

Bursting the Bubble of Elitism

OPINION

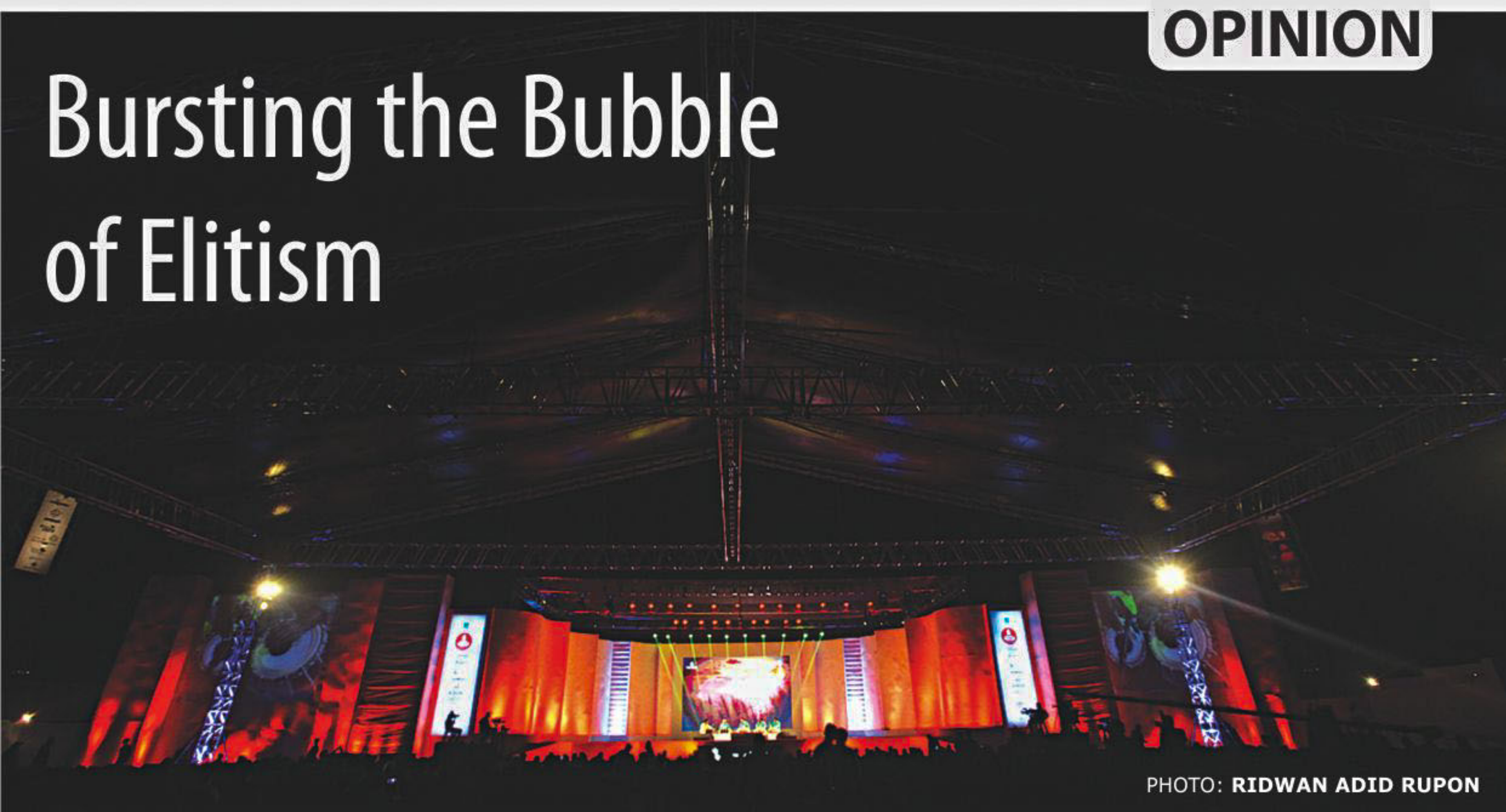


PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

DYUTY AURONEE

Dhaka has been on a roll over the last few weeks. Firstly, Unmad-JCC Comic Con took the geeks and pop culture enthusiasts by storm. The comic book community united in a glorious three-day festival of goodies and cosplaying. The next weekend marked the celebration of literature at the Hay Festival. Before the magic of Hay could wear away, Bengal Classical Music Festival presented Dhakaites with some of the all-time greats of Indian classical music and dance. Needless to say, three of the events pulled a huge number of people. While Comic Con was for a relatively younger crowd willing to spend a few hundred

bucks for the experience, the other two were not only FREE but also had something to offer to people from all walks of life.

Arts and culture are as important to a city as its people. What's metropolitan life without a break from the daily grind that leaves us feeling mechanical? Music, poetry and cosplaying are our ways of teleporting ourselves to a world where we are more than just our student roles or job designations. It's a way of assuring ourselves that we are living and breathing souls who can appreciate the arts and embrace the warmth of cultural goodness on chilly November nights. After all, it's not every day that we get to see such enthusiasm over poetry reading or book

launching. For those three days of November, Bangla Academy was full of life. It's also not every day that classical music wins over the masses. The five-day musical extravaganza kept a stadium full of people awake and mesmerised through the late winter hours.

The arts have often been misunderstood as indulgences of the elites. Knowing about the arts, appreciating them and being spotted at exclusive performances are supposedly part of the "elite culture". However, here's a little window to myth busting. Only a person who has swayed to the ragas and rhythms or has had goose bumps at storytelling sessions knows how much of a need these sensory experiences are.

There were allegations that these events nurture "elitism", but does it make sense? The restrictions, if any, are in the minds of the people rather than in reality. The event attendees represented a fair mix of people. Some were seasoned classical music connoisseurs/ poetry enthusiasts, whereas some were first-timers. So, it's alright if you walked into one of the events without any knowledge of what to expect. It must not have stopped you from absorbing the ambiance. Understanding the technicalities is secondary.



PHOTO: SAURAV DEY

THE HYPE AWAKENS

SHUPROVO ARKO

So the internet broke last Friday and thankfully it had nothing to do with Kim Kardashian. Star Wars Episode VII is upon us and its trailer is better than anyone expected. Here's why:

1.

IN JJ WE TRUST:

Watching *Episode III* left a bad taste in my mouth that'll perhaps never go away, but J.J. Abrams seems to know exactly what fans want. The whole trailer practically SCREAMS *Star Wars* and with his experience of decently rebooting fan-favourite franchises (*Star Trek*), we can be optimistic.

2.

THAT LIGHTSABER:

The design's a little dumb, but it's also very cool, just like everything else in *Star Wars*. Fans have been speculating whether we'll get to see other weapons, like lightspears, lightwhips or even *gasp*... LIGHT-NUNCHUCKS.

3.

HAN SOLO'S SHIP:

As if getting to see the original cast once again wasn't awesome enough, the trailer, in a moment that had millions of fans around the world squealing out of pure bliss, showed the Millennium Falcon barrel-rolling and dive-bombing into a bunch of TIE fighters. Pure nostalgia.

4.

THE SCORE:

At this point I've come to expect every action movie trailer to be filled with Inception's "BWAAAAAs". So when the John Williams-scored *Star Wars* theme music came on, I couldn't help but smile. After 10 long years we're finally getting a new *Star Wars* movie. This is happening. This is it. GET HYPED!

