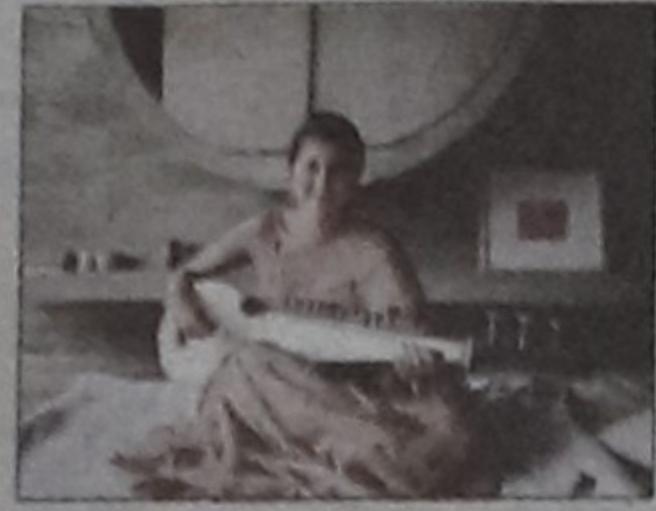


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

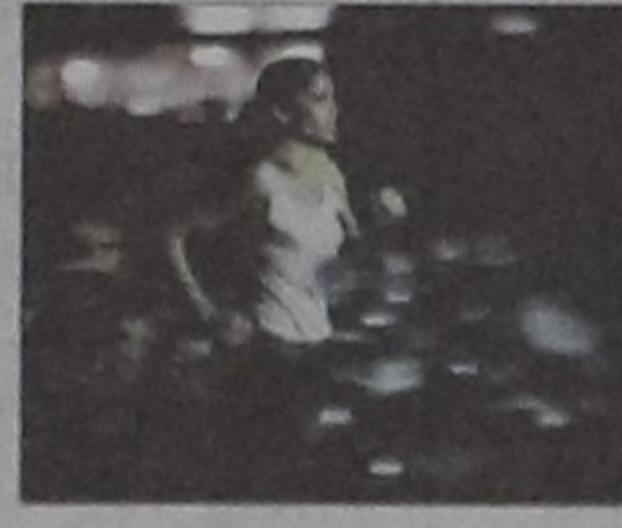
Recital of Sarod
Artist: Rajrupa Chowdhury
Venue: HCl Cultural Centre and Library, H 35, Rd 24, Gulshan 1
Organiser: Shadonna Date: March 20 Time: 7pm



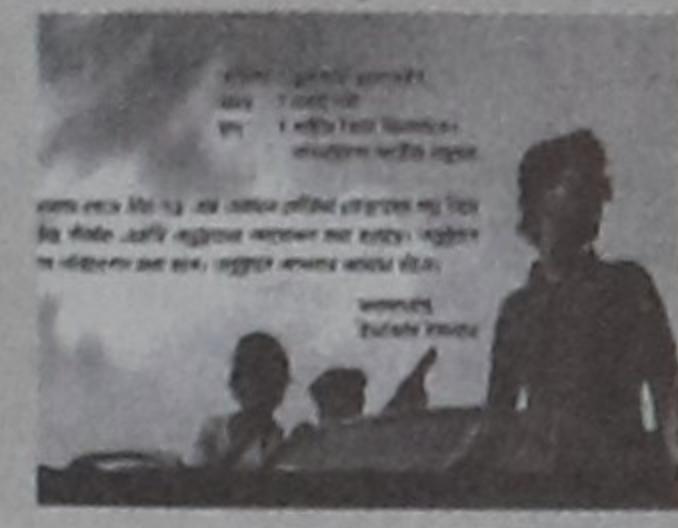
Jazz Concert
Troupe: Duende Quartet (USA)
Organiser: Dept. of Theatre and Music, DU & American Cultural Centre
Venue: Natmandal, DU
Date: March 15
Time: 3pm



Film Screening
Organiser: High Commission of India, Cultural Centre
Venue: High Commission of India, H 35, Rd 24, Gulshan-1
Film: Slumdog Crorepatti (Hindi)
Date: March 16
Time: 6pm



Discussion on Film
Film: Dip Nebhar Agye
Venue: Shaheed Zia Auditorium, National Museum, Shahbag Date: March 15
Time: 7pm



Manabdhikar Natya Utsab 2009: When theatre ensures human rights



Artists of Manabdhikar Natya Parishad, Jhenidah were first to perform at the festival.



A scene from the play "Akjon Ruhul Amin" staged by Bottola theatre troupe.

NADIA SARWAT

Bangladesh Manabdhikar Natya Parishad (MANAP) is celebrating a three-day theatre festival at the Rabindra Sharoban Mancha. Through plays that envision a Bangladesh of secularism, justice, effective democracy and equal rights, the organisation has been working for the last 10 years in various corners of the country. The festival, which began on March 13, is the third such festival organised by Manabdhikar Natya Parishad.

Seasoned playwright Sayeed Ahmed inaugurated the event by ringing a bell, a symbolic warning against evil. Sultana Kamal, executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra; M. Hamid, president, Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation were also present at the event. Motahar Akand, general secretary of MANAP, welcomed the audience. Kamal Lohani, president of MANAP, presided over the inauguration.

"Theatre should not be treated as mere entertainment. It can be an effective weapon to sharpen human consciousness by inspiring people, sometimes even providing insights to solve social problems," M. Hamid noted.

"Many times, efforts have been made by negative forces to violate basic human rights in our country. We have witnessed war, violence against humanity and often cruelty. However, we still have not lost the power to protest. MANAP does not believe failure to be a natural conclusion. No one can ensure your rights unless you fight for your rights. MANAP works to enable people to fight for their rights," Kamal Lohani said.

Initiated by the Popular Theatre Unit of Ain o Salish Kendra, MANAP set out on its journey in 2001. Organising the young artists of different villages, MANAP has staged plays to generate awareness about human rights and gender equality among the people at the grassroots level, using the local cultural history and tradition. MANAP has branches in 70 unions of 12 districts of the country, with almost 1,600 members.

On the first day of the event, Naogaon, Jhenidah, Jaipurhat and the Gaibandha branch of MANAP staged their plays along with the theatre troupes Prachyanat, Panchabedam and Bottola from Dhaka and Yes theatre troupe from Gazipur. Artists of MANAP Jhenidah, the first to perform, projected the power of democracy through the lives of a so-called 'wild' clan inhabiting a jungle. The other plays staged at the event also highlighted democracy, transparency, women's rights and human rights in general through the lives of common people.

MANAP will honour actor Khandakar Golam Kader, editor of the women's magazine " Begum", Nurjahan Begum and Language Movement veteran Abdul Matin today, the last day of the festival. Udichi and Subachan Natya Sangsad will also perform today.

PHOTO: MUMIT M

STYLE ICON 2008

The dream journey begins



From (Left): First runner up Rezwana Chowdhury Jhinuk, Style Icon 2008 winner Sadya Afreen Pinki and second runner up Malika Mushtaq pose for a photo shoot.

MAINUL HASSAN

Amidst much enthusiasm, glitz and glamour the grand finale of beauty pageant "Style Icon 2008", drew a large audience as the first open air beauty contest of the country kicked off at Fantasy Kingdom, Ashulia on March 13. Titled "Swapner Holo Shuru" the contest began on January 5. Out of 25 thousand entries ten -- Kumkum, Malika, Titli, Tania Rouf, Tamanna, Sormin, Nayna, Pinki, Shifa and Jhinuk -- made it to the gala round.

The programme started with a one-minute silence in memory of those who were killed at the BDR headquarters on February 25.

The much-awaited crown went to Sadya Afreen Pinki, from Khulna, a second year student of the Department of Drama and Music, University of Dhaka. "It is like a dream come true, the most amazing moment of my life," said an emotional Pinki while being crowned as "Style Icon 2008". Rezwana Chowdhury Jhinuk became first runner up and Malika Mushtaq was crowned the second runner up.

Pinki was awarded a cash prize of Taka 3 Lac, a laptop computer and a contract with ATN Bangla. The first runner up won Taka 2 Lac and the second Runner up was awarded Taka 1 Lac.

Kumkum Laila won the "best smile" award, Tania Rouf won the "best intelligence" award, Shoroni Jannat Nayna won

the "best catwalk" award and the award for "best look" went to Tamanna Chowdhury.

The contest was judged by Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman, Chairman ATN Bangla; S.M. Kamal Uddin, Chairman, Concord Group; Arshad Hossain, managing editor, The Daily Ittefaq; Shahriar Kamal, deputy managing director, Concord Group; actor Mahfuz Ahmed, Fiona Hossain, director, Fashion House, Mantra; Film maker Nargis Akhter; beauty expert Farzana Arman Munni and fashion designer Shahrukh Shahid.

Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman, S.M. Kamal Uddin, Arshad Hossain and others handed over the prizes.

The event began with a performance of the song "Swapno" by the top ten contestants. Among other performances staged by them were a dance performance and a catwalk session with the Tagore Song "Amar nishitho ratero badolodhara".

Between the performances the audience were entertained by noted and upcoming artistes -- Fahmida Nabi, S.I. Tutul, Kaniz Shabarna, Milon Mahmud, Hassan, Rajib, Cynthia, Topu, Hridoy Khan and Dipto.

Performance were staged by Eagle Dance Troupe and choreographed by Tanzin.

The top contestants will be sent to Miss Bangladesh Contest scheduled to be held in June in the US by ATN Bangla. The gala round will be aired on ATN Bangla at 8:00 pm on March 20. The contest was jointly organised by Ittefaq Group, Concord Group and ATN Bangla.

Last episode of Aim in Life tonight

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The last episode of ntv's drama serial "Aim in Life" will be aired tonight at 8:15 pm. The serial is written and directed by Masud Sezan.

The story centres on a retired government officer who decides to write a book titled "Aim in Life." Irritated by his errant offspring, he comes to realise that it is necessary for everyone to have an aim in life. He wants to incorporate this thought in his book. Looking for material for his tome, he begins his fieldwork by interviewing people -- even beggars, whether they have a goal or not. The serial unfolds with several interesting incidents.



Raunak Hasan and Kusum Sikder in the TV play.

The cast includes Mosharraf Karim, Kusum Sikder, Raunak Hasan, Tinni, Challenger, Nafisa, Rifat Chowdhury, Kochi Khandakar and others. In different episodes of the serial, the former captain of Bangladesh National Cricket team, Khaled Masud Pilot; artiste S.I. Tutul and illusionist Jewel Aich have done cameos.

Holi celebrated with verve in Dinajpur

KONGON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Holi, the colourful Hindu festival, was celebrated recently with traditional verve in Dinajpur and adjacent districts.

Children and adults celebrated the festival with colours and spread the message of joy and brotherhood. They also distributed sweetmeats after offering prayers at temples.

To celebrate Holi, the tiny tots recited rhymes and songs depicting the festival of colours. They also greatly enjoyed spraying each other with colour.

The grand finale of the celebration was lively dances, performed by children of several communities. The teachers enlightened the students about the background of the festival and the harmful effects of chemical colours.

Kanchan Ghosh, president of the Shechchha Sebak League of Dinajpur, said that although Holi is celebrated throughout the country, the festival of Dinajpur has pride of place.

Holi here is celebrated in a traditional manner where locals participate in the festival with great enthusiasm upholding the significance of the day.



Holi in all its colours in Dinajpur.

PHOTO: STAR

Drama serial Meyeti Ekhon Kothay Jabey on Rtv



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Drama serial "Meyeti Ekhon Kothay Jabey" will be aired tonight on Rtv at 9pm. Written by popular author Imdadul Haque Milon, the serial is directed by Sanjat Sarker.

The story of the serial revolves around a village belle Hena. Hena and Bina are the two offspring of Gani Mian. Everyday while going to college Hena is confronted by Raja, an eve-teaser. One day the recalcitrant Raja kidnaps her. The story takes a twist when Raja is pressurised to send her back to her family. Does Hena's family accept her? What does fate have in store for her?

Kushum Sikder, Abul Hayat, Dolly Zahur, Elora Gawhar and Shahed play the lead roles in the serial.



On the second day of Adibasi Cultural Festival 2009, artistes of Khagrachari Sanskritik Unnayan Kendra staged a play titled "Chumlong" (L). Artistes of ethnic communities Oraon, Chakma, Khyang, and the tea community also performed on the second day of a three-day festival organised by Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD). The festival ended yesterday.



PHOTO COURTESY: BANGLA CHOKH