

WHAT'S ON

Group Art Exhibition
Title: Express Yourself
Participants: American and Bangladeshi Artists
Venue: Dhaka Arts Centre, H-60, Rd-7, Dhammudi
Date: Dec 8-17, Time: 6-9pm

GongMyong Concert
Organiser: Embassy of the Republic of Korea
Venue: Auditorium, National Museum, Shabrang
Date: Dec 11

Group Art Exhibition
Venue: Gallery of Fine Arts, Asiatic Society, Nimgali
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 Kanta
Venue: Art Gallery, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Date: Dec 2-10
Time: 11am-7pm

Group Art Exhibition
Title: Masters of Bangladesh '11
Venue: Radius Centre, Gulshan-1
Date: Nov 25-Dec 17

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



Social slant Three films screened in Mymensingh



A scene from the short film "The Rejected".

AMINU ISLAM, Mymensingh

Three short films were screened on December 1 at the district Shilpakala Academy Auditorium: "Khino Alor Artonad" (The Cry of Soft Light), "Nishiddho Adhar" (Darkness in Confinement) and "The Rejected".

"Khino Alor Artonad" was written by Atiqur Rahman Sagar while "Nishiddho Adhar" and "Rejected" were scripted by Razib Khan Pathan. The short films were produced under the banner of Dhupchaya Sangskritik Sangathan, a cultural organisation consisting of young artists.

Rajib Khan Pathan, (chairman of Dhupchaya) and Atiqur Rahman Sagar has directed the short films.

The cast of the short films included Shihab, Rony, Nizam, Sunny, Jasim, Mosharraf, M.A. Motalab, Sumon, Abdur Rashid, Sagar, Boby, Bappi, Sabbir, Arnab, Habib, Nurpur, Rima and Naushin.

"Khino Alor Artonad" depicted the threatening presence of vested quarters even as a group of socially conscious young people struggle to eliminate the disparity that has persisted in society for centuries.

In "Nishiddho Adhar", the lifestyle of the socially deprived children was depicted. They are used by the influential for their selfish purposes.

In "The Rejected", the conflict of youths belonging to middle-class families was addressed.

In his welcome speech, Rajib Khan Pathan said, "Due to lack of producers and financial and technical constraints, our initiatives are being hampered. As students, we need greater help to go in for more films in the future."

Last year the group produced two short films -- "Bastobota" (and "Wai and See".

Travels through Liberty In conversation with Professor Abdullah Abu Sayeed

Bengalis have always been avid readers. The phrase, 'Bangali Babu' originated from that trait. We had our own cultural/literary renaissance in Bengal.

During the Pakistan era, reading for the sake of personal enrichment was gradually on the wane. After independence the situation was worse. The standard of formal education has gone down as well. Do you think those who don't really pay any attention to textbooks, would read other books?

Our libraries don't let readers borrow books and take them home. Outside Dhaka, libraries are few and far between.

Considering this dearth in national reading habit, Bishwo Shahitto Kendro has involved 10,000 schools in our programme that encourages reading as an extracurricular activity. The programme benefits 10,000 students.

Our aim is to double that number in foreseeable future.

Back in the day when we were kids, our schools had libraries and librarians. Now most schools have neither. Most stu-

dents are not even aware that there are books other than the ones they have to read at school. This is appalling! Successive governments don't seem to care that there are no libraries at schools and international donors don't seem to consider libraries a necessity.

Greek philosophers believed that only when one had attained a beautiful mind and health, one can make the most of wealth. In other words, refinement of the soul is necessary to become an evolved human being. In our country, wealth has arrived but enlightenment hasn't. And this is disconcerting because humanity is led by the enlightened. When they are on the right track, the world is in safe hands.

When we, at Bishwo Shahitto Kendro, realised that libraries are not becoming popular we decided to take the libraries to potential readers. Our Mobile Library project has become quite popular but the progress, however, is slower than we expected.

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World premiere of "1971" on Baishakhi Television



(From left) Ahsan Kabir, Tanvir Mokammel and Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul at the press conference.

A CORRESPONDENT

The world premiere of Tanvir Mokammel's upcoming documentary "1971" will be aired on Baishakhi Television. The nearly four-hour documentary on the Liberation War will be aired on December 16 at 2:45pm. A re-telecast will take place on the following day at the same time. The documentary is divided into two episodes.

The announcement was made at a press conference held at the Reporters' Unity on December 5. Among others, Baishakhi's Deputy Chief of programme Ahsan Kabir; Chief Editor and Executive Manzurul Ahsan Bulbul and the filmmaker Tanvir Mokammel were present at the press conference.

The research and shooting of the documentary took a time period of nearly seven years. A total of 250 hours stock footage was collected for it. In

Bangladesh, shooting took place in several districts including Dhaka, Chittagong, Comilla, Sylhet, Rangpur, Khulna and Barisal. The crew also went to India for the shooting. The location ranged over Kolkata, Delhi and places where refugees stayed during the War.

Mokammel collected various stock footage from different archives of Europe and America. The filmmaker interviewed over 176 individuals including freedom fighters, politicians, sector commanders, Birangana, refugees and witnesses of the Liberation War in general.

Renowned cinematographer Anwar Hossain was behind the camera, while Mahadev Shi did the editing. Syed Shabab Ali Arzu did the background scores. Uttam Guha is the assistant director. Apart from direction, Mokammel also did the research and screenplay. The documentary is produced by the Kino Eye Films.

A glorious era UPL's book fest on Liberation War

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To mark the 40th anniversary of Independence, the University Press Limited (UPL) will hold a book festival featuring writings on the War of Liberation. The festival will begin on December 9 at UPL Bookstore at Shahjadpur near Badda.

The highlight of the festival will be 71 books UPL has produced on the Liberation War. Some re-prints as well as new books and co-publications will also be displayed during the festival. Apart from them, books on other issues will be available.

The festival authority also takes the initiative in such fields as discussions and essay writings to encourage awareness among the younger generation of the glorious achievement of liberation.

During the festival, UPL will also inaugurate its Book Club. People will be able to purchase books with up to 50% discount.

The festival will continue till December 23, and will remain open from 10am to 7pm.

books will be held throughout the fest. The featured books include "Sheishob Pakistani" (author: Muntasir Mamun); "Pakistani-der Drishtie Ekattur" (edited by Muntasir Mamun and Mohiuddin Ahmed); "Mooldhara '71" (author: Mould Hassan) and "Historicising Genocide: Genocide 1971" (author: Professor Imtiaz Ahmed); and "Fault Lines Stories from 1971" (edited by Professor Niaz Zamam and Asif Farrukhi).

The essay writing competition will feature books from universities and colleges. There will be two topics: "How to encourage the dot-com generation to read more books" and "An analytical review of any UPL book on Liberation War".

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Runa Laila recreates '70s magic

The magic of the melodious 1970s was back with a bang on Friday night as the Bangladeshi queen of music, Runa Laila, took centre stage at the Qutub Shahi Tombs to make Day 7 of the Times Hyderabad Festival a mehfil the city will not forget too soon. Dazzling in a bright pink sari and a million-watt smile the versatile singer, who rocked three film industries (in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan) for well over three decades (between 1960s and 1980s), mesmerised the Hyderabadi not just with her charismatic voice but also her humble persona.

Despite a hysterical crowd that made one too many demands of the artist -- sometimes for a popular track and sometimes for "adjustments" in the accompanying orchestra -- the diva looked the least perturbed. In fact, she willingly obliged the gathering and even hummed a few verses, which were not on her list for the night, to please her fans.

Her grace and calm composure coupled with her soothing notes -- whether in Hindi, Bangla or even Punjabi -- made the audience relish every bit of the evening. "When she (Laila) sings, language is no barrier. Even if you don't understand the lyrics you want to sing along with her," said P Hemalata who was seen clapping and cheering with full vigour when Laila started the evening with "Je Jon Prem-er Baahab Jane Na", a Bangla folk song.

Even her rendition in Punjabi that followed next found many takers among the non-Punjabi speaking population present at the venue. So did "Shadher Lau", the hugely popular Bangla number. In fact, the audience that was seen sitting still on the seats as the musical genius dished out one breathtaking ghazal after another -- from "Unhi Nazroon Se Mohabat Ka Jo..." (from the film "Hum Tum") or "Katyain Hain Kaise Re" (from the album "The Loves of Runa Laila") -- jumped to their feet to shake the tune, his gesture added to the charm of the musical event.

But the best was clearly saved for the last. As the show neared its end, Laila unleashed on the crowd "De Pyar De" (from "Sharabi") and followed it up with "Mera Bhai Chai Chabila" (from "Mann Ki Jeet").

Soon after she started her do on stage, all hell broke loose off stage as both the young and old broke into an absolute frenzy. The loud sound of applauses, whistles and cheers filled the chilly air at the historic venue as Hyderabadi danced to the sound of mind-boggling music. However, "Dama Dam Mast Qalandar" from her debut movie (as singer) "Ek Se Badhkar Ek" stole the show like always.

The pulse of the evening started to race further when the diva opened her treasure

Source: The Times of India

trove of Bollywood chartbusters starting with "Mujhe Pyar Tumse Nahi Hai" from the 1977 release, "Gharonda". Then came the turn of "Deewane", from the same movie. Taking the maddening crowd completely by surprise, Laila called for a male voice from among the audience to be her "Bhupinder" (the male singer in the duet) for the evening. A young fan rushed to grab the moment, and though completely out of tune, his gesture added to the charm of the musical event.

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