

WHAT'S ON

20th National Art Exhibition
Organiser: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy
Venue: National Art Gallery, Shilpakala Academy
Date: June 22-July 12

Domestic Film Festival
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Segunbagicha
Date: July 3-10
Time: 5pm

Painting Exhibition
Title: Passion for Blue
Artist: Gopal Chandra Saha
Venue: Institute of Asian Creatives, Gulshan-2
Date: July 5-15

Print Exhibition
Artist: Biren Shome
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, Dhanmondi
Date: June 28-July 24
Time: 3pm-8pm

Painting Exhibition
Title: Book is Light
Artist: Proshanta Karmakar
Venue: Café Gallery, B-72, H-3A, Gulshan-2
Date: June 1-July 24

Borshamongol
Organiser: Rabirag
Venue: Shaikat Osman Auditorium, Public Library, Shahbagh
Date: July 6
Time: 7pm

Group Prints Exhibition
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge
Date: July 5-Aug 10
Time: 12pm-8pm

Celebrating 100 years of National Museum
Venue: Main Auditorium, N. Museum
Date: August 6-8
Time: 4pm



Jitu Ahsan

An actor with a dream

FAIZA HAQ

Actor Jitu Ahsan is as intelligent and urbane as his father, the noted actor Syed Ahsan Ali Sydney. The Daily Star caught the popular Jitu in a relaxed mood at his home that he shares with his small family, mother and four Ahsanians. The most important family member is of course Adiba, his cute bright-eyed daughter.

Jitu ushers me into their living room with its magnificent candelabra patterned in red and blue. Everything in the room boasts of affluence—large statues of elephants and magnificent pictures.

Says Jitu, "I'm always nervous before a shoot although I've been working professionally for 13 years." Jitu arrived in the acting arena in the footsteps of his father, Syed Ahsan Ali Sydney and since then has carved a niche for himself with his spontaneous acting. Beginning his journey in his childhood, Jitu's love for acting grew over time and prompted him to become an actor. "During my childhood, I watched my father act. I knew all the actors through my father. I went to the BTV office with him. These visits eventually landed me performances as a child artiste. I continued sporadic works as an actor, but never considered taking acting seriously. However, I pursued acting as a career from 2000 onwards. I did 10 BTV plays and one short film which include *Ekti Shetur Golpo*, *Shathjon Jatri*, *Shesh Manusher Thikana*. The short film was called 'Lal Balloon'. I enjoyed my work at every step of the way," says Jitu.

Did he have difficulty in memorising his lines?
"I learn my lines by myself. When my father was around I used to consult him if I had any difficulty. After my father's demise, I consulted the late Humayun Faride. I was blessed with his affection. I gave much weight to his suggestions as he was like a father figure. He taught me the art of getting into the skin of a character," says Jitu. He advised me to not chase after money, but to be humble in my ways. It is my good fortune that he cast me in all his TV plays. I consider myself very lucky to have worked under great directors of the country like Abdullah Al Mamun and others."

What kind of plays does he like to do?
"It depends. I consider myself fortunate that directors have cast me as notorious villains and even rickshaw pullers. I would not say that I'm comfortable only with this or that role. However, the script should appeal to my mind and heart. Day before yesterday there was a play that was telecast on channel-9. In it, I play a new director who nobody patronises as he is a rookie. After regular failures, one producer comes up and says that he is willing to finance the director—if he can rope in a particular film star. The film star is played by Shimul Bhai. I loved the story," says the eager young actor.

THE WEEKENDER

Lavlu puts his feet up

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Salauddin Lavlu is a busy man; apart from being a popular actor and director, he's also a cinematographer. However, he does manage to squeeze time out of his schedule every once in a while for some much needed leisure.

What is your idea of an ideal weekend?
Lavlu: A day when I will have absolutely no work, and no tension about it. A day when I can sleep, relax and chitchat.

Are you usually at home on weekends?
Lavlu: When I am, I try to catch up on some extra sleep. After that, I spend time with my family, and watch TV sometimes.

What's usually on the menu at lunch and dinner table on weekends?
Lavlu: It's pure Bengali food. That's what me and my family members love. And yes, there is usually a special item or two at the table on weekends. I love seasonal fruits as well.

Do you travel a lot on vacations?

Lavlu: I like spending my vacations in the country. While visiting my native home is always relaxing, the sea and the mountain also beckon me sometimes. I am not all that keen on travelling abroad for vacations.

What's your favourite way to spend time with family?
Lavlu: I don't get to spend a lot of time with them due to work, but when I do, we usually go out to eat or visit someplace nearby.

What would you do if you had a one-month vacation?
Lavlu: I'd probably go to my native home in Kushtia; spend time with near and dear ones. It's one of my favourite places.

Do weekends call for watching films and such?
Lavlu: Yeah, it does. What I'd watch depends on mood though. It can be old Bengali films, or even Bollywood or Hollywood movie. The last one I watched was "Pothe Holo Deri", a fantastic film. I've actually watched it quite a few times.



Group printmaking exhibition at Bengal Lounge

Staff Correspondent

Bengal Art Lounge in Gulshan has organised a group printmaking exhibition titled "Under Pressure". The exhibition begins today at 6pm. Twenty six printmakers are taking part in the exhibition.

Rokia Afzal Rahman, president of the Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) will inaugurate the exhibition as chief guest. Artist Mahmudul Haque, director of Safiuddin Bengal Printmaking Studio (SBPS) will also speak at the inauguration.

Around 55 prints are on display at the exhibition. The participating artists are Mahmudul Haque, Rokeya Sultana, Eltham Huq Khuku, Khandakar Jamil Iqbal, Rahul Amin Tarek, Nadia Yasmin, Sohana Shahreen, Shubho Saha, Najnin Jahan, Rabeya Ahmed and others.

The artists are students of SBPS who recently participated at the workshop, held at SBPS in the city.

The exhibition will continue till August 10.



It's True!



Suchitra Sen, born Rama Dasgupta in Pabna of Bangladesh, never got to see her debut film, "Shesh Kothaye" (1952) on screen, as it was never released. However, her on-screen debut "Sharey Chuator" (1953) was opposite Uttam Kumar, that led to a twenty-year on-screen partnership which made Uttam-Suchitra almost a genre in Bangla films itself. Her first appearance in a Hindi movies was in the film adaptation of Sharatchandra's classic "Devdas" (1955) for which she received a Filmfare Award for Best Actress. Her international success came in 1963, when she became the first Indian film actress to win an international award -- for Best Actress in Moscow Film Festival for "Saar Paake Bandha". When she refused Satyajit Ray's offer to work in the film "Devi Chaudhurani" -- a movie based on the erstwhile ruler Maharami Joy Durga Devi Chaudhurani of Rangpur in Bangladesh, Ray ended up scrapping the project.

Heroism and tragedy

DU Theatre Department stages Sohrab-Rustom

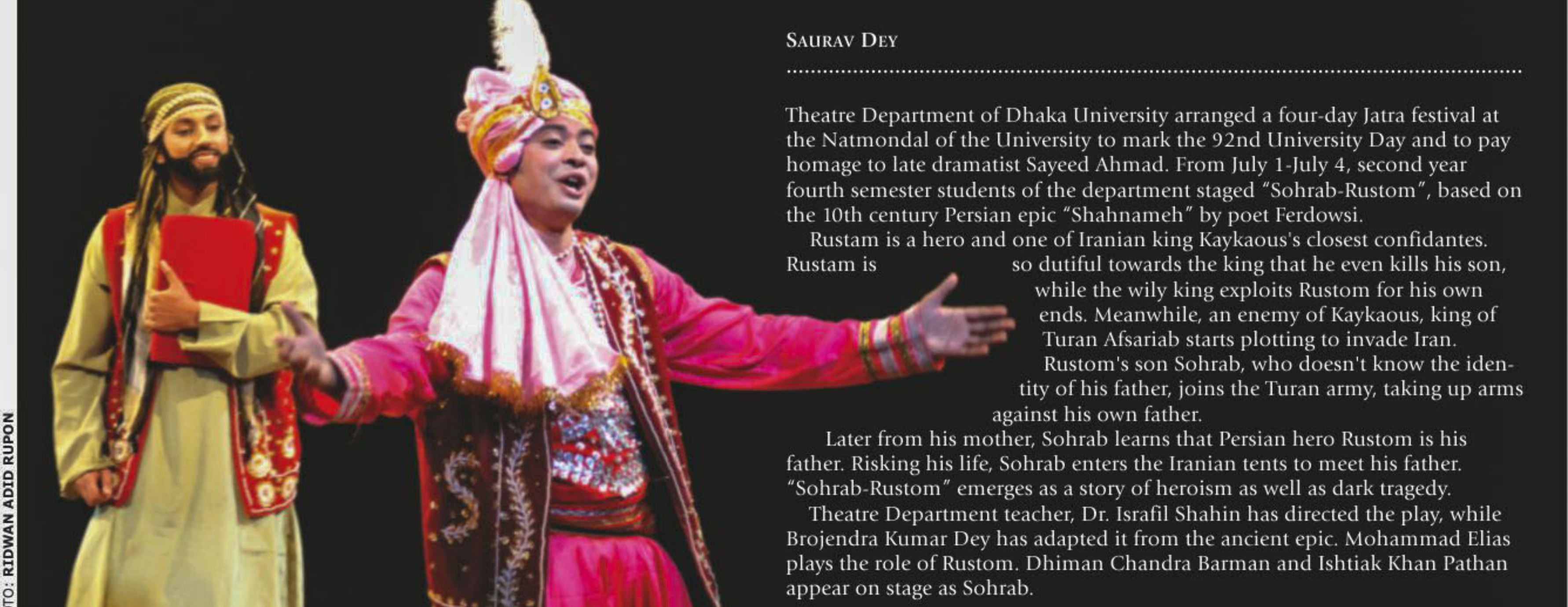


PHOTO: REDWAN AHMAD RUPON

SAURAV DEY

Theatre Department of Dhaka University arranged a four-day Jatra festival at the Natmondal of the University to mark the 92nd University Day and to pay homage to late dramatist Sayeed Ahmad. From July 1-July 4, second year fourth semester students of the department staged "Sohrab-Rustom", based on the 10th century Persian epic "Shahnameh" by poet Ferdowsi.

Rustam is a hero and one of Iranian king Kaykaous's closest confidantes. Rustam is so dutiful towards the king that he even kills his son, while the wily king exploits Rustom for his own ends. Meanwhile, an enemy of Kaykaous, king of Turan Afsariab starts plotting to invade Iran. Rustom's son Sohrab, who doesn't know the identity of his father, joins the Turan army, taking up arms against his own father.

Later from his mother, Sohrab learns that Persian hero Rustom is his father. Risking his life, Sohrab enters the Iranian tents to meet his father. "Sohrab-Rustom" emerges as a story of heroism as well as dark tragedy.

Theatre Department teacher, Dr. Israfil Shahin has directed the play, while Brojendra Kumar Dey has adapted it from the ancient epic. Mohammad Elias plays the role of Rustom. Dhiman Chandra Barman and Ishiakt Khan appear on stage as Sohrab.



Farooki on the move

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After 40 days of intensive shooting of Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's "Pipra Biddya" at Cox Bazar and Dhaka, the word "Pack-up" was a relief to the ears of the cast and crew.

The cast of "Pipra Biddya" includes Miss Kolkata and Miss Universe India Sheena Chohan, Nur Imran Mithhu, Sabbir Hasan, Mukit Zakaria and others. The film now in the editing panel, and is slated to be released at the end of the year. With its storyline and screenplay by Farooki himself, the film will be produced by Impress Telefilms.

"Pipra Biddya" will present the story of a youth from a middle-income family who struggles with his dreams, limitations, failures, and greed.

Farooki also informed that his recently released movie "Television" has been selected for the Melbourne International Film Festival. Moreover, the film has been invited at the Perspectives Film Festival to be held at the National Museum of Singapore in October. A joint collaboration of Nanyang University, Singapore Film Society and Singapore National Museum the theme of the festival is "New trends in cinema". Every year, around 1-2 contemporary movies and 4-5 classics are screened at the festival. This year the film "Television" will be screened under the contemporary section while films by Danny Boyle, Quentin Tarantino, and Rattana will be screened under the classics segment.

A touching story

Urral Ponkhi screened at Cineplex

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It's never easy for an artiste to do creative work when assigned to reflect or convey a specific, non-artistic message. "Urral Ponkhi", a production by financial service providers bKash—under BRAC Bank—was a valiant effort against this limitation. Directed by Mahfuz Ahmed, the 45-minute telefilm was screened at Star Cineplex on Wednesday.

bKash is an easy-to-access service to transfer money anywhere in the country and even abroad using cellular networks and community-based agents. In the last five years, it has reached rural areas and enabled even very-low income groups to access convenient money transfer. The telefilm "Urral Ponkhi" was pretty much a dramatised, well-told story of the utility and convenience of a bKash account -- that can be created and used using a cell phone by everyone.

The story begins in a village where an elderly lady (Dilara Zaman) suddenly falls sick and her brother-in-law (Amirul Islam) contacts his nephews in the city for emergency financial assistance. The two brothers, one a service-holder and the other a university student, are caught up in city life and struggle to find a way to quickly send money for their mother's treatment. They eventually figure out that bKash is the most efficient way to go, and after much less effort than originally estimated, all is well in the end.

The cinematography is appealing; the low depth-of-field close-ups, interesting compositions and frames make for pleasant viewing. The background scores are also chosen and placed smartly. However, shot-transitions are abrupt in places, and the story seems rushed at times. TV veterans Fazlur Rahman Babu and Faruque Ahmed also play cameo in interesting roles, both adding to the comic quotient of the production.

Despite being a rather indirect and unusually-lengthy advert campaign for bKash, "Urral Ponkhi" is enjoyable; a DVD of it, if released, could very well find popularity in the market.

NEWS bytes

George Lucas to receive National Medal of Arts

Star Wars director George Lucas is to be honoured with the National Medal of Arts at a White House ceremony next week. The 69-year-old is among 12 recipients being recognised for their cultural contributions to the US. President Barack Obama will award the medals next Wednesday.

The White House praised the director for "combining the art of storytelling with boundless imagination and cutting-edge techniques".

Herb Alpert, the co-founder of A&M Records and the Tijuana Brass is among the other recipients. Playwright and screenwriter Tony Kushner, best known for 1993 Al Pacino film "Angels in America" will also be honoured, as will screenwriter Elaine May, who was Oscar nominated for the films "Primary Colors" and "Heaven Can Wait".

Source: BBC

Reflections launched at Bengal Shilpalaya



Suchisree Ray sings at the event.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Classical vocalist Suchisree Ray's latest album, "Reflections", was launched at Bengal Shilpalaya, Dhanmondi in the capital on July 2. Eminent artist Mustafa Monwar unveiled the album at the event while Abul Khair, Chairman of Bengal Foundation, and the artist were present on the occasion. Produced by Bengal Foundation, the album contains five tracks ranging from kheyal, thumri, kajri, chaiti, she makes an interesting combination of poetic feel and consummate skill by extracting the essential boldness of the Agra-Gwalior "Gayeki" and the eloquence of the "Benaras Style".

Both vilambit and drut bandish of raga "Nathhairab", a morning-time raga, has been recorded for the album. A blend of the meditative grace of bhairabi with the romantic felicity of nat is the trait of the raga. A pentatonic late morning raga "Brindabani Sarang" is also included in the album.

The album has a poorvi, a unique variety of light classical vocal music originally derived from folk music. The genre which is known as "poorab aang" is mostly rendered in "Benaras". The thematic context of the genre is usually love and languishment. Hori, another variety of semi classical sung during the "holi" festival during spring is also included in the album.

The artiste presented kheyal and thumri at the event.

Film falls flat

"Ghanchakkar" releases in cinema halls in India

KAVITA, New Delhi

Bollywood comedy thriller "Ghanchakkar" has all the ingredients of success—a repeat of the sizzling "The Dirty Picture" pairing of Emraan Hashmi and Vidya Balan, a funny yet suspenseful storyline and few edge of the seat moments. Unfortunately the film falls flat.

The bantering between husband Sanju (Emraan Hashmi) and Neetu (Vidya Balan) loses its humorous edge some way into the film. And so does the drama that unfolds when Sanju is drawn into carrying out a bank heist by menacing duo Pandit (played by Ramesh Sharma) and Idris (Nami Das). What Sanju believes will be his final brush with the law, soon spirals out of control when he takes home the precious booty, suffers a bout of amnesia which makes forget where the loot is

stashed away and has the two other crooks on his heels to recover the hidden cash. Towards the end of the film he receives mysterious threats from an unknown caller who demands that he cough up the huge takings—or else.

So where does it all lead? Some light moments as Sanju dreams of taking home a gigantic LCD so he can while away time watching the idiot box, the fashion-fixated overweight Neetu poring over glitzy women's magazines. Her poor culinary skills also leave room for laughs as do the bedroom romps of husband and wife. Even the bank heist has its share of humour as the threesome wearing masks of Amitabh Bachchan, Dharmendra and Utpal Dutt break into the bank, sock the guards and look full on into hidden cameras. Funniest is Emraan Hashmi in the guise of the perpetually perplexed Utpal Dutt. Even the



Emraan and Vidya in a scene from the film.

fearsome Pandit and Idris lose some of their menace and appear now and then as bumbling crooks, except of course when they are not bashing up Hashmi when he forgets where the loot is located.

That said, "Ghanchakkar" that loosely translates into "Dumb Head" in English holds real promise only when it begins and ends. Filmmaker Raj Kumar Gupta who directed "Aamir" and "No one killed Jessica" has not done too well with this one. The hugely talented Vidya Balan, the star of such films as "Parineeta", "No one killed Jessica", "Ishqiyaa", "The Dirty Picture" and "Kahani", loses it as a Punjaban with an irritating and predictable fake Punjabi accent. Emraan Hashmi is reasonably good as the befuddled, amnesiac Sanju but the film palls and drags except at moments like when Sanju follows what seem like genuine leads in the mystery or at the open ended denouement where the hidden cash is finally located.

Not bad viewing but be prepared for some dull moments in an otherwise quirky tale.

POND'S
age miracle

My 2nd
Honeymoon
Come fall in love again



Watch Season Finale
on Saturday, 6th July
at 9:45 pm on Desh TV

Find out which couples win a romantic trip to 7 beaches of the world.



TV Partner
Desh TV
desh tv