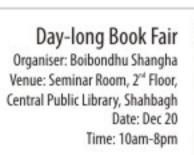
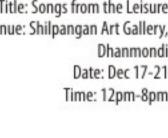
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# Penning songs for over two decades

Tête-à-tête with Mahmud Khurshid



A CORRESPONDENT

Who hasn't heard the evergreen Miles songs "Phiriye Dao", "Bhulbona Tomake", "Dhiki Dhiki" and "Jala Jala". These songs are still fresh in the memories of millions of fans, and they were penned by Mahmud Khurshid. Twenty-one years on and Khurshid is still going strong.

On the occasion of 40 years of independence of our country, George Harrison's iconic song "Bangladesh" has been translated in Bangla by Khurshid. The song was performed by Miles.

Mahmud Khurshid is a man of many talents and is actively involved with several social and cultural activities. He started with writing rhymes at a young age and later shifted to short prose. He wrote his first song "Ek Jhor Eshey", later titled "Shopno Bhongo" (in 1989), when his friends who were forming a band. That band, Octave, requested him to write songs for them. The song did not come out in Octave's album but his other songs did. "Shopno Bhongo" was later taken up by Miles and came out in their second album in 1991.

His first released song was "Tumi Chole Gechho", the title song of Octave's album. Next, he wrote lyrics for Miles, which instantly brought him into the limelight.

Some of Khurshid's popular songs like "Phiriye Dao", "Neela", "Dhiki Dhiki Agun Joley" appeared with "Shopno Bhongo", "Jadu", "Ridoyheena" and other songs in Miles' second album "Prottasha". In fact most of Miles' (four albums) hit songs are written by Mahmud.

Khurshid also wrote the popular numbers "Josh" and "Uru Uru Monta" performed by feedback. Warfaze's "Dhupchaya", "Aasha" and "Mounota" are also written by him.

Besides bands, he also wrote songs for several artistes such as Ankhi Alamgir, Kaniz Shuborna, Mehreen Khan, Waqar Chowdhury, Lopa Hussain, Dilruba Khan, Khaled Hassan Milu, Feroz, Lyla and many others. In 2004 he was awarded the Bhashani Padak as a lyricist.

"The lyrics of most my songs are tuned while they're still in the process of being written. The lyrics and the music are interlaced in a complementary manner," he adds. "'Phiriye Dao was instantly cooked up in the studio. Not all songs came so spontaneously though, like 'Bhulbona' for example which I wrote over a span of six months."

As a lyricist, Khurshid also takes into account the artiste who will sing his song. He says, "Lyrics conveys messages to the audience." I have remained cautious whether the song will communicate with the target audience or not.

Speaking on why he thinks his songs have longevity, the lyricist says, "'Phiriye Dao' was actually inspired by lines from Tagore's 'Shesher Kobita'." He was also inspired by Kishore Kumar and Kazi Nazrul Islam's songs. "Having knowledge about global music trends is also important. When writing 'Obak Shahar Dhaka', sung by Mehreen Khan, I not only kept her style and the type of song that goes with her voice in mind, but also wanted it to have a Latin vibe, as it is becoming more popular these days."

Apart from writing songs, Khurshid also wrote the jingles for Banglalink, School Football Campaign (with FIFA and AFC) and Food for Hunger (WFP,

# CULTURAL TRANSFORMATIONS

**IACSS Biennial Conference in Dhaka** 

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University hosted the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society (IACSS) Biennial Conference on December 17 and 18.

The conference, titled "Cultural Transformations: Development Initiatives and Social Movements", opened at BRAC Inn Auditorium on December 17 morning.

The conference of the IACSS, which is a consortium of universities in South, East and South East Asia, critically explores the relationship between culture and socio-political/economic changes. This instalment of the confer ence focused on development and tried to explore its links with culture and collective values.

The conference has a three-fold objective: Stimulating the growth of cultural studies in Bangladesh and South Asia not only in academia but also in social sectors; contribute to



"remapping" inter-Asia cultural studies to bring South Asia to the centre and provide the opportunity for formally launching the innovative inter-regional post-graduate programme which the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Society is

working towards designing Apart from BRAC University, participants of the conference included

National University of Singapore; Lingnan University in Hong Kong; Tokyo University; Sungkonghoe University in Seoul; University of Jakarta; Centre for the Study of Cultu and Society of Bangalore etc.

On December 17, the conference opened with a welcome address by Firdous Azim, Chairperson,

Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University. In her speech Azim said: "We hope that many delegates from outside the country will find this conference useful as it provides them with another example of the way a small Asian country has tried to refashion itself. For our Bangladeshi participants, the opportunity to

exchange views with scholars and activists from various locations would hopefully provide fresh impetus to their thoughts and ideas.

Professor A.K. Azad Chowdhury (State Minister), Chairperson, University Grants Commission of Bangladesh, was the chief guest. Professor Ainun Nishat, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University, chaired the opening session. Professor Syed Hashemi, Director, BRAC Development Institute and Acting Chairperson, Department of Economics and Social Sciences, gave the vote of thanks.

Keynote addresses -- "Being someone's symbolic other: A cultural study for South Asia" and "Presence of the Past: Cultural Connectivities and Continuities in Asia" -- were presented by Ashish Rajadhyaksha (Senior Fellow, Centre for the Study of Culture and Society, Bangalore, India) and Professor Perween Hasan (Vice Chancellor, Central Women's University, Dhaka) respectively.



Two popular media personalities of our country share a common birth date, on December 20. One of them is actor-director Afsana Mimi and the other is the model-actor Nobel.

Mimi started her career with theatre. She joined the theatre troupe Nagorik Natya Sampraday and later moved on to the mini screen. Mimi became a favourite of the masses within a very short span of her career. Presently, she has her hands full directing a

When asked how she would like to spend the special day, Mimi said that she does not have any particular plan, and that she'd be busy with work throughout the day. But all the wishes and felicitations of people close to her and her fans would make all the difference. She was also hopeful that the coming days will be rewarding and productive.

On the other hand, Nobel says he too will be spending his birthday working, as it is the year-end. But his children always arrange something or the other on his birthday. It is the children who enjoy and make the most of the day. The love of family and relatives will make the day more special, said Nobel.



# Birthday celebrations for Mimi and Nobel



mega serial, "Poush Phaguner Pala".



### THEATRE TODAY



The overall theatre scene is not as active as Hasan Shahriar would like it to be. Shahriar is the editor of the theatre-based journal Theatrewala. He is of the view that the number of theatre journals and magazines would increase with rise in theatre

cinema was seemingly at its peak, you'd find several film magazines such as Chitrali, and these magazines attained popularity. When the film industry started to collapse, these magazines crashed too,"

"If you look back at the era when Bangla

Shahriar's initiation happened in his nometown Comilla in 1985. Later he enrolled at Jahangirnagar University and joined the campus-based troupe, Jahangirnagar Theatre. After completing his studies, he and several of his friends came to Dhaka and formed a branch of Jahangirnagar Theatre in 1993. In 1998, the troupe changed its name to Drishyapat. "Socrates-er Jobanbondi",

"Narok Gulzar" and "Naag Mandal" are som of the popular productions of the troupe. Shahriar has played significant roles in these Shahriar affirmed that though Drishyapat has some popular plays to its credit, it's not that active of late. He tried

several times to revive the troupe but failed. As a result, he had to choose

another way to stay involved with theatre From that perspective, he launched Theatrewala in 1999. "It's hard to regain a position that you've once lost in theatre. You have to be

## "More theatre activities would ensure more journals"

-- Hasan Shahriar, editor, Theatrewala



A scene from "Shylock and Sycophants".

involved in some way. When our troupe was going through a rough phase, I realised that not only us, rather several other troupes were going through this. So I and a couple of my friends decided to launch a journal on theatre," he said.

Unfortunately, Shahriar could not run the journal smoothly either. Although initially the issues were published regu larly, he soon faced an uphill battle. Lack of financial support is the main problem he said. "I have a vision that my journal would be appreciated by all activists."

Under the circumstance, the innovative Shahriar came up with another idea. He launched a repertory theatre group called 'Theatrewala Repertory' in 2008. The

"Shylock and Sycophants", has been

auded by the critics.

"I just wanted to initiate a professional attitude in theatre. Sometimes I have to subsidise a show. But the truth is that perormers are earning a meagre amount from each show," he said.

> Shahriar could not manage to stage a show in last three months, as the troupe couldn't rent a hall. "When a theatre enthusiast asks me when the next show would be staged, I cannot give him/her a proper answer, as I don't know either," he

Shahriar also feels that an executive body should be formed to decide which plays should be staged at the three venues at Shilpakala Academy. He said that theatre needs star performers who would draw troupe's debut and only production so far, the audience in droves to the theatre.

## Photography exhibition on Liberation War

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Alokchitra Shilpi Sangsad (Ashis) organised a photography exhibition on December at Boishakhi Mancha of Shaheb Quarter Park area in the town marking the 40th anniversary of the Liberation War. More than 200 photographs, including 40

on the War of Liberation taken by interna tionally reputed photographer late Nayeb Uddin Ahmed, were displayed at the exhib tion. It was the 35th exhibition by Ashis. The other photographs were on wildlife

environment, agriculture, culture and heritage, nature and daily life of the common people. A good number of visitors thronged the venue to enjoy the exhibition. Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Lokman Hossain Miah inaugurated the

Bichitra Barua presided. Among others, mayor of Mymensingh

exhibition as chief guest. Upazila Nirbah

Officer (UNO) of sadar upazila Shibir

municipality Ekramul Haque Titu, acting president of Ashis Md. Mosharraf Hossain its vice-president Dr. Abul Mansur, programme officer of Mennonite Central Committee Bangladesh Peter Musgrave and Subudh Chandra Chanda addressed the inaugural session of the exhibition. Ashis secretary AHM Motalab delivered the welcome speech.

The speakers at the inaugural session said that photographs taken during the War of Liberation drew the attention of international communities who later came forward to assist the war victims.

Internationally reputed photographer also president of Bangladesh Bird Association Enam Al Haque; mountaineer M A Muhit; Adiluzzaman Adil; Mazeda Begum; Biplob Kumar Guha Manik; Shanta Roy; Prithish Sarker; Shahidur Rahman Hira; Abdul Halim: M.A Rushu: Ratan Sarker: Surindra Kishore Dutt Chowdhury; Motalab-bin-Ayet; among others displayed their photos at the exhibition.

### Farmers day out Village fair in Jhenidah

AZIBOR RAHMAN, Ihenidah

A three-day Grameen Jibon Jatra Mela( village fair) from December 17 was held at the village Mohesshwar Chanda primary school premises under Kaliganj upazila in Jhenidah. The mela has been organised with the initiative of local NGO Sonar Bangla Foundation led by Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods(CSRL). AL lawmaker Abdul Mannan inaugurate

the mela on Saturday. Deputy Commis-

sioner (DC) Roma Rani Roy of Jhenidah

were present as special guests.

Kaliganj upazila chairman Anwarul Azim

Anar and Upazila UNO Anjumanara Begum

people attended the rally. An unprecedented cart rally was brought out spontaneously by the local farmers. A traditional lath khela(traditional martial art), painting competition, Baul songs and a cultural function were the other highlights. Besides, local sports were held as well. Around 30 carts took part in the rally, while five groups took part in the lathi

Thousands of farmers, students and local

khela. A musical evening was held at the school grounds

process.

Discussants said that if such inspirational programmes for peasants are held in rural areas they will be inspired to interact with their peers and gather knowledge in the

### Information fair concludes in Jamalpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

A two-day information fair was held at the Baishakhi Mela premises in Jamalpur recently. Supported by Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB) and the District Administration, Sacheton Nagorik Committee (SANAC) of

the district unit organised the event. Chief guest Deputy Speaker Shawkat Ali inaugurated the Mela. Thirty three stalls equipped with computers

and information material of government and non-government organisations were set up at The organisations displayed and distributed

leaflets, posters, booklets and brochures which had information about their services. Anticorruption cartoons were also on display. Cultural functions, organised by Zila Shilpakala Academy and Shishu Academy, were held at the fair each day. An anti-

corruption play "Durnitir Katha" presented by

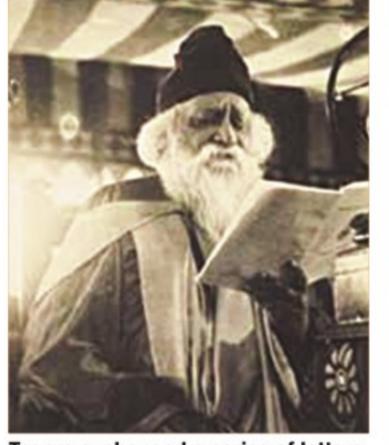
Gononatydal of SANAC was also staged. Presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sirajuddin Ahmed, special guests Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, executive director, TIB, Md. Abdur Razzak, Superintendentof Police (SP), Bijon Kumar Chanda, Sadar upazila chairman and Advocate BakiBillah, President, District Lowers' Association addressed the gathering at

Speakers said the Right to Information Act is a strong instrument through which democracy can be institutionalised. This act can help establish good governance, prevent corruption from the country and ensure empowerment of the citizens, they added.

the inaugural function of the event.



# Argentine film to spotlight Tagore and his muse



Tagore exchanged a series of letters with Ocampo

Argentine director Pablo Cesar's new film project is about the iconic Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore's "intimate but platonic" relationship with Argentine feminist writer, literary magazine editor and cultural activist, Victoria Ocampo.

The crux of the film, Thinking of Him, hinges on Tagore's 1924 Argentine sojourn during which he forged a deep emotional bond with "The film will be set partly in

1920s," says Cesar. "The idea is to emphasise the continuing relevance of Tagore. "I began pre-production in 2008

present times and partly in the

following a suggestion made by India's ambassador to Argentina. But I could not wrap up the film in time for Tagore's 150th birth anniversary as the research and fundin process took longer than expected, says Cesar. Cesar hopes to have Thinking of

Him ready for global distribution in 2012. "The resonance of Tagore's

poetry and world view is still very fresh and absolutely relevant. So it really doesn't matter that the film

won't hit the screens in the 150th

year of his birth," says the director Ocampo idolised Tagore ever since she read Andre Gide's French translation of Gitanjali in 1914, a yea after Tagore won the Nobel Prize.

The illustrious poet had a huge

influence on the Argentine writer

who was then in her mid-30s and lived to be 88. For his part, Tagore, who was 63 years old in 1924, not only dedicated his 1925 book of poems, Purabi, to

his Argentine muse but was also inspired by her to take up paintin In 1930, Ocampo organised the poet's first art exhibition in Paris where they met in person for the second and last time.

However, until he passed away in 1941, Tagore exchanged a series of letters with Ocampo.

Ocampo was legally separated from her husband - divorce wasn't possible in Catholic Argentina of the day - in the wake of an affair with his cousin but she never remarried Tagore's stay in Argentina was

He went on to spend two months

and Omar Khayyam as well as traditional qawwalis and Sufi songs." unscheduled. He was on the way Cesar says he hopes Bollywood from Europe to Peru when he was forced by illness to disembark in Tagore.

legend Amitabh Bachchan will play recuperating in a garden villa over- SOURCE: BBC

looking the River Plate in San Isidro,

in the suburbs of Buenos Aires.

addressed in his letters as Bijoya,

looked after the poet with the dili-

Tagore recovered and wrote as

many as 30 poems while in San Isidro.

One of them-- Atithi (The Guest)-

opens with the lines, "The days of

my sojourn overseas, you filled to

the fullest, woman, with the nectar

Thinking of Him will be an Eng-

lish-Bengali-Spanish film to be shot

on location in Santiniketan, Bolpur,

Cesar's association with India

goes back to 1996, when he shot

first-ever Indo-Argentine co-

production, in Rajasthan

Unicornio-- Garden of Fruits, the

and Jodhpur," he recalls. "On the

"I filmed in and around Jaisalmer

soundtrack, we used poems of Kabir

Ocampo, whom Tagore

gence of a devoted admirer.

of your sweetness'

Buenos Aires and Paris.

Drama Serial: Shahaj Priyo Shilpir Priyo Gaan

The Ring Two

All I Want for Christmas Ong Bak 3: The Final

RADIO TODAY FM 89.6



Star World

Master Chef USA The Sheild 11:30 The Big Bang Theory National Geographic

My Shocking Story

World Business Report DRAMA SERIAL 11:30pm Dot Com Fantasy

> 08:15pm No Problem Maasranga Television

### NEWS BULLETIN

News (Bangla) at 7:30am. News (English) at 10:00am, 1:00 pm, 10:00 pm. .ate Night News (Bangla a nglish) 11:30 pm. (To be News (English) at 6:00pm

telecast on all Bangla CHANNEL-i 4:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 8:30 pm, News (Bangla): 7:00 am, 10:30 pm, 12:30 am atn Bangla NEWS (Bangla): 7:00 pm, 0:00 pm, 11:00 pm, 1:00 m, 4:00 am 01:00pm, 3:00pm, 04:00pm

TALKSHOW

### 10:10pm Galpo Shalpo Gaan

2:30am Lead New 09:45am Tritio Matra 12:30pm Taroka Kotho 12:30am Ei Shomoy 10:40am Tarokalap

Desh TV 11:45pm Shoja Kotha 12:00am Zero Hour 12:00am Shamprotik

7:40pm Our Democracy