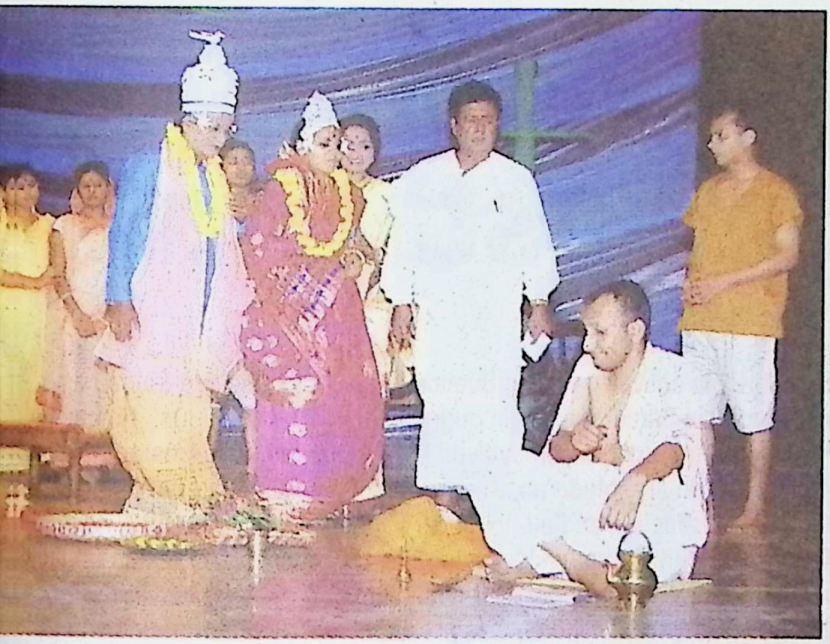
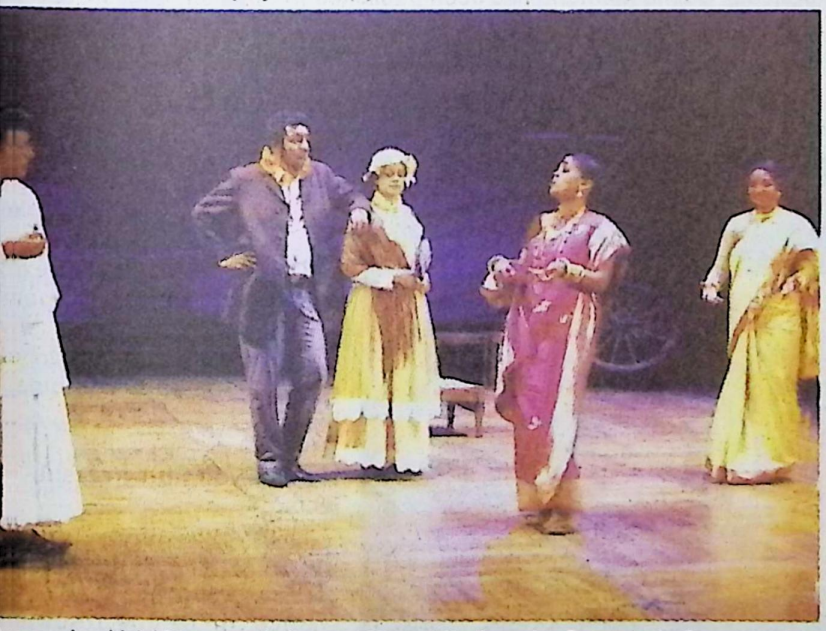


A marriage seene in the play.



A scene in which Vidyasagar helps poet Michael Madhusudan Dutt out of a financial crisis.

The director of the play Mamunur Rashid has basically focused on characterisation and vocal acting. His directional mastery however, remains in his art of blending comedy into serious scenes, much to the delight of the audience.

The construction of some sequences in Rashid's directorial composition work wonderfully on the stage. For instance, Vidyasagar's interaction with the members of the Young Bengal movement, a group of radical Bangali free thinkers emerging from the Hindu College, is really enjoyable. All of the actors in the scene perform really well. On the other hand, many scenes do not work properly such as when Vidyasagar goes to help legendary poet Michael Madhusudan Dutt in his days of financial crisis.

Most of the actions take place in a small space on the stage (just the right side of the upstage) leaving the rest of the stage empty. This is a flaw in Rashid's directorial composition.

Moreover, there is lack of co-ordination between set, light and actions of the play. Set designer Faiz Zahir has created an artistic set, which symbolically represents 19th century Kolkata. However, the actors do not use the set elements properly, nor does Thandu Raihan's light design support the actions properly. Although the stage is three-dimensional, the depth of the stage has not been created properly, which makes it appears two-dimensional. Moreover, the use of symbolic colour in Raihan's design is monotonous and ineffective.

> Many scenes appear abruptly and the major drawback of Heera's play is that Vidyasagar seems to be a frustrated man in a conservative society, at least at the end of the play. But Vidyasagar is regarded as the greatest man of the century for his fight against the darkness of the society.

It's really appreciable that Aranyak Natya Dal has given a break to a good number of new actors through this play, many of them have huge potential. In fact, apart from Mamunur Rashid, Mannan Heera, Momena Chowdhury, Aminul Haque and Amanul Haque Helal, the rest of the actors are newcomers. Of the new actors Abu Hashim Masuduzzaman, Sarif Hossain Apple and Sajjad Saju in the role of Young Bengal movement activists performed really well. Seasoned actor Mamunur Rashid, Mannan Heera, Momena and Helal also proved their potential in diversified characters. However, many of the actors gave exaggerated performances.

Ebong Vidyasagar, the 46th production of Aranyak Natya Dal, was premiered on March 10 at the National Theatre Stage.