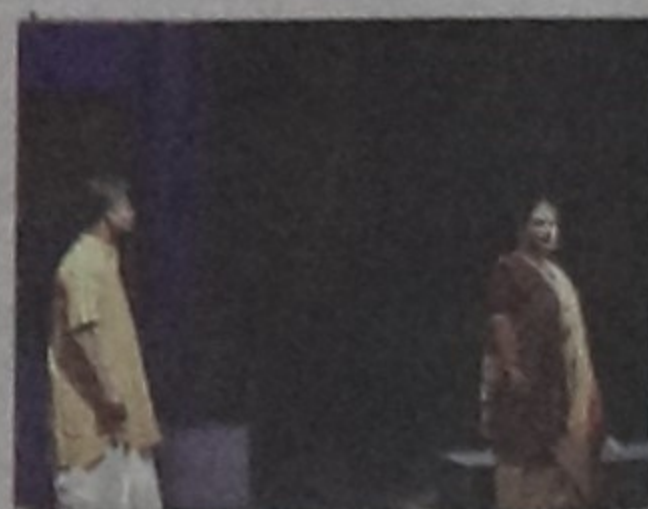


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Theatre

Plays: 'El Roud El Bishit' & 'Pichhu Dak'
Troupe: Syatikram Natya Goshthi
Venue: Mahila Samiti Auditorium, Natok Swarani
Date: June 17
Time: 7pm onwards



Exhibition

Title: Sound of Weaving
Organiser: Anjans
Venue: Nalinikanta Bhattachali Gallery, National Museum
Date: June 8-16



Fete de la Musique

Organiser: Alliance Francaise of Dhaka (AFD)
Venue: La Galerie, AFD, 26, Mirpur Rd, Dhanmondi
Date: June 21-July 2
Time: 6:30pm onwards



Theatre

Play: Rashadhar Sudhadhar er Rajjo
Troupe: Bangaranga Natyadal
Venue: Mahila Samiti Auditorium
Date: June 16
Time: 7pm



Monsoon arrives

Cultural organisations celebrate first day of rainy season

MAINUL HASSAN

Of the Bengali seasons, Monsoon has a special appeal. Yesterday was 'Pahela Ashadh' (first day of the monsoon season in Bengali calendar). Though city dwellers have been experiencing occasional downpour for the last few days, with the official arrival of the season, the wait was finally over.

Through cultural programmes -- recitation, dance and songs -- city dwellers welcomed monsoon yesterday in a fitting manner. Throughout the city, cultural organisations held special programmes to mark the occasion.

Udichi Shilpi Gosthi, Dhaka Mahanagar Shangshad welcomed the season with a colourful programme at the Faculty of Fine Arts (FFA), Dhaka University premises.

"After two excruciating months of scorching heat, monsoon comes with a message of hope, brining joy and replenishing every thirsty soul," said Kazi Madina, president, Udichi Dhaka Mahanagar Shangshad.

"This is the season when nature demonstrates abundance, and farmers get busy. It's just natural that people appreciate the arrival of monsoon and welcome it with songs, dances and more," added Madina.

This was the fourth 'Borsha Utshab' by Udichi in the city. The organisation has been holding the event since 2006.

Since early morning, people thronged the FFA premises. The serene air was broken with a Dhrupad recital by Swapan Kumar Bishwas, as 'Borsha Utshab 1416' kicked off.

Next Mita Haque performed a Tagore song followed by Khairul Anam Shakil who performed a Nazrul Sangeet.

The event mainly featured songs of rain written and composed by Tagore



Artistes celebrate the first day of monsoon season with music and dance at Udichi's programme.



Aditi Mohsin performs at the event organised by Satyen Sen Shilpi Shangstha.

and Nazrul, modern and folk songs, and some dance performances.

Solo performances were staged by Kalpana Anam, Jannatul Ferdous Lucky, Lina Taposhi, Chhaya Karmakar, Chandana Majumder, Mahadev Ghosh, Mahmud Selim, Altaf Hossain and others.

Artists of Rabinashmi, Dhruvotan and Udichi staged group performances.

Mahidul Islam, Belayet Hossain and Jharna Sharker recited poems at the event.

Lively dance performances staged by Nrityam, Nritya Nandan and Nrityalok added further shades of joy to the programme.

The event concluded with a rendition of the National Anthem. 'Barsha Utshab 1416' was aired live on Banglavisian.

Another programme celebrating the day, also titled 'Barsha Utshab 1416', was held at Hakim Chattar, adjacent to FFA. The event was organised by Satyen Sen Shilpi Shangstha (SSSS).

The event featured performances by artistes Ferdous Ara, Lily Islam, Shama Rahman, Aditi Mohsin, Kalpana Anam, Rupu Khan, Salma Akbar, Salahuddin Ahmed and others.

Group performances were staged by Satyen Sen Shilpi Shangstha, Dhubotan, Bonhishikha and Surshaptak.

The event also included a discussion. A.A.M.S Arefin Siddique, vice-chancellor, DU was the chief guest. Dr Hayat Mamud presided over the session. Golam Kuddus, general secretary, Shammilito Shangkritik Jote; Shamsuzzaman Khan, director general, Bangla Academy and Manzarul Islam Chowdhury, general secretary, SSSS also spoke at the event. The event was aired live on Channel i.

Eksho Bosta Chal staged in Sylhet

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Staging of a quality play drew much appreciation in Sylhet last week. Japanese Embassy in Dhaka organised the event in association with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on June 12 and 13 at the M Saifur Rahman auditorium.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Mashouki Inui and Shilpakala Academy Director General Kamal Lohani were the special guests while the Sylhet Mayor Badar uddin Ahmed Kamran was the chief guest at the inaugural session. Irin Pervin Lopa conducted the function.

The production, "Eksho Bosta Chal" (One Hundred Sacks of Rice), an adaptation of a play by Yuzo Yamamoto, drew much appreciation from the Sylhet audience. Golam Sarwar directed the play.

Winner of the 16th Uchimura prize, the play was translated into English by Donald Keene and into Bengali by Professor Abdus Selim.

The play is set against the backdrop of the

transitional period of 'Shogunate era' to 'Meiji' resurrection.

After the 'Boshin War' (1868-69), the legendary Japanese warriors, Samurai, had to constantly endure poverty. As a result like many other Japanese domains, people of Nagaoka became corrupt. "Eksho Bosta Chal" symbolises the fact that human beings can keep alive a dream in any circumstances.

The protagonist of the play, Kobayashi Torasaburo, the chief counsellor of Nagaoka, instead of distributing 100 sacks of rice to the poor Samurais, decides to establish a school. His reasoning was that the Samurais could not get rid of poverty with the small amount of rice, but if a school is established it would generate wealth worth tens of thousands of sacks of rice.

The cast included Junaid Eusuf, Tashmi Tamanna, Sharmin Sangita Khanam, Md. Nur Zaman Raja, Md. Rafi, Abul Kalam Azad, Golam Shahriar Rabbi, Md. Shahadat Hossain, Md. Abdul Qaiyum Bhuiyan and others.



A scene from "Eksho Bosta Chal."

Faiz Zahir and Junaid Eusuf did the set design, and Thandu Raihan was the light designer.

Celebrating Rabindra and Nazrul in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

The 'Ekushey Book Fair Celebration Committee', Pabna celebrated Rabindra-Nazrul Jayanti (birth anniversary) in the district recently. A discussion and cultural programme was organised at Pabna Town Hall premises on this momentous occasion. The speakers emphasised the major contributions of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore and National Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam to Bangla literature.

Md. Abdul Aziz chaired the discussion. President of the organisation Sultan Ahmed Buro; secretary, Mohammad Zakir Hossain; artist Md. Abul Hashem; agriculturist Zafar Sadek and cultural activist Gopal Sanyal were among the speakers.

Rabindranath and Nazrul are assets to

Bengali literature though their perspectives were very different, said the speakers in one voice.

The discussion was followed by a cultural programme, where artistes performed Rabindra and Nazrul Sangeet. Then came dance items by young artistes. The singers were Abul Hashem, Nasima Ashraf, Dr. Habibullah and Safi Ahmed, to name a few.

Meanwhile Pabna Press Club also celebrated Rabindra-Nazrul Jayanti at the Pabna Press Club auditorium last Saturday night. President of Pabna Press Club, Rumi Khandakar chaired the discussion while Secretary of the club Utpal Mirza, columnist Ranesh Maitra and seasoned journalist Anwarul Haque were the speakers. Later artistes performed songs of Tagore and Nazrul as well as dances.

Historical Hindu-Muslim love epic sweep IIFA Awards '09

AFP, Macau

A tale of love between a Muslim emperor and his Hindu wife swept the IIFA Awards -- popularly known as the "Bollywood Oscars" -- last weekend, earning a clutch of awards including Best Picture and Best Director for Ashutosh Gowariker.

"Jodhaa Akbar" traces the rise of the Mughal emperor Akbar and his love affair with his Hindu wife, played by Aishwarya Rai Bachchan.

Gowariker said some people had suggested he drop plans to make the movie, given the sensitivity of Hindu-Muslim relations in India.

"When I started this movie I was advised by all my friends not to make this film," Gowariker explained at the annual International Indian Film Academy Awards (IIFA), being held this year in the southern Chinese territory of Macau.

But Gowariker said the film's massive popularity had "reinstated my faith that we do need a Hindu-Muslim alliance."

"Jodhaa Akbar" saw off "Ghajini," "Rock On," "A Wednesday," "Dostana," and "Race" to take the Best Picture gong.

The movie's lead man, Hrithik Roshan, took Best Performance in a Lead Role (Male), urging his fans among the 8,000 gathered at the Venetian Macao Resort-Hotel to "have the courage



Rajesh Khanna was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

to live free and live the truth." Former Miss World Priyanka Chopra, whose effort as a model dealing with the seedy side of the business in "Fashion" won her Best Performance in a Lead Role (Female), thanked the audience for sitting through the nearly seven-hour ceremony.



Priyanka Chopra looks at ease with the Best Actress award.

"We Indians are everywhere," she added. "The film industry is like one big family and the fans really feel a part of that." Earlier in the evening, the powerful Bachchan clan had again threatened to steal the limelight.

Family patriarch Amitabh Bachchan was

feted by the event's hosts all night, while Rai picked up awards for Star of the Decade (female) and Outstanding Achievement by an Indian in International Cinema.

Rai's husband Abhishek then picked up a gong for Best Performance in a Comic Role (Male) for his turn in "Dostana," and the couple delighted the audiences with separate song and dance numbers.

Former Miss World Rai provided the night's most poignant moment when rewarded for her work over the past decade.

"It is never a singular effort," she said, before turning her attention to her father, who recently has been battling cancer.

"My father is still here," she said, thanking him for his "sacrifice and grace."

In contrast, Abhishek screamed for joy once on stage and -- in reference to questions being raised in the tabloid press about his sexuality -- yelled: "Well, I am gay tonight!"

Organisers estimated that the awards would be watched by 500 million TV viewers worldwide, while hundreds of fans gathered outside the Cotai Arena before the event, singing the names of their favourite actors as they took to the carpet.

The extravaganza, now in its 10th year, is staged outside India every year in an effort to increase the international profile of Bollywood films. It features premieres, media sessions, trade forums, and a fashion show.

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