

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: 12-8pm



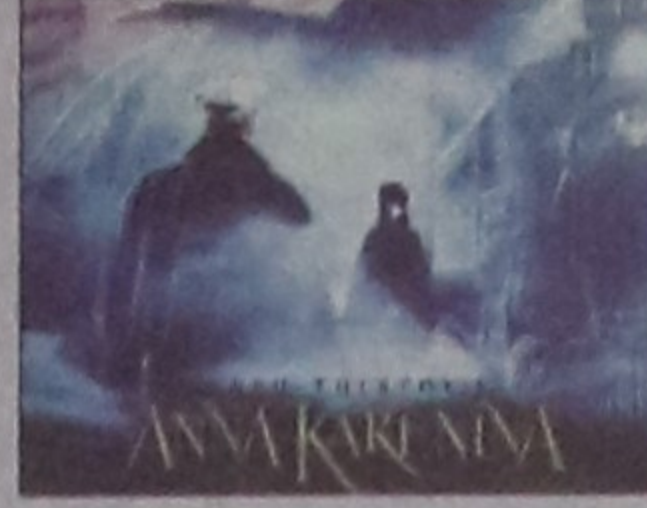
Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Kantha Kahini
Artist: Fahmida Akhtar Kakoli
Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi
Date: Oct 1-14



Film Screening

Celebrating 181st birth anniversary of Leo Tolstoy
Film: Anna Karenina
Organiser: Russian Centre of Science and Culture
Venue: Institute of Modern Language, Dhaka University
Date: September 29



Theatre

Play: Shyama Prem
Troupe: Pranganey Mor
Venue: Mahila Sharmili Auditorium, Natok Sharani, Bailey Road
Date: October 2
Time: 7pm



Samar Das (1929-2001)

Remembering songs, glorious legacy

A prolific musician and composer, Samar Das' contributions cannot be confined to just the aesthetic aspects of music. He was deeply involved with the Liberation War as well.

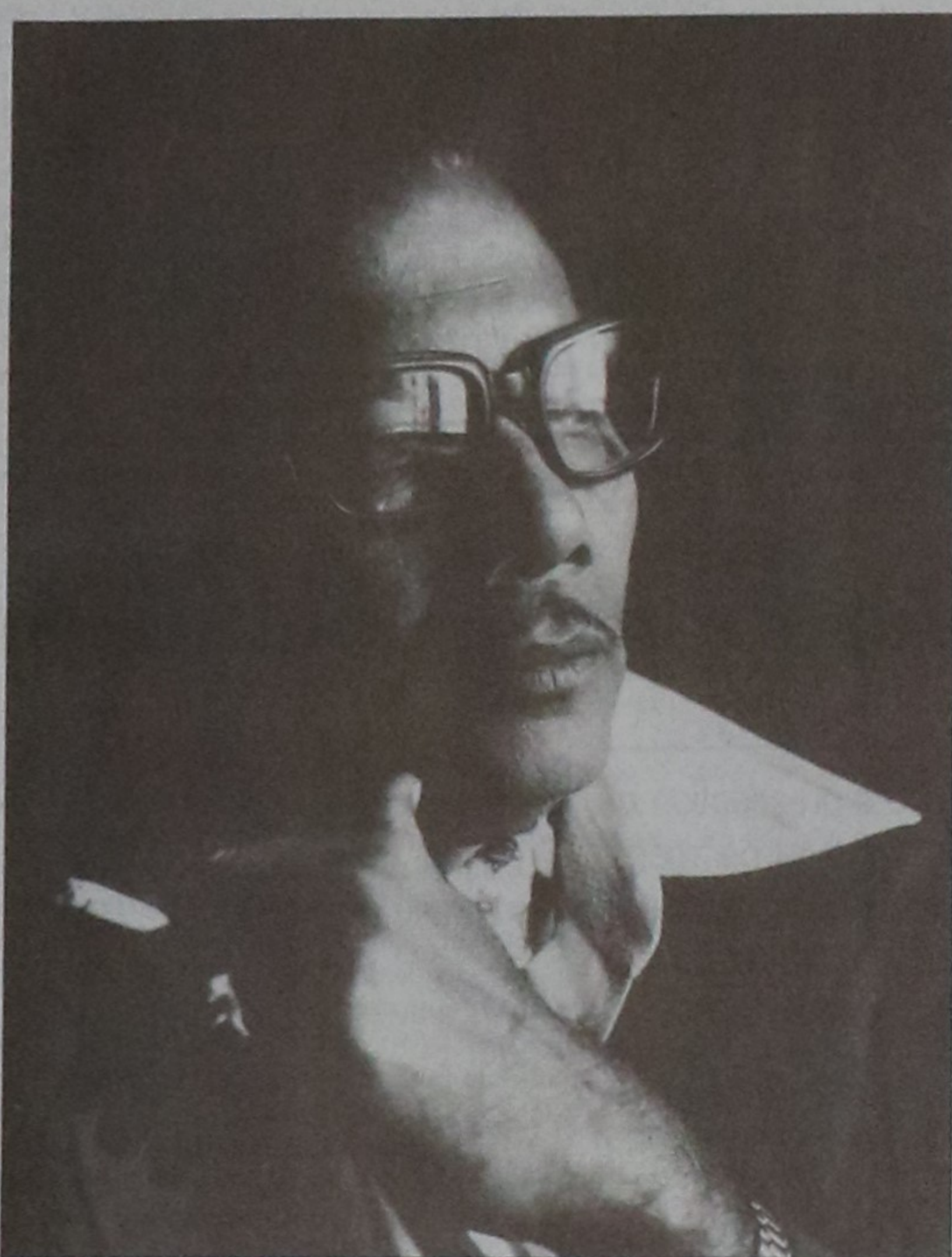
Das was born on 10 December 1929 to a family of musicians at Nabadwip Basak Lane in old Dhaka. Initially, he received music lessons at home. His skills became apparent at the age of 16 when he was enlisted as a flautist at the Dacca centre of All India Betar in 1945.

In the '50s he joined the HMV Gramophone Company as a pianist. In 1967, he was appointed music producer of Dacca Betar. Many singers found their way to success and fame under the tutelage of this composer/musician.

Samar Das played a major role as an artiste in the War of Liberation in 1971. He was one of the chief organisers of Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, the clandestine radio station that inspired millions of Bengalis under Pakistani occupation. He was appointed chief music director of the radio station. During that period he composed several patriotic songs that became immensely popular. Among these were *Purbo digontey shurjo uthechhey*, *Bhebo na go ma tomar chhelela* and *Nongar tolo tolo shomoy je holo holo*. He composed the signature tune of the newly founded Bangladesh Betar after Independence.

When Rabindranath Tagore's *Amar Shonar Bangla* was chosen as the national anthem of Bangladesh, Das transcribed the song into Western notation for orchestration, as is common for national anthems.

Das composed music for over 50 Bengali and Urdu films in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Songs composed by him from the Indian Bengali film *Lottery* attained huge popularity. Das also holds the record of being the



Samar Das

music director of the first Bengali film - *Mukh O Mukhosh* - made in Pakistan in the late 1950s. Other acclaimed scores under his direction were from the films *Aasia* and *Nabarun*. He composed the haunting melodies for one of the first films made in independent

Bangladesh, *Dhirey Bahey Meghna*. Samar Das was also recognised as a musician at the international level. He directed music at the South Asian International Music Conference in 1954. In 1964 he directed and produced the music for a Bangla ballet-

drama *Shonar Shabuj Gnaye*, performed at the Afro-Asian Music Conference in Lahore. He also led the Pakistani cultural team at the Commonwealth Festival held in London in 1966. He was awarded a gold medal by Queen Elizabeth II for excellence in music direction (of a ballet-drama *Sons of River*) at the festival. He was music director at the South Asian Federation (SAF) Games, held in Dhaka - both in 1985 and 1995 - where his orchestrations were seen and heard by an estimated audience of over 500 million across the SAARC regions during the opening and closing ceremonies.

Das' endeavours in preserving the songs of the Liberation War were also remarkable. In 1972 he directed music for a long play album containing twenty-six patriotic songs released by HMV Kolkata. Eminent artistes from both West Bengal and Bangladesh took part in the rearrangement of some of the classics. Later, at the initiative of Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust, Das compiled popular songs of the war period in two LP discs, titled *Mora Ekti Phulke Banchabo Bole Juddho Kori*.

It is estimated that he composed music for over two thousand songs aired on radio and television.

In recognition of his contribution to our music, he was awarded the prestigious Ekushey Padak and the Swadhinata Padak. He died on 25 September 2001 and was buried at the Christian cemetery in Wari, Dhaka.

Through his classic patriotic tunes still aired on radio, TV and performed by numerous artistes, Samar Das lives on in our collective historical consciousness.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent



On the occasion of celebrated Bangladeshi painter Shahabuddin's solo painting exhibition, Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts and HSBC jointly organised a press conference at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts yesterday. The exhibition begins today at Bengal Gallery, Dhanmondi. Reputed actress-activist Shabana Azmi will inaugurate the exhibition. The press conference was addressed by Subir Chowdhury director, Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts; Luva Nahid Chowdhury, director of Bengal Foundation; Sanjay Prakash, chief executive of HSBC and artist Shahabuddin Ahmed.

Rowing all the way

Traditional boat race held in Tangail



Preserving heritage: the boat race in Tangail.

MIR SHAHIL, Tangail

A superb traditional boat race was held at Signa Bil (water body) in Kalihati upazila of Tangail district.

Signa Jubo Sangha, a local youth organisation, arranged the boat race on September 24 last, sponsored by NCC Bank. The Bangladesh Rowing Federation (BRF) lent a helping hand in the organisation of the traditional event.

Around 50 teams, including four female teams from diverse upazilas in the district, participated in the competition.

Saadat Hossain and his team from Gopalpur upazila bagged the first position in the boat race, while Motiar Rahman and

his team from Kalihati upazila came up second.

Kalihati Upazila Parishad Chairman Hasan Imam Khan was chief guest at the competition, and the special guests were Executive Vice President of NCC Bank TM Faruque, General Secretary of Bangladesh Rowing Federation Abdul Awal and Kalihati Upazila Parishad Vice Chairman Anwar Hossain Mollah.

The guests distributed prizes to the winners of the competition.

Thousands of local people, including women, children and outsiders, enthusiastically observed the traditional event, particularly since it coincided with the joyous festivals of Eid-ul-Fitr and Durga Puja.

Making headway in the dance firmament

In conversation with Anik Bose

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Among the few male dance artistes in Bangladesh is creative and folk dancer Anik Bose. Complaining of the stepmotherly treatment accorded to dance in comparison with music, theatre and art, he points out that male dancers are often scoffed at. In his words, "When a man dances, people laugh and question why he is dancing on stage. Basically they subscribe to the view that dance is reserved for women."

Nevertheless Bose has made considerable headway in the dance firmament. He is a dance teacher of Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts (BAFA) and Bangladesh International Tutorial (BIT). A regular dance artist of BTV, he has participated in various programmes in government and non-government level both nationally and internationally. Among his achievements is his performance as an artiste in China, Thailand, Indonesia, Bhutan and India as a member of the Bangladesh Government cultural team.



Anik Bose -- in creativity.

His compositions have been aired on Baishakhi TV, Rtv, BTV, ATN and staged by BIT and BAFA. "The taste for dance is not yet fully developed," says

Bose, asserting that through the schools and TV channels he has spread the dance culture in the country.

Bose ventured into studying dance

at the tender age of six years. Encouraged by his late father, actor Arun Bose, he was enrolled for training in dance. In the course of the years he has trained under a variety of masters from BAFA, Rahiza Khanom Jhono (folk and creative), Kartik Sinha (Kathak), Humayun Kabir (basic dance) and Chitra (creative dance).

Today his forte is folk dance. "Folk dance is popular in Bangladesh. I find the dance postures very attractive. For instance, there is the fishermen's, tea garden workers' and snake charmers' dances," points out Bose.

Yet there is still a long way to go. His dream is to see dance established as a separate subject in all the schools in Bangladesh. In his view, while English medium schools such as Green Dale, Salvation, Scholastica and Red Beat have dance classes, he would like to see a more pervasive dance culture.

Bose has made an impact on the dance scenario in Bangladesh. As for the future, he has no plans to retire. "Dance is in my blood and I can't imagine a life without it," concludes Bose.

Lolita on Ekushey TV tonight

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

TV serial "Lolita" will be aired on ETV at 9:30pm. The serial is an adaptation from the story of Abdus Salam. Jewel Mahmud wrote and directed the serial.

The story line of the serial: Lolita is a girl living in a slum near Dhaka. Lolita dreams of becoming a heroine



Sumaiya Shimu with child actor in the TV serial.

and stands out sharply from the other slum dwellers. The slum represents the lives and future of the marginalised section of society and is also a hub of anti-social activities.

Produced by ETV, the cast of the serial includes Joyonto Chattopadhyay, Elora Gahor, Anisur Rahman Milon, Bonya Mirza and Sumaiya Shimu.

TV serial Bari Bari Shari Shari on ntv

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

TV serial "Bari Bari Shari Shari" will be aired on ntv at 8:15pm. Written and directed by Shafayet Mansur Rana, the serial goes on air every Saturday and Sunday.

The serial centres on a residential colony in the city. Mahmud, a government official, lives in the colony. A conservative man, Mahmud has two daughters -- one a university student and the other about to finish school. There is a conflict between the father and the daughters, as the girls find it difficult to cope with his rigid values. Ferdous, Mahmud's nephew, moves in with the family, ushering in new troubles. Another family living in the same colony is a working couple -- Nahrin and Asif. Though they are progressive, their conjugal life often seems rocky.

The cast includes Hasan Masud, Tanveen Sweetey, Homayra Himu, Monalisa, Richi Solaiman, Challenger, Iresh Zaker, Shohel Khan, Sharmili Ahmed and Wahida Mallik Jolly.



Richi Solaiman plays lead role in the TV play.

Crowds flock to Eid celebrations

Festive atmosphere at Kurigram



An artiste sings at the programme. Enthusiastic observers at the cultural function.

ABDUL WAHED, Kurigram

Palli Mangal Juba Unnayan Shangha of Kachakata thana, under Nagesdwari upazila, recently held a cultural function to observe an Eid re-union celebration.

In the evening a discussion was held at the Mominganj Gabtala Government Primary School grounds. The dialogue focused on the activities and achievements of the association. Nagesdwari upazila Chairman Aslam Hossen Shawdagar was chief guest, while the Principal of Kachakata Degree College Mohammad Jahurul Haque was special guest. The speakers comprised social activist Atiqur Rahman Raja, Mohibul

Hossein Khokon, Producer of ntv channel Saklain Russel and Chairman of cultural organisation 'Methojan' Yousuf Alamgir, while Headmaster of the primary school Mohammad Ali was in the chair.

A cultural function was held at the conclusion of the discussion. The performers were 'Methojan' artistes. Shokeli Rukhana, Lovely Sarkar, Jahid Hasan Milu, Raton Sarkar, Akhtarul Islam, Bashir Ahmed, Narayan Chandra and Bipin Chandra presented various songs, while Sreedebhi Anuradha performed a dance. About 30,000 people across a spectrum of professions and ages were enthusiastic observers at the cultural function.