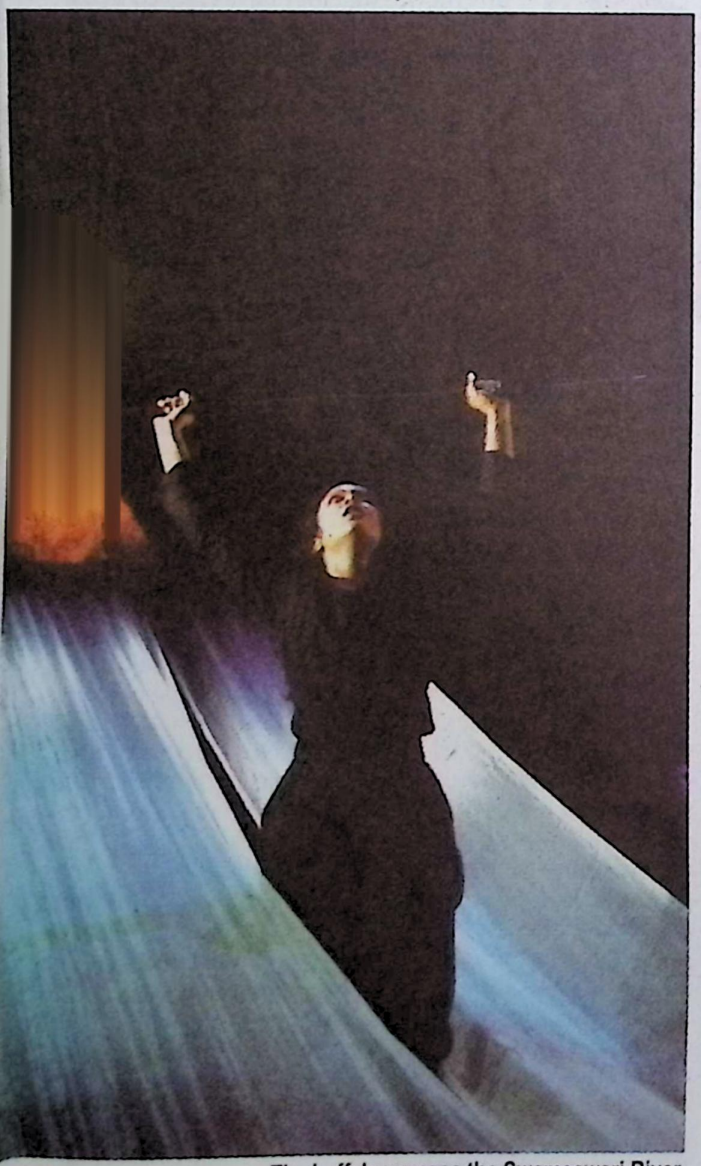
Life in Motion

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Death is inevitable: every creature must taste bitter death in the world. When his adopted daughter Anwita was diagnosed with cancer, the legendary playwright Selim Al Deen wrote Dhaboman. A believer in animism, the late Selim Al Deen, theatre icon of the postcolonial Bangla literature, has allegorically presented how death silently stalks life in Dhaboman.



The buffalo crosses the Swameswari River.

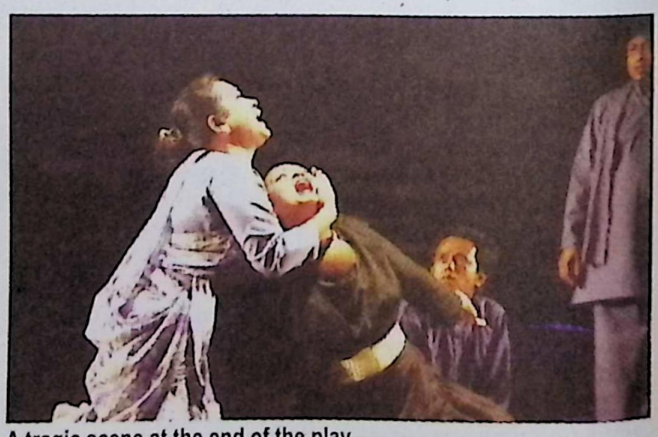
As a playwright and theoretician, Selim Al Deen developed a unique form based on the tradition of the indigenous performing art forms of Bengal, what he labeled as 'Dwoitadwoitobad'. According to Al Deen's Dwoitadwoitobad, theatre is an incorporation of all art forms, a concept reflected in Dhaboman.

The storyline of the play is simple: the birth of a buffalo calf named Sohrab, which the owner Nahbat treats like his own son but ultimately sacrifices when Sohrab becomes an adult buffalo. But the mastery of Al Deen's construction and language gives this simple storyline an epic quality.

Like the heroes of world classics such as Sohrab in the Persian epic the " Shahnameh" and Achilles in the Greek epic the "Iliad", the buffalo Sohrab grows up in Nahbat's home in Dhaboman. Nahbat teaches the buffalo the art of war, subsequently the buffalo becomes the champion at the annual buffalo fight in the area which is located by the Swameshwari River. It is a place in the greater Mymensingh area where Bangalis have been living side by side with the Mandi people.

The beauty of Al Deen's narrative in Dhaboman lies in the spontaneous appearance of traditional cultural heritage, myths and rituals of both communities. Some human characters such as Nahabat Ali and Munindra Marak have been developed as believers of animism.

Presenting such a play on stage is no doubt, a challenging task. As a debutant director eminent actor Shiful Yousuf's approach is experimental. She has used elements of rituals and traditional art forms in her directorial composition. Her presentation of ashon bandana (a traditional style of beginning a performance in indigenous performing art form) is not like the traditional one.



A tragic scene at the end of the play.