

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: Dali & Others
Organiser: Bangladesh Heritage Foundation & Bangladesh Research and Publications
Venue: Billa Auditorium, H 22, Rd 7, Dharmondi
Date: February 20-28
Time: 10am-8pm



Photography Exhibition
By Julien Pannellier and Bruno Valentin
Title: Dhaka, a City and its People
Venue: AFD, 26, Mirpur Rd, Dharmondi
Date: February 19-March 5
Time: 9am-12pm, 5-8pm (Saturdays 5-8pm)



Award
Title: Shilu Abed Master Craftsperson Award '09
Organiser: National Crafts Council of Bangladesh
Venue: BRAC Inn Centre Auditorium, 75, Mohakhali
Date: March 5
Time: 6pm



Poetic discourse

In conversation with Rabiul Hussain and Mamun Rashid

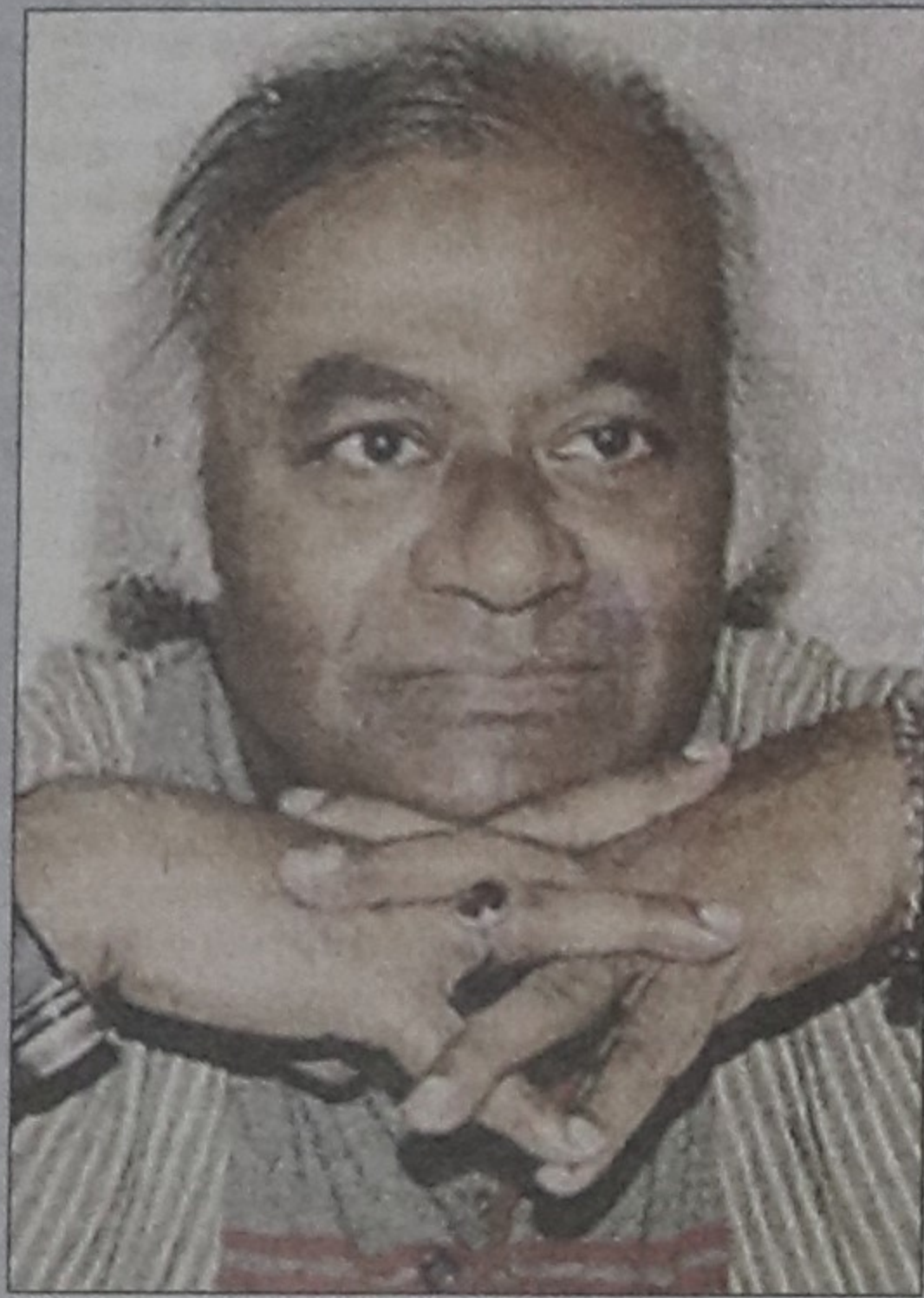
TAKIR HOSSAIN

Rabiul Hussain and Mamun Rashid are two Bangladeshi poets with sizeable readership. The Daily Star recently caught up with the poets.

Rabiul Hussain, emerging as a poet in the 1960s, is a recognised name in our literary circle. He is also an architect. His verses are soothing, informative and continue to fascinate readers. Said Hussain, "I used to write for leading women's magazines 'Begum' and 'Lolona' under the pen name 'Laily Hossain' (which was actually the name of one of my sisters). From 1965 to 1967, some of my friends and I published a little magazine 'Na,' which created ripples as a literary journal. Essays, poems, short stories and more could be found in the magazine. Kazi Sayeed Hussain, Rashid Chowdhury, Mahbub Hussain Khan and other renowned writers contributed to this little magazine. After several years, I started to contribute to 'Hungry Generation,' which was published from the southern part of our country. Rafiq Azad, Abdul Hasnat and Belal Choudhury used to contribute to that magazine as well."

Mamun Rashid is a promising poet of our country who made a name for himself in the '90s. Born in Pabna, he grew up and was educated in Bogra. Rashid began writing poetry in 1992. He started publishing a little magazine, titled 'Dibachcho,' from the year 2000. However, he could not continue due to a paucity of funds. "Lack of funding is a major issue in the little magazine scenario," said Mamun.

Truly, in our country many little magazines are published, but these have inadequate readership. Bogra, Pabna, Rajshahi and Rangpur have the largest



Rabiul Hussain

est publication of little magazines. The little magazine movement began a few decades ago. After the '80s and '90s, the number of little magazines has increased. Many creative and talented poets and writers have appeared in our literary arena over the years.

Mamun began his career with romantic poems. Later, anti-autocratic message dominated his



Mamun Rashid

works. Nowadays, he writes poems on various subjects such as nature, society and romance.

"I think that the poetry of the '90s are simpler in expression than that of the '80s. Poetry of the '80s mostly contained Bangla words of Sanskrit origin. I think the poetry of our time is simple like the compositions that came about in the freethinking period of the '60s," concluded Mamun.

Weeklong book fair in Khagrachhari

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

A weeklong book fair began in the hill town of February 21 to mark the 'Amar Ekushey' (International Mother Language Day).

Khagrachhari District Administration has organised the fair to offer the local book lovers a scope for flipping through pages and buying books.

Lawmaker from Khagrachhari constituency, Jatindra Lal Tripura inaugurated the book fair at the Town Hall premises on February 21.

Deputy Commissioner A.K.M. Khairul Alam, who is also the President of Amar Ekushey Book Fair Committee, said, "Avid readers, who are not able to go to major book fairs in Dhaka and other big cities, now have an opportunity to browse new publications and buy books at discounted prices." The fair in Khagrachhari has some 25 stalls.

Jatindra Lal Tripura said that book fairs are important in linking the publication houses and readers. Readers in the hilly district would become familiar with the talented, emerging writers through this fair, he hoped.



PHOTO: STAR

Organisers hope that readers in the hilly district would become familiar with talented, emerging writers through this fair.

Mega-serial FDC on Rtv tonight



Anisur Rahman Milon (left) and Hasan Masud in a scene from "FDC."

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Centring on the razzle-dazzle world of commercial Bangladeshi cinema, mega serial "FDC" will be aired tonight at 9:50 pm on Rtv. The serial is written and directed by Kochi Khandokar.

Bangladesh Film Development Corporation, popularly called as FDC, is a place that continues to lure thousands of film-crazy people. Everyday, hordes of them gather at the FDC entrance, in the hope to catch a glimpse of their favourite movie stars. Liku is one of them. A regular moviegoer, Liku knows

every single detail about each film released, and the stars. However, his visit to FDC cannot help him to meet his favourite hero or heroine. Instead he meets a film-journalist, Swapan Nandi. Though Swapan appears to be a fraud at first, soon Liku discovers a profound passion for films in him too. Swapan helps Liku to get an access to the real world of FDC.

Zahid Hassan, Mosharrar Karim, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Hasan Masud, Anisur Rahman Milon, Nafisa, Tinni, Tisha and Mamo, among others, play different roles in the serial.

Theatre

Asadullah Farazi: A small town boy who made it big

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Asadullah Farazi, a bright spark in the contemporary Bangladeshi theatre scene, prefers to be behind the scenes. This belies the fact that one of his plays, titled "Sea Morog," has been staged 197 times so far in Dhaka by Bangladesh Theatre. He is, in fact, one of a few theatre personalities from Mymensingh region who has won recognition in Dhaka.

Son of late Mohammad Ali Farazi and Saheba Khatun, Asadullah was born at the village Tupkerchar, Melandah Upazila of Jamalpur district in 1957. He did his SSC from Phulkucha High School in Melandah and HSC from Government Ashiq Mahmud College in Jamalpur town.

Asadullah's first performance as an actor was in a play at school in 1967. He also acted in various other plays in his student years, including "Akaler Chhele," "Manush," "Ei Jodi Hoy," "Aurus Diye Lekha" and more. As his interest in theatre amplified, he decided to dedicate his talent to this performing art.

He also staged some plays at Melandah. The theatrical works staged by Shaheed Samar Theatre in Melandah were "Bhashan" and "Keramat Mangal" by the late Selim Al Deen, "Khyepa Paglar Pyachal," "Khandani Kissa" and "Ingit" by SM Solaiman, "Ekatturer Pala" by Nasiruddin Yousuff, "Jahan Alirey Dhor" and "Hamed Alir Swarga Darshan" by Salam Saqlain.

Asadullah also wrote scripts, which won plaudits from theatre enthusiasts. "Birangana Bimolara," "Shohagi Baidanir Ghat," "Sea Morog," "Bhul Korey" and "Manush Amanush," are some of his notable works. "Bhul Korey," the first play written by Farazi,



was staged in 1978.

"Birangana Bimolara," "Shohagi Baidanir Ghat" and "Sea Morog" were aired on BTV as "Mancha Natak" (stage play). Plays scripted by him were staged many times over by different organisations of Bangladesh Gram Theatre (BGT) throughout the country, fetching positive

response from the audiences.

Asadullah acted in over 30 plays scripted by him and other noted dramatists. He respectfully remembers Selim Al Deen. According to him, he met Al Deen at Jahangirnagar University in 1983 with a view to gain membership of Bangladesh Gram Theatre (BGT). Inspired by Selim Al Deen, he joined BGT in 1983 and in 1984 the iconic dramatist came to Melandah and greatly appreciated the plays performed by Shaheed Samar Theatre, a local group. Farazi was elected to the post of organising secretary of BGT in 1997 and is still a member of the BGT executive body.

"I had support from various quarters but the lack of finance compelled me to leave Melandah for Dhaka," said Asadullah, also the founding president of Shaheed Samar Theatre.

About the present status of theatre in rural Bangladesh, he said, "Lack of patronage, support from conscious quarters of the society and fundamentalist attitude are responsible for taking theatre into back gear at the grassroots." According to him, the death of female actors is another cause for concern.

Abu Sama, a lecturer of the Bengali Department of Jahanara Latif Mahila Degree College in Melandah, said that Asadullah is not only an eminent theatre artiste in greater Mymensingh but also a competent playwright and director.

Mohabbat Ali Fakir, secretary of Uttaran Shamajik Shangkritik Shangathan told this correspondent that Asadullah is an asset for greater Mymensingh. This artiste should get more opportunities so that he can make a greater contribution to the theatre world and society.

Shilpa Shetty: Bringing together a cocktail of glamour and cricket



PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Bollywood's fascination with India's most popular sports cricket seems never ending. And the global economic downturn appears to have done little to dent that.

When actress Shilpa Shetty, along with her London-based boyfriend Raj Kundra, picked up a

stake in Rajasthan Royals, one of the teams in the Indian Premier League cricket competition, for 15.4 million dollars, she became the fourth Bollywood star to join the heady cocktail of silver screen glamour and cricket.

Bollywood "badshah" Shah Rukh Khan and actresses Juhi Chawla and Priyeta Zinta have last year bought ownership of two IPL

teams--Kolkata Knight Riders and Punjab Kings' Eleven.

Shilpa is likely to feature in a music video for Rajasthan Royals which, under the captaincy of former Australian spin wizard Shane Warne had won the inaugural IPL tournament last year, and play a key role in promoting the team across the world.

Rajasthan Royals chairman and joint owner Manoj Badale said the investment by Shilpa and Raj would enhance the off-field commercial potential of a brand already recognized in India and much of the world cricketing fraternity.

Besides being an investor, Shetty, the lithe long-legged actress, will also be the Royals' brand ambassador.

With Shilpa and her beau Raj, an entrepreneur who runs an international company in gold and diamond jewellery, investing the money, the valuation of the Royals is estimated to have gone up to 140 million dollars and this has encouraged IPL Chairman Lalit Modi to say that the competition is emerging as a good investment destination even at the time of economic meltdown.

This is not Shilpa's first brush with sports. She had represented Maharashtra state in volleyball at state-level.

Rajasthan Royals owners left little doubt about their intentions to promote their team in Britain cashing in on Shilpa's popularity in that country after she had won the controversy-marred television reality show "Big Brother" on a British television channel two years ago.