

WHAT'S ON

Amor Ekushey Book Fair 2015
Venue: Bangla Academy
Premises, Dhaka
Date: February 1-28
Time: 3-8pm & 11am-8pm
(Fridays)

Chobi Mela VIII
Organiser: Pathshala and Drik
Venue: Different locations in Dhaka
Date: Jan 23-Feb 5
Time: 10-8pm

CHOBIMELA
INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF
PHOTOGRAPHY
BANGLADESH
2015

National Poetry Festival 2015
Venue: Hakim Chatter, University of Dhaka
Date: February 1-2
Time: 10am-10pm

Bangladesh-Malaysia Poets Summit 2015
Organiser: Kathak, Bangladesh
Venue: National Gallery Auditorium, Shilpakala Academy
Date: February 3
Time: 5:30pm

Solo Art Exhibition
Title: Light, Dark Space
Artist: Md. Tokon
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge
Date: Jan 31-Feb 21
Time: 12-8pm

NEWSbytes

Disney reveals first Latina princess

Disney has unveiled its first Latina princess, Princess Elena of Avalor, the star of a new animated television series for Disney Junior. Princess Elena will make her debut in a 2016 episode of "Sofia the First" before getting her own spin-off series.

In a blog post, Disney described the 16-year-old as the "bold, caring, funny and clever ascendant to the throne in the fairytale kingdom of Avalor". The kingdom will be inspired by diverse Latin cultures and folklore.

Disney made history in 2009 with its first black princess, Tiana, in "The Princess and the Frog". While the show will



centre the "confident and compassionate teenager" Elena, it is being targeted at children aged two to seven.

Disney said the series, which will be presented in 25 languages around the world, will communicate "positive messages and life lessons" for young children about things like "leadership, resilience, diversity, compassion and the importance of family and family traditions".

Source: BBC

IT'S TRUE!



The main office of Bangla Academy is located at the Burdwan House, once part of the University of Dhaka. It was the official residence of the Prime Minister of the then East Pakistan, Nurul Amin, in 1952, when the Language Movement was at its peak. The very building that had seen the hatching of conspiracies against the Language Movement and unleashed the bloodbath of February 21, 1952, is now the symbol of Bangladeshi literary tradition and intellectualism. After the February 21 killings, the demand of transforming the house into a centre for 'Bangla Bhashar Gobeshonagar' (research centre for Bangla language) emerged. At present the 'Bhasha Andolan Jadughar' (Language Movement Museum) is located on the first floor of the house.



Kochi's "Bhroon O Utsab" at DAC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A solo exhibition by Mazaharul Islam Kochi began at Dhaka Art Centre in the capital on January 30. The exhibit, "Bhroon O Utsab", was inaugurated by former Chief Whip Vice-principal Abdus Shahid, while Dr. Shueb Zibran attended the inauguration ceremony as chief guest.

The exhibit features 39 oil and water paintings. This is the first solo exhibition by artist Kochi. About his works, Kochi said "I tried to depict the phenomenon that creates a resonance in our sense and as well as society."

The exhibition runs every day from 3-8pm till February 7.



PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

As the mercury steadily dropped, the chill in the air felt starkly different from the fiery situation prevailing everywhere across the country. This was early February, the year 1971. The mass upsurge of 1969 followed by the non-cooperation movement in 1971 against the Pakistani regime had pushed the country to a point of no return.

Shumona faintly recalls her days with her father, acclaimed artist Quamrul Hassan, at their Central Road residence. Quamrul was then chief designer of the erstwhile East Pakistan Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (EPSCIC), now Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC). But his daytime work was quite different from what occupied his time at dead of night. For then, his home would become the gathering place for scores of artists from the Arts College, who had a similar dream of an independent Bangladesh. The group would tirelessly work under the maestro's guidance, designing and creating huge anti-regime posters. Little Shumona Hassan enjoyed watching the young artists make buckets full of glue and using poster colours from big jars. Before sunrise the students would fan out, boldly

setting up the anti-oppression posters all across the capital.

February 21st was approaching. In that ongoing fervour of nationalism, political, social and cultural activists had united under a single banner. Working non-stop over the following days, Quamrul Hassan and his group used their brushes to completely transform the road leading to the Central Shaheed Minar, turning it from a blackened pathway

It is an opportune time to realise how it is not always violence that prevails, but rather the deep-rooted spirit of liberty that pulls the country through the darkest times

to one painted with bright and traditional alpana. The crimson was a vivid reminder of the blood that the country had pledged to keep the dream of independence alive.

A huge tree beside the Shaheed Minar was chosen as a symbolic landmark. It was decorated with Bangla alphabets and named the Okhhar Brikhho (alphabet tree) to reflect the vitality of the Bengali language.

This was Quamrul Hassan. Active, ener-

getic and ever innovative, he would spend hours doodling in his sketchbook, the cigarette packet or whatever served as a drawing board. Even while serving in-exile as director of the art division of Bangladesh's information and radio department, he drew the ferocious caricature of Yahya Khan, titled Annihilate These Demons, that later attained an iconic status.

Besides his mastery in the art world, Quamrul Hassan was also extremely adept in the performing arts. He used to frequent Vastukalabid, at Paribagh, the gathering place of stalwarts from the political, cultural and intelligentsia. Students of all ages would gather at the lush green gardens to get Brotochari Nritya (dance lessons) from Quamrul Hassan.

As the month of February dawns upon us, it seems an opportune time to reflect on Quamrul Hassan's contribution to the spirit of freedom. It is an opportune time to realise how it is not always violence that prevails, but rather the deep-rooted spirit of liberty that pulls the country through the darkest times.

It is an opportune time to wish that his crimson brush-strokes on the Shaheed Minar had not merely painted the pathway, but had tinted the spirits of millions to keep the spirit of freedom alive.

Nat'l Classical Music Conference held in Chittagong

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Chittagong

A two-day classical music conference concluded in the port city on Friday night.

Sadarang Uchchanga Sangeet Parishad organised the 18th National Classical Music Conference 2015 at the Muslim Hall auditorium, where diverse classical music performances enthralled music aficionados.

Chittagong University Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury inaugurated the conference as chief guest.

Classical music has a great influence on human mind and can touch the souls conveying human feelings through tunes, said the Pro-VC.

The conference started with a group choral performance composed on Ragas Bahar and Jog by Swarnamoy Chakraborty, general secretary of the organisation. A total of 35 artistes from Sadarang took part in the performance.

Expatriate artiste Merina Ahmed Alam performed three classical pieces, while Dr Fakir Shahidul Islam Suman performed two classical pieces that moved the audience.

Following the performance, violinist Shyamal Chandra Dash performed Raga Jhinjhoti. Tabla player Sabuj Ahmed accompanied the artiste. The duo's performance received



PHOTO: STAR

Artistes render a chorus at the event.

rounds of applause from the audience.

The second day's programme began with the performance of Shampa Bhattacharya with Raga Madhubanti. Her lucid voice was captivating. Rajib Chakraborty accompanied on tabla with the artiste. Artiste Rajesh Saha rendered raga Hansadhvani.

The conference ended with an enchanting performance on Chaturangi -- a string instrument created blending Beena, Sitar, Sarod and Guitar -- by Dipon Sarker from Dhaka that captivated the audience. The artiste performed Ragas Desh, Kirvani and BHairavi. Sabuj Ahmed accompanied the artiste on tabla.

Curtains on Int'l Children's Film Festival



Winners pose for a photo with guests.

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The eighth International Children's Film Festival (ICFF) closed on January 30 at the main auditorium of the National Museum. Chairman of the festival's advisory council Mustafa Monowar, Children's Film Society Bangladesh chairman Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, its general secretary Munira Morshed Munni and festival director Rayeed Morshed were present.

Abrar's "Swotosfurto" won the first prize in the completion, while Fariha Zabeen Oishi's "Long Way to Go" and Ashfaq Sakib Shafin's "Obhipraye" won the next two awards. Asif Shahriar's "Podokkhep" and Raju Ahmed-Ishrat Jahan jointly directed film "The Flag" won special mentions. The winners all received cash prizes, crests and certificates.

A number of awards were also handed in the international and social film categories as well.

Aamir Khan in a new avatar in Dangal



After playing an alien in Rajkumar Hirani's "PK", Aamir Khan is all geared up for his next project, "Dangal" wherein he will be playing the father of two girls.

The actor, who plays a wrestler in the film, will sport a close shaved head and a graying beard. "Dangal" is a biopic on the life of wrestler Mahavir Phogat, who is the father of India women wrestlers Geeta and Babita.

Source: Indian Express



On the penultimate day (January 30) of the five-day National Dance Drama Festival, a popular Tagore dance drama "Bhanu Singher Padabali" was staged. Samina Hossain Prema directed the production, performed by the artistes of Bhabna. Two other productions -- Battle of Bangladesh and Phiraye Anibo Torey by the artistes of Bangladesh Ballet Troupe and Nrityashilpi Sangstha, Rajshahi were also staged at the festival.

PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON