

WHAT'S ON



**Nazrul Utsab**  
Organiser: Chhayanaut  
Venue: Chhayanaut Bhawan,  
H-72, R-15/A, Dhanmondi  
Date: July 1-2  
Time: 6:30pm



**Sufia Kamal Birth Anniversary**  
Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya,  
H-42, R-16, Dhanmondi  
Date: June 24-29  
Time: 12pm-8pm



**Recitation**  
Antitee: Pragya Laboni  
Venue: ICC, H-35, Rd-24,  
Gulshan-1,  
Date: July 1  
Time: 6:30pm



**Fete de la Musique**  
Organiser: Alliance Française  
de Dhaka  
Venue: Alliance Française de  
Dhaka, Dhaka University  
Date: June 30-July 1



**National Recitation Festival**  
Venue: National Theatre Hall,  
Shilpakala Academy  
Date: June 26-July 2  
Time: 4pm onwards



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Artist: Mustapha Khalid Palash  
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, R-7 A,  
H-40, Dhanmondi  
Date: June 17-July 1  
Time: 11am-6pm



**Theatre**  
Play: Meraj Fakir-e-Maa  
Venue: Studio Theatre Hall,  
Shilpakala Academy  
Date: June 30  
Time: 7pm



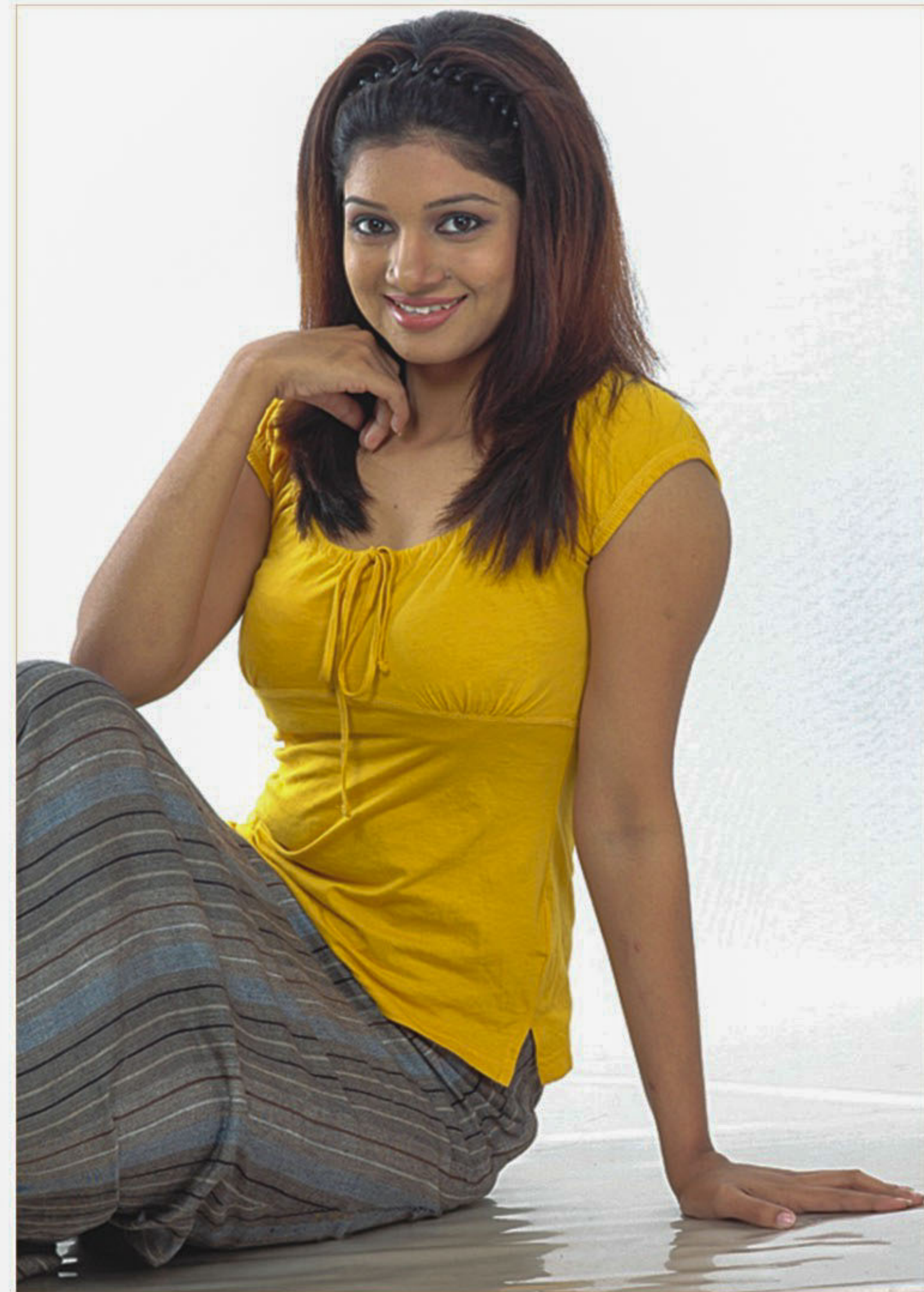
**Theatre**  
Play: Chaka  
Troupe: Bunon Theatre  
Venue: Experimental Theatre  
Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: June 30



**Memorial Programme**  
On Anandendu Biswas  
Venue: National Music and  
Dance Centre, Shilpakala  
Academy  
Date: June 29

# Playing the part

## Tête-à-Tête with Sohana Sabha



*The firm footing that she established with her debut in "Aaina" has only been strengthened with consecutive successes in "Khelaghor" and "Chandra Grohon".*

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

In the media, some struggle throughout their career to reach their desired goal, while others find a fairytale journey awaiting them. For Sohana Saba it is definitely the latter, as the talented artiste began her career with dancing but over the years has managed to cement a niche for herself as an actor.

Sohana has taken on the challenge of diverse roles and worked to her advantage to become a skilled performer. Her role in the serial "Poush Phaguner Pala" is the latest in her repertoire of acclaim.

The role of Promila has been prominent since the serial's inception and will continue to play a dominant part till its conclusion. Sohana says she enjoyed playing the role of a bride who crosses over the border with her husband.

Those acquainted with the serial "Manobjomin", have also seen Sohana reveal another facet of herself in the role of Mithila. About the character, who was originally named Monidipa in the novel that the serial was adapted from, Sohana says that Mithila is a personality with childish tendencies. As the story develops, the impulsive Mithila evolves into a mature personal-

ity. Sohana adds that she has blended herself into the role during the two years she has played the character.

Apart from serials, Sohana is also busy doing single-episode-TV plays such as "Ondho Tironday" and "Eka", while BTV is airing "Shorol Satya".

The actor has also achieved success with her performances on the silver screen. The firm footing that she established with her debut in "Aaina" has only been strengthened with consecutive successes in "Khelaghor" and "Chandra Grohon". But Sohana says this is not the end, she is still eager to play more challenging roles.

# Birth Centenary of Poet Sufia Kamal

## Musical Soiree at Bengal Shilpalaya



Iffat Ara Dewan sings at the event.

A CORRESPONDENT

As part of the five-day (June 24-28) festival, titled "Taar Dirgha Chhayae", marking birth centenary of poet Begum Sufia Kamal, Bengal Foundation arranged a musical soiree featuring favourite songs of the late pioneering poet at Bengal Shilpalaya on June 27 and 28.

Rabindra Sangeet singers Iffat Ara Dewan, Bulbul Islam and Nazrul Sangeet artiste Khairul

Anam Shakil performed on June 27. Rabindra Sangeet artistes Auditi Mohsin, Mohiuzzaman Chowdhury; the poet's granddaughters Farzin Ansari Tia and Dia Sudeshna Chakrobarty performed on June 28.

Bengal Foundation produced an album, titled "Jago, Rey Antor, Jago", that also features favourite songs of Sufia Kamal.

Aside from musical soiree, the festival also featured an exhibition of photographs, paintings, the poet's household articles and furniture.



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

With the theme "Jagroto Koro Udyato Koro Nirbhoy Koro Hey", the **weeklong National Recitation Festival 2011 (starting from June 26), is on at National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala academy (BSA). Apart from solo performances by noted reciters of the country, the festival features group recitation productions by a number of organisations. Directed by Shimul Mustapha, artistes of Boikuntha Abritti Academy staged their production "Bish Birikkher Beej", written by Rudra Muhammad Shahidullah, on June 27. Bangladesh Abritti Samannay Parisad, in association with BSA, has arranged the festival.**

# Power and intensity

## Opera "Madama Butterfly"

KAVITA, New Delhi

A young girl as vulnerable, delicate and captivating as a butterfly. Famous opera "Madama Butterfly" hinges on the doomed love story of exquisite 15-year-old Japanese Cio-Cio-San, also known as Butterfly and American naval officer Pinkerton. Recently, the film based on the tragedy was screened in Delhi as part of the series, 'Summer Delights--A Festival of Opera, Ballet and Concert Films'.

Music connoisseur Dr. RP Jain, a retired professor of Germany at the renowned Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) who has curated and introduced the series for the sixth consecutive year gave the context of the opera.

"With the opening up of Japan in the

second half of the 19th century, a naval base was established by the US in Nagasaki. This in turn led to the practice of young American naval officers contracting temporary 'marriages' with Japanese women, especially the so-called Geishas. The mutual misunderstanding between East and West arising out of this contractual arrangement and the subsequent clash of cultures was the cause of much pain and misery," pointed out Jain.

Famous Italian composer Giacomo Puccini wrote "Madama Butterfly" at the turn of the 20th century. The three-act opera, based on short story "Madame Butterfly" is, according to one scholar, believed to hinge on real events in Nagasaki in the early 1890s.

The opera ranks alongside Puccini's most frequently performed operas: "La

Boheme", "Tosca" and "Turandot". Though his rivals derided "Madama Butterfly" initially, once he had revised it, the opera became one of his highly successful works.

The two central characters are those of Butterfly played by the legendary Italian soprano Mirela Freni and Pinkerton (redoubtable Spanish-Mexican tenor Placido Domingo who ranks as one of the famous three tenors alongside Spanish singer Jose Carreras and Italian singer Luciano Pavarotti). The unscrupulous Pinkerton decides to take a 'temporary' Japanese wife until he marries a "real" American wife. The chosen one is Butterfly, a Geisha. Alienated from her community because of her decision to embrace the Christian faith of Pinkerton after her marriage, she spends a brief ecstatic period with Pinkerton.

Three years later Butterfly awaits her husband's return. She now has a child. One day when the American consul Sharpless comes to her house and suggests that Pinkerton may not return, she shows him their child and says that in the eventuality of being abandoned she would prefer to die rather than go back to being a Geisha.

The final blow comes when Pinkerton returns but this time with Kate, his new American wife. At the conclusion of the film we see a shattered Butterfly pushing out her child to Kate as she lifts a dagger to commit hara-kiri. Just as she stabs herself and is dying, a remorseful Pinkerton is heard calling her name.

"Madama Butterfly" gave the Delhi audience a much needed exposure to Western opera, a genre only rarely seen in the country.



# Chandalika: Desh Bangla Theatre's "untouchable" heroine fails to impress



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

"Chandalika" is the story of a lower caste woman, Prokity, whom higher caste people have labelled "untouchable".

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Desh Bangla Theatre staged its latest production "Chandalika", an adaptation of Rabindranath Tagore's much popular dance-drama, on June 27 at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. The dance-drama has been turned into a narrative form, designed and directed by Bivash Bishnu Chowdhury.

"Chandalika" is the story of a lower caste woman, Prokity, whom higher caste people have labelled "untouchable". Prokity develops an infatuation with a Buddhist monk, Ananda. The genesis of the attraction can be traced back to an earlier incident where the monk was offered water by Prokity.

Tagore adapted the dance-drama from "Jatak", a collection of Buddhist stories. The original story depicts how, having achieved nirvana, Chandalika gives up her desire for Ananda. However, Tagore has not provided a glimpse of Buddha or the necessity of acquiring nirvana. His "Chandalika" is more flesh and blood, and dramatic.

In the end, when Prokity's mother uses witchcraft to force Ananda to come to Prokity, the latter turns down the object of her



affections, as she realises that love cannot be achieved forcefully.

Apart from direction, Bivash Bishnu Chowdhury also designed the set, light and costume.

However, impressive set design could not conceal the below par performances by the actors. Mahjebin Godhuli, as the protagonist, could not do justice to one of Tagore's most memorable characters. She seemingly overacted at times. Aisharya Azad as Prokity's mother was more impressive, though she seemed too young to play the role.

Among others, Manik Sarkar, Palash Loh, Rajkumar Paul, Kawsar Samad and Syamol Shishir did other roles.

The music, highlighting Rabindra Sangeet, was one of the brighter aspects of the production. The set was also designed aptly. Several props, hanging from above created a mysterious ambience.

"Chandalika" is a tribute to Rabindranath Tagore on his 150th birth anniversary. The play received a grant from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. It is the 9th production of Desh Bangla Theatre.

# Kate Middleton related to author Jane Austen



Prince William's bride Kate Middleton is a distant relative of novelist Jane Austen, according to genealogy website Ancestry.com.

Ancestry.com said that the new Duchess of Cambridge and the author of "Pride and Prejudice" are 11th cousins, six times removed due to their 15th century common ancestor Henry Percy, who was the 2nd Earl of Northumberland.

The family history research group said the connection was fitting given Austen's many female characters who fall in love with, or aspire to marry, men of higher rank.

Middleton, 29, a commoner with no aristocratic background, married Prince William -- second in line to the throne -- in April after an all-year romance. She is now formally known as Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge.

"Finding this connection between the Duchess of Cambridge and Jane Austen is very exciting since, in many ways, Catherine is the modern Jane Austen heroine: a middle class girl marrying the future King of England," said Anastasia Harman, lead family historian for Ancestry.com.

"Jane Austen may have written about happily-ever-after but it seems Catherine has found a nonfiction hero to spend her life with -- far past the epilogue," Harman added.

Born in England in 1775, Jane Austen is one of the best-known novelists and social satirists in the world with works like "Sense and Sensibility", "Emma" and "Persuasion." She never married.

SOURCE: INTERNET

# Homage to Tagore in Dinajpur

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Singers and dancers from Dhaka entertained the audience here at Dinajpur Shilpakala Academy on June 27. The event celebrated the 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy had organised the programme. Residents of Dinajpur braved the bad weather to attend the programme.

Md. Jamal Uddin Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner of Dinajpur, inaugurated the programme as chief guest. Md. Mostafizur Rahman, Police superintendent (acting) of Dinajpur, was also present at the programme. Addressing the gathering, Md.

Jamal Uddin Ahmed said that the literature and creations of Rabindranath Tagore are parts of the lifeline of Bengali culture.

The programme began with a Tagore song "Ami Ki Gaan Gabo Je" performed by Anusree Bhattacharya. She rendered three Tagore songs dedicated to the bard, accompanied by musicians from Dhaka.

Dancers from Dhaka drew the attention of the audience with their unique costumes and impressive performances. The dances were directed by Farhana Chowdhury. Ujjal recited poems of Tagore.

The programme wrapped up with three Tagore songs performed by Nargis Chowdhury of Dhaka.



PHOTO: STAR

A group dance performance at the programme.

# "Amar Bondhu Rashed" screened at SUST



PHOTO: STAR

A scene from "Amar Bondhu Rashed".

SUBRATA DAS, Sylhet

Five shows of the movie "Amar Bondhu Rashed" were held from June 26-28 at the mini auditorium of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), Sylhet.

A large number of evidently moved students and teachers came away from the screenings that were an initiative of Chokh Film Society, a cultural organisation of the University.

Based on a novel with the same titled, by noted writer Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, the movie is a production of Impress Telefilm Ltd, and has been directed by Morshedul Islam, who has brought out the best from the performers.

The movie provides a glimpse of the Liberation War, through the eyes of a teenager who fights for the country, motivated by another unique adolescent freedom fighter named Rashed.

Rashed, wiser beyond his years, fights with great bravery and confidence and never compromises on his commitment to the nation's independence. This movie revisits the contribution of youngsters to the birth of Bangladesh.

Not many in the packed mini-auditorium could hold back their tears and were completely silent as they followed the unraveling of Rashed's predicament.