

WHAT'S ON

Che Guevara Death Anniversary. Organiser: Wishtiz Shuja Gosha. Venue: TSC Auditorium, DU. Date: October 9.

Film Screening. Film: Mukti Gaan. Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Gulshan-1. Date: October 13. Time: 3:15pm.

DVD Launch. Of the documentary 'Al Badar'. Venue: National Press Club. Date: October 9. Time: 5:15pm.

Anniversary Programme 50 Years of Goethe-Institut Bangladesh. Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh, H 10, Rd 9, Dhanmondi.

Solo Art Exhibition. Title: Symphony of Colours. Painter: Shumona Haque. Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhanmondi. Date: Oct. 2-11.

Solo Painting Exhibition. Title: Portraits: Rode of Characters. Artist: Apurba Kanti Das. Venue: La Galerie, Alliance Francaise de Dhaka, Dhanmondi. Date: Sept. 30-Oct. 13. Time: 3-9pm.

Classical Music Soiree. Artist: Pandit Sarathi Chatterjee. Venue: Natyashala, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Dhaka. Date: October 15.

Theatre. Play: Shesher Kabita. Troupe: Prangana Mor. Venue: National Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy. Date: October 10.

Veteran actress Shuchanda receives a Lifetime Achievement award at the gala event 'Uro-CJFB Performance Award 2010'. The programme was held at the Bangabandhu International Convention Centre, on October 7. The organisers gave 15 awards in different categories for winners in the music, television and film arenas. Habib Waheed and Baby Naznin respectively received Best Singer Male and Female award. Shakib Khan and Shabnur received Best Actor and Best Actress award for film, while Sajal and Bindu received Best Actor and Actress award for the small screen. The ceremony also featured colourful performances by celebrities.



The soul of a Tagorean

Time out with Milia Ali

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

As she enters the room, Milia Ali is a picture of elegance in an embroidered white muslin sari with matching silver and gold golap bala (bangles). The former World Bank Education Specialist, now settled in the US with her husband Owaise Saadat, has another identity that she has just started to re-ignite. Through her music, Milia is introducing young ones in the musical world of Tagore songs.

As we settle into our conversation, Milia explains how she stepped into the world of music. After completing her Masters in Physics from Dhaka University and Development Economics from the University of Pennsylvania, she undertook a certificate course in Rabindra Sangeet from Shantiniketan in 1992-93. Prior to that, she had studied at Chayyanaut under music exponents Waheedul Haque, Phool Mohammad and Sanjida Khatun. In addition, she was also under the tutelage of classical exponents such as Ustad Mithun De and Munshi Raisuddin.

"I learnt more than just music under the legendary singers Kanika Banerjee and Nilima Sen at Shantiniketan; it was the Tagorean way of life -- where you let go and try to be less materialistic. Mohor di (Kanika Banerjee) would emphasise on the musicality rather than the technical aspect of a song. Her way of re-awakening was simply humming the song till you internalise every note of the song," says a nostalgic Milia.

"Regarding my formative period, I have fond memories of talented singers such as Maleka Azim Khan, Chaman Afroze and Farida Bari Malik singing Tagore songs on Boshonto Utshab. They were all part of my family, and initiated me into Tagore's music. My mother, Janan Ghani, was a student of the renowned dancer Gahwar Jamil in the early '60s. She donned the main character in dance-dramas such as 'Shyama', 'Chitrangada' and 'Chandalika'. My father Quadrat Ghani, a music enthusiast, was a civil servant. Noted social activist, Mrs. Habibullah Bahar was instrumental in encouraging my mother to take up dance as an artistic vocation in those days when women were confined to their homes. This was in the '60s in Chittagong where I remember watching her perform during the Boshonto Utshab.

Though Milia is now in the US, her passion for Tagore songs has not waned. She has



Heritage, as symbolised so powerfully by Chhayanaaut, is what she still lives by. In this half century since its birth, Chhayanaaut has been a sheet anchor in an upholding of our cultural identity. Milia Ali identifies with that story.

recently set up a music school, Geetali, in Virginia, Washington. While she teaches Tagore songs, Tumpa (daughter of noted artists M.R. Benu and Shahin Samad), teaches the elementary courses of classical music.

"So far we have around six very talented and inquisitive children who attend hour-long classes," she says. "The evening classes are for those who need to refine their skills. While not all of them can be performers, they can become good listeners."

What is the aim of the school, I ask. "I plan to nurture and nourish the songs of Tagore across mainstream America. What struck me when I attended a programme in observance of

the 150th anniversary of the bard, organised by the Indian community at the Smithsonian Museum, was that Bangladeshi artists are far behind in the cultural front. Our embassies abroad need to project a wholesome image of our country that is embedded in our culture. We have our own entity which must be brought to light," she responds.

According to Milia Ali, "Our children need to connect to their roots. With this aim in mind, we held a programme at the McLean Baptist Church on the 150th anniversary of Tagore where we had an in-depth discussion on Satyajit Ray's 'Charulata'. The discussion focused on the autobiographical aspects of the story, originally called Noshro Neeer, and the great impact that his sister-in-law Kadambari's death had on Tagore's life and creativity."

Milia now enjoys writing columns as well. "During my yearly visits to Bangladesh, what disturbs me is the distortion of language on the TV shows," she adds with a touch of annoyance.

Milia has travelled extensively to all corners of the globe from Egypt to Indonesia to Armenia, Kazakhstan and Romania and now, the US. "I have never deviated from my identity, that is why my motivation is to introduce the young ones to be close to nature, and show them the reflection of nature in music. For example when we teach them Phoolley Phoolley Dholey Dholey, they can easily appreciate the lyrics. We discuss how spring brings about a change in nature. As music is relaxing for me, I enjoy working with students who see music as therapeutic," says Milia smilingly.

Despite her travels far and wide, Bangladesh has been dearest to her. Just as we were finishing our conversation with her favourite memories of Bangladesh, I took out a picture I had retrieved from the archives. It was a black and white picture of a presentation by Chhayanaaut students at the Central Shaheed Minar in 1969. Milia was overwhelmed. It brought back all the memories we had shared together as cultural activists during the tumultuous and embryonic stage of the birth of our country. Looking into her eyes, it was clear that despite being half a world away, Bangladesh and Bangladeshi culture were firmly etched on her heart. Heritage, as symbolised so powerfully by Chhayanaaut, is what she still lives by. In this half century since its birth, Chhayanaaut has been a sheet anchor in an upholding of our cultural identity. Milia Ali identifies with that story.

OF MEN & MUSIC

Tales of maestros and Tipu Miyan...

H.Q. CHOWDHURY

Music lovers can be classified into several categories. At a typical musical soiree, you find one with a thinking mind -- the quiet type, who would judge a song from the technical aspects. Another, who becomes euphoric with good music. Then there is the big group with little or no knowledge of the intricacies of music, but genuinely enjoying it. And yet another -- a cross section of 'music minds', consisting of VIPs, socialites, writers, politicians and executives, for whom it is actually less of music and more of a social gala to attend.

When the illustrious Dilip Kumar Roy (son of D.L. Roy) returned to Calcutta (Kolkata) for the first time after seven years since he had moved to Pondicherry, he found that the music scene in the city had changed for the better. Jnanendra Prasad Goswami, Vishnadev Chatterjee, Sachin Dev Burman and Tarapada Chakrabarty brought in a new trend in Bangla music. D.K. Roy happily once again bounced back into the music fold of Calcutta, announcing musical soirees where well known luminaries were often present.

At one of these programmes, the "Devdas" man, Sarat Chandra Chatterjee was invited. Upon entering the hall room, he whispered to Dilip Kumar Roy, "Uni thamey janento", insinuating that the musician on stage might extend his recital too long. Gandhi was also present at that programme and while it was on in full swing, he was collecting "chanda" defying all music traditions. Tagore, meanwhile, closed his eyes and listened with full concentration.

CALL TO PATRONISE ARTISTS

Sculptors honoured in Barisal

SUSHANTA GHOSH, Barisal

The third annual reception ceremony to honour the 'Paul and Kumars' (sculptors of idols) was held in Barisal city on Monday afternoon with a call to extend patronage to traditional folk artists.

Mritshilpi Sanmanona Udjapon Parishad organised the programme, sponsored by the leading business group Amrita Lal Dey Paribar.

Social worker Rakhal Chandra Dey



Abdul Karim Khan

After the programme was over, Gandhi was asked for his opinion of the recital. "Of course it was very nice but I still like my 'charka' songs more," he said. It is not known whether today's money collection at mosques (while the "vaaz" is on) and temples was an outcome of Gandhi's act or the other way round. But certainly it was not in good taste to engage in money collection in the midst of a musical soiree.

Exponents of classical music are also of different types. One with a tendency to show off during the recitals. Instead of the song, the singer



Dilip Kumar Roy

concentrates more on the wrong side of it, i.e. the gimmicks and words of wisdom. There is of course the serious type whose sole aim is to try for the best no matter what the audience is. But on occasions when the vibes with the audience do not match, they too make fools out of you!

The great Abdul Karim Khan of Kirana gharana for some years had in his company one Tipu Miyan. Tipu Miyan was his best friend until his passing away. They shared the same food and drink, even the same room. Wherever Khan Saheb went, Tipu Miyan accompanied him. Khan

Saheb even gave him lessons on music and Tipu Miyan took as much as he could absorb.

Once at a music programme in the town of Satara where Khan Saheb was invited, Tipu Miyan was also billed to sing with him. The curtain went up and Khan Saheb stepped in with his two disciples who were to be on the tanpuras. Khan Saheb then gave a brief description of Tipu Miyan's forefathers and the training he had undergone. The crowd listened patiently. Khan Saheb called Tipu Miyan on to the stage. He immediately responded and took his seat next to him. Tipu Miyan had a string of pearls round his neck to draw the attention of the listeners.

"Thik se gaana Tipu Miyan; yeh izzat ka sawal hai" (Please sing well. It is a matter of prestige). Tipu Miyan nodded confidently, little realising that he was to match "sur" with one of the all-time greats of classical music Khan Sahib began -- "sa" and it was matched by Tipu Miyan's note very much in tune. Then Tipu Miyan followed Khan Saheb with "re", "ga", and so on to the "sa" on the higher octave, staying there without a quaver. The crowd cheered and Khan Sahib acknowledged it with folded hands!

Tipu Miyan was Khan Saheb's pet dog. There is no record of whether it was Khan Saheb's revenge on the audience or his effort at training man's best friend.

The writer is a music connoisseur and associated with research in science and technology.



Crests, cash and sweets were distributed among the folk artists. PHOTO: STAR

Information fair and cultural festival held

RABIUL HASAN, Chapainawabganj

A three-day information fair and cultural festival concluded recently in Chapainawabganj town amid festivity. Hundreds of visitors thronged the events every day.

Sachetan Nagorik Committee (SNC), a unit of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) organised the fair and cultural festival at Horimohon Government High School premises supported by the district administration on the occasion of International Right to Information Day. About 40 government, non-government and socio-cultural organisations of the district took part by displaying their activities through leaflets and posters.

Abdul Mannan, DC, Rajshahi inaugurated the fair as chief guest while K.M. Ali Azam, DC of Chapainawabganj, Sajjadur Rahman; Superintendent of Police (SP), Professor Sultana Razia; principal of Chapainawabganj Government College, Abdul Matin; mayor of



The programme included traditional gombhira. PHOTO: STAR

Chapainawabganj municipality and Ruhul Amin, chairman of sadar upazila parishad attended as special guests. Advocate Sohrab Ali, convener of Chapainawabganj SNC chaired the occasion. Local artistes of different cultural organisation in the district participated in the cultural festival. Other attractions at the programme included traditional gombhira by local gombhira troupes.

INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S DAY

Bangladesh Shishu Academy celebrates CHILDREN'S RIGHTS WEEK 2011



The event featured colourful dance performances.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

On the occasion of International Children's Day, Bangladesh Shishu Academy (BSA) is observing Children's Rights Week 2011 at the academy. The main theme of the week is "Tothyo-Projukti Byaboharey Janbey Shishu Jogottakey" (children will get to know the world through information technology).

Emphasising creating a child-friendly environment in the country through ensuring the safety of children from exploitation and deprivation, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the International Children's Day and Children's Rights Week 2011 at the Osmani Memorial auditorium on October 3.

Termining children as future leaders, she said the present government is implementing various programmes for a full flourishing of children and ensuring their equal partnership at all levels in this era of globalisation and information technology.

She also directed the authorities to reduce the huge burden of textbooks for a smooth development of children's creative potential.

The PM later witnessed a cultural programme presented by the children. State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury was the chief guest on Girl Child Day (September 30) programmes held on October 4 at the academy. The programme featured a

rally, assembly of children and cart rides, Ferris wheels, discussion, Mina (cartoon) show and cultural programme.

October 7 marked the third day of the week as the academy remained closed for the previous two days for Durga Puja celebrations. The day was dedicated to underprivileged (employed at works) children while less privileged children assembled yesterday at the academy. Today's programme will feature to varied related activities while tomorrow is designed for upholding the rights activities of street children. The observance of the week will come to an end on October 11. The day is intended for the inspiration of differently-abled children.

Besides holding cultural events everyday, the week will also showcase children's competition (painting, poem and music), magic, photography and painting exhibition, film screening, Sisimpur walk around and many more.

Actors, singers and cultural personalities are regularly visiting BSA to inspire these future nation builders.

BSA in association with Unicef, Plan Bangladesh, Save the Children (Sweden-Denmark), Jatiyo Protibandhi Forum, ELCD Programme, Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum and Jatiyo Konyo Shishu Advocacy Forum have arranged the Children's Rights Week 2011.

Table of TV programmes including ATN Bangla, Channel I, ntv, and Z Studio.

Table of Radio programmes including Radio FM 89.2, Radio Foorti, and Radio Today FM 89.6.

Prokriti O Jibon On Channel I at 11:30pm. Documentary Programme. Host: Mukti Majumdar Babu.

Let Me In On Star Movies at 09:00pm. Genre: Drama/Horror. Cast: Kodi Smit-McPhee, Chloe Grace Moretz.

Shunno, Oti On ntv at 09:00pm. Single Episode TV Play. Cast: Arman Parves, Murad, Moutushi, Bewas.

Table of Star Movies including Music Jam, Robocop, Closer, Nowhere Boy, Let Me In, Robocop, HBO, She's Out of My League, Crank: High Voltage, A Nightmare on Elm Street, Creque de Frank, The Vampire's Assistant, Batman Returns.

Table of Boishakhi TV programmes including Bangla Feature Film, Shorashon Doctor, Prayo Mukh, Reporters Dairy, Boishakhi Sanskriti O Binodon.

Table of ETV programmes including Desh Jury Oporadh, Porikroma, Tara Bhora Raat, Drama Serial: Ohongkar, Ekashy-er Raat, Sunday Live.

Table of Maasranga Television programmes including Bangla Feature Film, Drama Serial, Long March, Desh TV, Gallyey, Sat Kalon, Boishakhi TV, Tokhon Hemanta, ETV, Lolita, Maasranga Television.

Table of News Bulletin programmes including News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm, 10:30 pm, News (English) at 10:00am, 4:00 pm, 10:30 pm, Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm.

Table of News Bulletin programmes including News (Bangla) at 7:30am, 10:30am, 12:00am, 4:00pm, News (English) at 6:00pm, News (Bangla) 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:30 pm, News (Bangla) 7:30am, 12:02pm, 2:00pm, 7:30pm, 12:02pm, 1:00am, ETV, News (Bangla) 9:00am, 11:00 am, 1:00pm, 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 11:00pm.

Table of Talk Show programmes including ATN BANGLA, 10:30am, Lead News, 11:55am, Vision 2020, 04:20pm, Pressang, CHANEL-I, 12:30pm, Tarika Kothon, ntv, 12:00am, Ei Shomoy, Desh TV, 11:45pm, Shuja Kotha, Boishakhi TV, 05:30pm, Orthonir, Chaka, 12:00am, Zere Hour, ETV, 10:10pm, Media, Gossip, Maasranga Television.