

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Ekushey Book Fair

Venue: Bangla Academy
Date: February 1-28
Time: 3pm-9pm



Cultural Program

To mark Amar Ekushey
Organiser: Shammilito Sangskritik Jote
Venue: Central Shaheed Minar premises
Date: February 8-21
Time: 4pm onwards



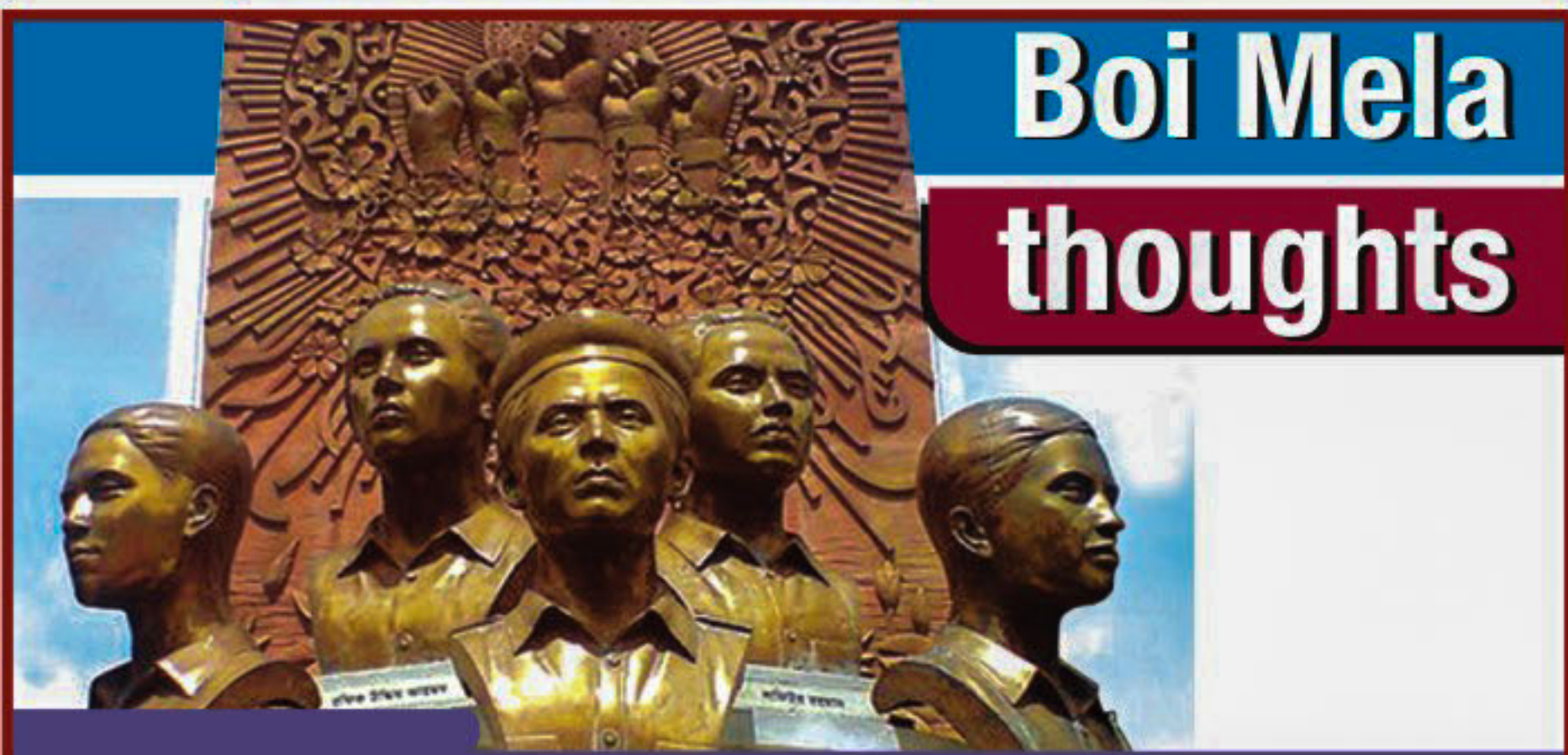
Theatre

Play: Lilaboti Akhyan
Troupe: Loko Natyadal
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy
Date: February 12
Time: 6pm



Theatre

Play: Half Akhrai
Troupe: Udichee
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: February 15
Time: 7:00 pm



Boi Mela thoughts

Every aspect of life -- home, education, and work -- should incorporate our mother language -- Mustafa Monwar

Veteran cultural personality Mustafa Monwar recalls, "Back in the day Ekushey Boi Mela was all about genuine enthusiasm. It was just about avid readers and the well-established publishing houses. As there were fewer means of recreation, more people were into reading. And the Boi Mela didn't only highlight novels and stories by popular writers, but also informative research-based works and essays."

"I'm not saying the attention has completely moved from the informative/educational aspect, but there is a noticeable tendency to show off. This tendency is not just demonstrated at Boi Mela but almost all major festivals and celebrations. I suppose nowadays flashier gets the preference," says Monwar.

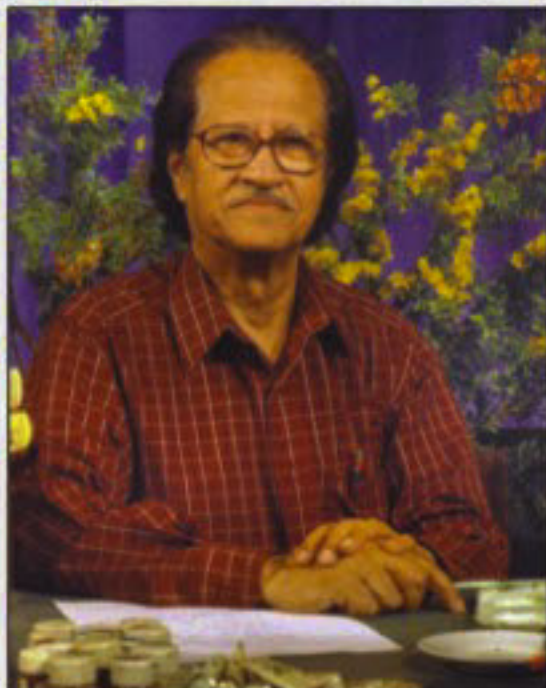
Another noticeable change in the publishing trend according to Monwar is "most of the houses aim to launch their potential best-sellers at the fair." "Whereas, back in

the day quality books came out all around the year."

Monwar also touches upon the issue of making our mother language for applicable in everyday life.

"Throughout this month we try to demonstrate our love for Bangla. Every aspect of life -- home, education, and work -- should incorporate our mother language. Science and technology should be employed in Bangla.

"We have to remember no nation in the world has made its presence felt by ignoring its mother language," he says.



Ayub Bachchu rocks Magura



Ayub Bachchu performs at Nomani Maidan in Magura.

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

"Ami Koshto Petey Bhalobasi", "Ek Akashey Tara Tui Eka Gunisney -- on February 9 evening, Ayub Bachchu's popular songs reverberated at the Nomani Maidan in Magura town.

The rockstar rendered 18 songs including the mega-popular "Ural Debo Akashey" and "Shei Tumi Keno Eto Ochena Holey" to a cheering crowd of devoted fans and music enthusiasts.

The concert was organised by the district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) to mark its 62nd founding anniversary.

Thousands of music lovers from different areas of the district thronged the venue to have a glance of the famed singer.

Earlier, a discussion was held with BCL's district unit president Mainul Islam Palash in the chair, who shared the stage with Minister for Water Transport Affairs Shahjahan Khan; noted actor and lawmaker Sara Begum Kabori and others.

Next "Spider-Man" movie to be in 3-D

AP, Los Angeles

The new "Spider-Man" plans to swing closer to movie theatre audiences.

The next Spidey movie will be filmed in 3-D and is scheduled for release July 3, 2012, Sony Pictures announced Wednesday. The fourth instalment is being directed by "(500) Days of Summer" filmmaker Marc Webb following the departure of Sam Raimi and Tobey Maguire, the director and star who worked on the previous three "Spider-Man" films.

Production on the next film, which will focus on a younger version of the superhero, will begin later this year.



With Tabu (L) and Hariharan in Mumbai.

NUSRAT JAHAN PRITOM

Time and again Runa Laila has proven that she is a living legend. Be it frothy pop, poignant ballads, deep *adhunik*, classic *ghazal* or emotive playback -- the Bangladeshi diva's reputation goes beyond borders. She has ardent admirers around the globe.

Runa started learning classical music at a very early age and received vigorous training from Ustad Habibuddin Khan. She made her first public debut as a singer at the age of six and cut her first disc for a Pakistani film called "Jugnu" at the age of twelve. She can sing in seventeen languages, including her mother language Bangla, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Spanish Japanese and Italian. She has sung and recorded over 5000 songs.

Runa Laila performed at two shows in Mumbai and Kolkata -- organised by the Times of India (one of the leading Indian newspapers) -- on January 22 and January 24, 2010 respectively.

In an exclusive interview, Runa shared experiences from her latest India tour with The Daily Star.

"The experience was absolutely overwhelming! The turnout in Mumbai was great! It was held at the Bandra Fort, which is a heritage site. We were expecting a crowd of 2,000 people, but more turned up. The fact that not only my peers, but people of all ages had gathered, was heartening. This one particular gentleman approached me after the show and said that if he died at that moment, he would have no regret. That was an overwhelming compliment," says Runa.

"Many renowned Indian musi-

The diva returns from a triumphant tour

Catching up with Runa Laila

cians like Hariharan, Ila Arun and director Imtiaz Ali were among the smitten admirers. The Pakistani band Strings was also present. I had a three-hour performance in Mumbai," she says.

According to the Times of India, Runa's Mumbai concert "turned into a free-flowing private *mehfil* of sorts. She easily alternated between 'Babu Chhail Chhabila' to the cult *ghazal* 'Ranjish Hi Sahih', supremely confident in her ability to make a seamless transition. The evening wore on, though listeners wished that time would stop. The '80s were revived with *ghazal* like 'Tum Aaye Ho', followed by some enthusiastic Bengali and Punjabi songs, leading on to the impromptu performance of her famous numbers from the film

'Gharaunda'. She finished with the signature 'Dama Dam Mast Qalandar', which brought listeners to their feet."

The show in Kolkata had an audience of about 8,000. It was a memorable event as well.

Being a judge on musical talent hunts in both Bangladesh and India, how does she view potential talents? "There is perhaps a difference in the two countries on this front. In India, the participants on the talent hunts come after years of training, when they feel ready. In Bangladesh however, in a lot of cases, the participants have little or almost no knowledge or training in music. It is not entirely their fault, as they do not get the opportunities to hone their skills. Also there is this problem here that once a contes-



tant wins a show, after a while they are out of sight on the media. This should not be the case. In India they highlight these emerging artistes in many ways.

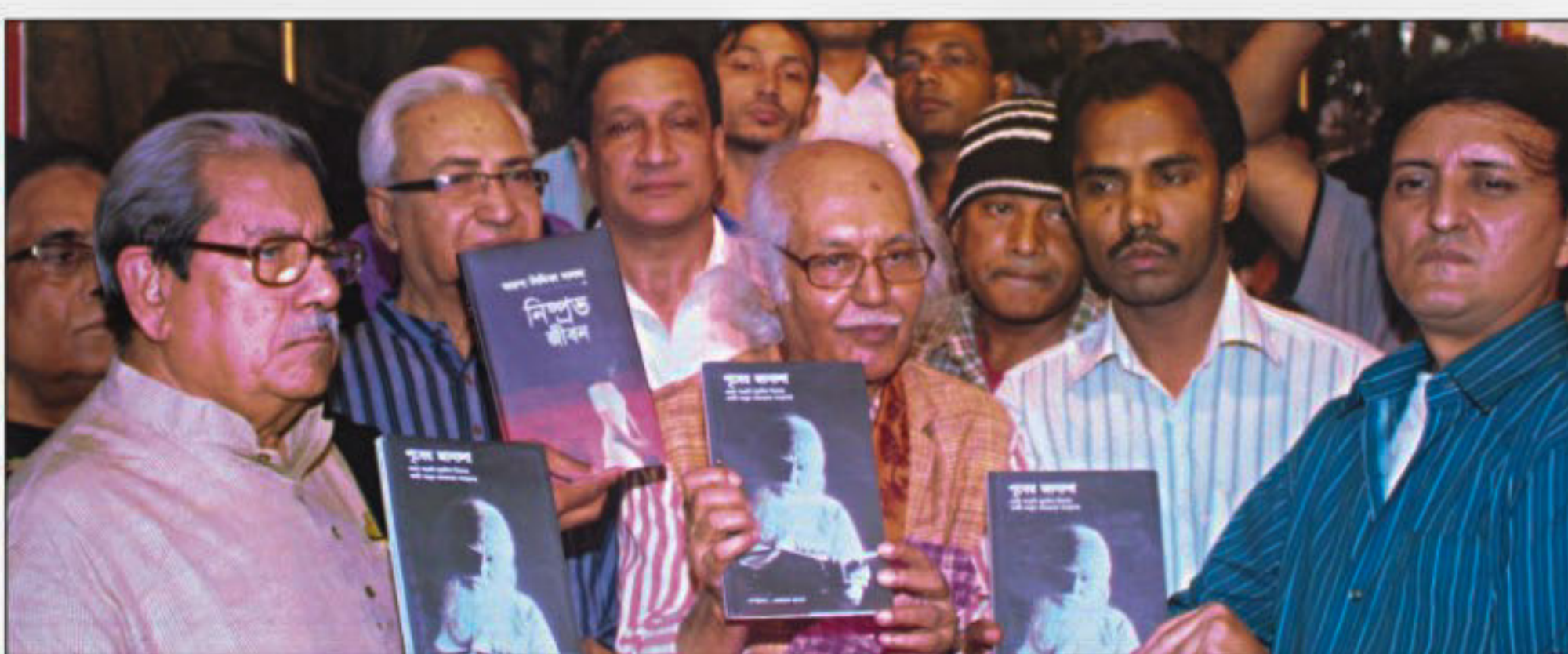
"These young talents must be nurtured, because many of them have the potential. The TV channels and the print media should take the responsibility of providing them the exposure they need.

"At the same time, these up and coming performers must also set themselves to be on par with the competition so they can bring out and offer quality works.

"I often urge music directors of our country to give these young talents opportunities but usually the response I get is that they will not be able to cope with it. But in reality they need opportunities to prove themselves. This scenario must change," says the seasoned singer.

Views on contemporary musicians? "Some of them are really good but, again, the exposure is not enough. The market has not grown enough. Music piracy is another nuisance. There are many gifted music directors and composers as well who are not getting the opportunity they deserve. But I believe there's a lot of promise in our music arena," says Runa.

Bangali Shamagra celebrates sixth anniversary



(L-R) Professor Anisuzzaman, Atiqul Haque Chowdhury and National Professor Kabir Chowdhury at the book launch.

A CORRESPONDENT

Bangali Shamagra, a museum that preserves and exhibits works of noted Bengalis, celebrates its sixth anniversary this year. To mark the occasion, the museum launched a book at the Nazrul Mancha, Bangla Academy on February 10.

"Pub-er Janala", autobiography of the first Muslim artist of Bengal Kazi Abul Kashem, was launched at the programme. National Professor Kabir Chowdhury unveiled the book. Among others, media personality Atiqul Haque Chowdhury and educationist Professor Anisuzzaman spoke at the programme.

Bangali Shamagra embarked on its journey on February 10, 2004.

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EXHIBITION/ SEMINAR

"WESTIN" Dhaka/Gulshan 2 exhibition/1 on 1 consultation
SATURDAY & SUNDAY
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