

WHAT'S ON

Group Art Exhibition
Title: Express Yourself
Participants: American and Bangladeshi Artists
Venue: Dhaka Arts Centre, H-60, Rd-7A, Dharamoni
Date: Dec 6-17, Time: 6-9pm

Documentary Screening
Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Gulshan-1
Date: December 10
Time: 6:30pm

Group Art Exhibition
Venue: Gallery of Fine Arts, Asiatic Society, Mirtili
Date: Nov 27-Dec 9
Time: 12pm-8pm

Concert
Band: Bohemian
Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Gulshan-1
Date: December 9
Time: 6:30pm

Photography Exhibition
Celebrating 40 years of Independence
Venue: La Galerie and Galerie Zoom
Date: Dec 9-22
Time: 3-9pm

Exhibition
Title: Tagore and Kamha
Venue: Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: Dec 2-10
Time: 11am-7pm

Group Art Exhibition
Title: Masters of Bangladesh
Venue: Radius Centre, Gulshan-1
Date: Nov 25-Dec 17

16th Berger Young Painters' Art Exhibition
Venue: Zamil Gallery, FFA, DU
Date: Dec 11-15
Time: 10am-6pm



PHOTO: MUKUT M.

Jyoti Sinha in "Kohe Birangana".

THEATRE TODAY

"We want to project our culture through theatre"

-- Jyoti Sinha, actress, Manipuri Theatre

JAMIL MAHMUD

Jyoti Sinha, actor of Manipuri Theatre, believes that it is possible to uphold one's cultural identity through performing arts such as theatre. She adds that theatre is also an effective way to preserve and resurrect dying cultural elements. "Initially Manipuri Theatre was our passion. As days passed by, we realised that it was also a way to project our identity," said Jyoti, an accomplished theatre actor of this generation. After her father's death in 1996, Jyoti and her family returned to her village in Kamolganj, Maulvibazar. That year Manipuri Theatre was formed there and she joined the troupe. In 2002, she enrolled in Jahangirnagar University.

The fact that a theatre troupe is operating from a remote village and yet, is reasonably well known to Dhaka audience is a rarity. Jyoti's brilliant performance in the troupe's latest production "Kohe Birangana" helped her as well as the troupe to come into the limelight. Her other memorable performances include "Sri Krishna Kirtan", "Ingal Andhar Pala" and "Ajobpur Barshobaron". "We had a modest beginning. Now we have a concrete idea of what we have to do," said Jyoti. As a troupe from a village it has to face obstacles: the major one being to traverse such a distance, stage a show in Dhaka and finally return to the village. "Each journey is stressful. Yet we come only to get recognition and to demonstrate what we're about," said Jyoti.

So far Manipuri Theatre has produced 27 plays (including stage, street and children's plays) over the last 15 years. Most of the plays are in Manipuri language, and are depictions of Manipuri cultural elements. The troupe predominantly highlights Manipuri traditions such as 'Radha Krishna Pala', 'Ras Leela' etc. At a time when troupes from Dhaka are struggling to ensure professionalism, Manipuri Theatre has already initiated a monthly remuneration system for its members, informed Jyoti. "This system is not what professionalism exactly denotes, yet it is a step to achieve the goal," she said. The troupe also has a small studio, where it holds shows. The troupe is a member of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation (BGTF). Jyoti thinks BGTF can play

more important roles to help troupes outside Dhaka. "As a young theatre activist from outside Dhaka, I have little interaction with senior activists from Dhaka. If BGTF arranges programmes such as workshops and seminars more often where we, the outsiders can join, it would help us immensely," she said. Another issue she feels hinders theatre practice is the lack of venues in and around Dhaka. If more venues are set up in Dhaka, they would get more chances to stage plays in the metropolis, she feels. Jyoti shared that they want to follow the philosophy of Badal Sircar's 'Third Theatre'. As they do not have advanced light and sound equipments, they want to win hearts of the audience through their performances.



Shahabuddin Ahmed and other dignitaries at the inauguration of the gallery.

Tribute to an iconic Tagore's French Connection photographer

RAFFAT BINTE RASHID

"Tobu mone rekho jodi duure jai chole..." is a much-loved, soulful Rabindra Sangeet. But its charm multiplies manifold when you hear the bard rendering it himself in his stirring voice. The French Gala Evening, organised by the France Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIFB) at Radisson Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka on Saturday evening, was where this number from the original archive, sent solely for the occasion, was played as part of the exclusive film of Tagore in France.

The event was split in two sessions -- "Tagore and France" was all about the poet's French connection, the history, literature and music while the second session featured "Riturango", a cultural show on classical composition, recital, song and dance. It was indeed a rare opportunity to be able to listen to the great poet sing his own songs in the documentary film, "Tagore and France", presented by Dr. Samuel Berthet, the Director of Alliance Française in Chittagong.

The relationship between Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore and France is of particular importance. It started with his grandfather Dwarkanath Tagore's visit to France and continued with his brothers, particularly Jyotirindranath. Before his fame spread all over the world in 1913, the talent of Tagore had already attracted the attention of personalities such as the famous traveller Alexandra David Neel and the poet Saint John Terse, French ambassador to London. His association with Romain Rolland paved the way for a historic, first-ever coordinated awakening and mobilisation of world intellectuals. Tagore became a regular visitor of La Maison Autour Monde, the house of famous businessman and patron of the arts Albert Kahn. In this house are kept invaluable archives of the poet and his family.

The first visiting professor invited to Visva Bharati was French scholar Sylvain Levi, in 1921, whose collaboration boosted Tagore's initiative of setting up a



Dancers perform at the programme.

university. His relationship with France also played a pivotal role in the incarnation of the poet as a painter with his first ever exhibition held in Galerie Pigalle in 1939.

Tagore's attraction towards influence on the French artists were immense and some of them rallied his educational experience in Shantiniketan, including French artists Alain Danielou and his companion, the Swiss photographer Raymond Burnier whose photos have been discovered in 2010 and exhibited for the first time in Chittagong and Dhaka this year and then taken to India and Europe.

"Riturango" or celebration of seasons, the second part of the programme, showcased some of the poet's best compositions -- songs, recitations and dances. The colourful and artistically choreographed cultural show paid tribute to the six seasons. In Shantiniketan, seasonal festival was first introduced by Tagore's younger son Shamindranath Tagore. Six-year-old Shami with his two friends staged Bashontotshab (spring festival) with a few songs from Tagore and some extracts from Bangla, English and Sanskrit literature. Certainly this made a deep impact on Tagore's mind

and the second seasonal festival Borshamongol (blessings of the monsoon) was initiated by Tagore himself.

And in today's global context seasons are celebrated all over Bangladesh. These celebrations comprise not only compositions from Tagore but also those of the other eminent Bengali poets. The programme commenced with the song "Akash bhora shurjo tara", describing the innate relationship between the cosmos and humans, between macrocosm and microcosm, the replication of the rhythm of the universe in the rhythm of heart.

"Riturango" was directed by Azizur Rahman Tuhin and choreographed by Tahmina Islam. Songs and recitation were rendered by Azizur Rahman Tuhin, Laisha Ahmed Lisa, Shemonti Manjou, Pabok Dipro and Naima Naz. And the graceful dances were presented by Tahmina Islam, Tarah Shahwar, Minmoy Rahman, Ajmea Jamal and Sraboni Chanda.

CCIFB is the country's oldest foreign chamber with 120 members. This year marks the 15th consecutive time that it has organised such an event. SS Kamal, the president of the Chamber, said in his brief speech, "The chamber this year celebrates the 150th birth anniversary of the Nobel laureate and highlights

Tagore's French connection." Kamal added that the Chamber, along with facilitating business and organising trade fairs, actively takes part in cultural exchange between the two countries. The annual French Gala Event has earned its own reputation in this regard.

The French Ambassador, the chief patron of the Chamber, pointed out that Bangladesh has an economy with considerable potential even during this worldwide economic recession. Its vibrant private sector proved that challenges can be changed into success. Bangladesh enjoys a robust trade index with France.

The evening was a chic affair that reminded us that Tagore had left behind a legacy of 'intellectuality and high spirituality'. The programme was sponsored by T.K. Chemical Complex (gold sponsor), and AEI-English Electric of Bangladesh Ltd, Legrand, Lafarge Surma Cement Ltd, Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd (silver sponsors). The bronze sponsors were Bureau Veritas (bivac) Bangladesh Ltd, ECM group and Knit Concern Ltd while the support sponsors were Aamra and Total.

The writer is Editor, Star Lifestyle

Travels through Liberty

Excerpts from Azam Khan's last interview

When the (Liberation) war broke out, my father told me that if I go to the battlefield, I'd have to come back only after the nation have been liberated. I took it as a challenge. His words encouraged me a great deal on the battlefield.

At the Mela Ghar training camp for MuktiBahini, I and my fellow freedom fighters could not keep the excitement concealed. As far as singing was concerned, it was accentuated by patriotic fervour. We used to take up our tin plates and tap on them with our songs. People from all over the barracks, including the teachers of the refugee camp schools, came to listen or sing with us.

I would not have taken part in the war had I known this is how it'd turn out. Before independence, Bengali politicians were not corrupt; they were inspiring figures. Pakistanis tried to repress us in every way possible. So, the war was inevitable. But is this what we fought for? We had a vision of a state that would uphold the rights of every citizen. Has that happened?

Maybe it's just me, but back in the day people were more passionate about music. We did not create music just to earn money, but rather to entertain the audience and make an impact on them.

Whenever I sang a song, I took my country and the listeners into consideration. I've yet to find my dream song. I've not yet recorded my best song.

I've been bestowed with immense honour and love from the people. I fought for freedom, tried to inspire the youth to stay away from all evils through my music, and in return received love from everyone.



Bangladeshi art exhibition in Agartala

STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Subir Chowdhury (left) Manik Sarkar (C) and Qayyum Chowdhury at the opening of the exhibition.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence, Kirat (an organisation of artists from north-east India) and Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Bangladesh have jointly organised a four day group art exhibition titled "Bangladesh Muktiuddho: Chollish Bochhor" at Agartala City Centre, Tripura.

Chief Minister of Tripura Manik Sarkar inaugurated the exhibition on December 3. Bangladeshi artists Qayyum Chowdhury, Rafiqun Nabi, Pavitra Kar, president of Kirat;

Subir Chowdhury, director of Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, among others, spoke on the occasion. Abul Hasnat, editor of Kali O Kalam, handed over two copies of the magazine to the chief minister at the programme.

The participating Bangladeshi artists are Qayyum Chowdhury, Tahera Chowdhury, Samarjit Roy Chowdhury, Hashem Khan, Rafiqun Nabi, Abdus Shakoor Shah, Ashrafur Hasan and others.

As part of the event, a three-day art workshop is now on at Geetobitan Bhavan, Khayerpur. About 16 painters from Bangladesh, Assam, Tripura, have participated at the workshop.

Portrait of a lady

Feature film on Aung San Suu Kyi

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

At a time when Myanmar is taking the first tentative steps towards restoration of democracy and US Secretary Hillary Clinton met her longtime icon Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar for the first time, it was in the fitness of things that a feature film on that country's most powerful symbol of pro-democracy movement should ring down the curtains on the 42nd International Film Festival of India in Goa.

And the significance of the timing was certainly not lost on acclaimed Malaysian actress Michelle Yeoh who plays Suu Kyi in renowned French director Luc Besson's latest film "The Lady" which is the extraordinary story of bonding between the woman who is at the core of Myanmar's pro-democracy movement and her British husband Michael Aris.

Despite distance, long separations and a dangerously hostile regime, their love endures until the very end. The military junta in Myanmar had not only imprisoned Suu Kyi since 1988 but never allowed her to meet her husband. Even when Aris was dying of prostate cancer, the junta did not allow Suu Kyi to visit him.

"The Lady" is thus a story of devotion and human understanding set against a backdrop of political turmoil in Myanmar.

Yeoh, 48, has so far been known for her roles in movies like "Tomorrow Never Dies", "The Crouching

Tiger Hidden Dragon" and "Memoirs of a Geisha". In Goa, both Yeoh and Besson wore T-shirts carrying pictures of Suu Kyi and slogans in her support.

Yeoh may have Hollywood hits to her credit but said she grew up watching Bollywood films. "I have grown up in Malaysia watching Indian films as we are a very multi-racial community. My mother is a very big cinema buff, so as kids we watched a lot of Indian and Malay films," she said.

"When I see Bollywood movies I understand them and I love the colour and the drama but I don't remember their names. I am very familiar with it and I hope one day I would have the opportunity to make a film in India. You have a beautiful country, it's a great contrast," she said.

The actress said she would love to get the DVD of Bollywood hits "3 Idiots" and "Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara".

Besson's films have always reflected the contemporary troubled times. And his latest directorial venture is no exception.

Besson, whose films were screened at the IFFI in Goa in the category titled "Retrospective", is one of present day Europe's most influential filmmakers and perhaps world cinema's most powerful producers. He shot into fame with what came to be known as "Cinema du look" along with directors Leos Carax and Jean Jacques Beineix. Besson's career consists of more than 50 films, either as a director, producer or writer.

Besson's movies screened at the IFFI include



A scene from "The Lady".

"Angel-A", "Leon the Professional", "The Big Blue", "The Extraordinary Adventures of Adele Blanc-Sec", "The Fifth Element" and "The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc".

His films won awards at the Montreal World Film Festival 2002 and Stockholm Film Festival 2009. For the film "The Messenger: The Story of Joan of Arc" he won the Lumiere Awards for Best Director and Best Film in 2000.

Besson could not shoot "The Lady" in Myanmar and the scenes of the prison, where Suu Kyi was imprisoned for more than two decades, were recreated with the help of Google Earth and 3D technology.

Much before making "The Lady", which released in France last week, Besson had travelled to Myanmar as a tourist with a high definition digital camera and some of its footage has found its way into the film.

"It's unbelievable. A woman who weighs 50kg has the strength to counter the might of a military junta. I wanted to discover how she manages to do this," said Besson.

Gramme Neel Dish	12:15	Retrospective
Antenna		
09:50 Look at Me	12:35	HBO
12:05 Kichu Dekha Kichu	02:25	Love Wrecked
Kotha	04:55	Out Of Sight
		Iron Man 2
ETV	07:40	04:55 Ace Ventura: Pet Detective
09:50 Ekushey-er Business	09:30	Without a Paddle
04:30 Gaaner Opare	11:35	Kick-Ass
05:30 Bindonder Bishwa		
07:50 Music Station		
08:20 Drama Serial: Ohongkar		
BANGLAVISION		
11:05 Shokal Belar Raddur	03:30	Breakout Kings
01:05 Bangla Feature Film	09:30	Master Chef USA
05:20 Poriksha Protsati	10:30	The Shield
09:05 Chaki Chai	11:30	The Big Bang Theory
11:25 Raat Biratey		National Geographic Channel
Desh TV		
04:30 Durpath	02:30	Situation Critical
06:30 Obak Pitribhai	05:30	Africa's Deadliest
07:45 Drama Serial: Gohinye	11:30	Caught in the Act
09:45 Pothe Jete Jete		Discovery Channel
10:30 Binodon Dunia	03:30	Stan Lee's Superheroes
12:30 Total Sports	08:30	Megakuake
Boishakhi TV	09:30	Man vs. Wild
10:30 Bangla Feature Film	11:30	My Shocking Story
04:15 Shorashor Doctor		BBC World

DRAMA SERIAL			
ATN BANGLA		09:05pm	Boiya Paribar
08:00pm	Adarsha Mess Bari	11:30pm	Dot Com Fantasy
09:20pm	Poush Phaguner Pala	ETV	
CHANNEL i		09:30pm	Ghatik Baki Bhai
07:50pm	Kuschar Phona	BANGLAVISION	
09:35pm	Obogunthan	08:15pm	No Problem
ntv		Desh TV	
09:45pm	Akasher Niche Manush	08:15pm	Sat Kahon
Rtv		Maasranga Television	

NEWS BULLETIN

BTV News (Bangla) at 8:00 am 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm News (English) at 10:00am, 4:00 pm, 10:00 pm Late News (Bangla) at 11:30 pm, (To be telecast on all Bangla channels) CHANNEL-i News (Bangla): 7:00 am, 9:00 am, 2:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 12:30 pm, 12:30 am ATN BANGLA NEWS (Bangla): 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm, 1:00 am, 4:00 am 01:00pm, 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00 am, 6:00 pm News (English): 9:00 am, 11:00 am	BANGLAVISION News (Bangla) at 7:30am 1:30pm, 5:00pm, 7:15pm, 10:30pm. News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00am, 12:00am, 4:00pm. News (English) at 6:00pm Rtv News (Bangla): 2:30 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:30 am ntv News (Bangla): 7:30am, 12:02pm, 2:00pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm, 1:00am ETV News (Bangla): 9:00am, 11:00 am, 3:00pm, 5:00pm, 7:00pm, 9:00pm, 11:00pm
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TALK SHOW					
ATN BANGLA		ETV			
12:30am	Lead News	10:10pm	Galpo Shalpo	Gaan	
CHANNEL-i					
09:45am	Tritio Matra	Desh TV	11:45pm	Shoja Kotha	
	Taroka Kothon	Boishakhi TV			
ntv		12:00am	Zero Hour		
12:30am	El Shomoy	Maasranga Television			
Rtv		07:30pm	Prime Issue		
10:40am	Tarokalap	12:00am	Shamprotik		
07:40pm	Our Democracy				