

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

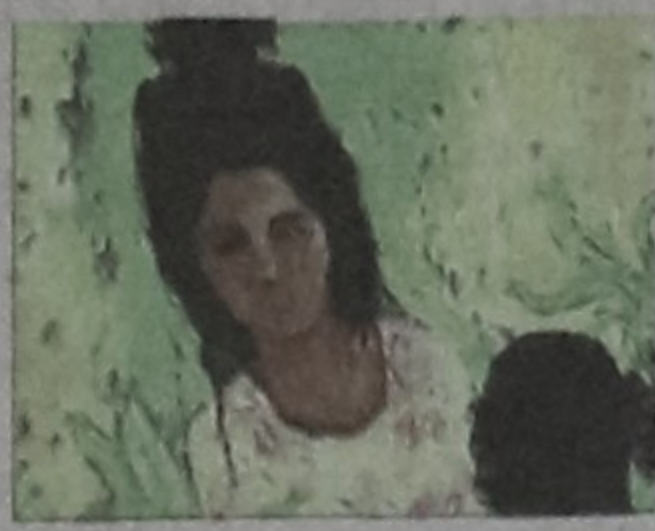
Photography Exhibition

Title: Bangladesh in Frames
Organiser: Through the Lens, Bangladesh
Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15/A (new), Dhanmondi
Date: March 25-29
Time: 3-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Recent Works
Artist: Faraha Zeba
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H 20, Rd 16, Sec 4, Uttara
Date: March 21-April 3
Time: 11am-8pm



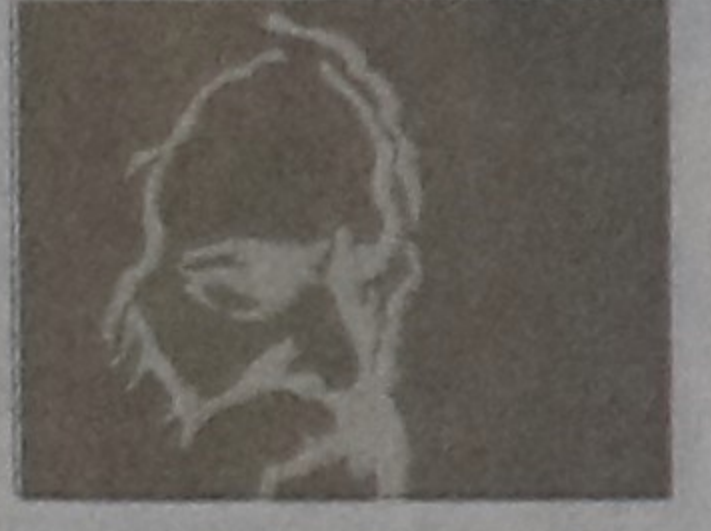
Installation

Title: Kagojer Chhayay
Artists: Wakilur Rahman and Dhali Al Mamun
Organiser: The daily Prothom Alo
Venue: Nalinikanto Bhattacharya Gallery, National Museum
Date: March 20-30



Rabindra Sangeet

Organiser: Geetamalika
Venue: Chhayanaat Sangskriti Bhaban
Date: March 28
Time: 6:30pm



Banna Mirza: Beauty, grace and reflective demeanour

SYEDA SHAMIN MORTADA

Our small screen is a kaleidoscope that presents various colours of life. Today, the television has become a powerful and effective medium that consists of a galaxy of dazzling stars. Many celebrities over the years have contributed to their respective fields and gained popularity as an acknowledgement for their dedication. One of them is Banna Mirza, whose beauty, grace and reflective demeanour have won the hearts of many.

In a freewheeling chat with The Daily Star, Banna talks about her life and professional experiences.

Banna Mirza earned her acting credentials through theatre and is known for her acting sensibilities. Talking about her early days, she says, "I thought of doing something just after I completed my HSC. I have been involved with the theatre troupe, Desh Natok, for 18 long years." Hungry for variety, Banna has managed to dig roles that offer her scope to convey myriad emotions. Some of her memorable work on stage includes - "Darpan-e Sharat Shashi," "Nitty Pura," "Birsha Kabbyo," "Ghar Lopat" and many more.

The actress continues, "It was Saidul Anam Tutul and Salauddin Lavlu who inspired me to work in TV plays. 'Shukher Nongor' written by Ahmed Yusuf Saber was my first work on the small screen." Banna says, "Di Chokro Jan' directed by Salauddin Lavlu and written by Masum Reza, 'Ayesha Mongol' directed by Mostafa Sarwar Farooki and written by Anisul Haque; 'Bhogoban Ke Daki,' directed by Ashrafi Mithu and written by Masum Reza are my personal favourites."

Talking about her vice and virtues, she says, "I'm a very professional person. I'm also very particular about my work and tend to be logical and focused at all times. I don't think that I'm overly emotional. At times I have difficulty controlling my temper, however, I manage to stay composed and poised most of the time."

Speaking about her favourite medium, Banna says, "Theatre is my passion and it has its own values. I consider TV as my profession. Two very different thoughts are involved with each. There is only one thing in common -- one needs to be dedicated and give it his/her best shot."

The audience seems to love the thespian's spontaneity and confidence as a TV show host as well. According to Banna, "Hosting shows is an interesting job if done fittingly. It is kind



of fun interviewing people and discovering their individuality."

On the personal front, Banna is happy and contented. She says, "My family is very supportive. My parents have never stopped me from doing something I want. My brothers and sisters are encouraging as well."

The writer is a freelance contributor.

Int'l Theatre Day celebration at RCSC

"Kansat-e Shomnath" staged by Anton Chekhov Theatre Group

JAMIL MAHMUD

A two-day programme to celebrate the International Theatre Day (March 27) ends today at the auditorium of Russian Centre of Science and Culture (RCSC). The programme, featuring plays by Anton Chekhov Theatre Group and Charunidom School of Acting, started on March 25. On the first day, Anton Chekhov Theatre Group staged its production "Kansat-e Shomnath."

Based on "Tebhagar Diary" by Shomnath Hore, the play "Kansat-e Shomnath" narrates the story of farmers oppressed in different times throughout the history of Bengal.

Hore kept a journal when he was observing the Tebhaga movement in the greater Rangpur area after appointed by Calcutta Communist Party. Hore's notes describe the day-to-day oppression on local farmers that generated a mass grudge among them and forced them to initiate the movement.

As the play begins, Shomnath finds himself at the front of a mob in Kansat. The angry mob is demanding electricity to supply water necessary for the survival of their crops.

On the other hand, Abani, Hari, Lakkhi, Shomen and Laily are some of the characters from the Tebhaga period who plan to keep their hard-earned harvest instead of giving it all



Actors of Anton Chekhov Theatre Group in a scene from the play "Kansat-e Shomnath"

to the landlords. But they know, to do so they have to fight against the mighty landlords.

Through the play, director Abdullah Al Rashed compares the fate of oppressed peasants who initiated the Tebhaga movement in the late 1940s with the plight of farmers of Kansat, Chapainawabganj in 2006. Both times, farmers made the ultimate sacrifice to achieve their goal.

Abdullah Al Rashed along with Humayun Kabir Himu has adapted the play. A group of young actors

including Ranak, Mamun, Sonnet, Rony, Helen and Ela played the central characters of Shomnath, Rupkanta, Jamshed, Lakkhi, Laily and others.

Today, Charunidom School of Acting will stage three short plays titled "Arshola," "Nana Rong-er Dinguli" and "Sharat-er Megh" adapted from Anton Chekhov's works. Gazi Rakayet is the director of the plays. Rakayet gave a brief welcome speech prior to the staging of "Kansat-e Shomnath."

TV play Bar Bar Phirey Ashey on Channel 1



Tazin Ahmed and Arman Parvez Murad in the play.

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Single-episode play "Bar Bar Phirey Ashey" will be aired today on Channel 1 at 9:20pm. Written by Rokeya Islam and directed by Sadek Siddiqui, the play has Arman Parvez Murad, Shohel Khan, Shahriar Nazim Joy and Tazin Ahmed in the lead roles.

The play begins with Joy, a goon, breaking into the home of a freedom fighter and journalist Munir Choudhury. Joy has been hired to kill Munir. In the middle of the night as Joy is about to proceed, he comes across Munir's wife Rina. He notices a scar on her forehead and asks her name.

Joy then refrains from his mission but threatens Munir to stop writing against an influential man. The man, a war criminal, has paid Joy for his services.

While Munir and his wife are left baffled, Joy recalls his childhood playmate Rina. During the Liberation War, Joy's family left the town in a hurry. His trip down memory lane makes him feel lost.

Does India deserve to gloat over Slumdog Millionaire?

MOHAMMAD SHAHIDUL ISLAM

The aspiration of Indian dream-merchants has finally come true! "Slumdog Millionaire," filmed in the Dharavi slums of Mumbai, has swept the Oscars this year, winning awards for Best Adapted Screen-play, Cinematography, Sound Mixing, Film Editing, Original Score, Original Song, Direction and Film. Thus 'history' of some sort has been made, since Indian participation in this mother of all film awards so far had been confined to minor achievements such as costume designing and, of course, the Lifetime Achievement Award conferred to legendary helmer Satyajit Ray.

The outcome has been on expected lines, the film having not only previously bagged other honours such as the Critics Choice Award and the BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts), but also no less than four Golden Globes, normally a pointer to which way the Oscar wind would blow.

The rise in the stature of this movie has been a saga in itself, possessing the inspirational fantasy quality of its core theme, a boy raised in the slums winning the highest prize on a game show "Kaun



Is it worth the hype?

Banega Crorepati," the desi version of "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire." A low budget production, it had failed to find a distributor, coercing the producers to consider bringing it out straight in the DVD format. Its journey from an initial release in just seven theatres to the red carpet at the Oscars has been truly an underdog-wins-the-day story.

But surely it would be delusional for Indians to assume that these

awards are a tribute to Indian cinema. The direction has been by Danny Boyle, the screenplay by Simon Beaufoy, cinematography by Anthony Mantle and film editing by Chris Dickens.

The reality is that "Slumdog Millionaire" is a British production with an Indian background. No doubt many of the characters are played by Indian actors, but their talent as thespians have not been

acknowledged in the form of awards. The only aspect that Indians can be truly proud of are the awards to A.R. Rahman for Original Score and Song, the lyrics of the latter being penned by Gulzar.

Almost all the music composed by Rahman -- starting from his breakthrough "Dil hey chhota sa, chhoti si asha" from "Roja," to the latest masala-laced "Masakali" from "Delhi-6" -- are original and superbly melodious. It won't be erroneous to say that some of these songs are way superior in terms of originality and brilliance than that featured in "Slumdog." If that's the case, why were his previous works not lauded internationally? Only on one occasion was his music globally accepted through the inclusion of his "Chhaiyya chhaiyya" from "Dil Se" in the world's 10 best songs. One must admit that "Ma tujhe salaam" is far stirring than "Jai ho!"

Many Indian films have been shot in the slums of Mumbai and Indian child actors had played parts in them. It is a moot point whether a film with the theme of "Slumdog Millionaire" would have won the hearts of a Western audience, let alone Oscars, had it been a totally Indian production.

While this in no way reflects on the aesthetic merits or emotional appeal of the movie, it does reveal in a telling way the fact that deft handling of a stereotype theme with an Indian background can reap rich dividends if the director happens to be from abroad.

A pity, indeed, that while "Slumdog Millionaire" has hogged all the limelight, another Oscar winning authentic Indian tale, as told in the documentary format by Megan Mylan in "Smile Pinky," has not been showered with the attention it deserves.

Mohammad Shahidul Islam teaches Tourism at National Hotel and Tourism Training Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Erratum

In the write up "The art of recreating the past," published in yesterday's issue of the Arts & Entertainment, Tahmima Anam's first novel "A Golden Age" is mentioned as the winner of "2008 regional Commonwealth Best First Book prize." The book went on to win the Commonwealth Overall Best First Book Award in 2008. We regret the error.



Students of Gano Bishwabidyalay perform at a programme held recently at the university premises. The programme was held to mark the 38th Independence Day. Noted litterateur Imdadul Haq Milon was the chief guest at the programme. Milon shared his views on his Liberation War based writings with the students. Later, students performed several patriotic songs.

AFL
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কর্পোরেশন স্যান্টারী পাইপ : প্রপার্টি হাউস, ১২ আর কে মিলন রোড, ঢাকা-১২০৩
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