

WHAT'S ON

Book Fair
Organiser: Oitijyo
Venue: Central Library
Premises, Shahbagh
Date: April 24-May 20
Time: 9am-8pm

Grand Group Art exhibition
Venue: Saja Art Gallery, DCC
Market, Gulshan-2
Date: April 1-May 10
Time: 10am-8pm

Illustration Exhibition
Of Children's Books
Venue: Goethe-Institut, H 10,
Rd 9, Dhanmondi
Date: May 1-9
Time: 10am-7pm

Solo Painting Exhibition
Artist: Ifat Ara Dewan
Venue: Bengal Gallery, H-275/F, R-27, Dhanmondi
Date: May 5-15
Time: 12pm-9pm

Rabindra Birth Anniversary Celebration
Organiser: Chhayanaut
Venue: Chhayanaut Auditorium, Dhanmondi
Date: May 7-9
Time: 6:30pm onwards

Celebrating Tagore's 150th Birth Anniversary
Organiser: Bangla Academy
Venue: Bangla Academy
Premises
Date: May 8-10
Time: 10am and 4pm

Group Art exhibition
Title: Rabindranath Tagore
Venue: National Art Gallery, BSA
Date: May 6-15
Time: 11am-6pm

Jatio Shishu-Kishore, Adishashi Natyo Utshah
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA
Date: May 9-19
Time: 4:30pm

Programmes at Tagore homesteads

AMANUR AMAN, Kushtia

Marking the 150th birth anniversary of Nobel laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore, two separate three-day programmes began at Shilaidaha Kutubbari and Tagore Lodge yesterday.

Both places were homesteads of the great poet. Kushtia district administration has arranged the programme at Shilaidaha with the assistance of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, while Kushtia municipality organised the programme at Tagore Lodge.

The programmes include a rally, discussion, renditions of Tagore songs, dance-drama and poetry recitation. A fair has been arranged at Shilaidaha Kutubbari. Eminent folk researcher and Professor of Bangla at Islamic University, Dr. Abul Ahsan Choudhury, Professor Dr. Sarwar Murshed and Advocate Lalim Haq were chief discussants at the programme.

Kushtia Deputy Commissioner Abdul Mannan presided over the programme. A total of 49 cultural organisations of the district are performing in the course of the three-day programme. Banglalink is sponsoring the programme.

NATION CELEBRATES 150TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF TAGORE

Exhibition, music, dance and lecture at Shilpakala Academy

Three-day festival jointly organised by Bangladesh and India

AKRAM HOSEN MAMUN

Intellectuals, cultural personalities and Tagore enthusiasts of the country attended the lecture by Dr. Sanjida Khatun, president and a founder member of Chhayanaut. The event, at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, was a part of the three-day long festival, jointly organised by India and Bangladesh, marking 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

On the first day (May 6) of the festival, the programme started with an exhibition (at National Art Gallery) of 150 painters' works inspired by Rabindranath's short stories, poems, and songs. Replicas of Rabindranath's own paintings are also installed at the ten-day exhibition. The event was inaugurated by Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad.

In the evening, Tagore exponent Dr. Sanjida Khatun's lecture at the National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, focused on the intricacies of reciting and singing Tagore's verses. The pioneering cultural activist and Tagore exponent spoke on the phonetic nature of Bangla language and explained, with numerous references, how incorrect intonation can drastically reduce the effect of a song. She urged Rabindra Sangeet singers to pay close attention



Clockwise (from top-left): Dr. Sanjida Khatun speaks at the programme; Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta sings and Amra Kojon Shilpi Goshthi (Bogra) stages a dance.

in pronouncing words. Her speech was interspersed with recitals and singing. Rabindra Sangeet enthusiasts, most of whom were her former students, seemed amused when she explained how a deviation from one phoneme (the smallest unit of speech) can alter the meaning of a sentence. Her presentation was more popular among intellectuals.

The speech was followed by a couple of choruses rendered by the singers of Dhruvota. Swagatalakshmi Dasgupta, one of the most celebrated Rabindra Sangeet singers of India, rendered a variety of the bard's songs. To a startling effect, Dasgupta rendered a composition by

the 18th century Scottish bard Robert Burns that inspired Tagore's "Purano Shei Din-er Kotha". Jayanta Chattopadhyay's recitation of Tagore's essentially modern "Banshi" maintained a conversational tone which is a defining characteristic of the poem. However, Jayanta's recital lacked a proper projection of the anti-romantic elements in the poem.

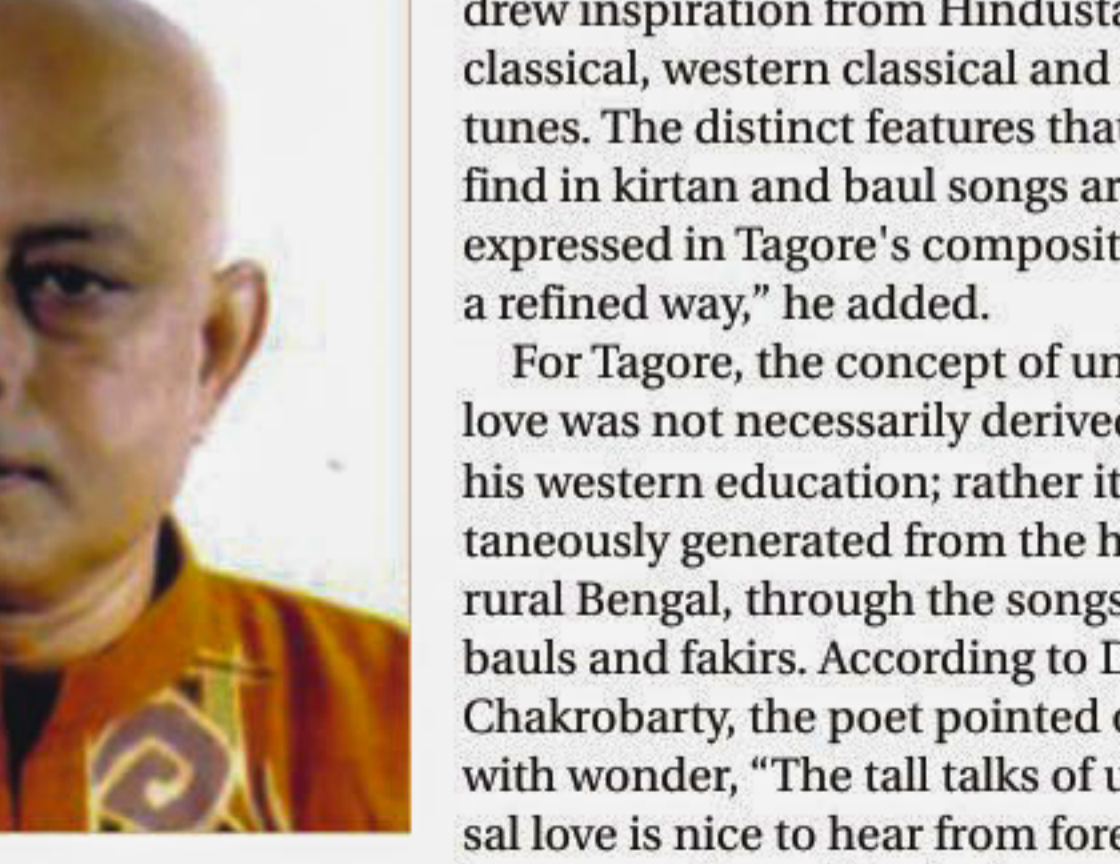
Accomplished Bangladeshi singers Abdul Wadud and Ifiat Ara Dewan rendered some timeless Tagore songs.

A dance performance by Amra Kojon Shilpi Goshthi (Bogra) was refreshingly different from other performances of the evening.



Rabindra Sangeet: In the Tradition of Folk Music

Lecture by Dr. Mridulkanti Chakrobarty



Dr. Mridulkanti Chakrobarty

ZAHANGIR ALOM
Starting from May 4, the five-day 22nd National Rabindra Sangeet Festival arranged by Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha (marking the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore) ended yesterday at Shawkt Osman Memorial Auditorium, Central Public Library, Shahbagh in Dhaka.

On the second day (May 5) of the festival, Dr. Mridulkanti Chakrobarty of Dhaka University delivered a speech, titled "Rabindra Sangeet: Composed in the Tradition of Folk Music".

In a speech full of allusions, excerpts and references, Dr. Chakrobarty elaborately discussed how folk tunes (baul, shari, bhaitali and karma sanggeet etc) have inspired Tagore's songs. "The opulent collection of Rabindra Sangeet is one of the most treasured heritages of Bengal. During his stay (1890-1901) in East Bengal (now Bangladesh), for overseeing his family estate, and later with the establish-

ment of Shantiniketan at Birbhum (West Bengal), he observed rural life closely and was thoroughly impressed with the folk tunes. Rabindranath and karma sanggeet etc) have inspired Tagore's songs.

"While looking after his estate in Rajshahi and Kushtia, Tagore met bauls, fakirs and vaishnavs. He published 20 Lalon songs in the monthly

drew inspiration from Hindustani classical, western classical and folk tunes. The distinct features that we find in kirtan and baul songs are expressed in Tagore's compositions in a refined way," he added.

For Tagore, the concept of universal love was not necessarily derived from his western education; rather it spontaneously generated from the heart of rural Bengal, through the songs of bauls and fakirs. According to Dr. Chakrobarty, the poet pointed out, with wonder, "The tall talks of universal love is nice to hear from foreigners, but songs about it by the beggars going from door to door -- why do those fail to reach our ears?"

"Experts say that Tagore's spiritual quests were first framed in his creation 'Geetal-Gheetimalya'. He wrote a play, 'Raja' at that time, inspired by the baul philosophy. He also enacted the role of a blind baul in his play 'Phalguni'," said the speaker.

Commemorating through music and dance



IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, Sylhet

A three-day event styled "Chiro Notunere Dilo Dak, Ponchishey Boishakh", to observe the 150th birth anniversary of Tagore, began in Sylhet last Thursday evening. Anandaloke, Sylhet; Bangladesh Rabindra Sangeet Shilpi Sangstha and Geetiban Bangladesh jointly organised the event at the Sylhet auditorium. Veteran educationist Professor M.A. Aziz

formally inaugurated the event in the presence of a large number of cultural activists. Anandaloke chief Rana Kumar Sinha addressed the brief discussion while Professor Aziz spoke as chief guest. With the formal inauguration, artistes rendered "Hey Notun, Dekha Dik" in chorus. Geetiban Bangladesh's Animesh Bijoey Chowdhury rendered "Chokher Aloye Dekhechhilam" and several other songs. A group dance presentation was another

attraction. Renowned singer Agnibha Bandopadhyay from Kolkata kept the audience enthralled for over an hour through renditions -- "Pran Bhoriet", "Krishnokoli Ami Tarey Boli", "Esho Shumlo Shundoro", "Momo Chitrey, Niti Nitye" and "Labonye Purno Pran". Other noted artistes from India -- Pubali Denvath, Shubharpada Nandi Majumder, Shantanu Dutta and reciter Sudipta Mitra -- are also performed at the event.

Dance performances by Nrityalok and Kathak Kendra



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the second day (May 7) of the celebration programme, jointly organised by Bangladesh and India, several Bangladeshi singers performed solos and choruses while artistes from both countries recited Tagore poems.

Artists of the Repertory of Kathak Kendra, New Delhi (India), presented a Kathak-based production, titled "Riturang", depicting three seasons -- summer, monsoon and spring -- featuring Tagore's poetry.

Classical vocalist Amjad Ali performed Raga "Sudha Sarang", "Megha Malhar" and "Bahar". The choreographer and chief of the troupe, Geetanjali Lal, articulated the rhythmic bols during three segments of the performance. Aman Ali on tabla, Ahsan Ali on sarangi, Mahaveer Gangani on pakhawaj and Abdul Sami Khan on sarod instrumentally assisted the mesmerising performance.

The dancers -- Vidha Lal, Shailja Nalwade, Eshani Agarwal, Rachna Sinha, Mulla Afsar, Mahendra Parihar, Rahul Pawar and Deepak Arora -- were immaculate as they danced to "Daruna Agnibaney", "Savana Gaganey Ghora Ghanagata" and "Aaji Bashanta Jagrata Daarey". Agriculture Minister Matia Chowdhury with State Minister for Cultural Affairs Advocate Promode Mankin honoured the performers with Uttario. Director General of BSA, Liakat Ali Lucky, presented them with books. The audience gave them a standing ovation.

Later half of the evening saw the staging of dance-drama, "Chitrangada", Chitrangada, a warrior princess, was reared as the future head of state by her father, the King of Manipur. When legendary hero Arjun visited Manipur as a part of his journey as an ascetic, Chitrangada fell in love with him. Arjun refused her love with the excuse of his "Brahmacharya Brata" (a vow to remain celibate to

achieve nirvana). Chitrangada approached the god of beauty and love, Madan. Madan granted her incomparable beauty. Though Chitrangada succeeded in winning Arjun's heart with her newly achieved beauty and grace, her soul felt the pangs of guilt. She knew it was not her true self that Arjun loved. Arjun, meanwhile, became curious to know the warrior princess after hearing stories of her valour.

Directed by Kabirul Islam Ratan, the production featured artistes of Nrityalok Shangkritik Kendra. Ratan played Arjun while Farhana Chowdhury and Sadia Islam Mou donned the two avatars of Princess Chitrangada -- as the warrior and the seductress, respectively. Colourful costumes, well planned set design and aesthetic use of light, especially in creating the magical transformation of Chitrangada, added to the lively performance.



"Chitrangada" staged by Nrityalok Shangkritik Kendra; a performance by artistes of Repertory of Kathak Kendra (bottom).

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Painting and poetry recitation competitions in Mymensingh

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Marking the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore, painting and poetry recitation competitions were held in the town yesterday evening.

Rabindra Parishad and Shardho Shoto Rabindra Janmotshab Committee (the poet's birth day celebration committee) jointly organised the competitions at the premises of Teacher Training College (earlier Alexandra Estate) as part of their elaborate programmes marking the occasion.

A total of 40 school students of different educational institutions took part in the painting competition in three groups. The participants were to sketch portraits of Tagore. A poetry recitation competition made the evening more joyous with the participation of 119 students from primary to university level. The competition was held in four groups.

The selected poems for the competition were -- "Megher Koley", "Taal Gachh", "Ek Ganye" and "Nirjhar-er Swapna Bhango".

A total of 21 youngsters were declared winners from the poetry recitation and painting competitions. The judges for both competitions were Shaymol Surhani, Rubina Azad and Joydeb Saha. The judges said that the performances of the participants in both groups were encouraging. The young talents would one day flourish if they are encouraged, they added.

Table with TV channels and programmes: BTV, Z Studio, Star Movies, CHANNEL i, HBO, etc.

Table with RADIO stations: abr radio FM 89.2, Bhorer Janalay, Makhoro Jiboney, etc.

Table with Rabindra Bhubon and Starship Troopers programmes.

Table with Gohinye On Dech TV and Drama Serial programmes.

Table with ETV, Rtv, BANGLAVISION, and Discovery Channel programmes.

Table with Desh TV, Boishakhi TV, and National Geographic Channel programmes.

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Table with DRAMA SERIAL programmes: CHANNEL i, Rtv, Desh TV, etc.

Table with NEWS BULLETIN programmes: RTV, BANGLAVISION, etc.

Table with TALK SHOW programmes: RTV, BANGLAVISION, etc.