

WHAT'S ON
Bengal Classical Music Fest 2014
 Organiser: Bengal Foundation
 Venue: Army Stadium, Dhaka
 Date: Nov 27-Dec 1
 Time: 5pm - 5am



Solo Art Exhibition
 Artist: Proshanta Karmakar
 Buddha
 Venue: Café Mango Gallery,
 H-3/A, Rd-72, Gulshan
 Date: Nov 14-Jan14
 Time: 10am-10pm

Group Art Exhibition
 Artworks by 40 Eminent Artists
 Venue: Bishwo Shahitto Kendro
 Art Gallery, Dhaka
 Date: Nov 14-28
 Time: 3pm-8:30pm

Korean Film Festival
 Organiser: The Korean
 Embassy Dhaka
 Venue: Bangladesh National
 Museum
 Date: Nov 28-29
 Time: 3pm-8pm

Solo Painting Exhibition
 Title: Life is Here
 Artist: Kanak Champa Chakma
 Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, 60,
 Gulshan Avenue, Circle 1
 Date: Nov 15-Dec 6
 Time: 12pm-8pm



Kathak legend Sitara Devi passes away

Kathak prodigy Vishal Krishna who is set to perform on the concluding day of the third Bengal Classical Music Festival has lost her grandmother eminent Kathak danseuse Sitara Devi. Sitara Devi died on Tuesday at Mumbai's Jaslok Hospital after a prolonged illness, her son-in-law Rajesh Mishra told the media. She was 94. Recipient of prestigious awards like Sangeet Natak Akademi Award, Padma Shri and Kalidas Samman, Sitara Devi was known as Dhannolakhmi in the family of Brahmin "kathakar" Sukhdev Maharaj in Calcutta (Kolkata) in 1920. The family moved to Bombay (now Mumbai) when she was 11. Early on she impressed Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore with a marathon three-hour solo recital. Over the next six decades, she became a Kathak legend and is credited with bringing the genre to Bollywood. Her death leaves a vacuum in the world of dance. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the death of Sitara Devi. "PM has condoled the passing away of noted Kathak dancer Sitara Devi. PM also recalled her rich contribution to Kathak," tweeted the Indian Prime Minister's Office.



New horizons of Bangladeshi classical music

Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay in full swing

ZAHANGIR ALOM
 With eminent classical music vocalist Pandit Ullhash Kashalkar as principal, Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay is now running full swing. The opening of the school, spells the realisation of a long cherished ambition of Abul Khair, Chairman of Bengal Foundation-- to open a new horizon of Bangladeshi classical music where Bangladeshi artistes will receive meticulous training in Indian Classical Music under world renowned stalwarts. Sanjivani Kashalkar, the administrative head of the school, says, "Bangladesh is basically a treasure trove of artistes. Earlier on, there were many great artistes like Vilayat Khan, Ali Akbar Khan and Pandit Ravi Shankar who belonged here. Now for the last three years, Bengal Foundation is organising a festival where so many stalwarts from India are coming and performing. The large audience turnout reveals the Bangladeshi people's love for classical music. People want to learn classical music. There are schools of classical music in Bangladesh, but not in a Guru-Shishya Parampara that is a fertile ground to learn clas-

sical music. So, Bengal Foundation is establishing a Gurukul called Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay here." Ustad Bahauddin Dagar said, "Thirty students have been selected for kheyal; 40 for tabla and nine for dhrupad. Now we are waiting for the instrumental section to come up. So there will be sitar, surbahar and rudra veena in dhrupad style

a very big hand because without such infrastructure, ambience and positive thinking, the school would not have been possible." Pandit Ullhash Kashalkar said, "Bangladesh has produced many world class artistes but guidance in classical music was lacking. Through the efforts of the gurus of the school, we hope to bring back the rich legacy of classical music in Bangladesh."

Pandit Uday Bhawalkar, who will be teaching dhrupad, said, "We all know that this land has produced so many classical music artistes. I am very honoured, privileged and happy to be here. I must say that the Abul Khair ji, Luva ji and all the people here in Bengal Foundation are so caring and meticulous in their organisation. If you get love and respect, you are happy and will give your best. There are many talented and dedicated students here." It is good news for us all that the celebrated stalwarts of classical music are teaching Bangladeshi students at Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay. We hope that the school will bring back the lost pride, heritage and legacy of classical music.

The prospects of the school are very bright, because there are many brilliant students in this country

Russian cultural troupe captivates Chittagong audience

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Chittagong
 The audience at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC), were mesmerised by an extraordinary performance by the artistes of Russian Orenburg State Academic Folk Choir. The artistes performed music, dance and played different musical instruments that cast a spell on the capacity auditorium. Although the lyric of the songs was not clear to many, it did not hinder them from enjoying the essence of melody and the rhythm of dance. The significant aspect of the performance was that the same artistes performed excellent songs and simultaneously performed superb dances. Famous Russian Artiste Vladimir Pozdnev was the art director of the choir which was established in 1958 and got the title of "State" in 1959. The Orenburg Choir was awarded the title "Academic" in 1997. Ministry of Cultural Affairs organised the cultural evening in Chittagong marking the Days of Russian Culture in Bangladesh. Secretary of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs Dr. Ranjit Kumar Biswas was the chief guest of the programme. He said Bangladesh had signed cultural exchange agreements with 40 countries including Russia. Terming Russia a tested friend of Bangladesh, Das remembered their cooperation with Bangladesh in the Liberation War of the country in 1971. He said the friendship between Bangladesh and Russia has withstood the test of time. Alexander A. Nikolaev, Ambassador of Russia to Bangladesh, in the programme, said cultural exchange will help the people of two different states to understand each other. He expressed the hope that the bond between the two countries would be strengthened by these cultural exchanges. Mejbah Uddin, Deputy Commissioner of Chittagong, also spoke among others with Liaquat Ali Lucky, Director General of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in the chair.



Musical tribute to the resilience of women

The Scheherazade Initiative India

KAVITA, New Delhi
 For years, wide-eyed children have listened to the enchanting tales of the Arabian Nights, also known as One Thousand and One Nights. Not everyone knows about its narrator, Persian queen Scheherazade, who cured her murderous husband King Shahrayar of his proclivity to behead a new wife every dawn. Her clever stratagem was to tell him a new story before sunrise, a rich storehouse of stories that came to be known as the Arabian Nights. The stories not only enthralled him but helped her save herself from the fate of her predecessors. For George Mathew, artistic director of Music For Life International, there is deeper meaning to the story of Scheherazade. "Scheherazade, as the narrator of the Tales of the 1001 Arabian Nights, is an archetypal figure. For a millennium, her legend has been an inspiration for composers, poets, writers, painters, sculptors and other artistes. She is a powerful symbol of the resilience of women and girls everywhere in the face of horrific violence." Using the legend of Scheherazade as a take-off point, Music For Life International teamed up with UN Women India and UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women to present "The Scheherazade Initiative India: A Concert Celebrating the Resilience of Women and Girls in the Face of Violence". The concert of chamber music in New Delhi featured a number of musicians --



former concertmaster of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York -- Elmira Darvarova on the violin, Chandrima Roy Majumdar (sarod); Mark Kuss, Smithsonian Institution Resident Artist (piano); George Mathew (piano) and soprano Aude Priya Wacziarg in rarely heard works by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Lili Boulanger, Sylvie Bodorová, Giuseppe Verdi, Igor Stravinsky and others. The Scheherazade Initiative is a series of concerts held in Washington, New York, New Delhi and other cities with the aim of fund raising for catalysing transformative change and generating public awareness about gender-based violence. The last stop of the initiative will be at the magnificent Carnegie Hall in New York on January 26, 2015.

IT'S TRUE!



Farooki's 'No Land's Man' wins award at Film Bazaar in Goa

A CORRESPONDENT
 Mostofa Sarwar Farooki won India's National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) Award for his project "No Land's Man". The cash award of Rs. 10 lakh was presented to him on the closing day of the Film Bazaar in Goa. NFDC award, earlier known as the Incredible India Award, is handed to the best project of co-production market. Farooki, known for films like "Television" and "Ant Story", was earlier selected for the Asian Project Market of Busan International Film Festival for his project No Land's Man. Raam Reddy's "Thithi" won the award in the fiction category of Work-in-progress lab. Khushboo Ranka and Vinay Shukla's "Proposition for a Revolution" won the award in the non-fiction category. Documentary films were introduced in the Work-in-progress lab for the first time this year.



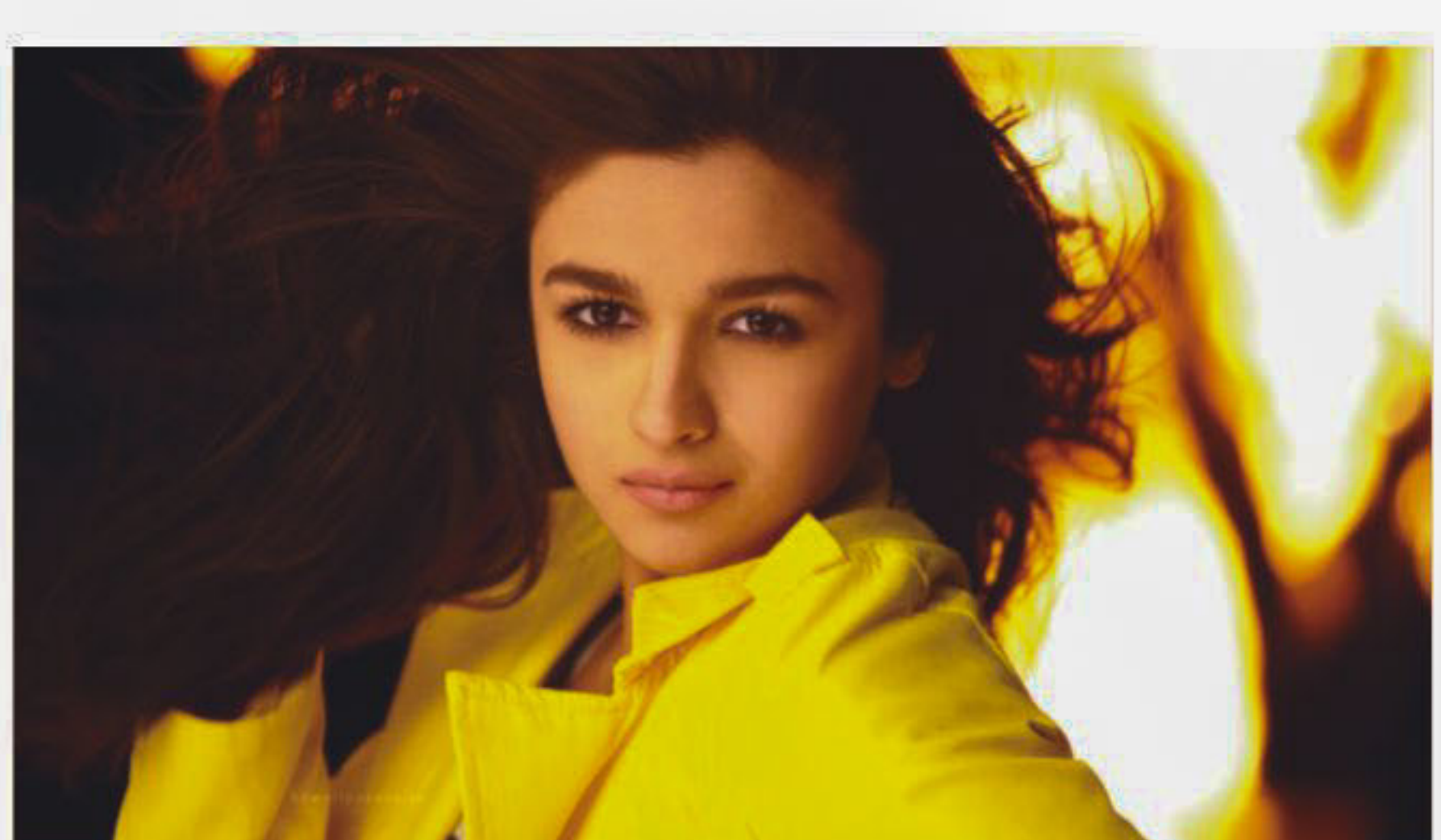
Farooki (R) receiving the award.

Legendary classical artiste Bade Ghulam Ali Khan began learning sarangi and vocal from his paternal uncle Kale Khan and his father Ali Baksh Khan at the age seven. When he was 21, he moved to Benaras where he accompanied a courtesan named Hirabai on the Sarangi and started to perform in public. Khan was also a disciple of both Ustad Akhtar Hussain Khan and Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan. After the partition of India in 1947, Khan went to his home in Pakistan, but returned to India later to reside permanently. He was against the partition, stating: "If in every home one child was taught Hindustani classical music this country would never have been partitioned."

James McAvoy wins Scottish Bafta film actor award



Hollywood star James McAvoy beat stiff competition from Peter Mullan and Jack O'Connell to win the coveted Actor Film award at Scotland's annual Bafta ceremony. McAvoy won the award for his portrayal of a corrupt policeman in "Filth", while Sophie Kennedy Clark won the Actress Film trophy for her performance in "Philomena". Other winners included David Tennant, who took the Actor Television category for his role in "The Escape Artist". Another big winner on the night was Shirley Henderson, who collected the Actress Television award for her role as a grieving mother in "Southcliffe". The winners of the British Academy Scotland Awards 2014 were unveiled at a red carpet ceremony at Glasgow's Radisson Blu Hotel. During the event, Lorraine Kelly received a special award honouring her 30-year television career. An outstanding contribution awards also went to Tommy Gormley, a Hollywood first assistant director whose credits include the much-anticipated "Star Wars: Episode VII". One of the night's biggest winners was "Starred Up", which collected three of the four categories in which it was nominated. The hard-hitting prison drama finished ahead of "Filth" and "Sunshine on Leith" to win the Feature Film award. For his work on the film, David Mackenzie took home the Director Film/Television award, while Jonathan Asser picked up the Writer Film/Television trophy. Will Anderson's "Monkey Love Experiments" triumphed in the Animation category, while Edinburgh-based video game studio Rockstar Games, accepted the Game award for "Grand Theft Auto V", the latest installment in the best-selling game franchise. Source: BBC



"I'm not a star yet" -- Alia Bhatt

Alia Bhatt has delivered back-to-back hits, so it doesn't come as a surprise that industry members are calling her a star. Even her father Mahesh Bhatt and sister Pooja Bhatt hold the same opinion. But Alia says she has a long way to go before she can be labeled as star. "Honestly, I think stardom comes with a body of quality works. I don't think I have reached that stage. I don't feel like any of us (the younger lot) are stars right now. I feel fortunate that I have had four hits, but I still believe I have a long way to go," she added. Source: Hindustan Times