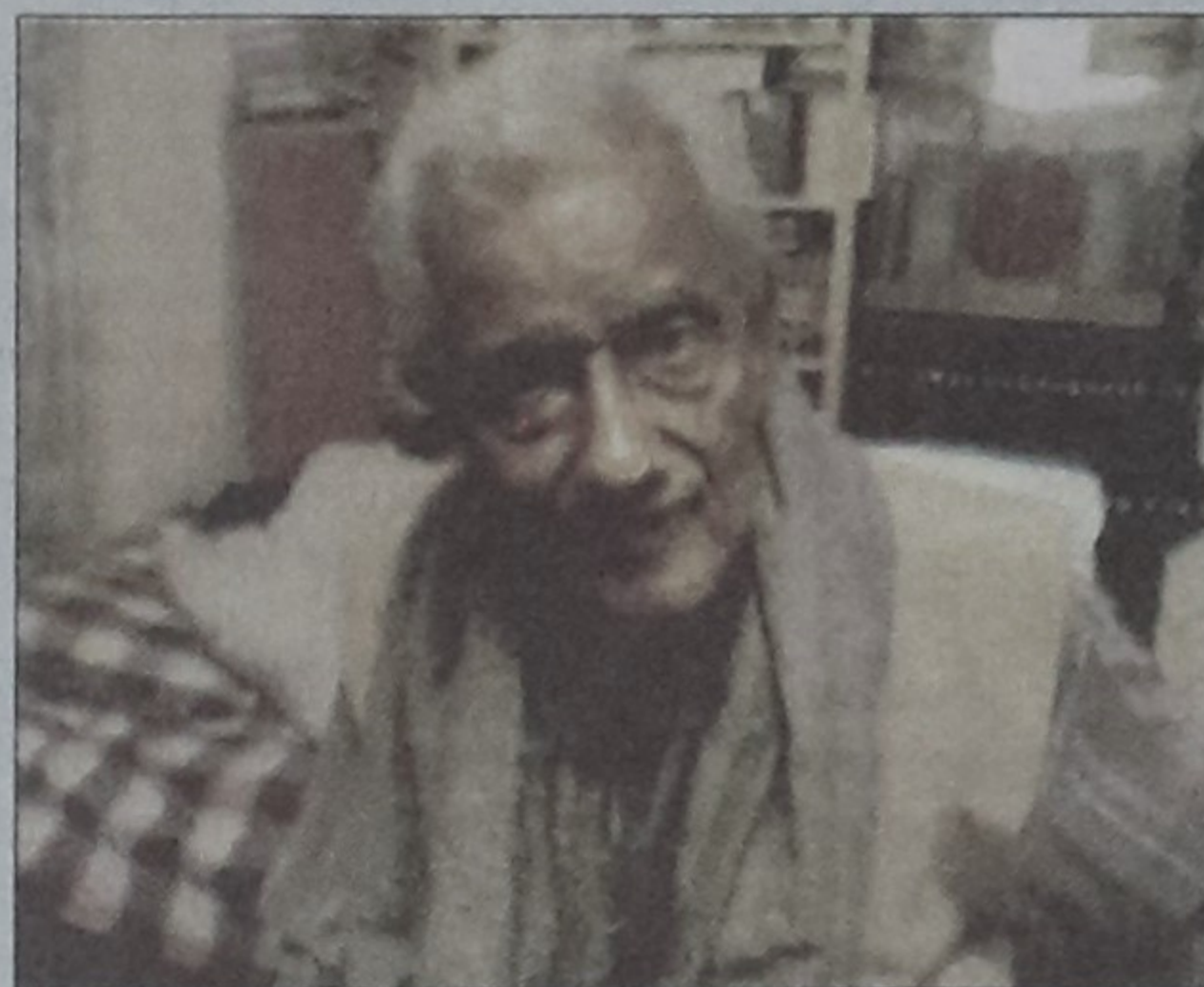
Ekushey Special

"Alor Shiri" on ATN Bangla

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

As part of the special programmes on Ekushey February, ATN Bangla will telecast a documentary on Language Movement veteran Syed Abdul Matin. The programme, titled "Alor Shiri," will be aired tonight at 11:30 pm. The documentary has been directed by Aslam Shikdar.

In the documentary, the Language Movement veteran recalls his memories of February 21, 1952.



"Ekusher Din Badal-er Shurjo" on ETV

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

A special docu-drama "Ekusher Din Badal-er Shurjo" will be aired tonight on Ekushey Television at 10:10 pm. Planned by Abdus Salam, Masud Ahmed has written the play and K.M. Khurshid has directed it.

The drama features the history of major movements that shaped our national history, starting with the Language Movement in 1952.

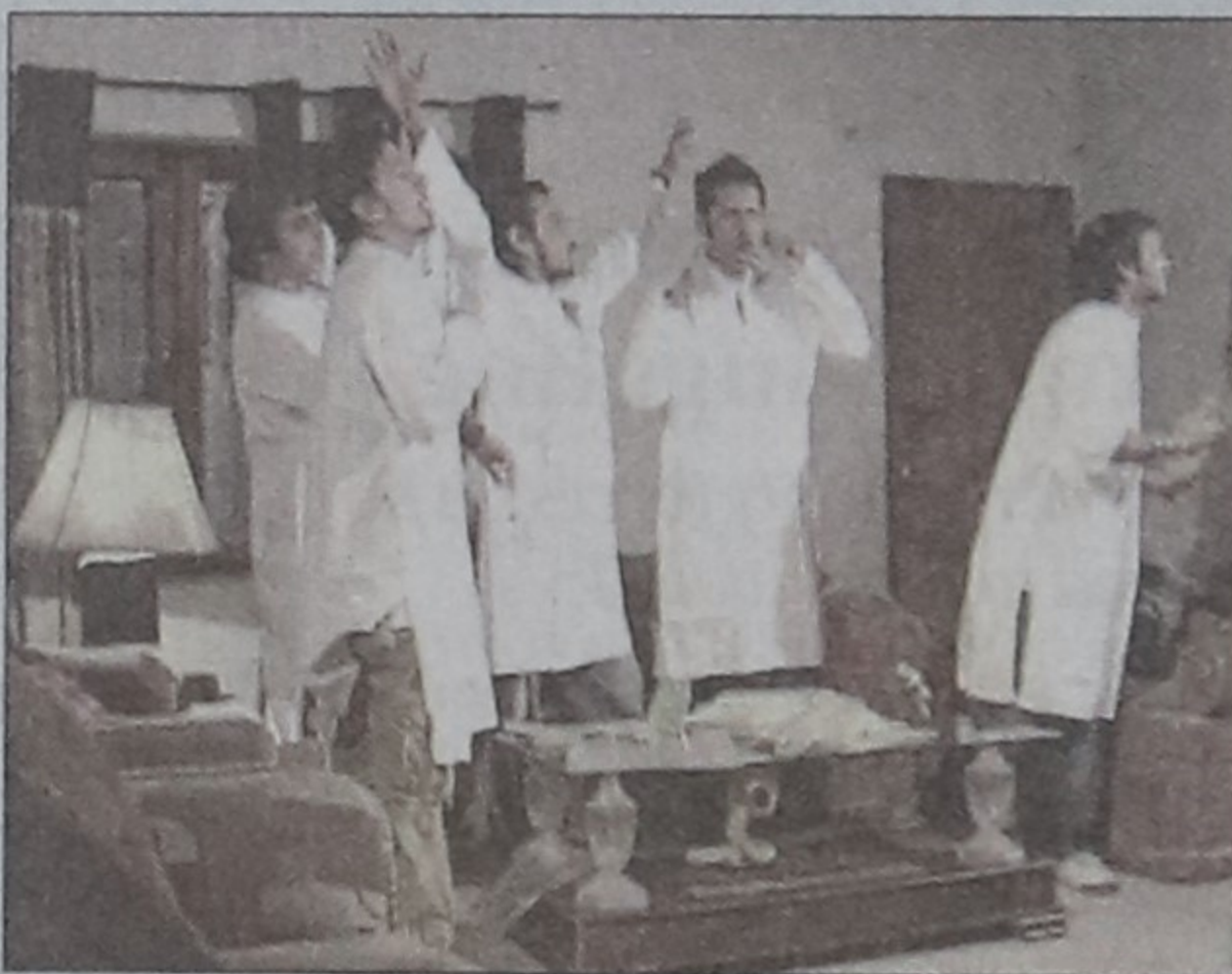
Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Shompa Reza, Nader Ghowdhury and Tarana Halim play the lead roles.

"Morichika Ebong Ekti Bangla Raat" on Rtv

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Special TV play "Morichika Ebong Ekti Bangla Raat" will be aired tonight on Rtv at 9:10 pm. The play is inspired by Rabindranath Tagore's "Tasher Desh" and the Indian film "Rang De Basanti." Farhad Lemon is the writer, while Muktadir Ibne Salam is the director of the play.

The story is about a group of young individuals who are seemingly confused about their cultural identity. The group plans to have a party on the eve of Ekushey February. But the story takes a surprising turn when the clock strikes

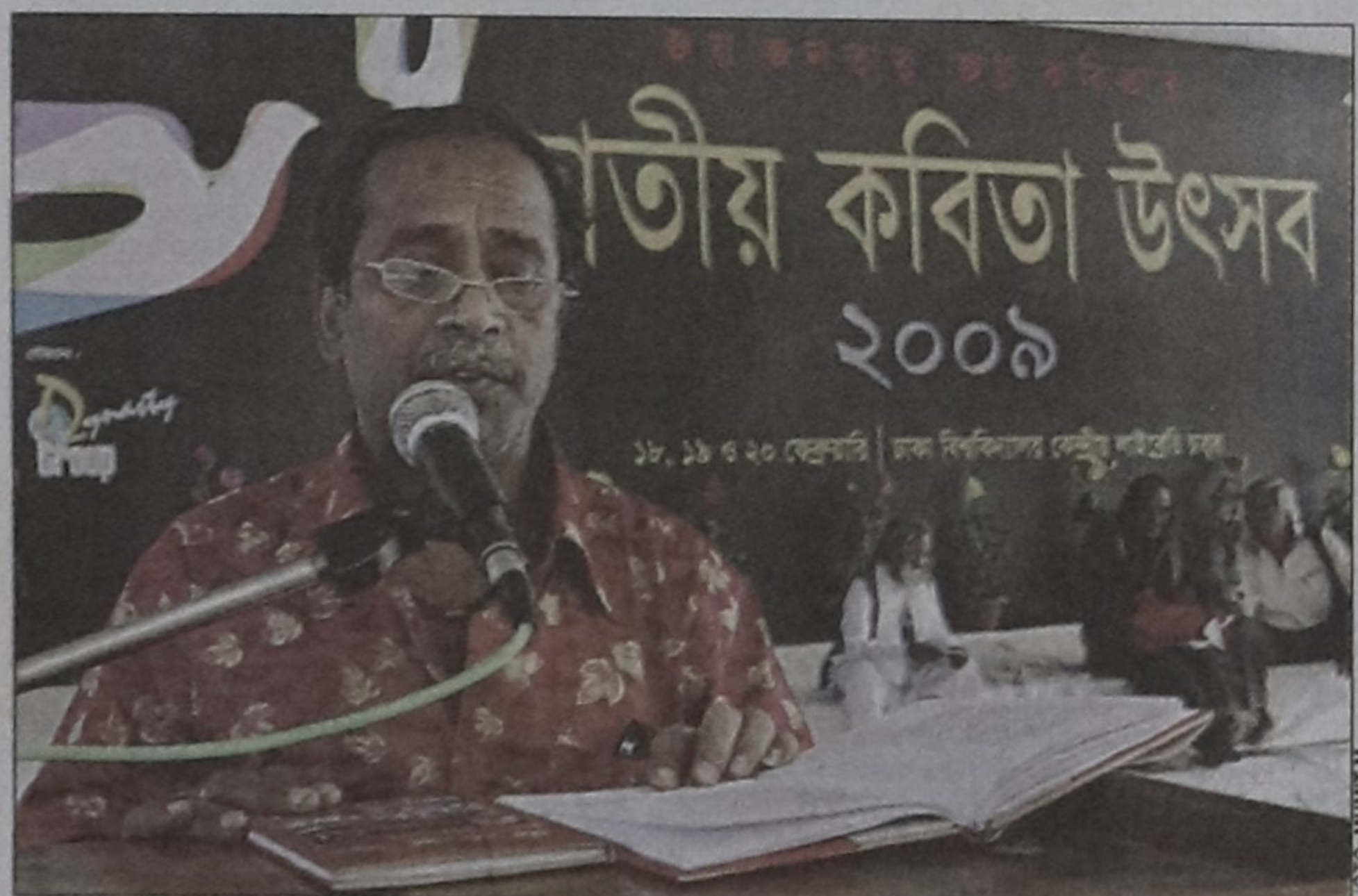


twelve and the group of friends find themselves on the night of February 20,

1952. A group of young actors have donned the lead roles.

National Poetry Festival '09

The bond of words



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

More than 150 poets from all over the country, including some from the capital, read out their verses at the National Poetry Festival to fans and avid enthusiasts. The festival organised by Jatiyo Kabita Parishad began with the slogan "Joy Jonotar Joy Kobitar" at Central Library Premises, Dhaka University on February 18 and ended yesterday.

Alongside prominent and promising poets from the country, the festival also featured a numbers of Bengali poets from Assam,

Tripura, Hyderabad, West Bengal and Mumbai (India); US; UK; Canada and Australia. Poets representing the local ethnic communities also participated at the festival, thus creating a bond between cultures through the language of poetry.

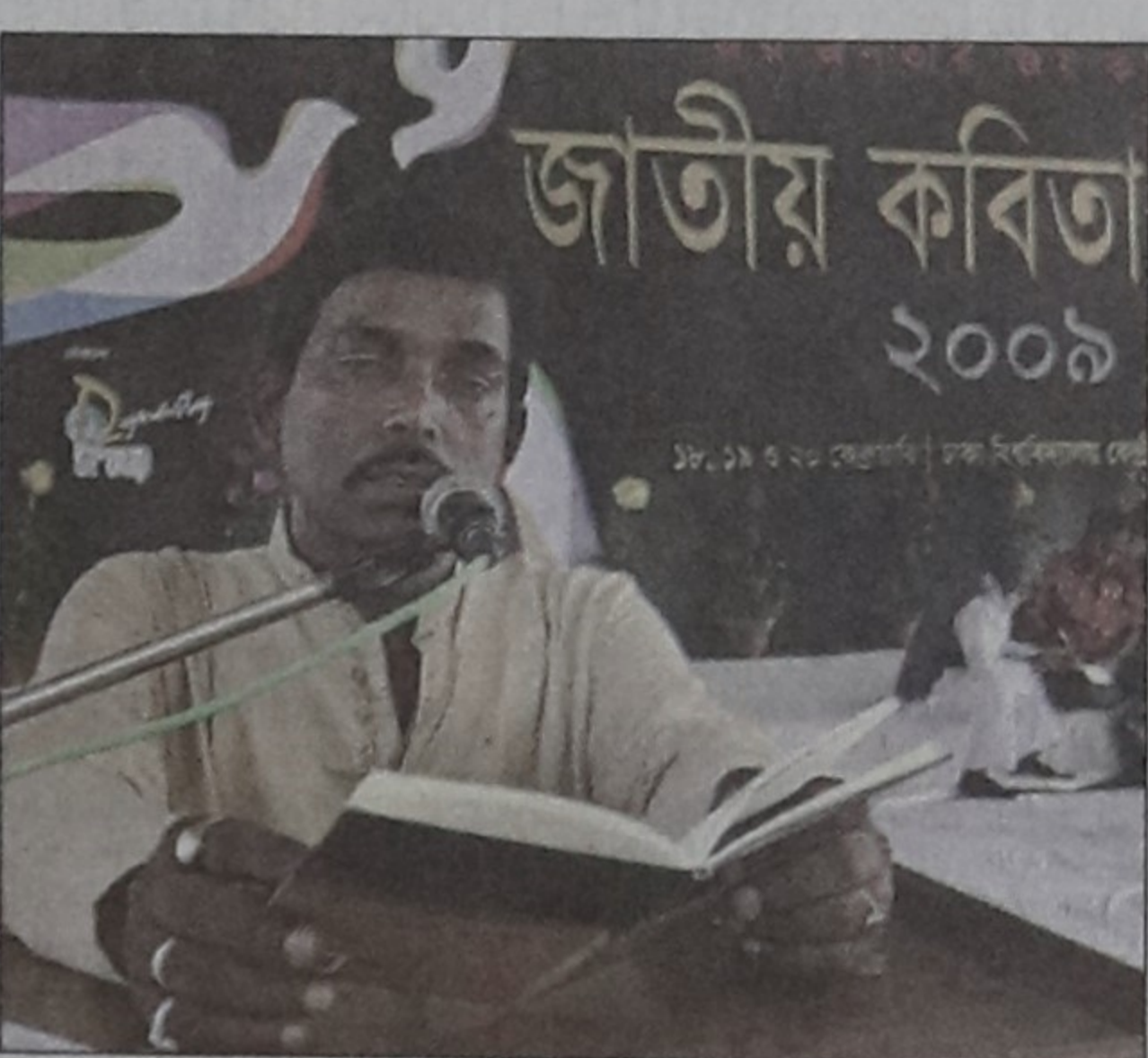
Poet Syed Shamsul Haque inaugurated the festival. "Poetry is the best and wisest expression of human language, the purest voice of humanity. Poetry has inspired man to win over all evil and malice," the poet said.

Remembering the con-

tribution of poets in our national movements, Haque noted, "Our poets have always dreamt of an ideal situation. The ink of their pen is as sacred as the blood of martyrs."

Mohon Raihan read the declaration of the festival. "Victory of the people is an inevitable rule in history. Poetry is the mantra that inspires this victory," he said.

Poet Habibullah Siraji, president of Jatiyo Kabita Parishad; Rabiul Hossain, convenor of the festival; Tarique Sujat, joint convenor and Golam Kibria Pinu,



Over 150 poets from all over the country read out their verses at the National Poetry Festival.

general secretary of the organisation, also spoke at the inauguration.

Eminent Gano Sangeet artiste Fakir Alamgir rendered the theme song of this year's festival, titled "Joy Joy Kabitar, Joy Joy Jonotar." The song is written by Mohon Raihan and composed by Fakir Alamgir.

The recitation session continued throughout the evening. Different sessions of the inaugural programme were presided over by Muhammad Samad, Muhammad Nurul

Huda, Rafique Azad and Asad Chowdhury.

At the second day of the festival two seminars on poetry were held. Noted poets and litterateurs participated at the seminars on "Poetry of the Two Worlds in the Age of Imperialism," and "Modern Bengali Poetry: The Context in Bangladesh." Poetry recitation session resumed in the afternoon.

Artiste Fayaz Ahmed inaugurated a session on the concluding day titled "Poetry and Art." The festival ended yesterday.

"Ekusher Golpo" on Banglavisision



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

"Ekusher Golpo," an adaptation of a Zahir Raihan story, will be aired tonight at 8:15 pm on Banglavisision. Kawnain Shourabh has adapted and directed the play.

The symbolic story zooms in on Topu. On the day of February 21 Topu goes to Ramna and becomes nostalgic. He has a deja vu and recalls that this is the place where some of his friends sacrificed their lives to secure the right to speak Bangla.

The cast includes Rawnak Hasan, Lara Lotus, Shirin Bakul and Pratik.

"Shedin Ki Ghotechhilo" on ntv

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Documentary programme "Shedin Ki Ghotechhilo" will be aired this afternoon on ntv at 4:10 pm. Nazmul Huda Shapla is the producer of the documentary.

Renowned artist Murtaza Bashir, National Professor Sofia Ahmed and artist Emdad Haque will speak on the event that became the cornerstone of our national struggle for independence. Riaz Mahmud Jewel, Jahangir Chowdhury and Smaran Prattay will recite poems on the show.

The programme is compiled and hosted by Dr. Manzur-e-Mawla.

