

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

ITI Theatre Festival
 Organiser: Bangladesh Centre of ITI & BSA
 Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
 Date: April 15-21
 Time: 7pm onwards



Group Art Exhibition
 Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, 275/F Road-16, Dhanmondi
 Date: 16-30
 Time: 12pm-8pm



Film Screening
 Organiser: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre
 Films: Documentary on Pather Panchali and Apur Sangsar
 Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-35, R-24, Gulshan -1
 Date: April 24
 Time: 6pm onwards

International Dance Day
 Organiser: Dance Artists Association and Shilpakala Academy
 Venue: National Theatre Centre, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
 Date: April 23-29
 Time: 6.30pm



Artistes share their elation

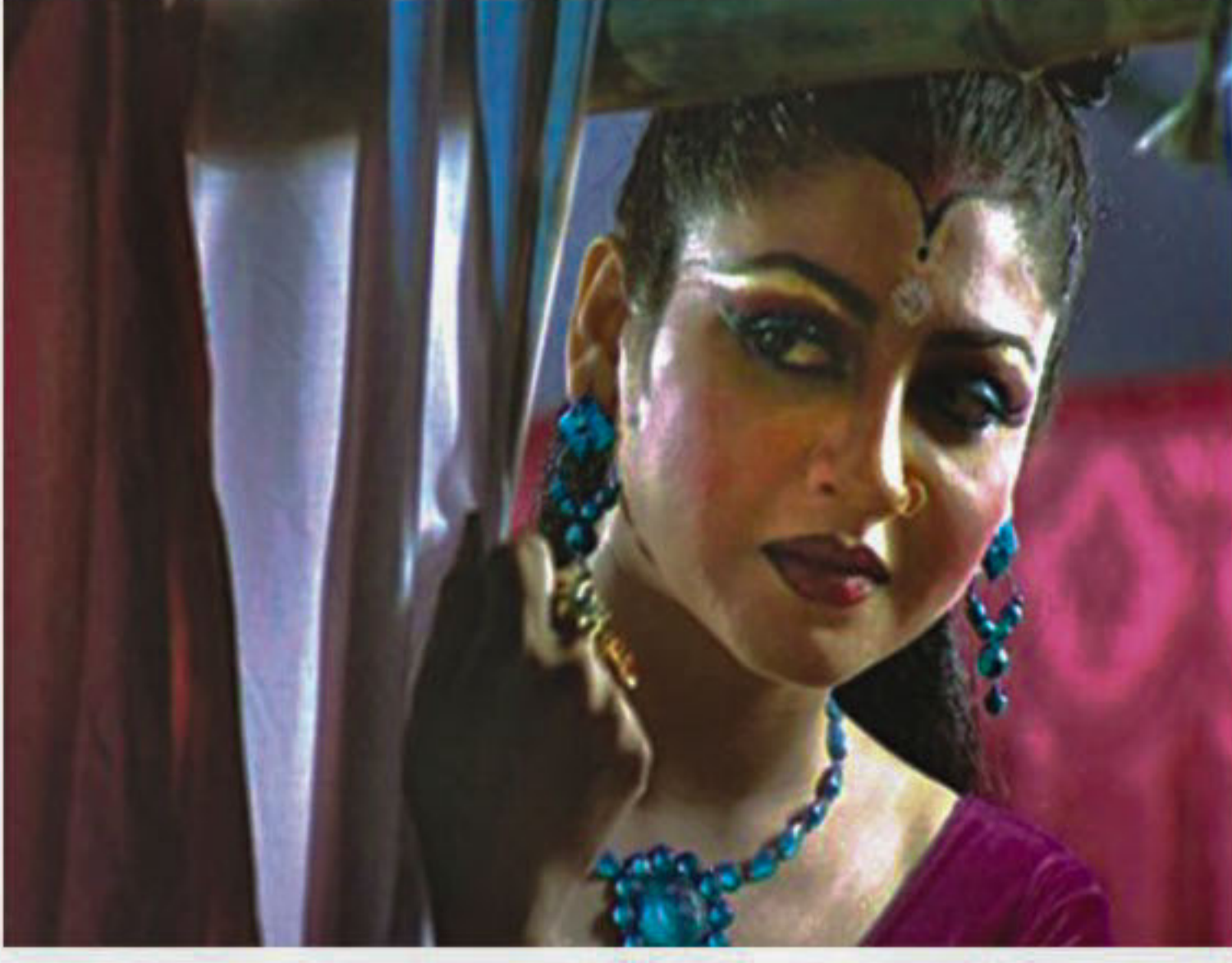
Meril-Prothom Alo Awards and after

A CORRESPONDENT

Lights and cameras flashed at the Hall of Fame of Bangabandhu International Conference Centre when the Meril-Prothom Alo 2009 Awards were declared recently. The Daily Star spoke to some of the lucky musicians and artistes who had bagged the prestigious awards. Here's



Nancy



Joya Ahsan

what the winners had to say:
 Habib Wahid and Nancy were named the best male and female singers for the song "Dwidha" (from the film "Third Person Singular Number").
 Nancy: "Feeling really great. To receive an award is a recognition of my work. It gives me an idea of what I have done -- whether it is good or bad, and gets me inspired."

acting (TV play) in "Tarpur O Angurlota Nando Ke Bhalobashey"
 Joya: "It's really exciting. My character was pretty alien to the typical society. The fact that fans have voted for me means that I have been able to present the character positively. It also sets a good example that any role -- no matter how challenging it is -- can be presented to the audience in such a way that it reaches their hearts."

"Monpura") and singer Topu (for the film "Third Person Singular Number") got the critics' award for acting.
 Topu: "Part of me is surprised as I didn't expect this, but then again it's a sweet surprise. As a singer, to have moved on to the field of acting and get recognition through an award for the latter is a very moving experience."



Topu



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

As part of the ongoing ITI Theatre Festival, three plays were staged on April 19 at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Aranyak Natyadal staged "Ebong Bidyasagar" at the National Theatre Hall; Theatre staged its acclaimed production "Meraj Fakirer Ma" at the Experimental Theatre Hall and the Department of Theatre, DU staged "Riders to the Sea" at the Studio Theatre Hall. The Aranyak production is written by Manna Heera and directed by Mamunur Rashid, while "Meraj Fakirer Ma" was written by the late Abdullah Al Mamun. Today is the last day of the weekend festival. Three plays -- "Aroj Charitamrito" by Natyakendra; "Gazi Kalu Champabati" by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and "Chhayanaut" by Nagarik Natyasampraday -- will be staged today at the National, Experimental and Studio Theatre Hall respectively.

"Amader Dhaka": Zooming in on the city

A CORRESPONDENT

"Amader Dhaka" is a programme on contemporary issues related to the city. The programme is aired every Wednesday on Rtv at 6:30 pm. As the summer heat sets in people are seeking ways to cool down. During the sweltering afternoons, many go to the roadside stalls for cold water or juice. Often these vendors use contaminated water, and as a result waterborne diseases, such as diarrhoea, are on the rise. Today's episode of the programme will try to highlight the issue as the

programme goes to the ICDDR hospital to provide a first-hand look at the situation. The programme is produced by Mamunur Rashid.



Tonight's episode highlights the outbreak of waterborne diseases in the city.

Cultural programme highlighting indigenous artistes

ESDO Mela in Thakurgaon

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

Amidst much festivity, the four-day 'ESDO Mela' opened last Monday at Eco Social Development Organisation (ESDO) Office premises at Gobindanagar village under Sadar upazila in Thakurgaon.

On the occasion, a vibrant cultural programme was held at the mela (fair).

The cultural programme included folk, Rabindra, Nazrul and *adhunik* songs, recitation and dances by indigenous artistes.

The cultural programme began with a Tagore song "Buk Bedhe Tui Dara Dekhi".

Shashwato, a student of Eco Pathshala, recited a rhyme and another child artiste danced to an *adhunik* song.

Then one after another artistes of ESDO cultural team rendered Rabindra, Nazrul, *adhunik* and folk songs at the programme.

Indigenous artistes performed



Indigenous artistes dance at the event.

dances with their traditional music that received rounds of applause.
 Deputy Managing Director of Palli Karma Shahayak Foundation Parvin

Mahmud inaugurated the event as chief guest.
 Superintendent of Police BM Harun-ur-Rashid; Thakurgaon Sadar

Upazila chairman Sultanul Ferdous Nomra and former lawmaker Alhaj Fazlul Karim attended the event as special guests.

A total of 16 stalls have been set up at the mela by different projects, giving a close view of their programmes -- such as sanitation, generating awareness against dowry and repression of women, ensuring indigenous peoples' rights, ensuring food security, enhancing local handicrafts industry, income generating activities, quality education and more.

Some stalls are displaying and selling handicrafts, which come under the banner of Income Generating Activities of ESDO beneficiary groups.

People from all walks of life are gathering at the mela premises and are being introduced to different NGO programmes.

The mela -- featuring cultural programmes and plays everyday -- will end on April 22.

"Meghbondhu" on Banglavisión tonight

A CORRESPONDENT

Banglavisión will telecast drama serial "Meghbondhu" tonight at 8:15 pm. Written by Shafiqur Rahman the serial is directed by Shokal Ahmed.

The plot: It's the same routine everyday -- go to the office, work all day, return home at the end of the day and do the same thing over and over again. Bored with work and monotony of the urban life, three friends -- Rakib, Shohan and Mamun -- decide take some time off. But soon it is realised that the

office is reluctant to let all three of them go on vacation at the same time. A plan is hatched. Mamun will say that he has been diagnosed with cancer, so for better treatment Shohan and Rakib will be taking him to India. The plan works. They decide go to Nepal. There they bump into two strangers Shormi and Rupa and the story moves forward.

The cast includes Bijori Barkatullah, Mahfuz Ahmed, Mosharraf Karim, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Dipa Khondokar and others.

Goodbye to a real beauty, "Ugly Betty"

After four seasons of bright and noisy comic melodrama, last week Betty Suarez left her fans to their own devices, as "Ugly Betty," which brought about an explosion of colour and fairy-tale tropes in the fall of 2006. This, however, was not a bad time, in

the fictional and practical life of the series, to say goodbye.

Betty has come some way over time, as she has gradually -- and logically, given that she has been working at a fashion magazine -- turned into the image of America Ferrara, the

lovely and well-presented screen star who plays her. One by one, the wig, the braces, the brows, the prosthetic padding have gone, and the substance and the surface have come into line, as when the duckling is revealed as a swan, or the frog becomes a princess, or the secretary takes off her glasses and there stands Marilyn Monroe.

Even thus revealed, Ferrara is by the standards of the average American TV heroine too broad, too short, too brown, which is part of what made the show valuable. (It was also just fun.) As working-class Mexican Americans, the Suarez family of Queens, N.Y. -- including Tony Plana as father Ignacio, the excellent Ana Ortiz as sister Hilda and Mark Indelicato as fashionista nephew Justin -- were rare for television, and no less now, sadly, than when the viewers first met them.

A multicultural fantasia that celebrated difference and the acceptance of difference, whether of race, class, sexual orientation or fashion sense,

"Ugly Betty" was unique in its tone, a mix of comedy and melodrama, the funky and the refined, the fanciful and the actual. (Things got more actual, though no less fanciful, when production moved to New York for the third and fourth seasons.)

Yet even when the show was not exactly true to life, as it regularly was not, and even when the mechanisms of the narrative became strained or absurd -- Betty's current sudden offer from "the most powerful publisher in all of Britain" to help run "a sort of younger person's New Yorker" in London was crazy in so many ways -- it produced moments of emotional truth. (This has much to do with the actors, who do subtle work amid the farce and flamboyance.)

Notwithstanding the odd fruitless detour, they have served us well, these four seasons. The show ended, as it began: a story of renewal, of identity claimed and proclaimed, of lighting out for the territories.



(From left) Becki Newton, America Ferrara and Michael Urie in the concluding episode of "Ugly Betty".



Mosharraf Karim and Dipa Khondokar in the serial.