

**WHAT'S ON**

Shora Painting Exhibition  
Painter: Sukumar Pal  
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, H-60, R-7/1, Dhanmondi  
Date: April 11-16

Solo Art Exhibition  
Title: Symphony of Colours  
Artist: Syed Abdullah Khalid  
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H-20, R-16, S-4, Uttara  
Date: April 12-29

Grand Group Art Exhibition  
Venue: Sajti Art Gallery, DCC Market, Gulshan-2  
Date: April 11-30  
Time: 10am-8pm

Book Fair  
Organiser: Adorn Publication  
Venue: National Library, Seminar Hall, Shahbagh  
Date: April 2-13  
Time: 10am-8pm

Art Exhibition  
Title: Time-Eternal  
Venue: Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dhanmondi  
Date: April 15-28  
Time: 5pm-8pm

Syed Badaruddin Hossain Smriti Natya Utshab  
Venue: National Theatre, BSA  
Date: April 6-12

Musical Soiree  
Artist: Chanchal Khan  
Venue: IGGC, H-24, R-2, Dhanmondi  
Date: April 15  
Time: 6:30pm

BALGO Contemporary Australian Art Exhibition  
Title: BALGO  
Venue: Gallery Cosmos, 69/1, New Circular Road, Mollibagh  
Date: April 1-13

## Homage to an Icon

### Divisional Nazrul Convention in Sylhet

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, *Sylhet*

Information Minister Abul Kalam Azad was chief guest at the inaugural function of the two-day divisional 'Nazrul Sammelon' (Nazrul Convention) at the Sylhet auditorium in the city on April 9.

Addressing the gathering, he said that the government has launched special programme to present an authentic picture of the National Poet to the youngsters.

The cultural function began with Khilkil Kazi and others rendering "Mora Jhonjar Moto" in chorus. Nazrul artiste Himangshu Biswas rendered a kirtan. Jharna Sarker and Nahidul Islam recited Nazrul poems prior to Kabirul Islam Ratan and his troupe from the capital presenting "Kamal Pasha" to the delight of the audience.

A brief training programme on the accurate study of Nazrul Sangeet was also held in the afternoon at the Shishu Academy conducted by veteran artists. Besides, a cultural programme was also arranged at the Sylhet auditorium in the evening.

Sunday's programme included a brief session on learning Nazrul Sangeet, discussion and a cultural function.



Noted Nazrul Sangeet artistes perform at the event.

## A Man with a Mission

### Catching up with Mahmudur Rahman Benu

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK, *writes from London*

With dawn approaching, the eastern horizon gradually brightened up. A dreamy eyed Mahmudur Rahman Benu sat idly atop a rundown bus, vocally articulating morning ragas Bhairovi and Raamkali.

Benu was on his way back from the routine visits to the Mukti Bahini (freedom fighters') camps near the border with his music troupe, when the bus tyres burst. While the driver replaced the tyres, a sleepless Benu practiced sargam along with his team-mate Bipul Bhattacharya. Deep down, Benu tried to divert his mind from the war waged against his country, just across the border. When the army started the crackdown, Benu didn't hesitate to join the Bangladesh guerrilla forces to fight the Pakistani army.

Mahmudur Rahman, popularly known as "Benu bhai" to many, had just crossed the Benapole border and joined the Mukti Bahini, under Capt Hafiz aka Major Hafiz, at Petrapole, Jessor sector.

A dedicated cultural activist and graduate from Chhayanaut, the spirit of patriotism was ingrained in Benu at an early age. His mentors at Chhayanaut -- Waheedul Haque, Sheikh Lutfar Rahman and Zahedur Rahim -- strengthened his passion even more. When the war intensified, Benu replaced his ammo with harmonium to inspire the countless freedom fighters who were camped at the war front. Unarmed and fearless, he led his team, the Mukti Sangrami Shilpi Sangstha, to the edges of the battlefield.

On my recent visit to London we talked about his experiences during the war and his involvement with the cultural scenario in London now.



Mahmudur Rahman Benu in a still from "Mukti Gaan".

"During the Liberation War," Benu went on, "everyday we would visit from five to seven camps in a minibus. We would sing Gano Sangeet to lift the spirit of the soldiers. We were given meagre pocket money and lunch boxes to sustain throughout the day. We would sing around 70 songs everyday. By the time we reached home late in the night, our voices were cracked and bodies sore. But we would prepare ourselves for the next day. Our only mission was to boost the morale of the Mukti Bahini. Our patriotic songs were our weapons to fight the invaders," Benu's eyes sparkled as he spoke.

Benu had settled in Leeds in 1973. After 10 years he moved to Sheffield and later to London in 1993.

Despite your role in the war, why do you decide to settle abroad? I asked. "Well I'm often confronted with this question. Even if I stayed in Bangladesh my mission would have been no different."

And what is that? I asked. "When I came over as a student, what struck me most was the distressing state of the Bangladeshi community settled here. Other than a handful, most of them had difficulty in communicating, writing or reading letters. My instincts were to immediately help them. I tried to make them aware of their history and take pride in their roots as well.

"While teaching English, Mathematics and Bangla at Waltheos Secondary School, I would often explain to them about Bangladesh, its culture and the bloody war through which we gained our independence. Gradually a noticeable change came about in the attitude of the young boys and girls of the school. It is with pride that I felt that parents became more and more eager to admit their children to the school where I taught."

In a speech, the head teacher of the school specially highlighted Benu's undeniable role in drawing people closer. In his long career, the head teacher had never witnessed such strength of influence of one man to dramatically change the mindset of a community like Benu had accomplished.

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handful, most of them had difficulty in communicating, writing or reading letters. My instincts were to immediately help them. I tried to make them aware of their history and take pride in their roots as well.

Year celebration) and other festivities that are observed in Bangladesh. This not only instilled passion amongst his students to learn more about their origins but the community as a whole grew a sense of pride in their cultural roots and developed a positive attitude towards their heritage.

Benu's uncompromising attitude towards music and the teachings of Chhayanaut inspired him to open several branches all over London. "I teach songs related to our culture -- Indian classical, ghazals, Nazrul Sangeet and more," he said.

The artiste who had long back sown the seeds of belonging amongst a community now watches with a certain sense of pride as those seeds have flourished and brought two worlds closer. The passion with which he had fought for the country's independence still runs deep to spread that country's cultural influence even further. As far as he is concerned, he still patrols the boundaries of his country -- if not geographical, certainly the cultural one.

PHOTO COURTESY: TAREQUE AND CATHERINE MASUD

## A Poet of Silence

### Documentary on Partha Pratim Majumder



The documentary was screened at Alliance Française de Dhaka.

ZAHANGIR ALAM

A biographical documentary, titled "Poet of Silence", on the internationally famed Bangladeshi mime maestro Partha Pratim Majumder was

launched at the auditorium of Alliance Française de Dhaka on April 9. Alliance Française de Dhaka, together with Raktarakabari, organised the screening.

Directed by Al Masum Shobuj, the 28-minute film highlights remarkable moments from Majumder's life -- starting from his childhood days in Pabna, Bangladesh to meeting the French mime icon Marcel Marceau.

The biography also features Majumder staging the mimodrama "The Nightmare" at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in 1994 and his solo show of "Padma Nadir Majhi" at UNESCO headquarters, Paris in 1986.

Noted personalities -- Asaduzzaman Noor MP, magician Jewel Aich, musicians Ila Majumder

and Bappa Majumder, filmmakers Morshedul Islam and Jean Nesar Osman, dancer Tamanna Rahaman and others -- spoke highly of Majumder's accomplishments with reverence.

"Being Partha's close friend, I had the opportunity to watch Marcel Marceau's show in Paris, London, New York and in Bangladesh. I observed the subtle dexterity and technique in Marceau's performance but I can never forget the superb use of emotions by Partha in portraying the death of a bird and a boy's guilt after shooting it," Jewel Aich says in the occasion.

The film wraps up with Majumder expressing his dream of setting up of Mime Academy in Bangladesh. The artiste also renders a song "Joy Joy Nabo Jati Bangladesh" in the film. Actor Joyonto Chattopadhyay and magician Jewel Aich, dancer Tamanna Rahaman and others were present on the occasion.

"I am very proud of my friend Partha. What I would like to say is that he is setting up an example of an exceptional expatriate by diffusing the artistry he had learnt," said Patrick Branco.

After his vibrant speech, Dr. Gauhar Rizvi embraced Partha Pratim Majumder and assured him of assistance in setting up a mime academy.

## HANGOVER2 UPDATE

Director Todd Phillips had no trouble shooting "The Hangover II" because everyone slipped back into character effortlessly.

However the "Due Date" creator did have some trouble working in the Thai capital because according to him it is not so "film-friendly".

Source: Internet



BANGKOK HAS THEM NOW

## Tracing the Footsteps of Tagore

### Documentary "Poth Chawatei Anondo" launched

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The packed National Museum auditorium eagerly watched the 75-minute documentary "Bangladesh-e Rabindranath: Poth Chawatei Anondo" that highlights Rabindranath's stay in East Bengal between 1890 and 1937. He came to administer the family estates but found himself turned into "Baul Rabi" and undertook huge reforms in the agriculture and small credit sector, much to the relief of the destitute farmers.

Chanchal Khan, an accomplished Tagore singer is the planner, director and music director of the documentary. Khan was assisted by Hasina Ahmed Shoma as the creative director.

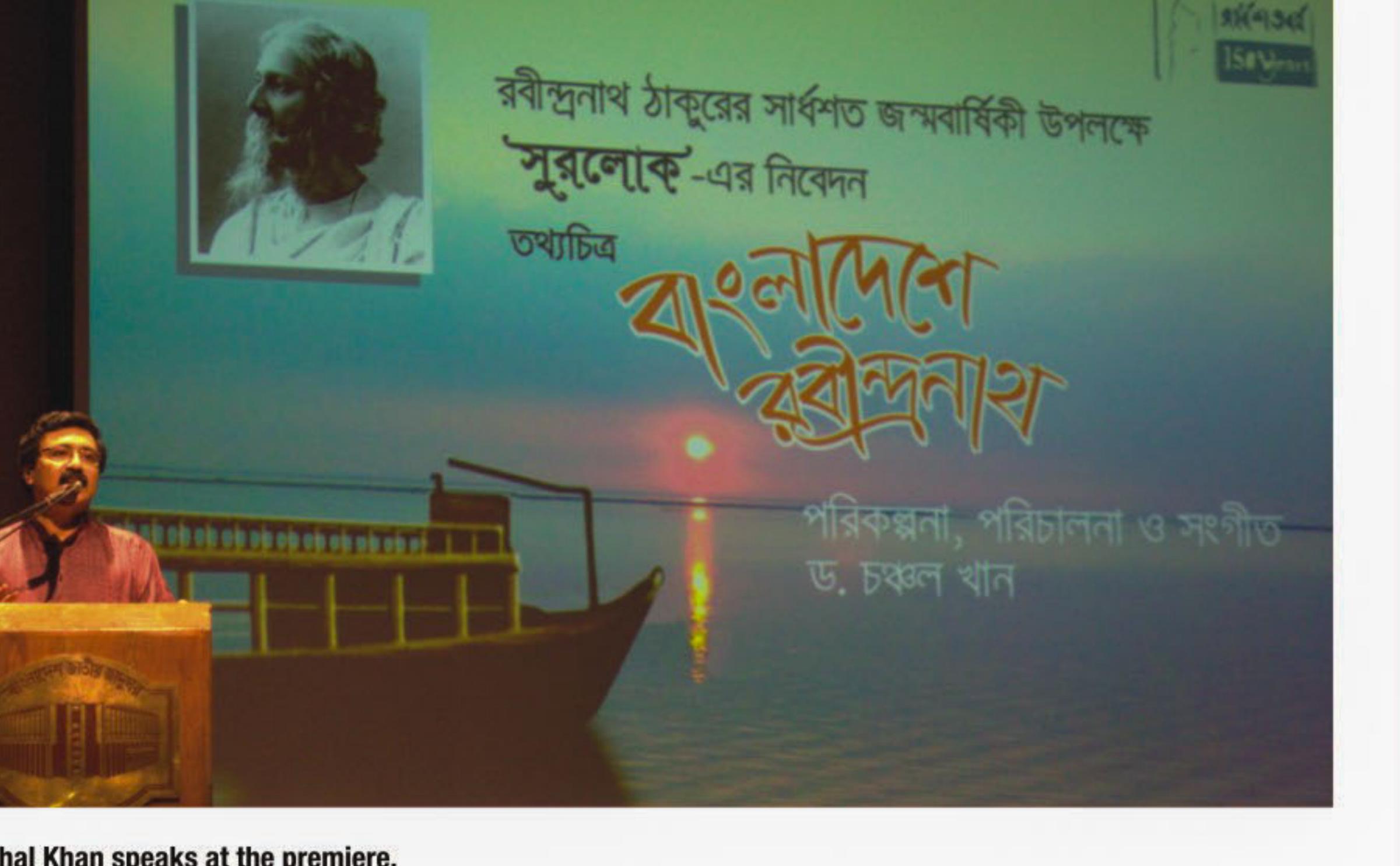
Abul Kalam Azad, minister for Information and Cultural Affairs, spoke on the occasion as the chief guest. He assured the audience that the government is doing its best to preserve the sites in Shilaidaha,

philosopher and Potishar that bear memories of Tagore. He sought advice from the artistes, educationists and litterateurs regarding restoration of the heritage sites in Bangladesh.

The documentary was launched to mark Tagore's 150th birth anniversary.

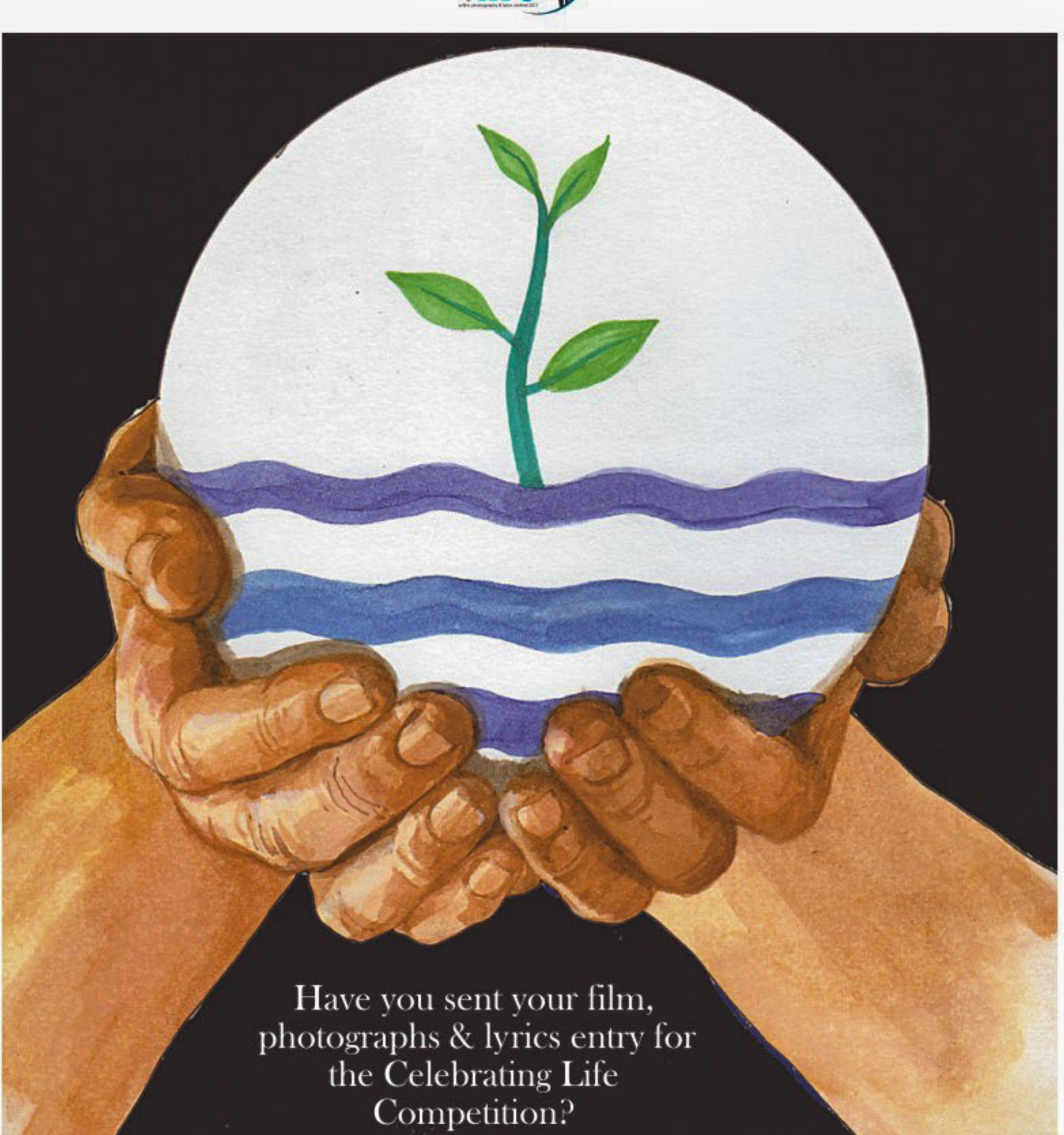
Nazmul Hassan MP, CEO of Beximco Pharma, spoke on behalf of the sponsoring organisation. Chanchal Khan spoke on behalf of Shurolok Music Group that produced the film.

Nazmul Hassan MP, CEO of Beximco Pharma, spoke on behalf of the sponsoring organisation. Chanchal Khan spoke on behalf of Shurolok Music Group that produced the film. Narrated by Rokeya Prachi, the documentary derives its strength from the comprehensive research by Ahmed Rafique. "The documentary has historical, archival and educational value, especially for those who have little or no knowledge on the bard's enormous contribution to music, literature and rural development of Bengal. Exposure to East Bengal made Rabindranath a complete poet,



Chanchal Khan speaks at the premiere.

The Daily Star



This year's theme

### Celebrate the Gifts of Nature and the Rivers of Bangladesh

Deadline for submissions  
June 30, 2011

For more details, log onto  
[www.celebratinglifebd.com](http://www.celebratinglifebd.com)

Partners:

ATN BANGLA

11:35 Chobir Gaan  
12:10 Motamot  
05:20 Ayer Shamrey  
06:20 Aladin  
10:45 Bihongi Kotha

CHANNEL i

09:30 Shangbadotro  
Bangladesh  
01:05 Ebong Cinemara Gaan  
05:15 Krishibangla  
09:35 Veet Channel i Top  
Model '11  
11:30 Travel On  
12:00 Ajker Shangbadotro

ntv

10:45 Bangla Feature Film  
10:45 Janar Achhey Bolkar  
10:45 Achhey  
06:45 Ongroj  
07:20 Sholoa Bangalianna

RADIO

abc radio FM 89.2  
09:30 Adik Odik  
02:45 Oyezzata  
03:00 Duranto Bilekey  
03:30 Adik Odik  
04:30 Bhalo Theko Sange  
Theko  
05:30 Kachalokha  
06:00 Morning Dhaka  
07:00 Today's Adda  
08:00 Good Morning Dhaka  
09:00 U Turn  
10:00 Morning Express  
12:00 Moner Kotha

Mogbul

On ATN BANGLA at  
08:00pm  
Drama Serial  
Cast: Faruk Ahmed,  
Siddique

TERMINATOR

On Star Movies at  
08:45pm  
Genre: Action Sci-Fi  
Cast: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Linda Hamilton

Moner Kotha

On BANGLAVISION at  
09:05pm  
Talk Show  
Host: Afansa Mimi

11:30 Drama Serial: Akash Chhoya

ETV  
11:30 Ekushey-er Business  
04:30 DW Today Tomorrow  
05:25 Dech Jurey  
05:50 Sports Plus  
07:50 Tommy Miah Recipe  
12:05 Ekushey-er Raat

HBO

01:30 The Informant!  
03:45 The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers  
07:30 Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan  
08:45 Major Movie Star  
10:35 Lost Future  
12:00 Supernova

Rtv

01:10 Bangla Feature Film  
05:00 Protidin-er Gaan  
06:00 Are You Ready  
09:50 Bridal Show  
10:00 Protidin-er Patrika  
12:00 Ekushey-er Raat

Star Movies

11:25 Prince of Persia  
01:25 Road House  
02:30 Damage  
07:00 Major Movie Star  
08:45 The Terminator  
10:35 Lost Future  
11:30 Cobra

Star World

02:00 Friends  
07:30 Coffee With Karen  
08:30 How I Met Your Mother  
10:30 Dexter  
11:30 Community

National Geographic Channel

03:30 Great Migrations  
07:30 I Didn't Know That  
Engineering Connections

Drama Serial

ATN BANGLA  
08:00pm Mokbul  
09:20pm Parapar  
CHANNEL i  
05:30pm Joto Dure Jai  
07:30pm Shapno Bazar  
07:30pm Shapno Bazar  
08:15pm Manabzamin  
08:45pm Darshok-er Galpo

Rtv