

## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Group Art Exhibition**  
Featuring 167 artworks by 107 Bangladeshi artists  
Venue: Saju Art Gallery, F 40-41, D.C.C North Super Market, 2nd Circle, Gulshan  
Date: April 11-May 12  
Time: 10am-8pm



**Architectural Exhibition**  
Featuring works by the 1st year student, Dept of Architecture, BUET  
Title: Swakrita  
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dacca, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi  
Date: April 9-13  
Time: 10am-12pm, 5-8pm



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Title: Lyrics of Line  
Artist: Sanat Kar  
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27 (Old), Dhanmondi  
Date: April 3-14  
Time: 12-8pm



**35th Anniversary of RCSC**  
Organiser: Russian Centre of Science and Culture  
Venue: RCSC, H 42, Bhasha Shoinik MA Main Road (Rd 7), Dhanmondi  
Date: April 12  
Time: 6:30pm



## No strings attached

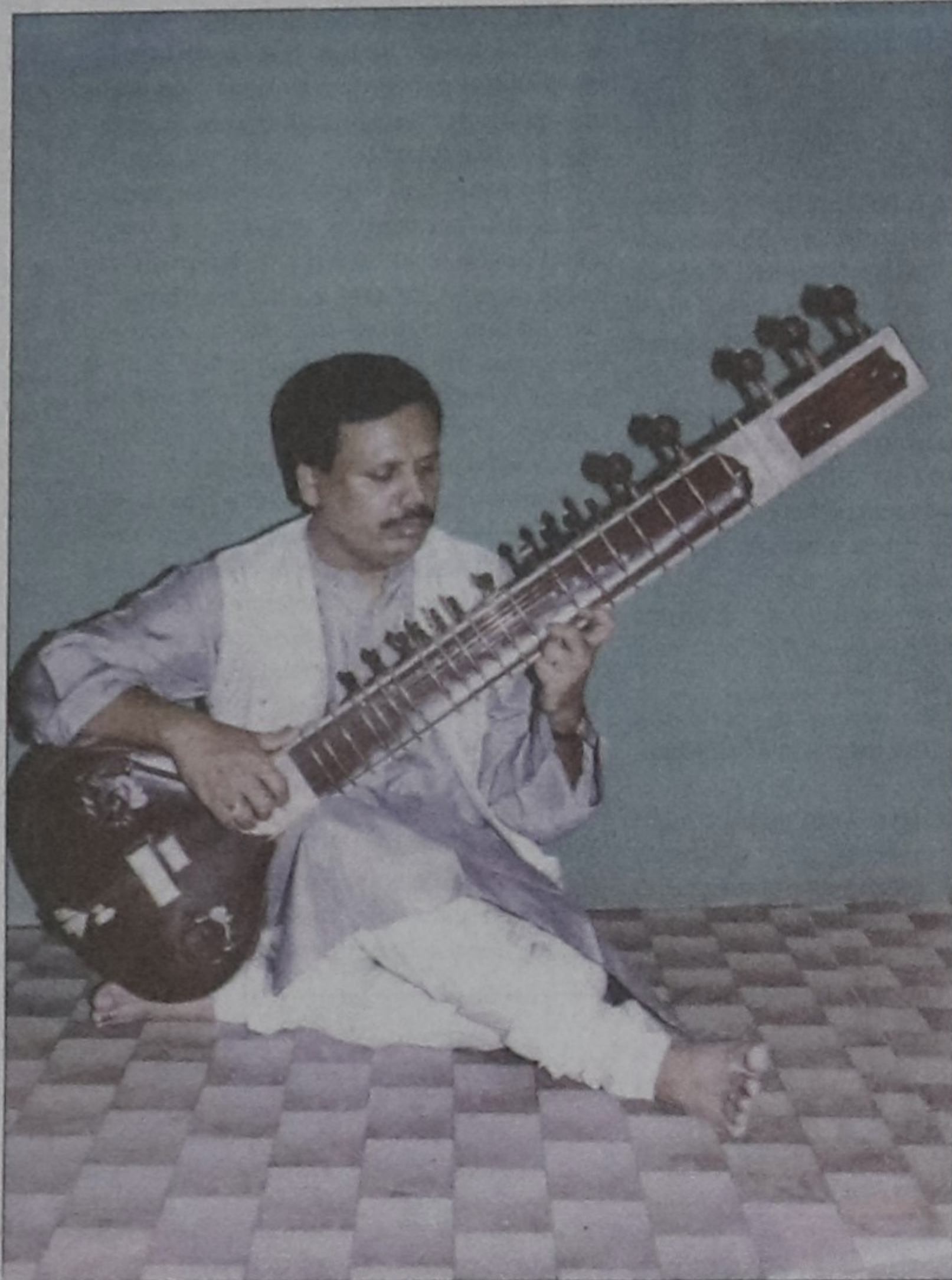
### In conversation with sitarist Firoz Khan

NIVEDITA RAITZ VON FRENTZ

Music begets music. Both his grown-up sons are aficionados; his wife is an ardent fan too. His father was a staff artiste at Bangladesh Betar in Rajshahi, specialising in numerous instruments; his maternal uncle, Ustad Khurshid Khan was a noted sitar player. While Firoz Khan had no burning ambition to learn the sitar, he bowed to parental wishes and took up the instrument as a child, tempted to follow in his uncle's footsteps by the scope for travel and his rising popularity. He is quietly proud of the National Children's Award bestowed on him when he was only 15 and following hot on its heels, an award for the Rajshahi District competition.

Born in Brahmanbaria in 1963, Firoz had the opportunity to visit Calcutta in early 1971 to further his musical education under the tutelage of his mother's uncle and cousins, sarod players, Ustads Bahadur Hussein Khan, Bidyut and Kirit Khan. Returning home towards the end of that year, Firoz initially took lessons from Khurshid Khan, moving on to Lakshmikanta Dey of the Enayet Khan Saheb Gharana, who remained his guru until the mid-'80s. He was fortunate in his choice, for Lakshmikanta Dey heaped special attention upon him, Firoz reciprocating with hard work and respect. "He concentrated on music to such an extent, dedicated his life to its pursuit, that he never married. His students were like his children. Ours was a father-son relationship and I was with him when he died," reminisces Firoz.

Kick-started by brief stints at Rajshahi Bangladesh Betar and BTV, Firoz joined Dhaka Betar, where he continues to be a staff artiste. His commitments are widespread, performing in orchestras for advertise-



Firoz Khan

ments, TV programmes and films, and of course live public and private concerts. To date, the concert with the most magical ambience was on Pakistan National Day a couple of years ago, accompanying Pakistani ghazal singer Ustad Ghulam Ali. "It was a great honour to be requested by the Ustad himself, a new experience to be playing live with him. We enter-

ained the audience with an intricate 'sawaal-jawaab' session." High praise has been showered on Firoz by noted Calcutta singer Haimanti Shukla and Delhi-based kathak dancer Rani Khanam. "Artists feel comfortable with me, as if we've practising together for years."

Travelling abroad for the first time in the mid 1990s as part of an artists'

delegation to Amsterdam, Firoz gave tremendous solo performances there, as well as a couple of years later during a Bangladeshi food festival in London. 1996 proved to be a great year for journeys; concerts took Firoz to Switzerland, Austria and Germany. "There were numerous programmes and I got great first-hand exposure to a variety of cultures. The local audience were keen music lovers and extremely hospitable, the Bangladeshis in these places were superb, supportive." One of the highlights in Firoz's international career was participating in the London Arts Worldwide Bangladesh Festival in 1999. "I met Tony Blair again, having met him previously before he became prime minister."

While pleased to be considered among the top instrumentalists in the country, Firoz keenly feels the lack of institutional and other support. His dream of establishing a sitar school remains stagnant and he rues the fact that his few students have no ambition to turn professional. "It is a difficult instrument to learn. The sitar needs serious discipline and, understandably, they don't wish to invest time where they are unable to see a future. There should be an academy solely for music; then the young can carry on the tradition. There are simply no opportunities." Firoz savours a non-existent wish to train further with Indian maestros Manilal Nag and Shahid Parvez Khan, and to bring foreign musicians to teach here. Rather pessimistically, he doesn't foresee a particularly bright future for classical music.

His hands fly across the instrument as if they were disembodied. The audience is enthralled, the applause rapturous. To hear Firoz Khan play live is a treat indeed.

The writer is a freelance contributor.

## Baishakhi Special

## Kangalini Sufia and Kuddus Boyati on "Smile Show"



Abdul Kuddus Boyati and Kangalini Sufia with Khandokar Ismail (centre)

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT  
Renowned folk artistes Kuddus Boyati and Kangalini Sufia will be fea-

tured together in a special segment of the variety programme "Smile Show" on ATN Bangla. The duo will deliver a special perfor-

mance on the theme of six Bengali seasons. It should be mentioned that Kangalini Sufia was admitted to a hospital recently due to severe ailments.

This special episode of "Smile Show" ushers in the Bengali year 1416 with several interesting segments including a fashion show on the theme 'Baishakh', songs and dance numbers and more. Popular band Feedback will present their ever-familiar hit "Mela-e Jaire" on the show. One of the segments features underprivileged children.

Directed and hosted by Khandokar Ismail, "Smile Show" will be aired on April 13 at 8:45pm.

## Sharmin Lucky on "Jegey Achho Ki?"

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Rtv's weekly programme for the teenagers and university students, "Jegey Achho Ki?" will be aired tonight at 11pm. The theme of this episode is celebrating 'Pahela Baishakh'. Popular TV personality Sharmin Lucky will be present as the guest in this episode.

Viewers can call during the show and participate in conversations. "Jegey Achho Ki?" is hosted by Sayem and Noushin and directed by Tanif Mahmud.



## Ekushey TV anniversary on Pahela Baishakh

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Satellite TV channel Ekushey TV will celebrate its ninth anniversary (transmission started in 2000) on April 14, the first day of the Bengali New Year. Besides a vibrant programme at their office on that day, Ekushey TV will air special shows from April 14 to 16.

Celebrations will begin with the musical programme "Hridoye Amar Surer Dola" on April 14 at 6:30am. Special programme "Dosh-e Pa" will be aired at 10am.

At 7:45pm that day, TV play "Swapno Bastob O Dipannita" will be aired. Written by Raunak Hasan and directed by Chayanika



Scenes from "Swapno, Bastob O Dipannita" (left) and "Bhalobashar Tin Kaal"

Chowdhury, the play features Tarin, Emon and Azizul Hakim in the lead roles.

"Bhalobashar Tin Kaal," a play written by Brindaban Das and directed by Salauddin Lavlu will be aired

on April 15 at 7:45 pm. Centring on the changing views on love and marriage through generations, the play has Chanchal Chowdhury, Golam Farida Chhanda, A. T. M. Shamsuzzaman and Dilara



Zaman in lead roles. Two other single episode plays, "Ki Jey Hobey, Ki Jey Hoy" and "Bhalobashar Onek Naam" will be aired on April 15 and 16 respectively at 10:10pm. The first play is

written and directed by Sharaf Ahmed and the second by Aruna Biswas.

Other attractions include talk shows, folk songs, programmes for children and special episodes of regular shows.

## Renowned producer-director Shakti Samanta passes away

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

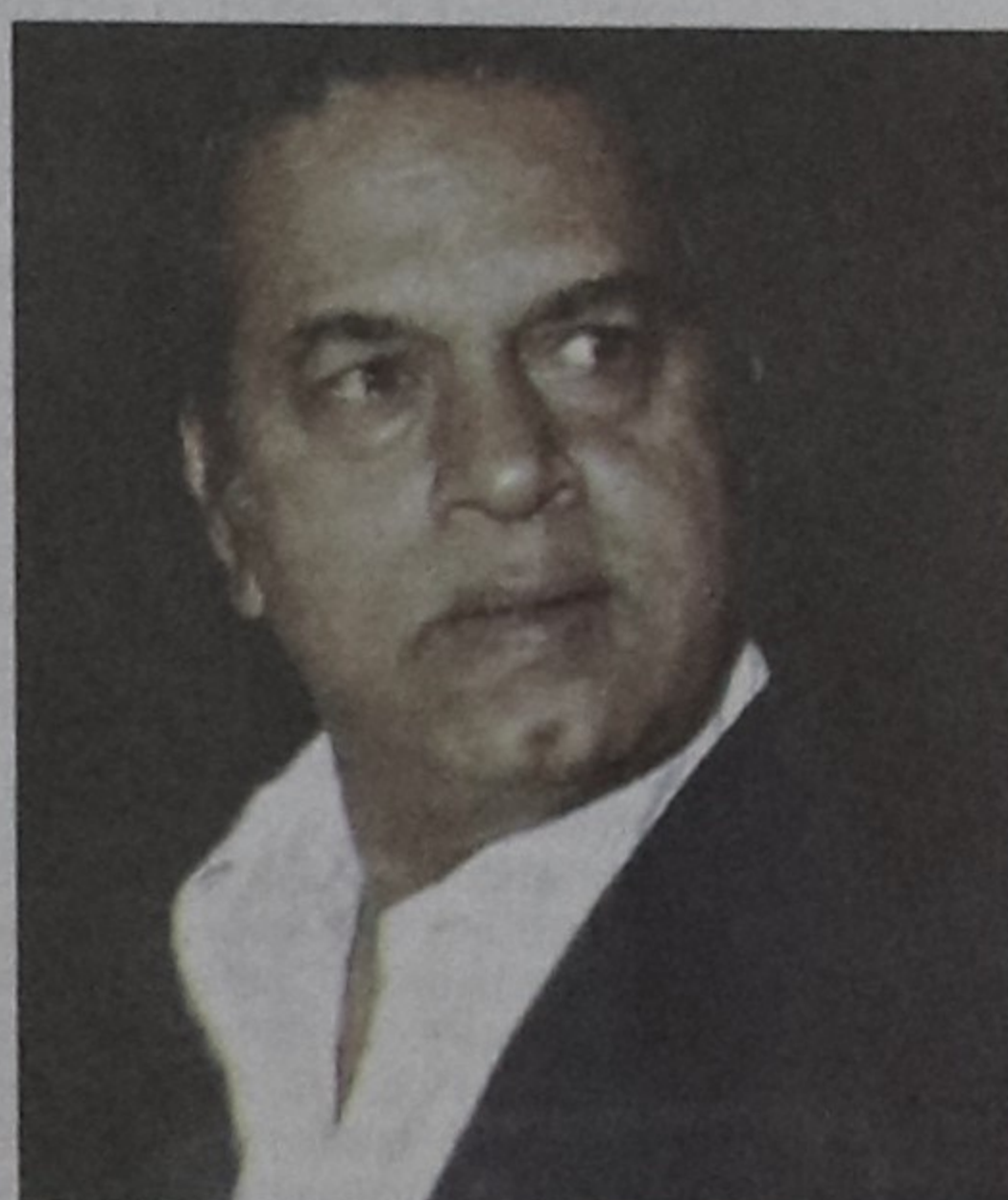
Producer-director Shakti Samanta, who introduced Sharmila Tagore to Hindi cinema and made a star out of Rajesh Khanna, is no more. Samanta died at his residence in Mumbai last Thursday night after a brief illness at the age of 83.

Samanta had suffered a stroke more than two months ago and was recovering from that when the end came at his Santa Cruz house.

Samanta, born in West Bengal's Burdwan district and educated in Kolkata and Dehradun, would be best remembered for giving a number of box-office hits like "Kati Patang," "Aradhana" and "Amar Prem," the last two films starring Rajesh Khanna and Sharmila Tagore.

In a career spanning over four decades, Samanta made 43 films including six in Bengali -- "Amanush" and "Anand Ashram," both starring acting legend Uttam Kumar and Sharmila Tagore. The two films were, in fact, bilingual as they have their Hindi versions too with the same cast.

It was "Aradhana" (1969) which turned Rajesh Khanna a star of the 1970s. This film, along with "Kati Patang," also re-launched the singing



career of Kishore Kumar who sang hit numbers like "Ye Shaam Mastani" and "Mere Sapno Ki Rani Kab Ayegi Tu."

Samanta began his career with a flop film "Bahu" in 1955 but found success three years later with "Howrah Bridge" and "China Town" (1962).

He introduced Sharmila Tagore to Bollywood by casting her in "Kashmir Ki Kali" opposite Shammi Kapoor in 1964. The two actors also starred in "An Evening in Paris" (1967), another super-hit movie in which Tagore appeared for the first time in a swimsuit.

Hit songs, whose music were composed by greats like O.P. Nayyar ("Kashmir Ki Kali" and "Sawan Ki Ghata"), S.D. Burman (in "Aradhana") and R.D. Burman ("Kati Patang," "Amar Prem," "Amanush" and "Anand Ashram") were the hallmarks of Samanta's films.

The filmmaker, however, recreated the same magic with Khanna in some of the later movies like "Anurodh," "Ajnabee," "Mehbooba" and "Awaz" between mid-1970s and mid-'80s.

Samanta is also credited with giving Uttam Kumar's biggest Bollywood hit through "Amanush" in 1975. He also worked with Amitabh Bachchan in the Hindi film "Barsaat Ki Ek Raat" (1981) and the hit bilingual movie (Hindi and Bengali) "Anusandhan."

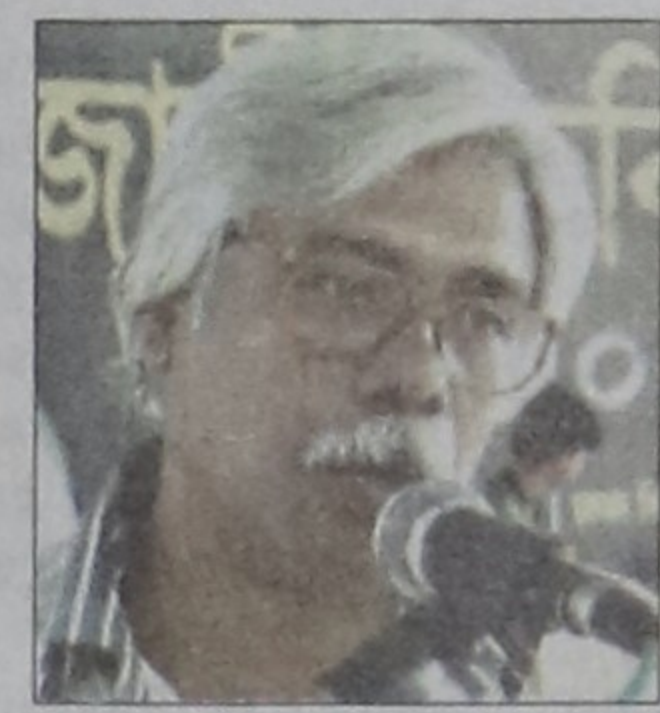
He was also the President of Indian Motion Pictures Association for five years and head of the Censor Board.

## Poet Farid Ahmed nominated for 'Mahadiganta Award'

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Poet Farid Ahmed Dulal, editor of Swatantra Shahitya Patra, a literary magazine published from Mymensingh, has been nominated for the 'Mahadiganta Award' for his contribution to publishing.

The honour is conferred by Mahadiganta Shahitya Patra, edited by poet Uttam Das and published from West Bengal, India. The award has been given since 2000 for contributions in



Poet Farid Ahmed the field of literature including poetry, short stories, little magazine and essays. Previous recipi-

ents of the award are Nirmalendu Gun, Mohammad Nurul Huda, Kazi Rozy, Abdul Mannan Syed and Mahmud Kamal for their contribution to poetry and essay writing.

Swatantra Shahitya Patra has been published since 2005. A total of 12 issues of the literary magazine have been published so far. Faruq Khan Pathan is the publisher of the magazine, while Professor Amir Ahmed Chowdhury Ratan, litterateur Iffat Ara and Dr. K.R. Islam are the advisers.

## The Simpsons soon to be on stamps

"The Simpsons" has won 24 Emmys over its two-decade and counting run on Fox, spawned a hit movie, and sold billions of dollars in ancillary merchandise. The show will be the latest TV classic to be honoured by the United States Postal Service with a series of stamps recently. The five main characters of the cartoon series -- dad Homer, mother Marge, bad boy Bart, sassy Lisa, and silent Maggie -- are featured on a set of 44 cent stamps that go on sale May 7.

"The Simpsons" stands alone as the only TV show to be the sole subject of a stamp set while still in production. Said show creator and executive producer Matt Groening, "This is the biggest and most adhesive honour 'The Simpsons' has ever received."

Among the two dozen Emmy Awards won by "The Simpsons" are 10 for top animated programme under one hour, 12 for voice-over

(albeit none for perpetually-snubbed Harry Shearer) and two for top song. At the height of the show's popularity, the producers opted out of the animated Emmy race and tried their luck at nabbing a nod for comedy series. However, unlike that modern Stone Age family "The Flintstones" which contended for best comedy series in 1961, "The Simpsons" could not break into the big leagues. After two failed attempts, the show went back to reign supreme among animated programmes.

"The Simpsons" has piled up numerous other accolades over the years including the prestigious Peabody in 1997. Among its other kudos are 26 Annie Awards, including 12 in a row as best animated series.

Source: Internet

