

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

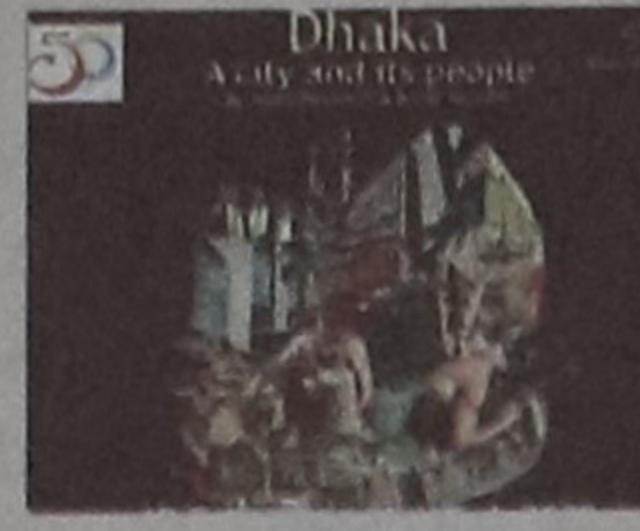
Japan Cultural Festival '09
Organiser: Embassy of Japan and BSA
Venue: National Theatre Hall, BSA
Date: February 28-March 7



Art Exhibition
Title: Addition & Omission
Artists: Wakilur Rahman and Al Mamoon
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H 20, Rd 16, Sector 4, Uttara
Date: February 27-March 7
Time: 11am-8pm

20galleri KAYA
House 20 Road 16
Sector 4 Uttara
Dhaka 1230
Bangladesh

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



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



Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela ends

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The month-long 'Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela 2009' ended on February 28; though instead of fanfare a shadow of gloom loomed large.

The total sale of books at this year's fair was Tk 18 crore. On the occasion of the fair, 313 story books, 480 novels, 205 essays, 637 collections of poems, 80 research-based books, 104 collections of rhymes, 212 publications for adolescents, 93 biographies, three anthologies, 76 books on Liberation War, 13 plays, 69 books on science, 51 travelogues, 40 publications on history, 32 on politics, 29 on health and medicine, 14 on computer related subjects, 29 on jokes and humour, 29 on religion and spirituality, 36 translations, two dictionaries, 13 science fiction and 181 on a range of other issues were published.

At a discussion on February 28, director general of Bangla Academy, Syed Mohammad Shahid delivered a speech while National Professor Kabir Chowdhury presided over the programme. Managing director, Mercantile Bank Ltd, Dewan Mujibur Rahman and director of planning and training division, Shaheed Khatun were also present as discussants.

The Bangla Academy authorities have awarded prizes to three publishing houses for their eye catching and artistically done stalls. Anya Prokash, Student Wage and Muktadara were selected for the first, second and third prizes for the year 2009.



PHOTO: STAR

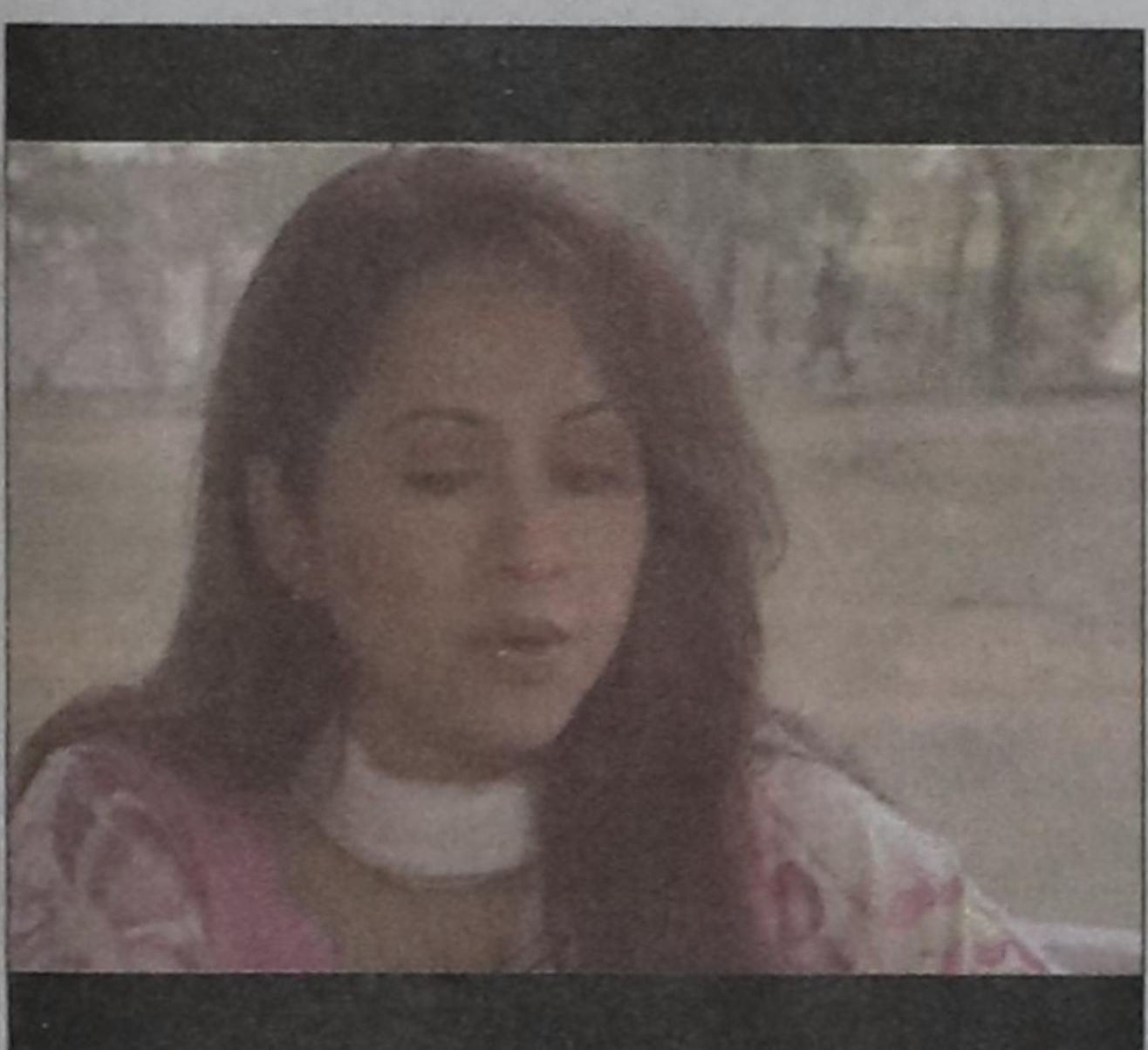
The Bangla Academy authorities awarded three publishing houses for their artistically decorated stalls. (top)

Booklovers thronged the Bangla Academy premises on the last day of the 'mela.'



Int'l Women's Day special

"Swopno, Bastob O Dipannita" on Ekushey TV



Tarin in a scene from the play.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

On the occasion of International Women's Day, Ekushey TV will air a special TV play "Swopno, Bastob O Dipannita" on March 8. Written by Rounak Hasan and directed by Chayanika Choudhury, the play will be aired at 7:45 pm.

Tarin, Emon and Azizul Hakim play lead roles in the play. Tarin and Emon take on the characters of lovers. Emon is an unemployed young man in the play. While Tarin is eager to marry Emon, he avoids the subject. In the meantime, Tarin is forced into a marriage with a drug addict, played by Azizul Hakim. The play unravels with this dilemma.

"Horizon" evolves with U2's audacity, creativity, innovation

U2's 12th album, "No Line on the Horizon," a kaleidoscopic quest, rivals 1991's "Achtung Baby" for audacity and innovation. "We had to learn a lot before we could do this," Bono, 48, says. "Normally, you zone in on a particular area and make it your own. On this, we seemed to be able to meander from joy to despair, from introspection to exhibitionism. And there's a lot of humour. I'm surprised, because people don't generally buy a U2 album for the laughs."

"There's fun and frolics here. Real joy, and that's the essence, the life force, of rock 'n' roll."

One of the year's most eagerly anticipated albums, "Horizon" is garnering raves for brazen and byzantine sonic architecture that rises from U2's familiar foundation of heartfelt rock. The 11-track disc, out last week, found the Irish foursome recording in Morocco, then in Dublin and later in New York and London. The album closes the band's longest gap between studio albums, following 2004's "How to Dismantle an Atomic Bomb," which sold 9 million copies worldwide and generated eight Grammys.

Edge, 47, is relieved to emerge from what he calls the "oil rig" after a long spell of concentrated but isolating creativity with Bono, drummer Larry Mullen Jr. and bassist Adam Clayton. The latest album's lengthy gestation was not the result of setbacks or writer's block, but rather a geyser of impulses and detours.

"We would have loved to finish the album last summer, but the songs weren't finished with us," says Edge. "Realising there was more to this album than what we had, we kept going. We dropped two or three songs, finished up others. It would have been a darker record before."

Tunes left behind, including the soulful "Every Breaking Wave," are slated for a more meditative album due possibly by year's end. U2 also is sitting on material from early sessions with

Rick Rubin, benched after the band reconnected with long-time collaborators Brian Eno and Danny Lanois, who produced "Horizon" with Steve Lillywhite.

Edge says they are not wed to any single formula. "There's no strict route to a U2 song," he says. "The only thing that's consistent is the search for inspiration. It can start from a drumbeat, a guitar part, a title, a lyric. An entire piece of music can suddenly arrive. We subscribe to the idea that there's no such thing as failure. There's just giving up. We do not give up. We are relentless."

U2's tenacity and artistic daring pay off in Horizon's towering splendour, says Blender editor Joe Levy.

"It combines two moments: the epic grandeur of 'The Joshua Tree' and the experimental audio research of 'Achtung Baby' and 'Zooropa,'" he says. "They're at a point where they can be the biggest band in the world and still be edgy, with a capital 'E' in this case. They haven't come out swinging this hard and reaching this high since 'Joshua.' On the surface, it's classic U2. Put on the headphones, and you hear an album every bit as sonically ambitious as 'Achtung Baby.'"

Horizon's immediacy, nimble complexities and clear messages cement U2's standing as the only veteran rock band with consistent artistic relevance and commercial clout, he says.

"They don't do it by utilising the same set of tricks or by having Justin Timberlake and Timbaland on speed-dial," Levy says.

"None of their '80s contemporaries -- Madonna, Bruce Springsteen, Prince or Michael Jackson -- managed to continuously keep the focus on new music."

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent



"Road to Democracy" on Rtv



The show highlights contemporary political, economic and international issues.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Talk show "Road to Democracy" will be aired tonight on Rtv at 7:30 pm. Based on contemporary issues, politics, economics and international affairs, "Road to Democracy" is Rtv's regular talk show aired every evening at the same time.

The talk show is jointly planned by Samia Zaman and Mozammel Babu, and directed by Nur Safa Julhaz. Important personalities from different sectors are invited on the show as guests.

Book fair in Kushtia ends

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

After a decade, an 'Ekushey Book Fair' was held in Kushtia (from February 21 to 28). Kushtia Shilpkala Academy and district administration jointly organised the fair at the local Shilpkala Academy premises.

Hundred of enthusiasts thronged the fair premises, bought books and attended special programmes arranged on the occasion of the fair.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Kushtia, Sarkar Abul Kalam Azad inaugurated the fair on February 21.

Several events including discussions and cultural programmes were held everyday at the fair. Local cultural organisations took part in the programmes. In total, 36 stalls -- featuring a range of publications -- were set up at the fair. According to the publication houses, sales were satisfactory. Poet Matiul Ahsan, president of Kushtia Shahitya Academy, said that the public participation was impressive.

Visitors demanded regular arrangement of such fairs.

Amirul Islam, general secretary of Kushtia Shilpkala Academy, said that if the district administration and leading organisations cooperate, this book fair can be arranged every year.



A theatre performance at the book fair in Kushtia.



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