

**WHAT'S ON**

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

**Tagore Film Week**  
Organiser: EMK Center  
Venue: Midas Centre (9th Floor), House 5, Road 16 (New), Dhakamandi  
Date: July 20-25

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

**Print Exhibition**  
Artist: Bires Shome  
Venue: Dhaka Art Centre, Dhakamandi  
Date: June 29-July 24  
Time: 3:00pm-5pm

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

**Group Art Exhibition**  
Title: Whistle  
Venue: Shilpakala Gallery, H-7, R-13, Dhakamandi  
Date: July 5-14  
Time: 12:00pm-5pm

**Group Prints Exhibition**  
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge  
Date: July 5-Aug 10  
Time: 12:00pm-5pm

**Group Exhibition**  
Marking Ten-Year Journey of Galleri Kaya  
Title: Glimpses  
Venue: H-20, Rd-16, Sec-4, Uttara  
Date: June 21-July 20  
Time: 11am-7:30pm

**DIFFERENT TAKE**

Exclusive with **Dr. M Zahir**

**SADYA AFREEN MALLICK**

When M. Zahir finally looked up from his electric guitar we were through our second round of coffee and goodies prepared by his wife Professor Shahida Zahir on a wintry morning.

Far removed from his professional avatar, Barrister at Law and senior advocate of the Supreme Court, Dr. Zahir treated us to his delightful rendition of the film hits of the 60s, "Aye Mere Dil Kahin", "Ye Raat Ye Chandni", "Ay Dil Hai Mushkil Jeena Yahan", the Tagore classic "Tomar Holo Shuru" and the evergreen song "Oh! My Darling Clementine".

"The guitar was my first love," Zahir quipped. "And I started off quite young—during my college days. It's an age when you want to make an impression on the girls," he went on. And did you? "Well, I wanted to! You see, the moment I mentioned that I wanted to practice law, the girls invariably fled the scene!

Now however, I play for myself! Unfortunately because of my busy schedule the only time I get to play is on Friday, when I shut my door to the world and lose myself in music."

Dr. Zahir, a renowned lawyer and jurist of the country, revels in living life to the brim. Besides running his highly respected legal practice and charming listeners with his music, he runs his opponents to the ground on the tennis courts on a regular basis. An avid

tennis player since 1963, he has been the reigning Doubles Champion of Dhaka Club for the last two years. To top it all, he has published authoritative works on legal practices that serve as reference to lawyers across the country.

Who did you learn to play the guitar from? "Well that is a very interesting story. My first mentor was Kalipodo Babu. My father, Justice Asir, was a music enthusiast too. He bought me the Hofner guitar. But it was my cousin Dulubu (Professor Dr. Zarina Zaman) who inspired me to play the guitar. So, one day I got in touch with Samar Das, the brilliant composer and musician. His technique of teaching was far from run of the mill. He would come and play the guitar for hours and I would try to absorb his style. After he left I would try to imitate him. However, while studying at Notre Dame College, Samar Das and I hatched a "brilliant" idea to run away from home to Kolkata, to venture into Bollywood's teeming music world.

"But our sojourn was cut short and I returned from Kolkata with a broken heart. Samar Das possibly went to Bombay for some time and he too returned after some time. This was most fortunate as he went on to create some timeless compositions for us later on!"

What are your earliest memories, especially on the music front? "I remember playing at the Intra District Musical programme at Paltan Maidan a long time



"The most unforgettable event in my musical life took place in 1964. The legendary singer Mohammad Rafi was to perform in London and it was by sheer coincidence that I got the chance to play with him as there was no one else available at that time," says an elated Zahir.

But it was not music all the time. Dr. M Zahir embarked on his career as a lawyer in 1962. After practicing for several years he joined the Australian Government Attorney General's Department, but returned to Bangladesh in 1975. Dr. M Zahir has written several authoritative books on Company and Securities Laws and the Stock Exchange and received the coveted Padatik award in 2009.

With your busy worldwide travel schedule, how do you keep up with your hobby? "We were a group of around 35 batch-mates of 1956 of Dacca University; unfortunately many of them are no more. The one day we, as a group, get to come together is on weekends. At these get-togethers we forget the present and go back to our old days. I often have to play the guitar or the electric organ on request," he says.

What's next on your horizon? "For now, apart from my hectic schedule, I look forward to gardening and the occasional delicious Shorshey Ilish cooked by Shahida," he said disarmingly. His wife wrapped up in history, music and sports, she smiled the smile of a contented man.

Eminent jurist and constitutional expert Dr. M Zahir passed away on Thursday, July 11, at the age of 74. Zahir, who had been suffering from Myeloma for a year and half, breathed his last at Bangkok General Hospital, Thailand around 10:30am Bangladesh time. The following interview based write-up on M. Zahir was published in the Arts and Entertainment page of The Daily Star a few years ago. We reprint the article for our readers.

Poetic genius  
**Al Mahmud turns 78**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Al Mahmud is considered one of the greatest Bengali poets to have emerged from the 1950s. He has written poems, novels, short stories, essays, and more. His immense contribution to Bangladeshi poetry over six decades has earned him international acclaim as well. His writings highlight nature, greenery, crises of the Bengali middle class family and their struggles and pleasures, the Language Movement, nationalism, political and economic exploitation, chronicles of the oppressed et al.

On the occasion, Kabita, a progressive cultural organisation, arranged a birthday celebration at the poet's residence in the city yesterday. Senior poets, writers, publishers, cultural personalities and admirers greeted the poet with flowers, sweets, cards and gifts.

Poet Asad Chowdhury presided over the event.

Chowdhury said, "Al Mahmud made great contributions to the Language Movement and Bengali literature. The poet was a freedom fighter as well. He was deeply involved with several significant literary and progressive movements. His poems provide the readers with an authentic perception of the real Bangladesh—its roots."

Mahmud was born in Brahmanbaria district in 1936. He began his career as a journalist. He was recognised as an outstanding poet after the publication of "Lok Lokantor" in 1963. Books such as "Kaal-er Kolosh" (1966), "Shonali Kabin" (1966), and "Mayabi Porda Duley Otho" (1976) cemented his position as one of the most prominent Bengali poets. He has received several awards for his remarkable achievements. He took part in the Liberation War of Bangladesh as a freedom fighter in 1971. After the war, he joined The Daily Ganakantha as the assistant editor. Later, the poet joined Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in 1975 and retired in 1993 as director of the academy.

**Bulbul Ahmed honoured in Mauritius**  
Daughter Tilottama releases her first music album

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Tahsin Farzana Tilottoma, eldest daughter of Mahanayak Bulbul Ahmed, launched her first music album "Mahanayaker Gaan" in Mauritius recently to commemorate the third death anniversary of her father. Tilottoma, who lives in Mauritius with her family, came to Dhaka last January to record 12 popular film songs, acted, directed and produced by her late father. The album is a tribute from a daughter to her iconic father by reliving the memories of his illustrious career through her enchanting voice.

The High Commission of Bangladesh in Mauritius organised the CD launching ceremony as a tribute to Bulbul Ahmed. The CD



Tahsin Farzana Tilottoma (C) unveils the album.

guests from various cultural and national backgrounds.

Bulbul Ahmed was born on September 15, 1940 in Dhaka. He worked as a banker from 1965 to 1975, and launched his acting career through stage drama in 1965. He debuted in television acting in 1968 before making a foray into film. Bulbul Ahmed received four National awards in his lifetime. He won the National Film Award four times for his role in "Shimana Periya", "Shesh Uttar", "Badhubidday" and "Dipu Number 2". He directed the film "Rajlakshmi Srikanto" in 1987 and the film won the National Film Award in 13 categories. The legendary actor performed in more than 300 plays and 200 movies until his death on July 14, 2010.

**TV WATCH**  
**Rainy Raain on Maasranga**



A CORRESPONDENT

Raain has been married for four years to Ashfaq, a successful professional in the city. As he is always at work, Raain gets only too familiar with loneliness, melancholy and nostalgia. Memories of her former lover also draw Raain in another direction, but how does that fit in with her family life? The story of "Rainy Raain" will tell the rest on screen, at midnight tonight on Maasranga TV. Written by Sajjad Hussain and directed by Shahzada Mamun, the TV play features Fisha, Tanvir Tanu and Shirin Bakul in central roles.

Preserving a precious legacy  
**Ethnic Minority Heritage Museum starts its journey at Shilpakala**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To preserve the culture and heritage of the country's ethnic minority groups, Ethnic Minority Cell of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) launched an Ethnic Minority Heritage Museum at the ground floor of National Music and Dance Center of BSA on July 8.

State Minister for Cultural Affairs Advocate Promod Mankin inaugurated the museum as chief guest while secretary of the ministry Dr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas (ndc) graced the occasion as a special guest. Former Associate Professor of the Department of Anthropology of Jahangirnagar University Prasanta Tripura and general secretary of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum Sanjeeb Drong were present at the event. Assistant director of Ethnic Minority Cell of BSA SM Shamim Akter delivered the welcome address while BSA Director General Liaquat Ali Lucky presided over the programme.

The objective of the museum is to preserve the cultural artifacts, musical

instruments, traditional attire, ornaments, furniture and other memorabilia of the 45 ethnic minority groups of the country.

"At present the museum contains antique collections of 26 ethnic minority groups. Many traditional musical instruments like Chakma's Dhudak and Hengrong; Garo's Dama; Santal's Chadur Badhuni and Keko Banam along with their traditional attire and ornaments are on the verge of extinction, as ethnic people are increasingly embracing modernity. Our objective is to preserve and make the public conscious of minority culture," said SM Shamim Akter.

The government took the initiative to open the museum in a record one year's time. The state of art museum will be expanded in the days ahead, according to Shamim Akter.

A cultural event followed where artists of Chakma, Tripura, Rakhain, Santal, Pahadi, Garo and Manupuri communities presented their respective dances.



Oblivious chapter of the Liberation War  
Theatre stages Bangobalar Hatey

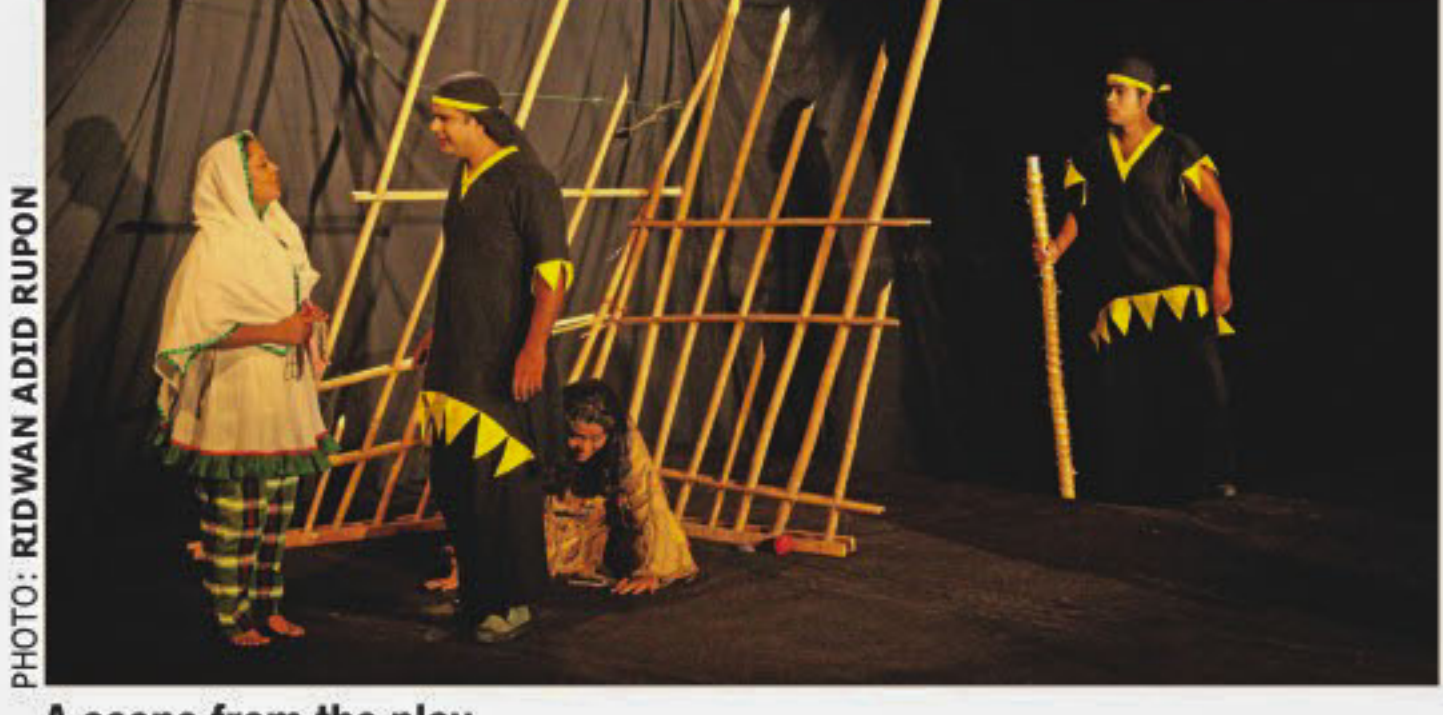
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Theatre (Arambagh) brought its 37th production "Bangobalar Hatey" on stage in a maiden performance at the Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA), on July 9.

"Bangobalar Hatey" is written and directed by Shamim Shagor. The play presents the oblivious chapter of the Liberation War, depicting the saga of continual injustice, stigma and distortion of history. Contemporary issues including trial of the war criminals were also portrayed in the play.

Rizvina Moushumi donned the role of Bangobala while the cast also included Rafiqul Islam Rafiq, Touhidul Islam Badal, Jahangir Kabir, Prabir Datta, Ashfaq Pallab, Majedul Miithu, Reena Akter, Nuruzzaman Sarkar, Shankar Sarkar, Oindrila Hasan, Proshanto Modak, Palash Das, Hasan Saimon, Suman, Shubho, Bishwajit, Jilani and Azad. Zunaed Yusuf was the stage and light designer for the production.

Before the staging of the play, former president of Theatre Professor Momtazuddin Ahmed formally announced the premiere of the play. Among others, Liaquat Ali Lucky, director general of BSA, was present as a guest of honour while former and present general secretaries of the troupe, Rezaul Ekram Raju and Ashok Roy Nandi spoke at the event. Theatre president Dr. Nilufar Banu presided over the programme.



A scene from the play.

**It's True!**

In 1977, American director George Lucas had released Star Wars, a wildly successful science fiction film influenced by Akira Kurosawa's "The Hidden Fortress", among other works. Lucas, who considered him a role model, was shocked to discover that the Japanese filmmaker was unable to secure financing for any new work. Lucas leveraged his influence over 20th Century Fox to coerce the studio to produce Kurosawa's "Kagemusha" in 1978, then recruited fellow fan Francis Ford Coppola as co-producer. The 1980 quickly became a massive hit in Japan, and achieved critical and box office success abroad, winning the coveted Palme d'Or at that year's Cannes.

**NEWS bytes**



**THE BEST OFFER sweeps Silver Ribbon awards**

Giuseppe Tornatore's "The Best Offer" has scooped six prizes at the 67th Nastri d'Argento (Silver Ribbon) awards, Europe's oldest film honours. The Oscar-winning director's tale about an eccentric auctioneer, played by Geoffrey Rush, who becomes obsessed with a reclusive heiress, won best film. Its other prizes included best score for renowned composer Ennio Morricone.

Tornatore won an Oscar for best foreign language film in 1990 for "Cinema Paradiso".

The Silver Ribbon awards are voted for by Italy's National Syndicate of Journalists. The awards were held in Taormina's Teatro Antico venue, the site of Sicily's 59-year-old Taormina Film Festival.

Source: BBC

**THE WEEKENDER**  
**Mehreen**  
**No fun without family**

With her versatile voice, interesting, fresh music and charming personality, Mehreen is an artiste in demand right now. Between live shows, albums or even judging reality shows, she makes the most of the little time she gets to spare with her near and dear ones.

The ever-smiling singer talked to The Daily Star about her weekend plans.



FAHIM FERDOUS

How can you tell a weekend is here? Mehreen: I have two school-going children at home, so the calendar tells me that today is Thursday and the kids' studies are slightly slack today; and that I have to get the week's studies done over the next two days. Apart from that, there's usually no change in my routine on a particular day of the week. We have shows throughout the week as well.

How do you squeeze out time for yourself amid all your professional commitments? Mehreen: I work at my own studio; that gives me the scope to choose my own hours. I've been in the industry for a while now, so I believe I should give some time to myself. Those are not long stretches of time, though. But when I am resting, I love watching TV with my kids. Be it cartoons, fantasy and adventure or sci-fi movies, I really enjoy the time with my children. Apart from that, I love playing solitaire, so I find some time every day to play on my computer.

And what's on your agenda for vacations? Mehreen: My vacations are also planned centering my children's school vacations; often, we do not have time to process a visa, so we go to nearby countries where you can get an on-arrival visa. For example, our last vacation was in Sri Lanka, and it was quite impromptu. You cannot plan all of this for a long time. Like, I and my mister/husband recently went for a quick trip to Maldives; that was a good tour. Sometimes, you have to find an outlet to let go of your routine and stress.

Any upcoming plans to travel? Mehreen: As a matter of fact, the kids are on vacation right now, so we're thinking of doing some travelling. Nilgiri is one place on our minds; let's see how it turns out.

You've also recently taken up a judges' chair in a major music reality show. What's that experience been like? Mehreen: I've done judging at two shows previously, but both of them were out of the country, so the experience was different from this. Being a part of 'Bangladeshi Idol' is exciting, but it is also a major responsibility. Besides, my co-judges are all very prominent musicians and critics. People have a lot of expectations, but we can choose just one winner; it's hard on all the other aspirants, but it's hard for us too to be in the way of their dreams. At the same time, we want to ensure there is no injustice to anyone. Overall, it's a challenging task.