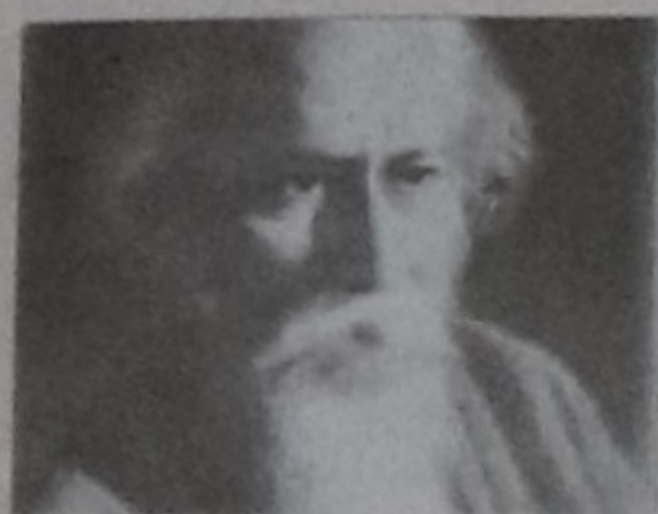


## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

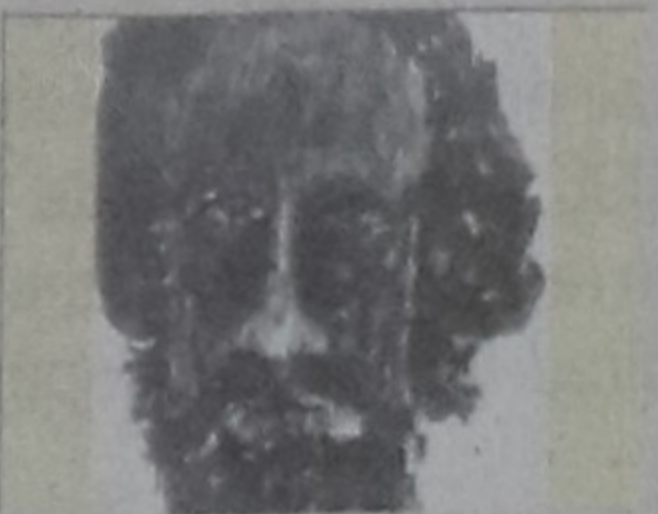
### Musical Soiree

Title: Jharichhey Srabono Dhara  
Organiser: Nandan  
Venue: Chhayanaout, Dhanmondi  
Date: July 24  
Time: 7:15pm



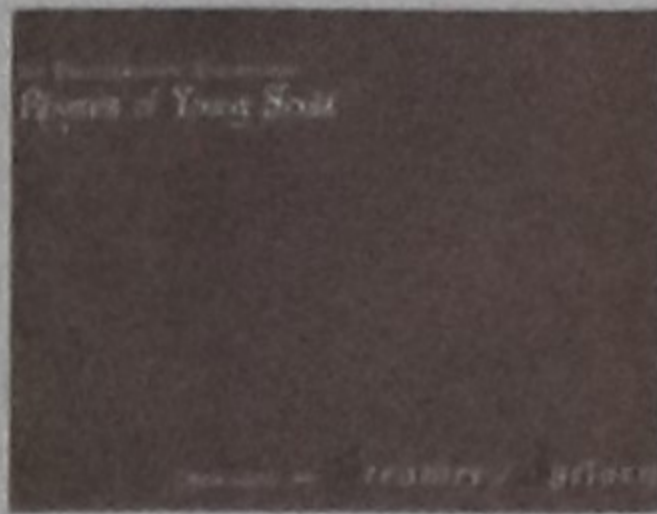
### Rabindra Festival

Organiser: Chhayanaout  
Venue: Chhayanaout, Sangskriti Bhavan, Dhanmondi  
Date: July 17-18  
Time: 10am (1st day), 6pm (2nd day)



### Photography Exhibition

Title: Rhymes of Young Souls  
Organiser: Dreamers' Factory  
Venue: Ork Gallery, H 58, Rd 15A (new), Dhanmondi  
Date: July 17-21  
Time: 3-6pm



### Concert: Tribute to King of Pop

Organiser: Jaadu (MJ) Events  
Venue: Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre  
Date: July 18  
Time: 7pm



## Everything Tagore

Rabindra Utshab at Chhayanaout



Chhayanaout artistes sing (top) and dance (bottom-right) at the Rabindra Utshab yesterday.



Dr. Sanjida Khatun speaks at the programme, Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid next to her.

MAINUL HASSAN

To celebrate Rabindranath Tagore, his works and philosophy, Chhayanaout is holding a two-day 'Rabindra Utshab' (Festival) at Chhayanaout Sangskriti Bhavan in Dhanmondi. The festival began yesterday. Leading and upcoming Tagore artistes of the country as well several cultural organisations are participating at the event.

This is the first Rabindra Utshab by Chhayanaout. The organisation was founded in 1961, on the occasion of Tagore birth centenary.

The festival began with chief guest Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid lighting mangal propid. Chhayanaout artistes sang "Eto alo jaliechho" in the background.

Artists of Chhayanaout also staged group dance performances with the songs -- "Prothom juger udoy digangoney" and "Joy tobo bichitro anando" -- marking the opening of the festival.

A short discussion followed. Partho Tanvir Noved, teacher of Chhayanaout, welcomed the audience. Among others, Dr. Sanjida Khatun, president of Chhayanaout, and Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid spoke at the event.

"This festival aims at celebrating Rabindranath Tagore's life and works," said Dr. Sanjida Khatun.

Referring to a newspaper report about a father who was forced by local goons to blind his son, Dr. Sanjida Khatun said, "With social unrest on the rise, we are facing troubled times. Tagore's songs, his words can provide much-needed solace and can generate awareness against violence and crime among the masses."

In her speech, the Tagore exponent made an open

appeal to all the students and alumni (an estimated 40,000) of Chhayanaout to play an active role in presenting our cultural heritage to the world.

Professor Murshid said, "Tagore has a significant place in our culture, the influence of his works -- his songs, writings and plays are undeniable."

"His works have the ability to move people -- inspire and unite them. Tagore goes beyond national boundaries, he belongs to the world," he added.

"Globalisation is a system, often driven by greed. It seemingly benefits only a few and the poor become even poorer, deprived from their rights, much like during colonialism in Tagore's time."

"In his works, Tagore had always spoken for the deprived, and highlighted the ill effects of greed in society. In today's world his works can inspire people the same way," Professor Murshid said.

A cultural programme followed the discussion. Teachers and students of Chhayanaout, including Partho Tanvir Noved, Nirjhar

Chowdhury, Nilotpal Shadhyo, Sejuti Barua, Shukla Pal, Satyam Kumar Debnath, Nilufar Jahan and others staged solo performances.

Among invited artistes were Swati Sarkar, Shimu Dey, Abhik Deb and Fahima Samad.

A solo dance performance by Warda Rihab was one of the highlights. Masuduzzaman recited poetry.

"Culture is the true identity of a person and festivals make people aware of their cultural roots. We hope to hold more festivals on a regular basis."

Festivals on Nazrul, Dr. Roy, Rajnikant, traditional dance and more are on the cards," said Dr. Sanjida Khatun.

The evening session of the festival started at 5 pm. The session featured group performances by artistes of Bishwa Bina, Rabirashmi and Chhayanaout. Chhayanaout and Dhrupad Kalakendra staged dance performances.

The festival ends today. The closing session will start from 6 pm. BRAC Bank Ltd has sponsored the festival.



## Prokriti celebrates monsoon in Faridpur

REZAUL KARIM, Faridpur

Prokriti, a group of cultural enthusiasts and nature lovers, of Faridpur, held a 'Borsha Utshab' (celebration of the rainy season) on the heels of the Bangla month Ashadh at the Teachers' Training (TT) College premises in the town recently.

The programme, titled "Badol Din-er Prothom Kodom Phool," included Tagore, Lalon and adhunik songs, recitation and discussion. Acclaimed photojournalist Nasir Ali Mamun was chief guest and Professor Nirod Baran Majumder, principal, Faridpur TT College, was special guest at the event. Professor Altaf Hossain, a well-known cultural personality of the area and former principal of Faridpur Govt. Yasin College, chaired the function.

The discussants were of the

view that Borsha (monsoon) is the most important of all the six seasons of Bangladesh, and farmers look forward to it. Borsha is inextricably linked to our culture. Random deforestation poses a grave threat to our environment and reduces rain. To make the most of the rainy season, we have to maintain a close bond with nature,

they added.

The musical session of the programme began with the song "Badol din-er prothom kodom phool," rendered by promising Tagore singer Steve Tourja Baroy. Chittaranjon Mondol, a trainee of TT College, presented "Pran shakhi re"; Zakir Hossain presented an Abdul Alim

classic, "Mon-e boro asha chilo"; Majeda Khatun performed "Barir pashey arshinagar"; Dr. Sunil Chakraborty and Advocate Sipra Goswami sang a duet, "Shaon-oraat-e-jadi."

Rashid Ahmed Titu performed "Megh boleche jabo jabo" and Sharmistha presented "Rim jhim ghono deya boroshe." The audience also enjoyed a chorus, "Pagla hawar badol diney" on the occasion.

Celebrated photographer Nasir Ali Mamun recited "Abar dekha hobey," written by the recently deceased poet Alauddin Al Azad.

Among others, Mujibor Rahman, convenor of Faridpur Nishorgo Shangshad; Mafiz Imam Milon, member of Prokriti and journalist Rezaul Karim spoke on the occasion.

Marking the programme, organisers and participants planted some saplings at the TT college grounds.



Renowned photojournalist Nasir Ali Mamun (centre) speaks at the programme.

## A Bollywood nightingale in Dhaka

Live performance by Alka Yagnik

### CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Talk of the town for the last few days has been a concert featuring renowned Indian playback singer Alka Yagnik. The show was held at the Hall of Fame, Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Centre on July 16. Presented by Marico, the concert was organised by Red Enterprise Limited.

Yagnik, one of the finest voices of her generation in Bollywood (the Mumbai-based film industry) as well as the sub-continental music scenario, enthralled the audience throughout the nearly three-hour performance.

Chetan Rana -- a winner of the musical talent hunt "K for Kishor" on Sony TV -- opened the show with a couple of songs, including "Subhan Allah." The artiste later sang a duet with Yagnik. The diva was one of the guest judges on the talent hunt.

Yagnik started her per-



PHOTO: MUMIT M

Yagnik's performance in Dhaka featured an extended list of her Bollywood hits.

formance with a song that has become a requisite in her shows. It was the title track from the 1998 Shah Rukh-Kajol blockbuster, "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai." The singer bagged one of her two National Film Awards

for the song. Along with numerous honours, the other National Film Award came in 1994 for the song "Ghoonghat ki oud se."

The forte of Yagnik's repertoire was melody. She charmed the Dhaka audience with "Ek din aap yun hamko mil jayegey." "I always try to give my best and perform all kinds of songs. I hope all of you find my selection of songs enjoyable," the diva said to her audience.

In most cases she did not finish a song, as she wanted to perform more numbers.

It is remarkable how many Yagnik songs have gone on to become huge hits. One got an impression of that going by the collection of songs the artiste performed at the

Dhaka concert.

The medley started with the overly familiar "Mere angney me," Yagnik's breakthrough song in Bollywood. One after another the artiste sang, "Gazab ka hain din," "Pardesi jana nahi," "Baazigar o baazigar," "Taal-e sey taal mila," "Dekha hey paheli bar" and its Bangla version "Dekhechhi prothom bar."

Other memorable renditions included "Tawba," "Dekha tumko jabsey" and "Kissiroz."

Munmun was the MC of the event. Omni Music, Pepsi and Dynamic were the sponsors, while The Daily Star, Ice Today and Radio Today FM 89.6 were the media partners of the event.

## A mega-convention of young theatre activists

130 troupes participate at PTA's 10th national camp

### CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

With the motto "Amra shobai manchokuri natmandoney phutbo," the 10th National Theatre Camp for children and adolescents kicked off at Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library in Shabbagh yesterday.

Peoples Theatre Association (PTA) And Rakhal have directed and arranged the event respectively. Some 130 theatre troupes from different corners of the country are participating in the fortnight long event. The programme also includes the 2nd theatre camp for indigenous and underprivileged children and adolescents.

On this occasion, a rally was held at 10 am. Future nation-builders, irrespective of social background took part in the rally.

Speaker of the parliament Advocate Abdul Hamid inaugurated the programme at 11:30am. In his speech, special guest Ataur Rahman, president of ITI, Bangladesh Centre, inspired the little artistes with references to Rabindranath Tagore and Sukanto Bhattacharya.

Speaker Abdul Hamid promised to raise the issue of increasing government fund on culture at the parliament.

Among others, general secretary of



PHOTO: MUMIT M

Speaker of the parliament Advocate Abdul Hamid (centre) inaugurates the event with lighting candles.

Sammilito Sanskritik Jote, Golam Kuddus and adviser, PTA, SM Mohsin spoke on the occasion. Festival convenor Liaquat Ali Lucky presided over the programme. The festival will remain open from 4pm to 9pm daily (Friday 10am to 9pm.)

Apart from plays, other attractions of the event include puppet shows and circus. The camp will also feature informal meetings, workshops and more.

Barendra Shishu Theatre, Rajshahi; Khuya Sanskritik Jote, Faridpur; Uchharon Academy, Bogra; Santal, Dinajpur; Kids Cultural Institute, Chittagong; Dinajpur Repertory, Dinajpur; Peoples Little Theatre, Dhaka and O'rao, Dinajpur staged "Pathshala Polayon," "Mathal," "Mukhtir Michhiley," "Shashet," "Kaktarua," "Antoraye," "Chandalika" and "Mandi Amokhi" respectively on the inaugural day.

## Anil Ambani inks deal worth \$825 million with Spielberg

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

"It's a marriage made in Heaven," was how Hollywood's celebrated director Steven Spielberg described his joint venture with Indian industrial tycoon Anil Ambani as the two joined hands last Wednesday to produce and distribute movies.

For Anil Ambani, it was Hollywood debut as he announced an initial investment of 825 million US dollars in the joint venture involving Spielberg and Stacey Snider of Dream Works Studios

for making films for a global audience. Ambani met Spielberg, director of acclaimed films like "ET," "Jurassic Park" and "Munich," and Snider in New York on Wednesday.

The joint venture to be headed by Spielberg and Snider is expected to produce five to six films each year, featuring Hollywood stars. Work on the first is likely to start later this year.

Spielberg said he looked forward to visiting India and the association with Reliance Big Entertainment promoted by Anil Ambani "opens a new door to our future."

With the financial meltdown hitting

Hollywood hard, American film studios are increasingly looking to Bollywood and tapping the huge Indian market where the entertainment segment is poised for a big leap, according to estimates by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

Spielberg said he was impressed with the Reliance work philosophy and it was a "creative collaboration" and that was why it was, as they say, a "marriage made in Heaven."

It remains to be seen if this marriage between Hollywood and Bollywood sets the world cinema on fire.