

### WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
Title: Jai Bangla  
Artist: Shahabuddin  
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H 275/F, Rd 27 (old), Dhanmondi  
Date: Sep 27-Oct 10  
Time: 12-6pm



**Exhibition**  
Title: Poshakey Ronger Utshab  
Venue: Gallery Nitya Upahar, Aziz Cooperative Super Market, Shahbagh  
Date: August 28-September 19  
Time: 10am-8pm



**Photography Exhibition**  
Title: Heritage Inspiration  
Photographer: M. Shamsuzzaman  
Venue: Dr. K. G. Hall, H 58, Rd 15A (new), Dhanmondi  
Date: September 15-19  
Time: 3-9pm

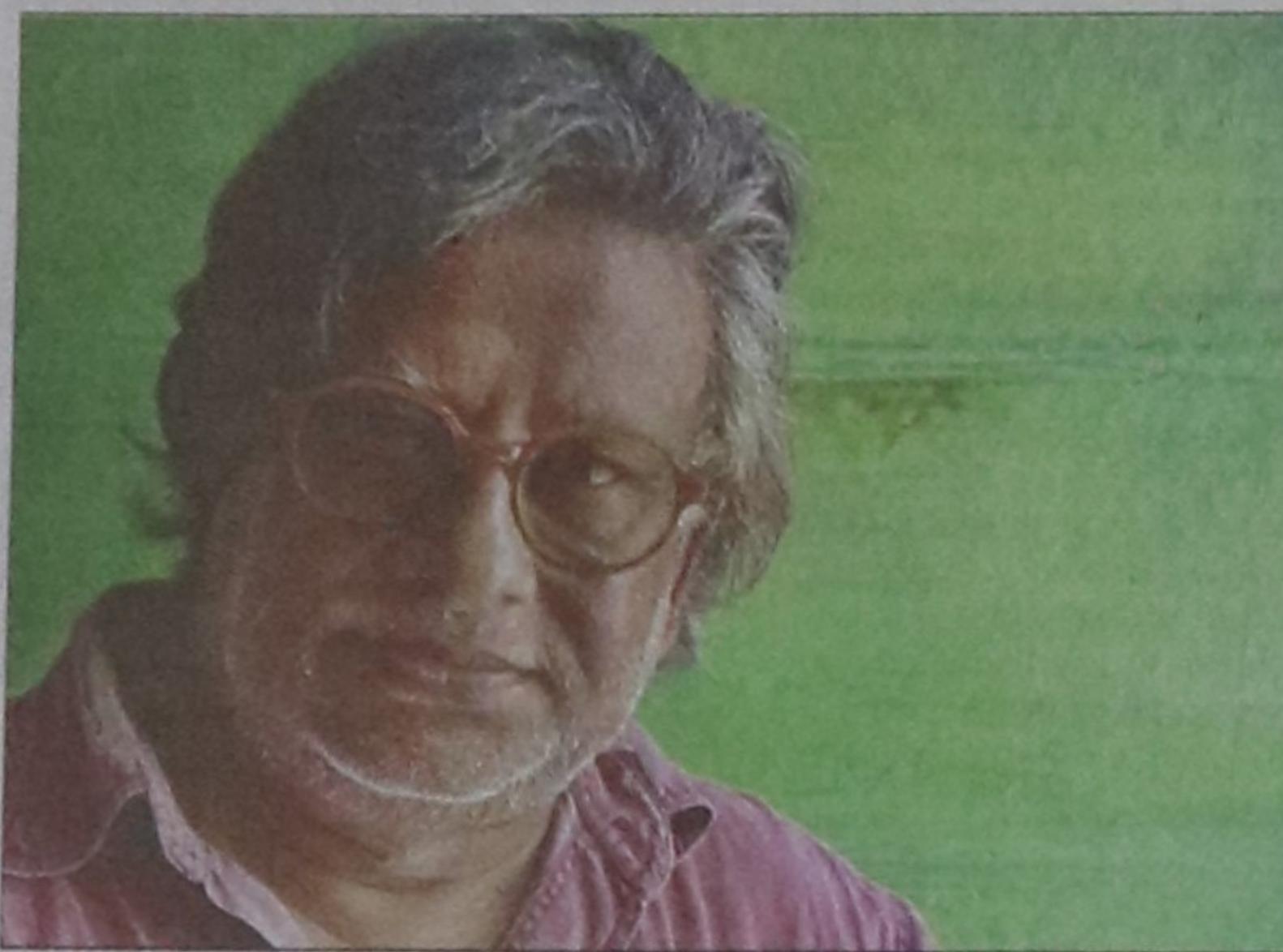


**Iranian Film Festival**  
Film: The Circle  
Director: Jafar Panahi  
Venue: Alomgir Kabir Film Centre, 62 Science Laboratory Road  
Date: September 18  
Time: 5pm



## Eid in days gone by

Monirul Islam and Zahid Haider reminisces



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Monirul Islam is one of the most recognised Bangladeshi painters/printmakers. His works delineate romanticism, spiritualism and mysticism. He has been living in Madrid since 1969. Eid, he believed before moving to Madrid, was the only special festival for the masses.

"To us, as children, Eid was more significant than any other day. Coming from a middle class family, it was always exciting for me to get new clothes on any occasion. I kept my new clothes under my pillow, as I thought it was the perfect hiding place. We do many things as children that might otherwise be considered 'silly,' but children are untainted and naive."

"Going to the mosque for prayers was another blissful part of Eid day. *Shemai, payesh* are very common items but I liked this one kind of *firni*, which was cooked with molasses. Beef curry with pieces of potatoes had a distinct taste. *Pulao* with beef was part of the superb menu and the flavour tickled our taste buds."

"Since I left the country, nostalgia takes over me on Eid days. During the early years abroad, on Eid, I used to feel like an orphan. There was this vacuum in my soul that I felt acutely."

"As children, on Eid day, we would visit friends, neighbours and relatives, and collect *eidee* (money as gift) from elders. The money was spent on watching movies at Rangmahal and Manimangal -- two local movie theatres in our area. They used to show Hindi films those days."

"On Eid day, I adorned my room with newspapers, varied colours and lime paste. Villagers enjoyed this decoration," recalled Monir.

Zahid Haider is a noted author, columnist and poet in our country. His literary works are always teeming with novel ideas and fresh perspectives. He grew up in Pabna and remembers Eid being ushered in a festive spirit.

"I went to bed very early on the night before Eid. I would keep my new trouser, shirt and shoes in a corner of my bed. My mother would want to keep them in the *almirah* (closet), but I would vehemently resist. On the morning of Eid, I would wake up very early, take a bath and go to *Eidgah Maidan*. The *maidan* was famous in our locality and it is called Pabna Boro Gorosthan-er Eidgah. I used to go there with my cousins and elders."

"*Shemai* has always been my favourite food on Eid. A few days before Eid, the preparation of *shemai* added to the festive mood in our house. The *shemai* was made with a tiny, hand-operated tool. I still remember how my mother, aunts and elder sisters got busy with the preparation of this particular item. One of my uncles played a gramophone next to them, to keep them entertained."

"After returning home from Eidgah, we went out to collect *eidee*. An interesting, unofficial competition on who could collect the most *eidee*, would take place in our circle and we enjoyed it a lot. We bought marbles with the money."

"By midday, we would be busy eating. A delectable flavour spread in the air. *Khichdi, pulao, beef, mutton, chicken and homemade bread* were on the Eid menu at our household," Zahid Haider fondly reminisced.

Monirul Islam

PHOTO COURTESY: NASIR ALI MAMUN

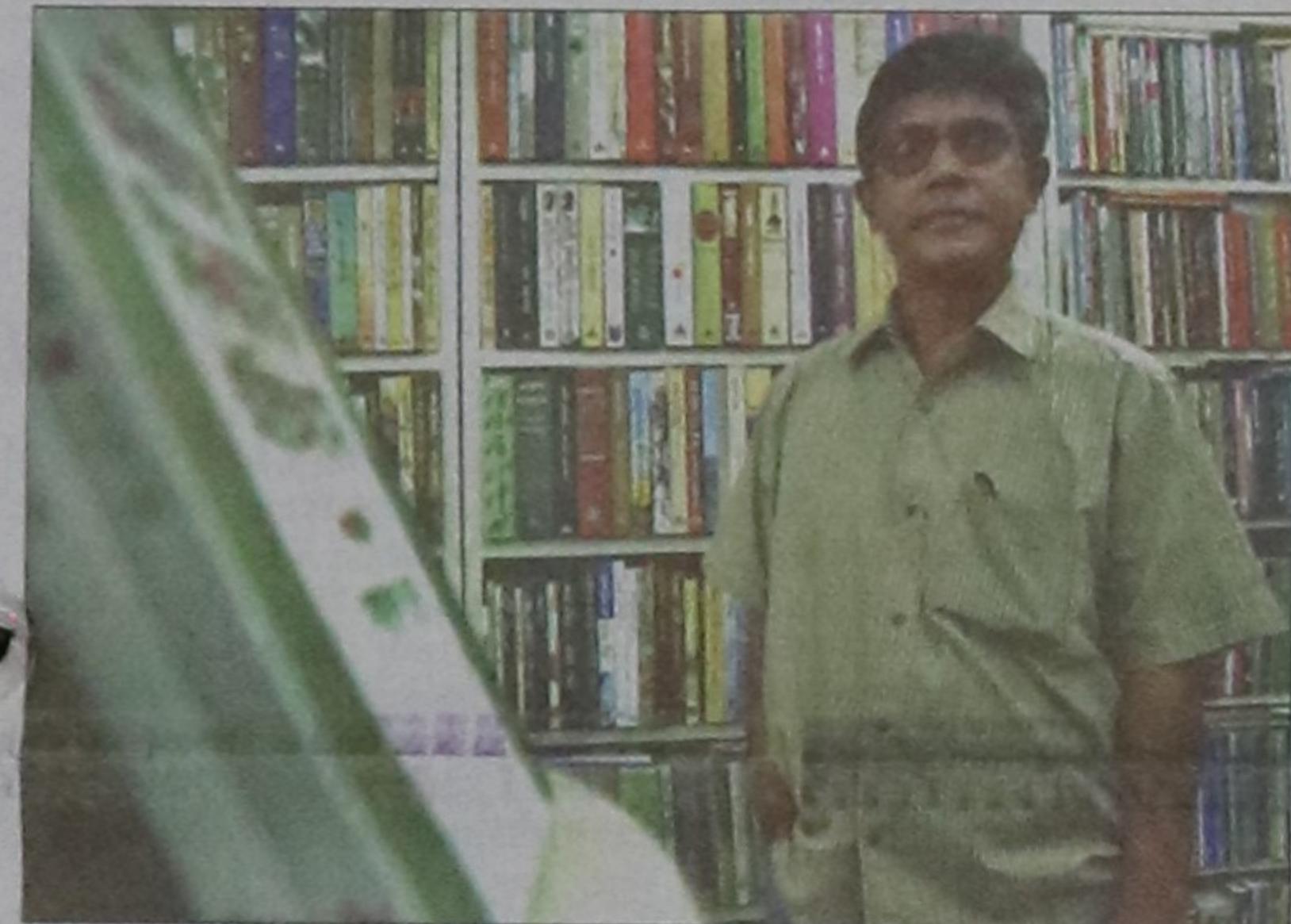


PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Zahid Haider

## Mymensingh artisans upbeat about prospects at Puja

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Idol-makers here are elated, as the number of *puja mandap* has increased, raising their income over previous years. A total of 487 *mandap* were erected last year and this year the number has crossed 500, according to sources.

The workers are readying to meet the demand for 'Bishwakarma Puja,' performed by workers of various professions of the Hindu community. "As this Puja is around the corner, the orders have to be delivered in time," says Paltan Pal, a worker at Jubilee Ghat in the town.

"In this profession you can earn a handsome amount of money," says Jayanta Ghosh, 33, an artisan at Jubilee Ghat area in the district town. "Every year the number of *puja mandap* increases in the district and outside, creating more job

opportunities for us," adds Jayanta. Already he has got an order for 18 *Durga pratima* (idols), including one from Gaibanda district. He points out that he could not take more orders as he is engaged in making idols for various forthcoming *puja* such as 'Bishwakarma Puja' and 'Kali Puja'.

Says Nikhil Chandra Pal, a worker who hails from Munshirhat in Dhubaura, "We earn around Tk 15,000 to 25,000 in the course of a three-month contract (*Bhadra* to *Kartik*) and the employers bear all the expenses and make arrangements for food and shelter of the workers, who also get a bonus."

Some have their reservations, however.

Says Shankar Saha, organising secretary of District Puja Celebration Parishad, "The remuneration of artistes should be increased to encourage younger artisans."



An idol-maker at work.

PHOTO: STAR

## Obama and Kanye West: It's hard for presidents to be 'off the record'



Kanye West ruins Taylor Swift's moment at the MTV Video Music Awards.

The last few days bring another reminder of how hard it is for presidents to be truly "off the record" -- not in this

media-saturated world, not when he describes

controversial singer Kanye West as "a jackass."

Obama thought he was speaking privately last

Monday when -- like every other person on the planet

who cares -- he criticised West for his boorish behaviour at the MTV Video Music Awards; West grabbed the microphone during an acceptance speech by Taylor Swift and argued that Beyoncé should have won the award instead.

The critique came as Obama was being mixed and sound-checked for an interview on CNBC -- pre-tape chatter that is supposed to be off-the-record. White House reporters have honoured this unwritten rule for years, but it's getting tougher in the Age of Twitter.

An ABC News reporter tweeted Obama's comment, and, though he deleted it an hour later, the comment is now in the public domain. So is the tweet itself. ABC later

apologised to the White House and CNBC, as reported by Politico.

By the way, this is West's second brush with the White House. After Hurricane Katrina in 2005, West said President George W. Bush "doesn't care about black people."

The fact is people rarely drop bombs off the record. And Obama's comment about West was rather mild compared with some of the other things that have been said: the singer Pink -- on her Twitter feed -- called him "the biggest piece of....on Earth."

And West has apologised for his actions.

Source: Internet

## Fantasy Kingdom introducing Go-karts in Bangladesh

To provide the chance to experience riding international standard go-karts, Concord Entertainment Co. Ltd. is introducing world-class go-karts at its theme park Fantasy Kingdom, says a press release. These are true racing karts, which are used at seven-time Formula 1 champion Michael Schumacher's go-kart institute to train the racers. There is a visitors' gallery at the park, from where one can enjoy go-kart racing. The park provides different types of membership cards, like Platinum, Gold and Silver. The ride can go from 8 minutes (minimum) to 30 minutes (maximum) and racers can enjoy every moment of around 400 meters of track.



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PHOTO: MUMIT M.  
Bangladesh Shilpkala Academy premiered its fourth theatre production "Gazi Kalu Champabati" at the Experimental Theatre Hall on September 16. An adaptation of the narratives by Sheikh Khoda Baksh, Halumir and Abdul Rahim, the play was directed by Golam Sarwar. Simon Zakaria, Saidur Rahman Lipon and Junaed Yousuf have jointly adapted the play. The play centres on the 17th century Muslim mystic Gazi Pir. Despite preaching Islam, Gazi Pir established an inter-religious harmony between his Muslim and Hindu followers. Saidur Rahman Lipon, Khandakar Tajminur, Shishir Rahman and Shamima Shawkat played the central characters in the production.

### Eid special

## Kushum-er Chhobi: A depiction of rural life

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Written by Imdadul Haq Milan and directed by Shamsuddin Khan Hiru, "Kushum-er Chhobi" is a serious drama that intertwines around and portrays the village life. The play stars Abul Hayat, Shirin Bokul, Zakia Bari Mamo, Arman Parvez Murad, Shubhechha Haq Lekha and others.

The story follows a schoolteacher, Moti Master. A well-rounded man, Moti Master loses his sanity after his daughter dies in an accident. There is no one to look after him. One day an artist comes to the village. Miraculously he sees the dead girl in his dreams and goes about to draw her in his picture. The frenetic father

finds peace looking at his daughter's image. "Pubali, Hotapara and Gazipur were the locations where we shot the play," said the art director, Md. Rasheduzzaman Khan. "Shubho. Our intention was to bring out the rustic beauty in this touching story," he added.

"Kushum-er Chhobi" will be aired on the sixth day of Eid at 7:50 pm on Channel 1.

Abul Hayat and Shirin Bokul in a scene from the play.

## Dan Brown's The Lost Symbol breaks first-day records

Dan Brown's latest historical/conspiratorial/symbolical mystery had a stellar first day, selling more than one million copies in the U.S., Canada and the U.K.

Amazon and Barnes & Noble reported that "The Lost Symbol" broke their records for first-day sales of an adult fiction book. "Adult," in this case, being shorthand for "not Harry Potter."

The e-book edition also posted big sales, and is currently the top seller for the Amazon Kindle.

Suzanne Herz of Knopf Doubleday says that this kind of fervent response was absolutely what the publisher expected. "There is no comparison," she said, between The Lost Symbol's success and the early sales of Brown's other novels. Anticipating massive demand, the publisher had to go back to press immediately prior to release in order to print an additional 600,000 copies (bringing the total number to 5.6 million).

According to Carolyn Brown, spokeswoman for Barnes & Noble, the book exploded past previous first-day records. "No other adult fiction title even comes close."

Brown's sequel to his massively successful 2003 hit, "The Da Vinci Code," a cultural symbol in its own right, finds his popular protagonist Robert Langdon back in the United States, returned from his two-book European vacation, and faced with another series of cryptic clues and shadowy goings-on. Fans are clearly excited at the prospect of another go-round with their favourite (likely by default) Harvard symbologist. Like one of Brown's beloved ambigrams, whether read backwards or forwards, this spells major success for the author.

Source: Internet