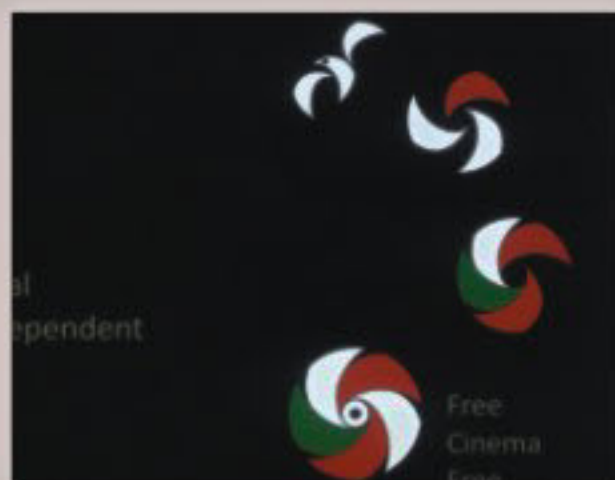


## WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

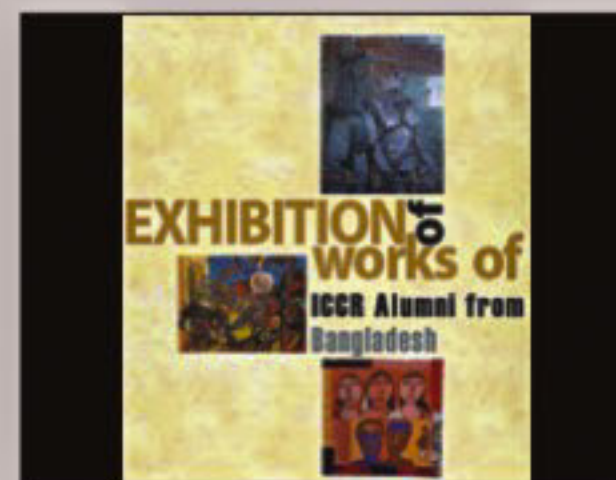
**Dance Drama**  
 Title: Valmiki Pratibha  
 Organisers: Shurolok & Nriyanchal  
 Venue: National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy  
 Date: March 12  
 Time: 7pm  
 Invites only



**11th Int'l Short & Independent Film Festival**  
 Organiser: Bangladesh Short Film Forum  
 Venue: Central Public Library, Shahbagh  
 Date: March 4-12  
 Time: 11am onwards



**Group Art Exhibition**  
 Organiser: High Commission of India, Dhaka and ICCR  
 Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan-1  
 Date: March 10-23  
 Time: 10am-6pm



**Cultural Programme**  
 Felicitating Nasiruddin Youssuf on receiving 'Ekushey Padak'  
 Organiser: Bangladesh Gram Theatre  
 Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy  
 Date: March 12  
 Time: 4:30pm onwards



## A genre-bending passion for music

In conversation with Manam Ahmed



What projects are you currently involved with?  
 Manam: At this moment, I'm working on a few albums -- mostly with upcoming singers. I'm working on an album with Mehnaz, one with Nusrat, etc. Recordings are underway.

Recently Miles did a special song for Valentine's Day. The song, "Priyotoma" was composed by me.

I'm also working on a number called "Smile", featuring Elita, Kona, Laura, Simin and the rapper By-Shock (lyrics by Mahmood Khurshid).

I decided to work with expatriate artistes as well, helping them to record and release their albums. Some singers like Ashraf [from UK] are already involved. I'm working on this project through a foundation called Starline.

Starline has another project that promotes young musicians and this is very close to my heart. This project provides opportunities for talented musicians who want to study abroad. We would try to assist them with scholarships and such.

Which genre of music do you prefer?

Manam: Genre is not a decisive factor for me. Music is my passion -- whatever the genre may be.

NUSRAT JAHAN PRITOM

Manam Ahmed won the Best Music Director honours at the last (5th) Citycell-Channel i Music Awards for the album "Shwopno Jatra" (Manam Ahmed featuring Rauma, produced by RAGE Record).

recently talked to The Daily Star about his experiences and different projects:

How did it feel to have won the award?

Manam: Obviously it felt great! No music software or electronics -- just pure, unadulterated melody and a combination of different styles. I think what should matter is the whole essence of the song and not just the

## In Focus

# Madhupur Ethnic Mini Museum: A modest but notable endeavour



The museum houses around 80 traditional items used by the Garo, Koch and Hajong communities.



Fishing tools used by the Koch.

MIRZA SHAKIL, *Tangail*

History, traditions and heritage of the indigenous communities of the Madhupur Garh region are seemingly under threat. Initiatives to preserve and uphold these traditions and cultural elements have been few and far between. However, a mini museum has been set up at the Telki area under Madhupur upazila in Tangail recently with an intention of safeguarding the history and traditions of the local indigenous groups.

Semp, a local non-governmental organisation working towards the development of the indigenous communities, has established the museum that houses around 80 traditional items used by the Garo (also known as Mandi), Koch and Hajong communities.

Around 35,000 people -- belonging to the Garo, Koch and Hajong communities -- live in Madhupur Garh region which is sprawled out across the Sal forests of Madhupur, Ghatail, Sakhipur, Mirzapur, Phoolbaria and Bhaluka upazilas of Tangail and Mymensingh

districts. Of them, around 25,000 are from the Garo community.

As the Garo society is matriarchal, women of this community are significantly more diligent and confident than their male counterparts.

The biggest celebration of the Garos is the annual *wangala*, where they dedicate the crops to their gods, amidst much merriment.

The traditional Garo religion has a lot in common with shamanism. Hence the idea of "healing" -- with herbal medicines and rituals to drive away evil spirits -- is quite popular among the Garo.

Over the years, due to mass conversion to Christianity, the traditional lifestyle, clothes, and food habit of the Garos are now on the verge of extinction.

Traditions and heritage of the Koch and Hajong communities -- who worship nature -- have also come under threat as the forests are being depleted.

The Semp project is currently the only initiative to preserve the traditions of these indigenous communities. The modest museum at Madhupur forest



Nokmandi, a traditional Garo hut.

has on display household utensils, clothes, hunting weapons, musical instruments and more.

A *nokmandi*, a traditional Garo hut, standing next to the collections is the highlight. A nursery with around 300 kinds of plants surrounds the museum.

Robi Khan, chairman of Semp and

founder of the museum, told this correspondent that they are trying to preserve the traditions of the indigenous communities of the Madhupur Garh region.

A new building for the museum is under construction at the site, he added.

## Humayun Ahmed's "Leelabati" adapted for small screen

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Humayun Ahmed's popular novel "Leelabati" has been adapted into a TV serial. Directed by Arun Chowdhury, a 52-episode serial has been made (with the same title). The serial will be aired on ATN Bangla soon.

Apart from direction, Chowdhury has also dramatised the serial. The cast includes Shahiduzzaman Selim, Tamalika Karmakar, Arefin Shuvo, Srabasti Tinni, Adnan Faruk Hillol, Nova, Bindu and Prova.

About the serial, Arun Chowdhury said that it has been one of his dreams to adapt a Humayun Ahmed novel/story. He said,

"Humayun Ahmed is my teacher. I truly admire his writings. It was tough for me to choose a particular novel to work with, as there are quite a few that I like. I picked 'Leelabati' because, to me, it is one of his [Ahmed's] more intricate works."

Chowdhury also said that for the shooting, the cast and crew went to a remote village in Manikganj district, where they worked for nearly 40 days at a stretch.

About the location, Chowdhury said, "The village is so beautiful that we instantly fell in love with it. It's a sanctuary for thousands of birds. We encountered some difficulties during our stay but on the whole the project was satisfying."



The serial has been shot in a village in Manikganj.

## Tuktuki from "Sisimpur" goes to a kite festival

Today in "Sisimpur", Tuktuki will make a journey to a kite festival in Bokulpur. A letter arrives to Sumona about a kite flying competition. Tuktuki who is keen on adventures, wants to see the plethora of bright and exciting colours in the sky. However, in order to get there, she will need a guardian to accompany her and Bahadur opts to take that responsibility. That was stage one. In the next phase, Tuktuki gets ready for the big day. The preparation of making her kite and all the other necessities begin.

"Sisimpur" will be aired today at 9:35 am on BT, and will be repeated tomorrow at 2:15 pm.



## Bangladeshi jamdani and muslin impress Kolkata fashionistas



(Top) Indian models display Ahang saree at the Kolkata show. (Below) Actress Indrani Halder (C) with Marzan Hadi Jhuma, MD of Ahang.

Bangladeshi fashion house Ahang held a fashion show featuring traditional *jamdani* and *muslin sari* with ornamental works in Kolkata recently, according to a press release.

The show was part of the gala round of 'Sananda Shreemati Beauty Contest', held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

The stunning line-up of *saree* received much acclaims from the audience that included famed Indian designers. Actress Indrani Halder was featured as the 'show stopper'.

The collection was designed by Marzan Hadi Jhuma, managing director, Ahang. Marzan has been invited to participate at the upcoming Kolkata Fashion Week as well.



## Madonna, daughter to launch fashion line



Madonna and her daughter Lourdes

AFP, New York

Madonna and her 13-year-old budding fashionista daughter Lourdes are to launch a new line in teen clothing called "Material Girl" in the US this August.

The mother-daughter collection, which will be exclusively available at Macy's stores, will focus on affordable back-to-school clothes but will include footwear, handbags and jewellery and aims to add a fragrance in 2011.

The line is a joint venture between Madonna and the Iconix Brand Group, which purchased the Badgley Mischka brand in 2004 and includes other leading labels such as Mossimo and Ed Hardy.

"The 'Material Girl' collection was inspired and designed in collaboration with Madonna and her daughter Lourdes, along with Iconix Brand Group's in-house fashion department," a press release from Iconix said.

As part of the hook-up, Macy's will retain the right to launch additional brands with the MG (Material Girl) icon in the future.

"We are excited to announce the first in a series of new brands that will be developed under our partnership with Madonna," said Iconix CEO and chairman Neil Cole.

"Material Girl" has a powerful retail partner in Macy's and we look forward to working together to deliver an innovative launch for our consumers."