

WHAT'S ON

Celebrating Life Shadinata Concert Organiser: The Daily Star Venue: Suhrawardy Uddyan, Dhaka Date: March 31

Solo Musical Soiree Singer: Sabina Yasmin Venue: Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, H-24, Rd-2, Dhanmohi Date: March 30 Time: 6:30pm

Solo Art Exhibition Artist: Yuki Odakura Venue: Zanzai Gallery, Faculty of Fine Arts, DU Date: March 25-30 Time: 11am-5pm

World Theatre Day Drama Festival Organiser: Transparency International Bangladesh Venue: Suhrawardy Uddayan Date: March 27-28 Time: 4pm

Theatre Play: Ebonj Bidyayagar Troupe: Anayak Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy Date: March 28 Time: 7pm

Exhibition Title: Bazanyan Ananya Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, H-42, Rd-16 (New), Dhanmohi Date: March 24-28 Time: 12-4pm

Prkriti Mela '12 Venue: Channel office, 40, Shahid Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Tejgaon Date: March 31 Time: 11am-5pm

Theatre Play: Sheeh Sanglax Troupe: Shanyo Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy Date: March 28 Time: 7pm

The art of recreating the past

In conversation with Selina Hossain

KARIM WAHEED Historians and fiction (in particular historical fiction) writers are strange bedfellows. Where does one draw the line? According to author Selina Hossain, "When you want hardcore facts, you should go for history or news reports. The purpose of historical fiction is to provide the reader with a feel of being present at a particular event through the perspective of characters. This is essentially an art of recreating the past, entirely dependent on the literary process of a writer."

Hossain, a recipient of numerous national and international honours (including a Bangla Academy Award in 1980), delves deep into Liberation War in Bengali literature. "The end of 'Hangor, Nodi, Grenade' is a true story," she says. The novel is considered an outstanding specimen of Bengali fiction on the theme of Liberation War. "One of my teachers told me the story of a woman who gave up her own son to Pakistani soldiers to save two freedom fighters. In the process of writing a novel, centring this incident, I had to give the protagonist a past which is obviously fiction," the author continues. "Akhteruzzaman Elias' 'Chilekothar Sepai' gives accounts of the Mass Uprising (1969) through perspectives of its protagonist. Literature can also address historic events through allusions or analogies. In the novel, 'Neel Mayur-er Jouban', I've narrated the story of a poet from the Charjapad era whose hand is severed by the King as a punishment for writing in the language of the masses. This is a reference to our Language Movement," Hossain says.

In another novel, 'Juddho,' the author describes a mass slaughter of Bengalis by the Biharis in Syyedpur during the war -- a true story. Apparently, the Biharis living in that area made announcements



Selina Hossain at a mass grave in Kasbah, Brahmanbaria. This burial ground near the border has 51 graves (including two unmarked ones) of people killed during the Liberation War.

that they have arranged a special shuttle for Bengalis and Hindus that would carry them across the border. Many showed up and were mercilessly butchered. "The depiction of the war in our TV plays and films, however, is often commercialised and incomplete. It seems this historic event has not been translated well on celluloid. I'd give Chashi Nazrul Islam credit for his sincere efforts in adapting 'Hangor, Nodi, Grenade' for the big screen but unfortunately the film didn't shine in its own merit; the essence was somewhat lost in translation. But these efforts are commendable nevertheless, as the core facts and values of the war have not been distorted. Besides this is an effective way to educate the illiterate portion of our populace on the national history," Hossain remarks.

"We need other perspectives on the war as well. I met Pakistani writer Atia Dawood at a writers' forum for SAARC countries. She gave moving accounts of the last days of the war. When the news broke that General Niazi has surren-

dered, Atia's parents cried. There was no resentment but a sense of loss -- the kind one endures when a relative is lost, that's how Atia put it," she says. The author is hopeful that the post-Liberation War generation of writers will further enrich this genre of fiction with fresh, new ideas and viewpoints. She specifically mentions "A Golden Age" by Tahmima Anam. "Her (Tahmima's) debut novel has been translated in several languages and lauded internationally ('A Golden Age' won the 2008 regional Commonwealth Best First Book prize), thus drawing the attention of a wider, global readership to the Liberation War. From someone who has not experienced the war firsthand, this is a remarkable accomplishment.

However, while writing on historical events, writers should be factually correct regarding dates and venues," Hossain says. Selina Hossain is currently working on a novel on 'chhitmahal' (enclaves), which would address the Liberation War as well.

Agony of women

Monodrama fest at Natmandal

JAMIL MAHMUD A three-day monodrama festival featuring as many plays was held at the Natmandal auditorium of Dhaka University, from March 24-26. Theatre-based journal, "Manchakatha" arranged the festival that featured "Kokilara", "Ami Birangana Bolchhi" and "Lal Jamin". All the three plays predominantly depict the woes and agony of women. "Kokilara" is a tale of a poor village girl. On the other hand, "Ami Birangana Bolchhi" and "Lal Jamin" both reflect the anger of women who made tremendous sacrifices during the Liberation War, yet received nothing in return.

On the inaugural day, Theatre (Bailey Road) staged its resurrected version of the old play "Kokilara". Featuring veteran actor Ferdousi Majumdar as the protagonist, Sudip Chakraborty has re-designed the play. The play was originally written and directed by the late Abdullah Al Mamun.

"Kokilara" is a monologue of a poor girl, who arrives in the city from a remote area and comes face to face with the hardship of living in an urban area. The girl, Kokila, is abused by one of her landlords, while the others ironically take stands against her.

Apart from redesigning, Chakraborty also did the light design for the play. The play narrates the story of a young girl. Initially it was a bit discomfiting to see veteran actor Ferdousi Majumdar in the role; nevertheless she matched the role with her brilliant performance. Majumdar was the actor during the play's early phase as well.

On the second day, Nagarik Natyangan staged "Ami Birangana Bolchhi". Lucky Enam has adapted the play from Dr. Nilima Ibrahim's literary work. Enam also directed the



"Kokilara" depicts woes of a poor girl, who arrives in the city from a remote area.

play and acted as the protagonist. The play is about a woman named Shefali, who has lost everything during the war. Although the nation has recognised women like Shefali as Birangana, the question that the play throws up is how much have we given them back in return?

Mahmudul Islam Selim was the set, light and art designer of the play. Shunnon Theatre's "Lal Jamin" was staged on the last day. The monodrama -- based on the

Liberation War has been written by Mannan Heera and directed by Sudip Chakraborty. The play reveals a female freedom fighter's involvement in the war and her woes after 41 years of independence.

Momena Chowdhury, played the protagonist. Ramiz Raju and Julfikar Chanchal directed the music. An added attraction is a flute recital by Bari Siddiqui. A large audience enjoyed the shows each day.

WINNING STREAK

In conversation with Shakib Khan

SHAH ALAM SHAZU Shakib Khan won the Best Actor National Film Award-2010, for his performance in the movie "Bhalobashlei Ghor Badha Jae Na". The most popular and sought-after movie star of the time, Shakib Khan has the ability to make an instant hit of any film he stars in. The prominent actor has also been elected as the president of the Choloচিত্র শিল্পী শামিত্তে. Shakib Khan recently talked to The Daily Star about his winning streak.

How do you feel after winning the National Film Award for the first time? Shakib Khan: There are no words to express my feelings. Winning the prestigious award for the first time is truly a special experience. It made me feel that all my effort has not gone in vain. I'm grateful to the audience and fans, the Jury Board who considered me worthy of the honour and the director of the movie.

"Bhalobashlei Ghor Badha Jae Na" won awards in seven different categories. You view? Shakib Khan: It's not an easy task for a single movie to scoop seven different National Film Awards. I'm very proud to be a part of the effort. I believe that any good work will get due recognition.

As an artiste, how do you view winning the award? Shakib Khan: Obviously in a very positive light. I believe the National Award is an inspiration for me, as it is a state honour. But the love of my fans is my true award. Tell us about your ongoing movies. Shakib Khan: I'll be staying in Cox's Bazaar for the rest of this month for the shooting of "Dhaka to Bombay".

How will you celebrate your birthday on March 28? Shakib Khan: I'll be busy shooting in Cox's Bazaar. But the shoot-



Shakib Khan PHOTO COURTESY: TUHIN HOSSAIN

ing unit will probably arrange something in the evening. However, I will miss my parents very much. I'm also expecting my fans, well wishers and close ones to wish me over the phone.

Tell us about your latest movie which was released last week? Shakib Khan: "Ek Takar Denmohor" where I starred opposite Opu Bishwash, was released last Friday. It's a movie with a good storyline. Commercially, it's doing pretty well.

Recently another movie "Amar Challenge" was released. How do you view that? Shakib Khan: Yes. I feel that "Amar Challenge" was one of the most significant films that I did in my career. I had high hopes when the shooting began. The producer and director of the movie are the same as the film "Priya Amar Priya" which was my most commercially successful film.

How do you feel about your packed shooting schedule? Shakib Khan: I consider my busy schedule as positive. I carry out my shootings just as an office gear carries out its duties everyday. I think I would be very unhappy if I had too much time to relax.

Tell us about your future plans. Shakib Khan: Although I had been doing an average of 15 films a year up till now, I'm planning to do less than 12 this year. Before signing any new project, I will go through the scripts more carefully. I will not be working on Fridays.

What do you feel about the allegation that contemporary movies lack a story? Shakib Khan: This allegation is not applicable for all movies. Many of the films have a very good storyline. The viewers are heading to the cinema halls because of this. I can say that the story of the recent movie "Ek Takar Denmohor" is brilliant.

March 1971...in nostalgia

STAFF CORRESPONDENT Sarwar Ali, Mafidul Haque, trustees of Liberation War Museum, dramatist Ataur Rahman, poet Habibullah Siraji, Faridur Raza Sagar, managing director, Impress Telefilm Ltd and Channel i; reminisced on the Liberation War on the occasion.



Abdus Shakoor Shah and Mohammad Moniruzzaman paint freedom's colour.

ZAHANGIR SHAH, Manikganj Manikganj district administration organised a cultural function at Manikganj Government Boys' High School ground on Monday night to observe Independence and National Day.

Artists of Manikganj Shishu Academy; Manikganj Zila Shilpakala Academy; Manikganj Sahitya O Sangskritik Sangsad and Manikganj Government Child Home performed songs and dances at the function. Tahia Haque Pritha of Manikganj S.K. Government Girls' High School recited poetry while guest child artiste Farhan Mahmud performed two patriotic songs.

Earlier, a discussion was held. Munshi Shahabuddin Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner of Manikganj, was present as chief guest. Md. Nizam Uddin, Additional Deputy Commissioner (general) of Manikganj, presided over the discussion. Mohammad Ali Mia, Police Superintendent of Manikganj, SB Mostofa Kamal, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Manikganj Sadar Upazila, Momin Uddin Khan, organising commander of Manikganj district unit of Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Sultanat Azam Khan Apel, secretary of District Sports Association, Romeza Akter Khan Mahin, secretary of District Women's Sports Association, journalist Zahangir Alama Biswas and lecturer Basudev Saha were the discussants.

They urged the new generation to fulfill the dreams of the freedom fighters and the three million martyrs of the liberation war.

Marking the country's Independence, a cultural programme was held at Shilpakala Academy premises on March 26. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy organised the programme. The programme

Tagore singers Adity Mohsin, Anima Roy, Nazrul singer Ferdous Ara and artists of Surer Dhara performed at the programme.

included discussions on the Liberation War and performances by cultural groups of the town. Md. Zohurul Haque, Deputy Commissioner, Narail inaugurated the programme as chief guest. Md. Hossain Tarik, Additional District Magistrate, Sheikh Sadi, UNO Narail Sadar Upazila, Tasquruzaman, Executive Magistrate, Saiful Islam Milon, district Cultural Officer attended the programme.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal The glorious 41st anniversary of Independence of Bangladesh was observed in Barisal on Monday with a three-day programmes calling for the speedy trial of war criminals and repudiating anti-liberation forces in all spheres of life.

Barisal Reporters Unity organised the unique programme of "Muktijuddher Kotha Bola" (Tales of Liberation War) and painting competition at BRU premises.

BRU president Jasim Uddin presided over the programme. Freedom Fighters Lt. Tofazzel Huq Khoka Chowdhury, Nurul Alam Farid and Enayet Hossain Chowdhury; Environmentalist Dwijen Sharma, US citizen Rachele Gannon, Indigenous people's rights activist Myerthein Promila; President of Barisal Chamber of Commerce and Industries Saidur Rahman Rintu, also managing director of Sundarbans Navigation Company the sponsor of the programme; and human rights activist Advocate Hiron Kumar Das Mithu attended the programme as guests and distributed prizes among the winners.

Gano Shilpi Sangstha led by Professor Sayamya Sarkar and district BRAC representative Ripon Chandra Mandal, presented patriotic songs. Photographs of the Liberation War from BRAC archive were also displayed. Barisal Sangskritik Sangathan Samanya Parishad (BSSSP), an alliance of 26 major cultural organisations of the city arranged the programme at Barisal Central Shaheed Minar premises.

The BSSSP programmes included a discussion, cultural function, a candle-light procession on the early hours from Shaheed Minar and a bare-foot procession to the 'mass-killing ground' and paying tributes at the Liberation War Memorial Monument on Independence Day. The concluding day of the BSSSP programme on Monday evening was presided over by Nazrul Islam Chuunu, president BSSSP; Jagul Haider Shahin, secretary BSSSP; Advocate Talukdar Md. Yunus, AL lawmaker, Dr. Mokhesur Rahman, administrator Zila Parishad,

Manbendra Batabayal, Syed Dulal, Jagul Haider Shahin, socio-cultural activists, among others took part in the discussion. Barisal Natak, Khelaghar, Prantik Sangeet Bidyalaya, Brojo Mohon Theatre, Kheali Group Theatre, presented music, dance, musical-drama on the concluding day of the programme.

The district Muktiyoddha Sangsad arranged a reception for the freedom fighters, family members of the martyrs at the Aswani Kumar Hall on the occasion.

A march past and acrobatic show was held at Bangabonghu Udyan and a friendly football match, painting and patriotic songs competitions, women's sports, discussion and cultural programme at Aswani Kumar hall.

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU, Pabna Cultural activists of Pabna observed Independence Day demanding the punishment of war criminals. The activists lit candles at Indara point in a symbolic gesture of light, cutting through the dark.

Pabna Drama Circle organised the programme with the participation of cultural activists from different organisations. "War criminals carried out heinous crimes on the Bengali people during the Liberation War. When the Pakistan occupation army attacked innocent people, they helped the Pakistan occupation troops carry out mass genocide across the country," said Mostafizur Rahman Russel, secretary of the Pabna Drama Circle, adding that the people of the nation demanded the punishment of the war criminals to keep alive the spirit of the Liberation War.

Cultural activists also paraded the main streets of the district headquarter. Shammitilo Sangskritik Jote, Pabna Pabna Drama Circle, Gonoshilpo Shangshtha, Pabna, Udichi Shilpo Goshti and different organisations placed floral wreaths at Durjoy Pabna, Liberation War Memorial. Different cultural organisations organised discussion and cultural programmes to commemorate the Liberation War. Ananda Gobinda Public library organised a day long programme to observe Independence Day.

A book titled "Muktijuddha O Bhalobashar Chitrnatya", written by poet-playwright Raju Alim, was recently launched at Kendrio Kachi-Kacha Bhaban auditorium, Segunbagicha. Finance Minister AMA Muhit unveiled the book as chief guest while Vice-Chancellor of World University Dr. Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Chairman of Standard Bank Kazi Akramuddin Ahmed, Director General of FDC M. Hamid and others were present on the occasion. Professor Emeritus Anisuzzaman presided over the programme.



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Advertisement for 'দি ডেইলি স্টার-অদম্য চট্টগ্রাম নাট্য উৎসব ২০১২' (The Daily Star Adimya Chattogram Natya Utsav 2012) featuring a list of plays, dates, and sponsors.

Table with TV channels and programmes: ATN BANGLA, Channel 1, nTV, ETV, etc.

Table with radio stations: abc radio FM 89.2, Dhaka 104.0, etc.

Spelling Bee at 07:50pm Education Based Programme Host: Abdullah Bin Kassed

When a Stranger Calls On Fox Movies at 10:55pm Genre: Horror/Thriller Cast: Camilla Belle, Tommy Flanagan

Dokhinayoner On tv at 09:45pm Drama Serial Host: Shyamol, Moutushi Nag

Table with TV channels and programmes: Star World, National Geographic Channel, BANGLAVISION, etc.

Table with TV channels and programmes: ATN BANGLA, Channel 1, nTV, ETV, etc.

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