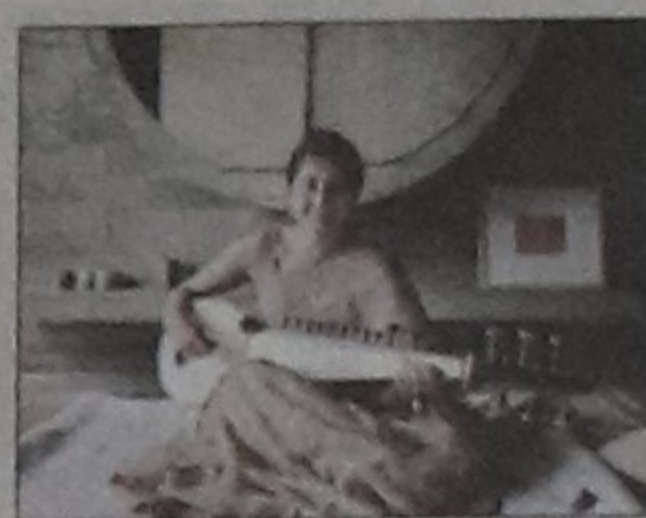


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

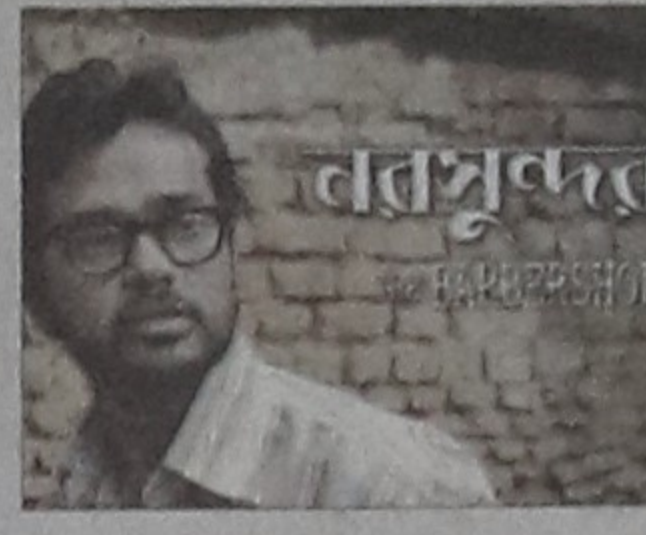
Recital of Sarod
Artist: Rajrupa Chowdhury
Venue: HCI Cultural Centre and Library, H 35, Rd 24, Gulshan 1
Organiser: Shadhona
Date: March 20
Time: 7pm



National Pantomime Festival '09
Organiser: Pantomime Movement
Venue: Theatre Institute, Chittagong
Date: March 20-22
Time: 4pm everyday



Film Premiere
Title: Naroshundor
Director: Tareque Masud and Catherine Masud
Venue: Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbag
Date: March 19
Time: 4pm



Francophonie Film Festival
Organiser: Alliance Française de Dacca, Zahir Raihan Film Society
Venue: Auditorium, AFD, Rd 3 Dhanmondi
Date: March 16-24
Time: 5pm. Today: The American Trap, Henry Dunant-Red on the Cross



Homage to Waheedul Haque

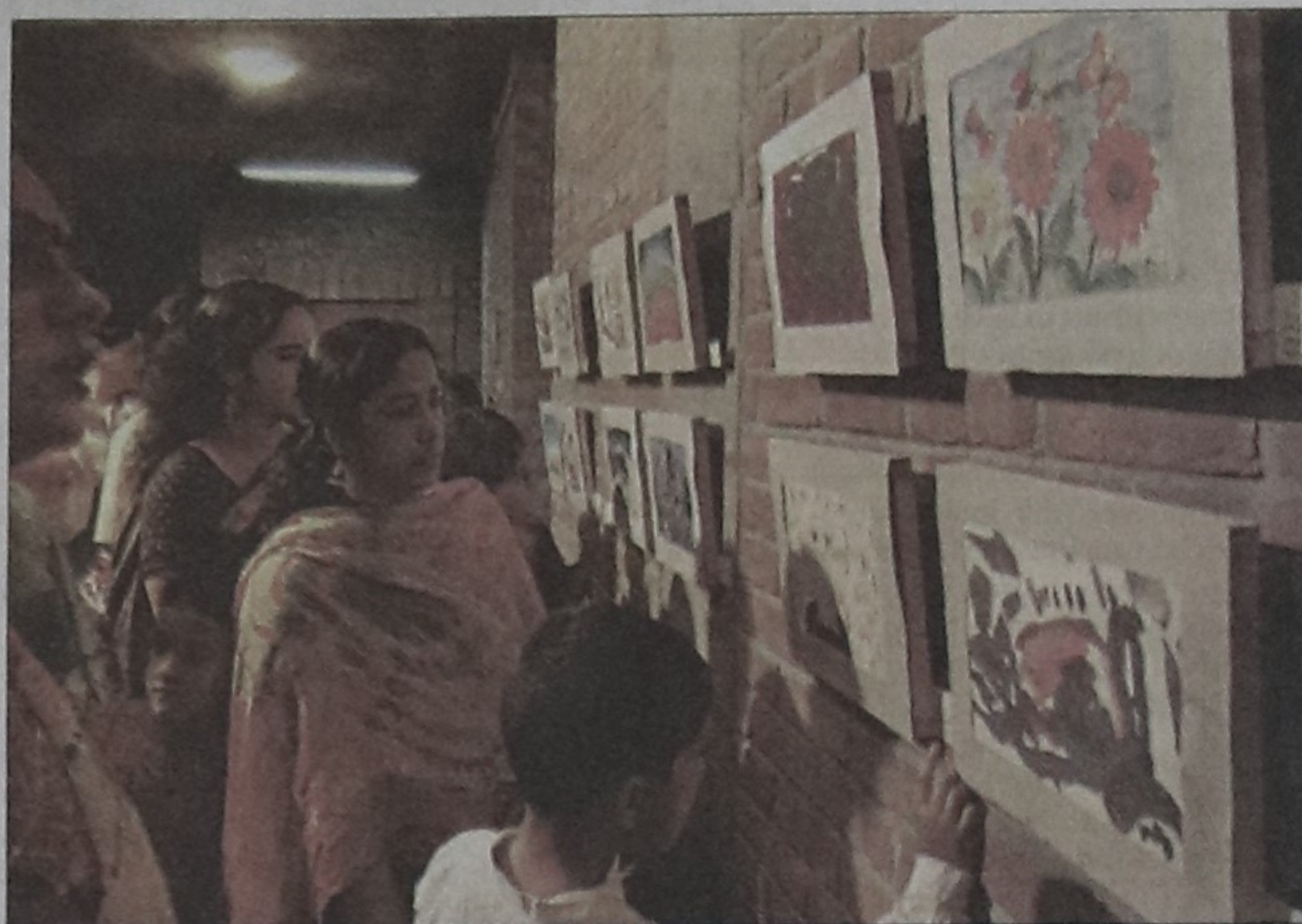
Culture was his premise of living

JAMIL MAHMUD

To celebrate Waheedul Haque's 76th birth anniversary, cultural organisations Chhayana and Anandadhoni arranged a memorial programme at the main auditorium of Chhayana Sangskriti Bhavan on March 16. Both the programmes marked renditions of Tagore songs, recitation and more. A painting exhibition for children was also part of the programme.

Waheedul Haque was born on March 16, 1933 at Bhawal Mohonhariya village in Keraniganj, Dhaka. He was a major organiser of the Tagore birth centennial celebration in 1961. The same year he founded Chhayana. Along with Chhayana and Anandadhoni, he founded other notable cultural organisations like Rabindra Sangeet Sammelan Parishad and Kanthosheelan.

Chhayana's brief cultural programme featured performances by noted Tagore artistes Bulbul Islam and Iffat



Enthusiasts gather at the children's art exhibition.

Ara Dewan. "Waheedul Haque was concerned not merely with songs but also the benefits of a culture-oriented life," said Bulbul Islam, who rendered two songs, "Tomay natun korey pabo bole" and "Aamar e path tomar pather thekey" at the programme.

Both Bulbul Islam and Iffat Ara were initiated into Tagore music by Haque. "I was the student of the first batch of Chhayana. During those times classes of Chhayana were held at Bangla Academy premises. I have trained under Waheed Bhai for more

than four decades," said Iffat Ara. She paid tribute to Haque with the rendition of songs such as "Madhur rupey," "Esho aamar ghorey" and "Nayan meley dekhi."

Chhayana's programme concluded with a talk given by economist Professor Atiur

Rahman. He went over a brief account of Haque's views on patriotism.

Anandadhoni, founded on Waheedul Haque's initiative, paid rich tributes to him with a musical programme. Incidentally Haque himself planned the programme during his lifetime, which highlighted songs from Tagore's 'Geetabitan'.

A group rendition of "Surer guru dao go surer dikha" inaugurated the soiree. A group performance of "Kanna hashir dol dolano," followed.

Noted Tagore artiste Mita Haque rendered "Tomar bina." Elora Ahmed Shukla sang "Jatokkhon tumi amay." Songs such as "prothom juger uday," "Ganer bhar diye," and "Tumi kemon korey gaan koro hey guni" were also part of the soiree.

Among the members of Anandadhoni, Nilotpal Shadhya, Chhaya Karmakar, Laiza Ahmed Lisa and ATM Jahangir performed at the programme.

The children's art exhibition features over a hundred drawings and will end on March 22.

Francophonie festival begins in Dhaka



Ambassadors and representatives of the Francophonie countries speak at the inaugural programme.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

An eight-day Francophonie Festival 2009, organised by the Alliance Française de Dacca, began on March 16. On the occasion, a press conference was held at the café of Alliance Française de Dacca. Robert Mc Dougall, Canadian High Commissioner; Ahmed Al Shourbag, DCM of the embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt; Charley Causseret, Ambassador of France; Driss Hachaq, Deputy Head of Mission of Morocco Embassy; Juerg Siegenthaler, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Switzerland and Nguyen Van That, Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam spoke on the occasion.

Charley Causseret said, "The Francophonie advocates common values: solidarity, cultural diversity, curiosity about others and dialogue between people. United by the will to defend these values, the French speakers are able to propose original solutions to face global challenges within the international organisations."

In his remarks, Robert Mc Dougall said,

"This week provides an opportunity for us to celebrate not only the French language and the rich and diverse Francophonie culture, but also the values of peace, democracy and respect for human rights. These elements unite the members of the international organisation of La Francophonie."

The programmes include a movie festival, dictation contests, an open air screening and other cultural activities.

Francophonie is a cultural and linguistic community of more than 175 million people who use French to varying degrees in their daily lives. Francophonie is also an institutional community of 53 states and governments on five continents. For several years, the French-speaking people across the world have been celebrating the Francophonie cultural festival every March. Francophonie is an annual event meant to celebrate the diversity of the French language. The event represents a remarkable moment of cultural exchange that will strengthen communication and contacts between Bangladesh and French-speaking countries.



Bulbul Islam (left) and Iffat Ara Dewan perform at the function.



PHOTO: MUMIT M

Raga based Tagore songs light up the evening

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The High Commission of India, in association with cultural organisation Bishwabeena Performing Arts Institute, arranged a musical evening of classical-based Tagore songs recently. The programme was held at the Indian Cultural Centre, Gulshan.

Tagore artistes Abdul Wadud (Principal of Bishwabeena Performing Arts Institute), Mahmudul Hasan, Sanuara Jahan Nitu, Aniket Acharya, Barsha Raha, Shimu Dey, Sumon Norman Chompa, Sanjida Sultana and Adhara Madhuri presented Tagore songs based on different ragas, including Raga Shankaravaran, Imon Kalyan, Bhupali, Behag, Bahar, Paraj Basant and Desh.

The programme kicked off with a group rendition of "Biswa bina robe." Several more group songs including "Bajey bajey brahmabina," "Orey bhai



Artistes of Bishwabeena Performing Arts Institute, sing at the programme.

agun legechhey," "Aji nirbhaye nibhritey" and "Esho shyamol sundar" also featured in the programme. These songs were performed based on ragas including 'Behag', 'Imon' and 'Desh'.

Abdul Wadud rendered two songs-- "Tumi shandhyar megomala" and "Hridoy shashi hridi." The other solo performances featured songs including "Ei korechho

bhalo," "Biroho modhur holo," "Aji ei gandho bidhur shamirane," "Keno jagey na" and "Haikadebeyarshantona."

Mohammed Shoyeb and Mahmudul Hasan performed classical songs at the programme. Other musicians were Sheuli Bhattacharjee on the violin, Biswajit Nattya (tabla) and Asit Biswas (esraj).

Go Yamagata: Visions of wild Africa

KAVITA CHARANJI, New Delhi

From the regal Himbas, a semi-nomadic pastoralist tribe, to the majestic lion and other unusual animals, to matchless landscapes. All these images from Southern Africa have been captured on camera by Japanese photographer Go Yamagata. And for a change, instead of dwelling on the poverty stricken Africa, Yamagata has managed to give a refreshing perspective of the continent. "Through my exhibition, I convey the beauty, diversity and power of wild Africa," says the young photographer.

One ventures into the India International Centre, New Delhi to be immediately greeted by photographs of Himba tribals. One work is titled "Little girl and her brother" (Kaokoland, Namibia) and another "Woman collecting milk" (Epupa Falls, Namibia).

A work that immediately catches attention is of a group of Himba women engaged in what looks like a serious discussion, perhaps exchanging notes about village affairs. Turned up in traditional attire and jewellery, the topless women are engaging with their plaited hair and sheepskin skirts. "One of the reasons I chose the Himbas in my works is that they have managed to preserve their traditional lifestyle, without much western influence,"

explains Yamagata.

The Kalahari desert is also a recurring theme. Take, for instance, "Dawn over the Savannah" (from Central Kalahari Game Reserve, Botswana). This landscape captures the beauty of the rainy season when the arid desert becomes a land of lush green pasture.

When one comes to the third and last section of the

are jacana, a group of tropical waders, carmine bee eaters and the oryx, one of three to four large antelope species.

Does Yamagata have many interesting encounters along the way? Yes, he says, pointing to a work called The Angry Hippo. Shot in Mamili National Park, Namibia, after the shoot was over, he saw a hippo charging

African bush."

Yamagata has also captured unusual facets of wildlife such as a standing elephant in the deserts of Namibia. Here we get to see an elephant on its hind legs as it seeks to reach the branches of an elusive tree.

Yamagata now plans to go back to Africa in June/July and is likely to



Himba women exchange notes about village issues.

exhibition, one cannot but help marvel at Yamagata's mastery over his medium. Here, in addition to the staple of lions, giraffes, hippos and zebras, there are photographs of rare and fascinating fauna: The elephant shrew, small, insectivorous mammals which are akin to mice. Also on display

ing at him. Describing this as "the scariest moment" of his life, Yamagata obviously had to run for his life. Talking about the dangers of the wilds of Africa, he says that, "Hippos kill more people than lions or leopards. In fact, hippos and crocodiles are probably the most dangerous animals in the

return to India in August. The photo exhibition of sanctuaries in Central India, which Yamagata plans to launch will be held within the next two years. This exhibit goes in conjunction with the art works of his scientist father, Yoichi Yamagata, also currently in India.

Passion unbound for words

The Reading Circle turns three

FARIDA SHAIKH

The Reading Circle (TRC) celebrated its third anniversary recently at Words n' Pages.

Fellow bookworms have travelled together, so far for 36 months, meeting each month to discuss books. This has been a wonderful experience and spiritually rewarding experience.

TRC has discussed and reviewed quite a number of literary works last year. One such publication was "Gilead" by the acclaimed writer Marilyn Robinson.

In April 2008, the circle read "The Hundred Secret Senses" by Amy Tan. It

was a beautiful read and a review of the book was published in the Books Review page of The Daily Star. TRC began the year by a reading of Amitav Ghosh's historical novel "The Glass Palace."

Our Bangla Language month was covered by readings from Jahanara Imam's "Of Blood and Fire" and Tahmina Anam's "A Golden Age." Both books generated keen responses, particularly on account of the generation gap between the writers and their works.

Members of TRC also read the "Bengal Saga" and Shahidullah Kaiser's "Shangshaptak" (translation of which has been done by Shahrul Rahman, a TRC member).

In July TRC turned its attention to

"Fire of Bengal" by Rozsa Hajnocy (translated by Wimmer and Grant). The work was much discussed among members.

"Stories of 1971," edited by Niaz Zaman and Asif Farruki, was read and hugely discussed in November. The review of the book was posted in the Books Review page of The Daily Star.

During the end month of the year Raana Hyder presented her work "China Contrasting Contours." Discussion on the book was lively as many TRC members had actually travelled to China and shared their experiences.

The writer is a member of The Reading Circle.