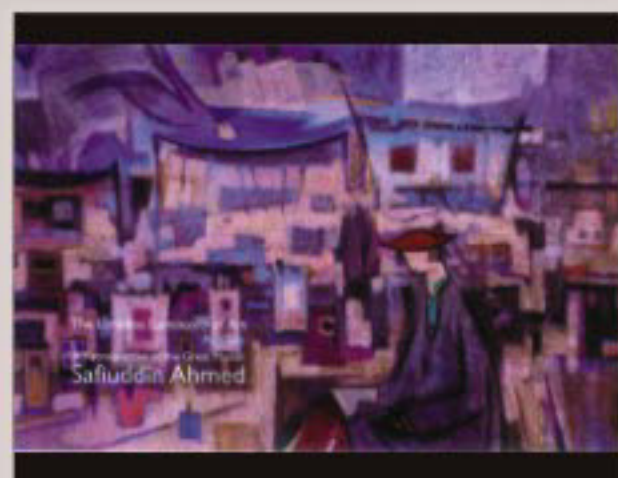


WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

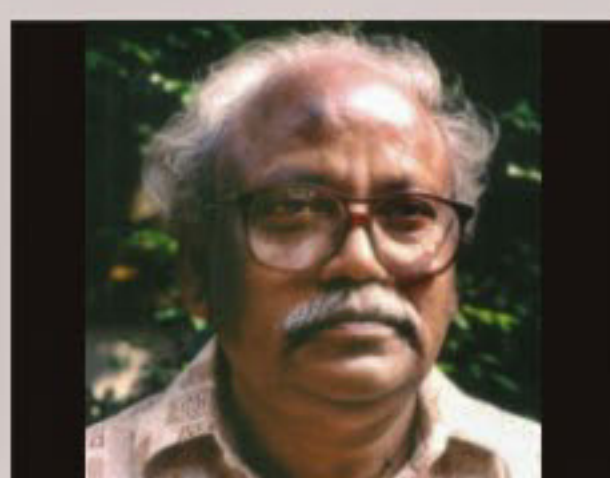
Solo Painting Exhibition

Title: The Limitless Luminosity of Art
Artist: Sufiuddin Ahmed
Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H-275/F, R-16, Dhanmondi
Date: December 10-December 23
Time: 11am-8pm



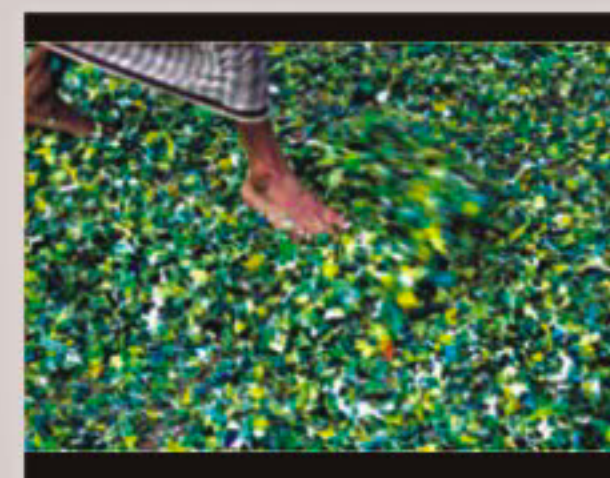
Drawing Exhibition

Artist: Rafiqun Nabi
Venue: Gallery Chittrak, H-21, R-4, Dhanmondi
Date: December 3-20
Time: 10am-8pm



Exhibition

Title: Used and Reused
Artist: Zahidul Islam
Venue: Goethe-Institut, H 10, Rd 9, Dhanmondi
Date: December 2-14



Sculpture Exhibition

Title: The Dialogue of Nature
Sculptor: Ferdousy Priyabhashini
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, H-60, R-7/A, Dhanmondi
Date: December 9-13
Time: 11am-8pm



Two documentary films on the anvil

Victory Day celebrations in India

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

It will be a different kind of celebration of the Victory Day at the Bangladesh High Commission here on December 16. This is the momentous day when the joint forces of Indian soldiers and Bangladeshi freedom fighters triumphed over the Pakistani army 39 years ago leading to the birth of a new nation.

"Stop Genocide", the landmark documentary film by Zahir Rahman, depicting the brutality by Pakistani troops unleashed on unarmed Bengalis, will be screened at the mission's auditorium aptly named "Moitree Hall", symbolising the friendship between India and Bangladesh.

It will be the first time that the 22-minute documentary, made by Raihan during the Liberation War, will be shown in Delhi.

The film highlights a parallel, drawn in the narration, between the genocides in Vietnam, Algeria and Bangladesh.

"Stop Genocide" was the debut documentary by Raihan who was already an established name in the feature film segment with works like "Kokhono Asheni", "Sangam", "Bahana" and "Jibon Thekey Neyra".

During the Liberation War, Raihan had gone to Kolkata where his "Jibon Thekey Neyra", based on the 1952 movement for Bengali language, had earned appreciation from Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen and Tapan Sinha.

Another documentary that will be screened at the High Commission is "War Crimes 71", directed by Shahriar Kabir, portraying the genocide committed by Pakistani troops during the Liberation War in the name of Islam.

The Bangladeshi mission here must be lauded for the initiative taken to arrange the screening of the two films as part of its cultural diplomacy which had been dormant for a long time until it was revived earlier this year with the holding of a festival of Bangladeshi feature films here earlier this year.

"This year, we have decided to celebrate the 39th anniversary of the Victory Day of Bangladesh in a different manner. We will screen the two documentaries," said Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Tariq A Karim.

"The atrocities inflicted on the innocent and unarmed people of Bangladesh by those who opposed the liberation of Bangladesh accounted for one of the gravest crimes against humanity of all times," he said.

Karim said the present democratic and secular polity of Bangladesh is determined to bring to justice, maintaining international standards, the perpetrators of those heinous crimes against humanity committed during those nine painfully bloody months of the war in 1971.

"This has been long overdue and has hung heavily on the collective conscience of the people of Bangladesh for long," he added.

A dose of Deshi, a touch of French

Gala evening at Radisson



Fusion Kathak performance by Isabelle Anna.



PHOTO COURTESY: BABLU

RAFEAT BINTE RASHID

The France-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry arranged their annual French gala evening at Radisson Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka last Saturday evening to promote the countries' cultural diversity.

First half of the programme featured a unique fashion show, where designer Bibi Russell introduced a young and talented designer, Debashis Chakma, from Khagrachhari, whose forte is creating lines that use the rich weaves and vibrant fabrics from the Hill Tracts.

The second half showcased a dance number that was a delicate fusion of east and west -- combining both classical and contemporary concepts -- by renowned French artiste Isabelle Anna.

The evening started off with a signature Bibi Russell line of casual wear that has in a vogue-high street look to it. Her line takes inspiration from off-overlooked Bangladeshi crafts like gamchha and rickshaw art,

and turns them into vibrant trendy must-haves. Russell's collection on display at the event was, in one word, à la mode.

"When people see my collections, I want them to understand and appreciate all the work and effort that have gone into them. I want to preserve the heritage of my country, foster creativity, provide employment, empower women and contribute towards the eradication of poverty -- that's what I'm committed to do," she said, emphasising on the fact that she was elated to introduce and promote a designer, who is working hard to compete in a field that is currently crowded with "shop owners claiming to be designers."

It was indeed a treat to see one of our fledgling indigenous designers being taken under the wing of a graceful and humble Bibi Russell, allowing him to be highlighted at a major event. Chakma's collection for the night took inspiration from the hill tracts of Bangladesh, where on a charcoal background one sees bursts of colours from wild blooms that

makes the landscape appear extraordinary.

With the theme of wild flower, Chakma has ably merged the untamed beauty of the hills, the colours of the people, culture and craftsmanship. His collection showed off pencil skirts, full skirts and trousers complemented with off shoulder, haltered, frilled tops, some of which had sensuous side knots. Rich silky black, royal blue and luminous green where highlighted with red and navy blue stripes.

The basic character of any indigenous weave is coloured border stripes on a plain canvas; Chakma cleverly manipulated those striped weaves into sashes, belts, scarves, jackets and capes. The women's line featured contemporary, fashionable party wear and the men's line was a sober synthesis of contemporary, yet traditional take on panjabi.

Highlight of the show was definitely the models; they made the ramp come alive with their perfect postures and professional looks; and with Bibi Russell backstage, this was quite

expected. The make-up was very modish -- tight ponytails, dark smoky eyes and nude lips gave the models a chic look. The men were all looking their masculine best, minus any make up, sporting only spiked hairstyles. These were all done by Bangladesh's celebrated beauty expert, Farzana Shakil, who authored "Looks", the first book on fashion and beauty in the country.

Isabelle Anna's solo dance performance was a mesmerising Kathak recital. Her piece included both traditional aspects of the Lucknow Gharana and her experimental work based on the genre.

President of the Chamber, SS Kamal, in his speech emphasised on the fact that the Chamber is only a facilitator between Bangladesh and French business houses. He said the economic conditions of the country are at their opportune best now, and France being the fourth largest trade partner of Bangladesh, feels it right to explore businesses in ship building, leather industry etc.

"December is the month of victory, high spirits and aspirations; we remember millions of our martyrs and proudly recall the courage of the father of the nation to make us dream of and achieve an independence. We have won the political war, now we want to win the economic one," he said.

A spirited man himself, he strongly feels that between aid and trade, Bangladesh prefers the latter, where technological know-how and other expertise can be dispersed to improve the status of the country.

Rifat Rashid, director, France Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in her welcome speech thanked all their silver sponsors AEI-English Electric of Bangladesh, Legrand, Lafarge Surma Cement Ltd, Knit Concern and Square Pharmaceuticals; their bronze sponsors Bureau Veritas Bangladesh Limited, ECM Services Ltd and support sponsor Aamra. Their partners, Alliance Francaise, Dhaka helped in arranging the cultural part of the show. This annual gala started in 1997 and she believes it is going strong with lot more to come in future.

The Writer is Editor, Star Lifestyle

Chokh Gelo Pakhrey

Chandana's latest album of Bijoy Sarkar songs



(From left) Abul Khair, Kamal Lohani, Chandana Majumdar and Kajal Adhikari at the album launch.

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Featuring nine soulful songs of Kobial Bijoy Sarkar, "Chokh Gelo Pakhrey", the latest solo album by folk singer Chandana Majumdar was launched recently. The launching ceremony was held at Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhanmondi, Dhaka on December 11. The album has been produced by Bengal Foundation. Among others, Kajal Adhikari, son of Bijoy Sarkar, was present as a guest at the event.

The album launch marked the 25th death anniversary (December 8) of Bijoy Sarkar.

After unveiling of the CD, Chandana entertained the audience and guests with her moving renditions of Bijoy Sarkar compositions.

Kamal Lohani, director general, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy unwrapped the cover of the CD as chief guest. Among others, Abul Khair, chairman, Bengal Foundation was

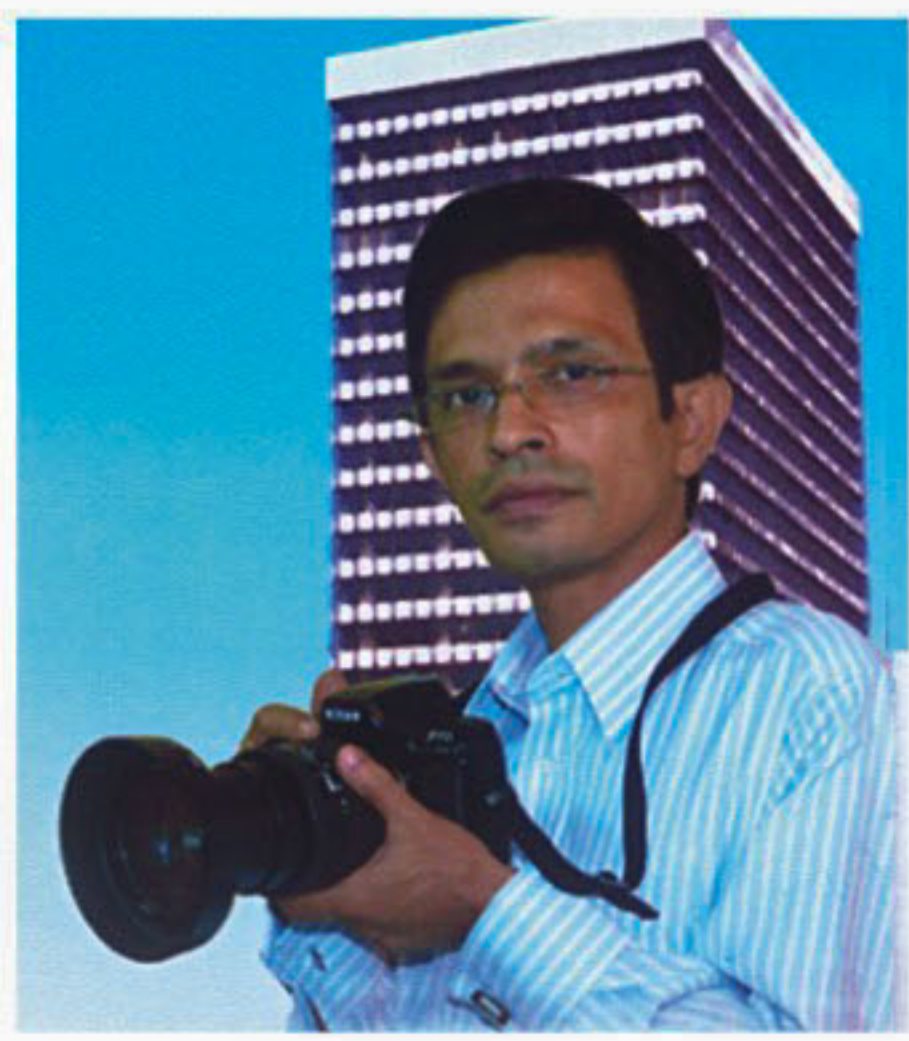
present at the ceremony.

Nine songs featured in the album are: "Koto Bhalo Lagey Tomarey", "Ghar Bhangbey Tor", "Paglarey Khyaparey", "Chokh Gelo Pakhrey", "Amar Pran Bondhuar Desherey", "Ami Ganer Mala Ga(n)thiya", "Ki Shapey Kamralo Amarey", "O Bou Shorshe Katey" and "Kobey Amar Tirey".

Amit Bandoopathy has arranged the music. During her performance at the programme, Chandana covered "Koto Bhalo Lagey Tomarey", "Chokh Gelo Pakhrey", "Amar Pran Bondhuar Desherey" and "Ki Shapey Kamralo Amarey" from the album.

Bijoy Sarkar is among the bards who enriched the repertoire of Bangla Baul songs during the early part of the 20th century. Sarkar was born in Narail in 1903. His compositions belong to the Bhattali sub-genre of folk songs, though they are particularly popular as *Dhua Gaan*. Sarkar died in 1985.

Bangladeshi photographer Ripon's solo exhibit in Nepal



Nepal Art Council Gallery, Kathmandu, according to a press release.

The exhibition has been designed to focus on the newly established structures and high-rises in Dhaka, and will be part of the Bangladesh Victory Day Festival organised jointly by the Bangladesh High Commission in Nepal, Sheltech and Buriganga Arts and Crafts.

Titled "Changing Cityscape", the exhibition will be inaugurated by Bollywood actress and UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador Manisha Koirala today. This is the fifth solo photo exhibition by Shahriar.

The Bangladesh Ambassador in Nepal, Dr. Neem Chandra Bhowmik; Sheltech managing director Toufiq M. Seraj; senior Nepalese artist Shashi Bikram Shah; Chancellor Kiran Manandhar; photographer Kiran Man Chittrakar and entrepreneur Tanvir Ahmed will be present as special guests.

The exhibition will continue till December 22, everyday from 11am to 4pm.

Bangladeshi photographer SA Shahriar Ripon's exhibition of photographs on the changing cityscape of Dhaka will be held at



Debashis Chakma (centre) with models at the fashion show.

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