

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Album Launch

Title: Tomar Bibha Te
Mugdho Aml
Organiser: War Crimes
Facts Finding
Committee
Venue: Chhayanaout
Sanskriti Bhavan
Date: June 26
Time: 7pm



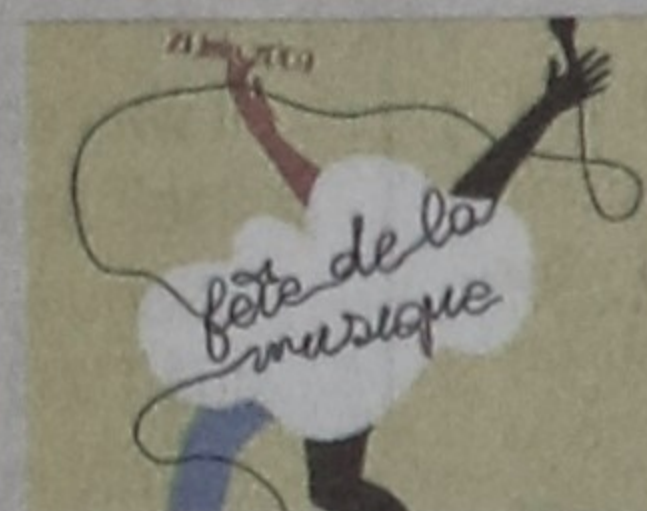
5th Int'l Children-Art Biennale

Organiser: Bangladesh
Shishu Academy
Venue: Auditorium of
Bangladesh Shishu
Academy
Date: June 21-July 5
Time: 11am-6pm



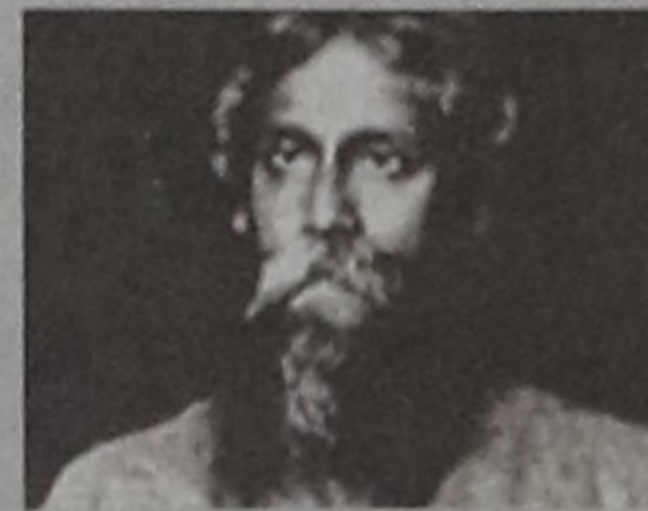
Fete de la Musique

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



Theatre Festival

On Rabindranath
Tagore
Organiser: Sanglaap
Group Theatre
Venue: Experimental
Theatre Stage
Date: June 18-24
Time: 7pm



Music unbound

Fete de la Musique begins with Farida Parveen performance

JAMIL MAHMUD

Fete de la Musique, the festival celebrating the World Music Day, began at the La Galerie, Alliance Francaise of Dhaka (AFD), Dhanmondi on June 21. The festival began with a solo musical performance by internationally renowned Lalon singer Farida Parveen. This year, the ten-day festival will take place at different venues around the city where several local troupes and artistes along with a Kolkata-based choir will perform.

Ambassador of France Charley Causeret delivered the inaugural speech, highlighting the traditional music of Bangladesh. "The 2009 edition of the festival will give us the opportunity to discover or rediscover the opulence and diversity of Bangladeshi music," said Causeret. His message will likely reflect throughout the festival as it features the major music genres of Bangladesh like 'Lalon Geeti' and 'Bhawaiya'.

Since its inception in 1982 in France, the music festival now takes place in more than 100 countries and 350 cities all over the world. In Bangladesh, the festival has been organised by AFD since 2000.

As a beginning of a festival, it doesn't get better than songs of Lalon performed by



Farida Parveen sings at Alliance Francaise, Dhaka on June 21.

Farida Parveen. Parveen is widely credited to have taken Lalon's music and philosophy beyond our borders. In 2008, Parveen won the 'Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize,' a prestigious Japanese award for upholding traditional music in Asia.

Although, Parveen has become synonymous to 'Lalon Geeti,' she is also an accomplished 'adhunik' singer. Parveen started her performance with a rendition of a patriotic song 'O pakhi

rey ekbar aye," a home to freedom fighters. She sang two more compositions -- the patriotic 'Ei Padma, ei Meghna' and her hugely popular 'adhunik' 'Tomra bhulei geccho Mallikadi'r naam' -- before moving on to Lalon's songs.

"Music is divine. It has the ability to satiate human soul. At present, the whole world is traumatised. It is divine music that can help the world to overcome this suffering," said Parveen.

Accompanied by the able playing of 'tabla' and bamboo flute by Debendranath Chattopadhyay and Gazi Abdul Hakim respectively, Parveen took the audience on a journey to the mystical world of Lalon, as she rendered songs from the bard's collection.

"Khamo, khamo oporadh," a plea to the Almighty to absolve sins, was her first rendition of Lalon's songs. She gradually sang compositions that belong to 'Deha

Tatwa' -- "Khanchar bitor auchin pakhi"; 'Nabi Tatwa' -- "Roop kather ei nauka khani" and 'Jati Tatwa' -- "Jaati gela jaati gela bole" and "Shob lokey koy Lalon ki jaat shangsharey."

The artiste also rendered lesser-known songs like "Jeneyshuney rakhey mon-e" and "Shei kala chand nadey eshechhey" alongside popular numbers "Barir kachhey aarshi nagar" and "Tin pagoley holomela."

A wonderful interplay of Parveen's vocals and Gazi Abdul Hakim's flute during the songs "Asha puron holo na" and "Shomoy geley shadon hobey na" caused a musical high. Daulat-Ur-Rahman on keyboard, S.M. Reza Babu on 'dhol' and Delwar Hossain on 'dotara' and mandolin accompanied Parveen throughout the programme.

French Music Party featuring performances by teachers, students and staff of AFD will be held this evening at AFD, Dhanmondi. The festival will also feature a concert by folk-fusion band Bangla (on June 27) at the Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre and Calcutta String Quartet (on June 28) at the AFD, Dhanmondi.

Fete de la Musique will end on July 2.

World Music Day celebration in town

MAINUL HASSAN

Throughout the globe, June 21 is observed as World Music Day amidst much enthusiasm and fanfare.

On Sunday, singers, musicians, songwriters, composers and music enthusiasts celebrated World Music Day through a programme at Shaheed Minar premises, Dhaka University campus. The event was organised by Bangladesh Sangeet Shaghaton Shomonnay Parishad (BSSSP). This was the second programme on World Music Day by the organisation.

The slogan of this year's programme was, "Esho Gaaney Gaaney Praney Praney Bandhi Bandhan." Children in Baul attire added colour to the event.

"Music has a tremendous power over the human mind. A special day for music gives us all an opportunity to celebrate its significance in our lives. People associated with music are part of a big family; today we have tried to bring together all members of the music community on the same stage," said Biswajit Roy, joint general secretary, BSSSP.

The programme started at 5pm with solo performances of 'Bhawaiya' and patriotic songs. A.K.M. Mustafizur Rahman, Anima Mukti Gomez and Shafiqul Alam Raza sang at the

programme.

A group rendition of the ever-familiar D.L. Roy song "Dhono dhanyo pushpey bhora" followed.

A one-minute silence was observed in memory of the recently deceased sarod artiste Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and Language Movement veteran Gaziul Haque.

Leading artistes and representatives of several cultural organisations stood united against piracy. Royalty issues were also discussed at the event.

Jhuna Chowdhury, secretary general, Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation; Bulbul Moholanobish, Mahadev Ghosh, Kurshid Alam, Mohammad Rafiquzzaman, Shahin Samad, Fatema Tuz Zohra, Fahim Hossain Chowdhury, M.A. Mannan, Abdul Jabbar, Dr. Mridul Kanti Chakrobarty and others spoke at the event.

Veteran singer-composer Ajit Roy was present as the chief guest.

Cultural organisations Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Shangstha, Nazrul Sangeet Parishad, Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts (BAFA), Mandira Shilpi Gosthi, Nibedan, Rabirashmi, Udichi and Obbhayuday attended the celebration.

The event concluded with a rally brought out from Shaheed Minar.



Youngsters in traditional 'Baul' attire lead the World Music Day rally.

PHOTO: MUMIT M

New Acropolis Museum opens: Greece wants missing marble works from Britain



Photos of the so-called Kritios Boy statue are projected onto the walls of the new Acropolis Museum in Athens, Greece. The ancient Parthenon temple is seen in the background.



Visitors admire a sculpture at the new Acropolis museum in Athens on June 21, 2009.

AP, Athens

Gods, heroes and long-dead mortals stepped off their plinths into the evening sky of Athens on Saturday during the lavish launch of the new Acropolis Museum, a decades-old dream that Greece hopes will also help

reclaim a cherished part of its heritage from Britain.

The digital animated display on the museum walls ended years of delays and wrangling over the ultramodern building, set among apartment blocks and elegant neoclassical houses at the foot of the Acropolis hill.

The nearly euro 3 million

(\$4.1 million) opening ceremony was attended by some 400 guests, including European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura, and foreign heads of state and government. Conspicuously, there were no government officials from Britain, which

has repeatedly refused to repatriate dozens of 2,500-year-old sculptures from the Parthenon temple that are held in the British Museum.

President Karolos Papoulias said Greeks think of the Acropolis monuments as their "identity and pride," and renewed the demand for the missing marble works, displayed in London for the past 200 years.

"The whole world can now see the most important sculptures from the Parthenon together," Papoulias said. "Some are missing. It is time to heal the wounds on the monument by returning the marbles that belong to it."

Crouching 300 yards from the Parthenon's slender bones like a skewed stack of glass boxes, the euro 130 million (\$180 million) museum provides an airy setting for some of the best surviving works of classical sculpture that once adorned the Acropolis.

By day, printed glass panels filter the harsh sunlight while revealing the ancient citadel in the background. The internal lighting projects the battered statues outward at night, contrasting with the floodlit ruins on the low hill.

"We tried... to be as simple, as clear, as precise as we could be establishing a visual relation between the Parthenon, the museum with the beautiful sculptures and with the archaeological remnants," said the building's designer, French-Swiss architect Bernard Tschumi.

Among the exhibits are small sculptures recently returned from Italy, The Vatican and Germany.

The Parthenon was built at the height of Athens' glory, between 447-432 B.C., in honour of the city's patron goddess, Athena, and is still considered one of the most

impressive buildings in the world.

Despite its burning by invading Goths in 267 A.D., conversion into a Christian church in the early 6th century and Ottoman occupation from the 15th century -- when it served as a gunpowder store -- it survived largely intact until a Venetian cannon shot caused a massive explosion in 1687. Elgin, a Scotsman, removed about half the surviving sculptures between 1801-04, when Greece was an unwilling part of the Ottoman Empire.

The British Museum has repeatedly rejected calls for their return. It says it legally owns the collection it bought from Elgin, who sold it to stave off bankruptcy, and that it is displayed free of charge in an international cultural context.

With about 150,000 square feet (14,000 square meters) of exhibition space, the museum holds more than 4,000 ancient works, many of them never displayed before due to lack of space in the cramped old museum that sat atop the Acropolis hill.

Now visitors can walk among freestanding statues and reliefs with surviving traces of paint; view fragments of sculptures and coins still bearing scorch marks from the Persians' sacking of the city in 480 B.C.; gaze through three stories of glass floors straight into the foundations, where construction revealed an entire neighbourhood of ancient and early Christian Athens.

The museum opened to visitors on Sunday. Entry is at a nominal charge of euro 1 (\$1.40) until the end of the year, when it will increase to euro 5. The first four days are already completely sold out through Internet sales.

Poet Nirmalendu Guun's 65th birthday celebrated

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

The 65th birthday of poet Nirmalendu Guun was celebrated on June 14 at the Barhatta Auditorium in his native Netrakona district. The event was organised by 'Nirmalendu Guun Janmo Jayanti Ujjapon Parishad (NGJJP), Barhatta-2009.'

A daylong programme was chalked out on the occasion. The celebration programme included poetry recitation, discussion and more.

Khairul Kabir Khokon, chairman of Barhatta

Upazila Parishad, inaugurated the function.

The event was presided over by Girindra Chandra Sarker, president of NGJJP. Among others, Amol Krishna Mondol, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Barhatta; Jyotish Chandra Sarker, principal of Barhatta College and Papia Jahan, vice chairman of Barhatta Upazila Parishad spoke at the programme.

The speakers discussed Nirmalendu Guun's contribution to contemporary Bangla poetry and journalism. Later, local artistes performed at a lively cultural programme.



Local performers recite poetry at the celebration of poet Nirmalendu Guun's 65th birthday.

PHOTO: STAR

Celebration of Tagore, Nazrul and Monsoon in Magura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Shishukantha Khelaghar Ashor, Magura district unit celebrated Rabindra and Nazrul birth anniversaries at the auditorium of Syed Ator Ali Public Library on recently. Apart from a cultural programme, the celebration included a competition on Tagore and Nazrul's songs and poetry recitation. Around 120 children participated at the competition in two groups.

Shilpakala Academy, Magura held a cultural

programme at the Asaduzzaman auditorium to welcome the season of 'Barsha' (monsoon). The programme featured songs, dance and recitation.

With solo and group performances of Rabindra and Nazrul Sangeet on rain, artistes of local Shilpakala Academy welcomed the season. Members of Udichi Shilpi Gosthi performed dances, while BM Sujon recited several poems.

Deputy Commissioner of Magura, Dilwar Bakht, formally inaugurated the programme.