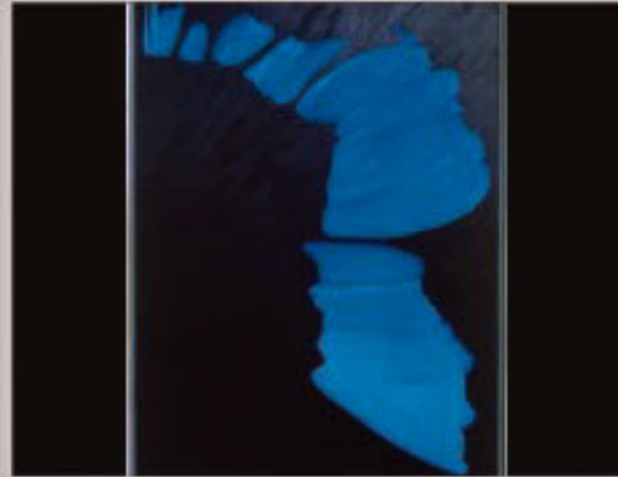


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Solo Art Exhibition

Title: The Wing
Artist: Murtaja Baseer
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H-20, R-16 Sector 4, Uttara
Date: September 25-October 10
Time: 10am-8pm



Painting and Installation Exhibition

Title: Dhaka Traffic: the City Can't Wait
Artist: Sulekha Chowdhury
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, Dhanmondi
Date: October 4-28



Group Art Exhibition

Venue: Radius Centre, Bay's Galleria
Date: September 24-October 15
Time: 10am-8pm



Solo Art Exhibition

Title: Innocence and Experience
Artist: Mohammad Iqbal
Venue: Gallery Chitrak, H-21, R-4, Dhanmondi
Date: September 24-October 12
Time: 10am-8pm



Concert and film screening for Bipul Bhattacharya

Shadhin Bangla Betar Kendro singer, and one of the artistes featured in the film "Muktir Gaan", Bipul Bhattacharya has been ailing from lung cancer and it is not possible for him to continue medical treatment unless additional funds are raised. In this regard, a fundraising concert and screening of "Muktir Gaan" have been organised by singer Shaheen Samad and filmmaker Tareque Masud on behalf of the "Muktir Gaan" team. The concert and screening will be held this Monday (October 11) at 5 pm at the Shawkat Osman Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbagh in Dhaka, according to a press release.

Along with the artistes of "Muktir Gaan", several leading contemporary singers, including Arnob, Anusheh, Krishnokoli and Tanvir Alam Shawjeeb, will perform at the concert. The programme will begin with the screening of "Muktir Gaan".

About the ailing singer, filmmaker Tareque Masud



Bipul Bhattacharya in "Muktir Gaan".

said, "Bipul Bhattacharya is the soul of 'Muktir Gaan'. His voice, singing uplifting folk songs to freedom fighters and refugees, infuses the film with power and

grace. Without Bipul da, there would be no 'Muktir Gaan'."

Those willing to make a special contribution to Bipul's medical treatment can do so at

the entrance of the auditorium before the show. Tickets for the programme will be sold for Tk 100, and will be available from 10 am at the auditorium entrance.

Boikuntho, group of reciters, turns 24

Three-day programme at Public Library

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Boikuntho -- an organisation of reciters -- celebrates its 24th anniversary this year. On the occasion, the organisation arranged a three-day programme highlighting recitation, titled "Joog Jog Joog", at the Shawkat Osman Memorial Auditorium, Central Public Library, in Dhaka.

The programme opened on October 6. On the first day, one of the group's earlier productions, "Roudro Joler Khelate" was staged. Ishrat Nishat directed the production.

On the second day (October 7), artistes of Boikuntho presented two productions -- "Poraner Gahin Bhitore," written by Syed Shamsul Haque and "Manusher Manchitra," written by Rudra Mohammad Shahidullah. Directed by famed reciter Hasan Arif, a number of artistes -- Farid, Duka, Sanchita, Sumi, Roman, Nazu, Sagor, Shahana, Masum, Shayla, Biplob and Diba -- performed in the productions.

Rahul Anand directed the music, and Wasim Ahmed did the set and light designing. At the closing programme yesterday, artistes of Boikuntho performed their production "Kono Dakghar Nei", directed by founder of the group, reciter Shimul Mustafa. A guest troupe from Natore, led by Abdus Sobhan, also presented their production "Madar Pirer Gaan" at the event.



The three-day event featured recitation-based productions staged by artistes of Boikuntho.

PHOTO: MUMIT M.



Gypsy days

Nomadic Fair and Festival in Delhi

KAVITA, New Delhi

Suraj Bhopa is a folk healer and musician from village Nanglimega, Alwar district, Rajasthan, North India. He plays the *ravan hatha*, an ancient Indian musical instrument, and sings ballads to earn a living. "It's a very hard life and I am in grave financial difficulties. We move around so much that the children cannot go to school most of the time," he laments.

Meera Banjara, from a village in Jaipur (rural) Rajasthan, is skilled in making traditional *ponchu* nomadic ornaments, which sell for Rs 20 a piece. Work is erratic, she complains, and the returns paltry. However, she is more fortunate than many others since her husband Mamraj gets a regular income as a farmer.

Suraj and Meera are both nomads -- Suraj from the community of Bhopas (bards), Meera from the Banjaras (transporters). They joined up with the Kalbeliyas (snake charmers), Banwariyas (hunters), Gadia Lohars (ironsmiths) and Jogis (Baul singers from the North Indian state of Rajasthan) at a recent Nomadic Fair and Festival. The fair was unique. Normally these insular communities do not even sit or play their musi-



cal instruments together. The fair included workshops on nomadic instruments, handicraft exhibitions, nomadic food, and documentary films of these communities along with nomadic concerts in the evenings.

The festival was conceived and curated

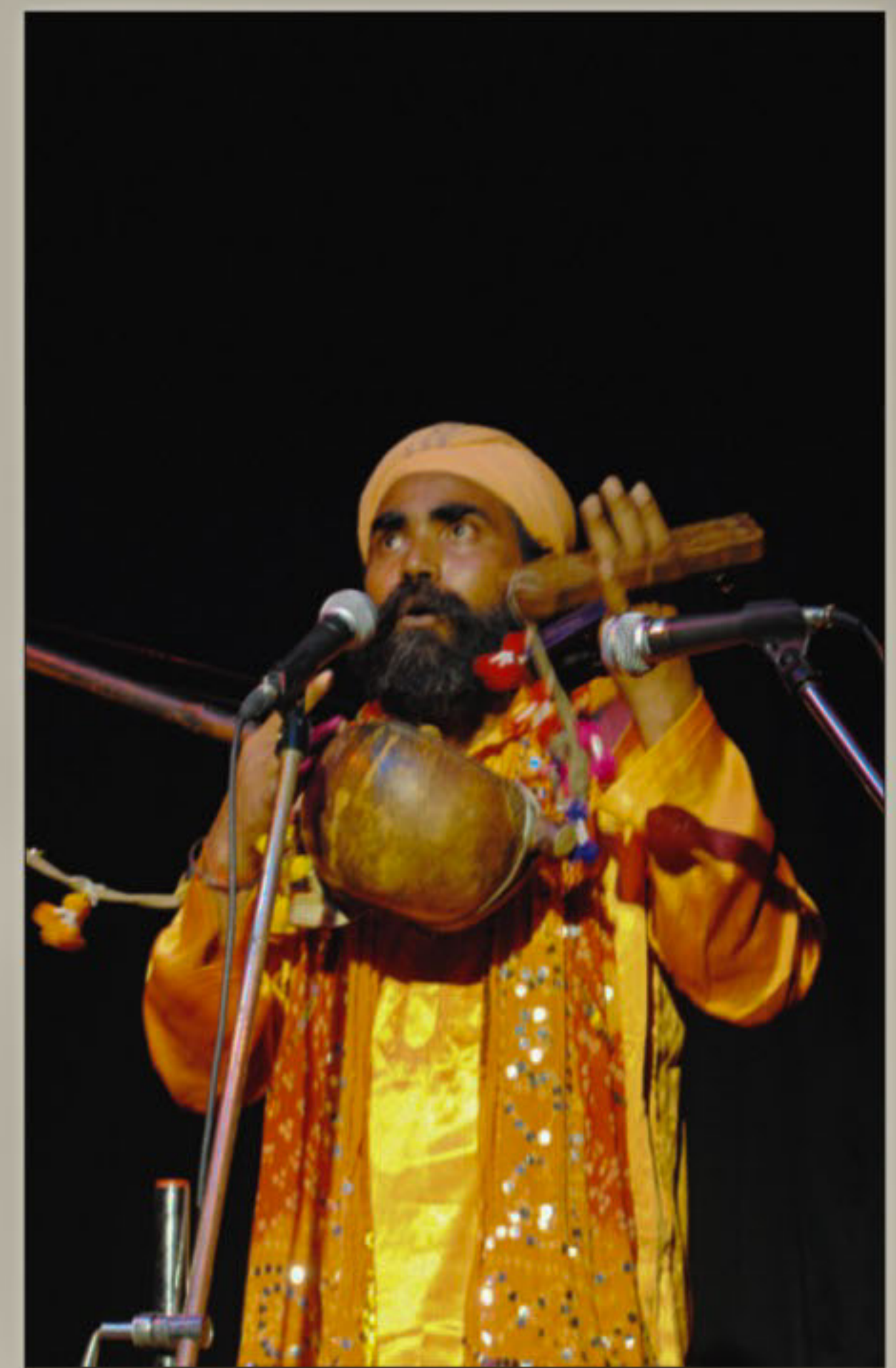
by husband-wife duo Vinay and Meenakshi Rai. The couple run a non-profit organisation, Chinh, which organised the event in association with ICCR.

The Nomadic Orchestra of the World (NOW) concerts saw a unique *jugalbandi* of

ravanhatha, *been*, *bapang*, *dhol* and *ektara*. However, some musicians have fallen on hard days, says Meenakshi. "While the others have multiple talents, the Bhopas are entirely dependent on their singing and *ravan hatha* to make a living. In the earlier days they flourished under the patronage of rajas. Today Bhopas like Suraj earn only when there are special programmes." In fact, she says, Suraj Bhopa had almost given up his instrument when Chinh brought him back from the brink.

Though many nomads lead a hand to mouth existence, Chinh hopes to give them a better quality of life. With the organisation's support, *ponchu* nomadic ornaments are making inroads in the domestic and export market. They have now been showcased at 'Dilli Haat', a popular food and crafts bazaar in the Indian capital, and a government organisation has procured *ponchu* for the Commonwealth Games. *Goodri* patchwork, made by Gadia Lohars from Uttar Pradesh, India, is another area with high market potential.

Now Chinh has extended a hand to the nomadic Baigha and Gond (hunter) communities in Madhya Pradesh. It is going to be a long haul for Chinh but it is slowly getting there.



A Jogi singer performs at the event (top); Kalbeliyas, Bhopas, Jogis and Banjaras at the festival (left).

All for the love of reading

Oitijhyo's book fairs in 14 districts

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

Events like book fairs play an important role in generating interest in books, developing reading habits and encourage new readers. Unfortunately however, most major book fairs are held in the capital while readers in other parts of the country remain sidelined. Reputed publication houses should expand on the divisional and district levels to encourage the national reading habit -- speakers at the opening of a book fair, organised by the publication house 'Oitijhyo', said. The programme was held at the premises of Sylhet Press Club on Thursday.

Veteran educationist and writer Professor Md. Abdul Aziz formally inaugurated the weeklong fair that marks Oitijhyo's 10th anniversary. To celebrate the occasion, the publication house is holding similar book fairs at 13 district towns, the organisers informed. The book fairs are being held at Sunamganj,



The chief guest and other visitors browsing the stalls.

PHOTO: STAR

Habiganj, Brahmanbaria, Chittagong, Khulna, Mymensingh, Tangail, Faridpur, Narayanganj, Bogra, Bagerhat, Feni and Cox's Bazar.

Animensh Rudro of Oitijhyo said that they had published 700 selected books. He assured that Oitijhyo would hold book fairs outside the capital on a regular basis.

Pirate Johnny Depp makes surprise school visit

Hollywood star Johnny Depp has made an unannounced visit to a London primary school after receiving a letter from one of its pupils.

The actor turned up at the school in Greenwich, south-east London, dressed as his "Pirates of the Caribbean" alter-ego Captain Jack Sparrow.

He said nine-year-old Beatrice had written to Captain Jack, asking him to lead a mutiny against her teachers.

Depp, 47, has been filming the latest instalment of the franchise in London.

After his arrival, a special school assembly was called and the film star -- along with other members of the cast dressed in full costume -- walked in.

Depp produced Beatrice's letter and performed for the children for 15 minutes.

But he told the schoolgirl that a mutiny might get them into trouble.

Source: BBC



Johnny Depp is filming the latest "Pirates of the Caribbean" instalment at the Old Royal Naval College in London.