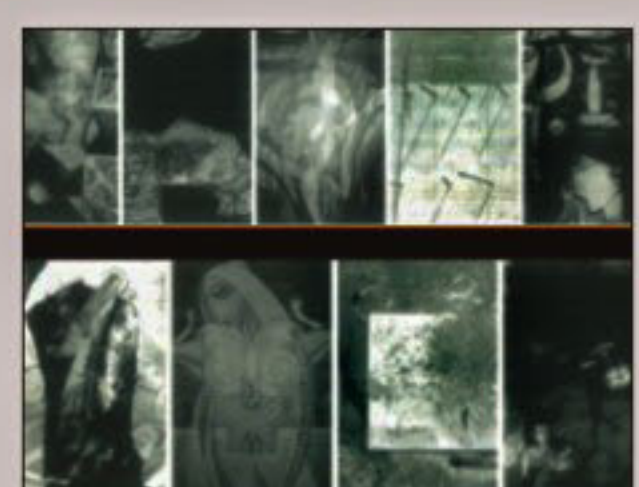


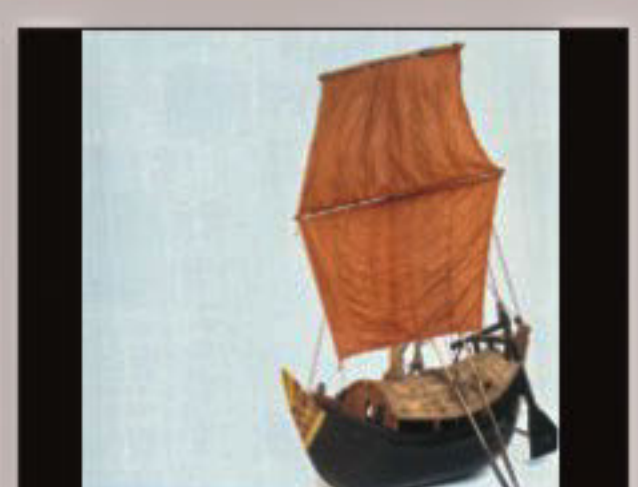


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK	Group Art Exhibition Organiser: Gallery Chitrak Venue: Gallery Chitrak, H-21, R-4, Dhanmondi Inauguration: April 3 at 6pm Date: April 3-12 Time: 10am-8pm		Solo Painting Exhibition Artist: Syeeduzzaman Sumon Title: Rural Life Venue: Alliance Francaise, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi Date: April 3-17 Time: 3pm-9pm (except Sundays)		Solo Painting Exhibition Artist: Murshida Arzu Alpana Title: Drinking Bottle Water and Breathing Dust Only Venue: Goethe Institut Bangladesh H-10, R-9, Dhanmondi Date: April 5-22 Time: 10am-8pm		Boats Exhibition Title: Traditional Boats of Bangladesh Venue: Nalinikanta Bhattashali Gallery, Bangladesh National Museum Date: March 23-April 19 Time: 10am-5pm	
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A tradition navigating towards extinction

Exhibition of boats at National Museum



The models on display are handcrafted, maintaining every single feature and detail of each type of boat.

PHOTO: MUMIT M.



KARIM WAHEED

As you walk into Nalinikanta Bhattashali Gallery, National Museum, you find yourself under a *chhoi* (bamboo roof) of an actual *Patam* boat. The *chhoi* is as big as a living room -- with a clay stove, provisions, cargo of jute and tea boxes, knick knacks and essentials that may belong to boatmen -- giving you an idea of how big (around 70 feet) this now-extinct boat was. A *Patam* boat could carry cargo weighing up to 1000 *maund* (approximately 40 tons).

Fifty miniature and a few life-size models of traditional Bangladeshi boats are on display at the museum. The exhibition has been organised by Friendship and sponsored by AB Bank. Formed in 1998, Friendship is an organisation that identifies and tries to reach out to the most vulnerable and marginalised communities.

The ongoing exhibition at the museum is part of Friendship's Cultural Preservation Programme that intends to conserve the heritage of boat building in Bangladesh and facilitate socio-economic development of the craftsmen and their families involved with this tradition.

The models on display are handcrafted, maintaining every single feature and detail of each type of boat. The exhibition also houses materials traditionally

transported by these boats. Bales of jute and rope, bamboo and earthenware give a sense of what life on a boat is like. Films projected and descriptive panels provide further information on these boats.

From time immemorial boats have been a major mode of transport in the Bengal delta. While sea-going vessels adopted exotic styles influenced by foreign trade, wooden boats of the inland waterways developed their shapes and forms according to indigenous needs. These boats were built using skills and technology that have been passed down from generation to generation.

Until the mid-20th century, these riverboats of Bangladesh remained the same. Around the 1980s two technological revolutions occurred, suddenly changing the riverscape -- from a sea of colourful sails to a bare noisy one. With the advent of cheap diesel engines the first revolution was the rapid motorisation of boats. The second was the change of boat-building material -- from wood to tin and welded steel sheets. Traditional wooden boats soon became too expensive and economically less viable.

These alterations are ushering in an end to a magnificent heritage, changing the lives of families involved with this craft.

The exhibition has been meticulously planned and organised -- providing details on each kind of boat. Thanks to the

panels accompanying the models, the viewers get to know that a *Dinghy* (from Pabna) boat is 5.5-7.6 metre long and 1.5-1.8 meter wide and a *Bazipuri* (from Barisal) is 12-15.2 m long and 3-3.6 m wide. The latter, with two trapezoid shaped sails, has its *chhoi* in the back and is now extinct. The *kosha* (from Pabna) -- 7.6-9.1 m long and 2.4-3.35 m wide -- stands out for its flat hull and is used to travel short distances. *Palki* (from Chandpur) -- 9.1-12.2 m long and 3-4 m wide -- was a beautiful specimen of craftsmanship for its ornate *golui* (front and rear end of a boat). "Was," because it's now extinct. *Potol* (from Faridpur) -- 9.1-15.25 m long and 2.3-3.8 m wide -- perhaps gets its name for its resemblance with the vegetable; the *chhoi* extends all the way to the back. The *Shampan* (from Chittagong, Cox's Bazar and Mongla) tread the mighty waves of Bay of Bengal and can carry up to 100 tons of cargo. The distinct shape of the boat -- 12.8-14.65 m long and 4.6-5.2 m wide -- has a Chinese influence.

Also on display are models of *Pinash*, *Bajra*, *Basari*, *Goina*, *Donga*, *Tedi Balam*, *Shuluk*, *Mayur Pankhi*, *Goghi* and many more.

A skeleton of a large boat is put on display as if to caution the viewers what the future of our traditional boats might look like if the nation does not set its focus on this heritage.

Launch of Salauddin Lavlu's next film "Warish"

Popular TV play and film director Salauddin Lavlu's latest project -- a feature film titled "Warish" -- was formally launched recently. Shooting for the film is set to start from May 25, according to a press release. This is Lavlu's second film. His debut film "Molla Barir Bou" was a major hit and won him the Lux-Channel i Performance Award '05 for Best Director. "Warish" is being produced by Impress

Telefilms Ltd. The cast includes LUX Channel i Superstar '09 winner Mehzabin Chowdhury, Arefin Shubho, Syed Hasan Imam and Raisul Islam Asad.

The launching ceremony for the film was held at Dhaka Sheraton. Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director, Impress Telefilm Ltd and Channel i; Salauddin Lavlu and the actors were present at the event.



Syed Hasan Imam speaks at the launch.

Fifth anniversary of Sangeet Niketan

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Cultural organisation Sare-ga-ma Sangeet Niketan held a cultural function at the Asaduzzaman auditorium recently marking its fifth anniversary in Magura.

Apart from rendition of songs and dances by the performers the organisation, artistes of Jessore Nritya Bitan also performed captivating dances. Hundreds of enthusiastic people enjoyed the event.

Earlier, a discussion was also held at the same venue with director of the organisation M.H. Rahman Shiblu in the chair.

Jolie, Pitt visit people displaced by Bosnian war

AP, Sarajevo

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt visited Bosnia on Monday, intending to spotlight the plight of 117,000 people who have not able to return to their homes, even though the Bosnia war ended 15 years ago.

But they tried to do so while evading the spotlight themselves: There were no reported media sightings of the celebrity couple.

The two arrived Sunday evening, said Aida Prljaca, the spokeswoman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Sarajevo.

Jolie, who has been a UNHCR ambassador since 2001, will visit projects meant to help Bosnians who cannot return home, either because their homes have not been rebuilt or the infrastructure in their villages has not been repaired.

Some 7,000 people live in dozens of refugee centres throughout the country. The other 110,000 live primarily with relatives or in rented housing.

Jolie is currently filming "The Tourist" with Johnny Depp in Italy.



Angelina Jolie and partner Brad Pitt were in Bosnia to highlight the plight of refugees who have been unable to return to their homes since its war ended 15 years ago.