



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

# BAFA celebrates diamond jubilee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

*Bulbul Lalitkala Academy or Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts (BAFA) has come a long way to be a pioneering cultural institution in the country. In celebration of diamond jubilee, the institution arranged a programme at Sahityabisharod Abdul Karim auditorium of Bangla Academy on June 10.*

The event, featuring a cultural programme and a long-winded discussion, opened with chorus songs by the children of BAFA.

Lawmaker Advocate Kazi Feroze Rashid and acting editor of Daily Ittefaq, Tasmima Hossain attended the event as special guests, along with distinguished guests -- noted cultural personality Kamal Lohani, BAFA's founder member Nrityaguru Ajit Sanyal, Bulbul Chowdhury's daughter Nargis Bulbul and noted dancer Laila Hasan, among others.

Speakers expressed worries over the present condition of BAFA. They demanded that the organisation be renovated and reinstated to its once-glorious state. Some of them also demanded that the government establish the institution as a university where Bangladeshi youths will receive higher degrees on different forms of art and culture.

Adding that BAFA's duty is to prepare the children to make them better citizens, speakers expressed hopes that BAFA will soon be free of conflicts and start a smooth journey.

Kamal Lohani mentioned that the organisation withstood many obstacles and did a commendable job of upholding our culture.

Ajit Sanyal, who came from India to attend the programme, reminisced on the days he spent with his dance guru Bulbul Chowdhury.

Later, the cultural part began with a group dance directed by Anik Basu, followed by a Kathak performance under Saju Ahmed's direction. The event wrapped up with dance drama "Mayar Khela" by the students of BAFA.



IT'S TRUE!

Jodie Foster made her acting debut in a television commercial when she was three. As a child, while she was filming Disney's "Napoleon and Samantha" (1972) Jodie was attacked by a lion and carried briefly for a short distance in its mouth. She gained popularity in the 1976 movie "Taxi Driver". Jodie was only 13 when she won an Oscar nomination for the supporting role. She graduated from Yale University with a B.A. in literature. In 1997, Yale bestowed upon Jodie an honorary, Doctor of Fine Arts degree. She ranked #18 in Empire (UK) magazine's "The Top 100 Movie Stars of All Time" list.

# From Norway, with love

## Concerts Norway's endeavours with Bangladesh's culture

FAHMIM FERDOUS

From all the way across continents, Concerts Norway -- an organisation that started on its own to promote live music in their country, is silently working for the betterment of Bangla music and culture, and building artistic bonds through exchange. Working at various levels -- from traditional music to classical dance to rock music, they have formed a bridge from which bigger things can be expected. Anne Moberg and Solveig Korum Manga, two people at the helm of International Projects of Concerts Norway, recently visited The Daily Star, and shared their experience.

Asked how Concerts Norway became interested in Bangladesh's culture, Solveig went back to the early days of the organisation some 40 years back, when they had found out that the immigrant population's cultures were important to portray as well, and worked towards it, and also built an ethnic music centre. Their work was so successful that the Norwegian government asked Concerts Norway to work with them, and it is part of the government's interest in cultural diversity that the organisation began working in the sub-continental region. In October 2011, the Norwegian Embassy entered into an agreement with Concerts Norway to promote music cooperation between Norway and Bangladesh. The objective is



Solveig and Anne speak; children at Arshi Nagar school.



to raise competence in Bangladesh in sound techniques, musical copyright and the documentation of musical traditions that are in danger of disappearing, as well as musical exchanges. Another goal is to strengthen the coordination between Bangladeshi musical communities and international partners. They have so far found solid partners in BITA (Bangladeshi Institute of Theatre Arts), dance school Nritya Nandan, Lalmonirhat-based music school Arshi Nagar and Dhaka's urban music organisers Live Square Music. Chhayanaaut is also a "friend" of the cooperation, and offers various kinds of support.

One of the most significant works by the organisation has been "Songs of

death and freedom -- in Bangladesh", a two-CD compilation of folk songs sung by kids of the Arshi Nagar. Anne shared the story of how they got in touch. "Arshi Nagar had a Norwegian friend before us, poet-writer Wera Sæther, who came to visit Bangladesh and fell in love with the school. Her organisation Suno Norway supports Arshi Nagar, and it is through her that we got to know about it, and it seemed like a great space to work in. The kids sing with so much heart and about such deep philosophical matters, and the teaching method is still so organic, it was important to give them exposure, and along with Wera, we did it."

Another major work being done

recently by Concerts Norway is an exposition of traditional musical instruments of Bangladesh and musical history to the youth, a yearlong project in association with BITA that is going on in full swing. Their other collaborations have facilitated urban fusion band Chirkutt and Nritya Nandan's dancers to go and perform in Norway, and Norwegian band Casa Murillo and other artistes performing in Dhaka.

While there are able organisations in our country shying away from working towards the betterment of our culture, a European organisation's commitment to it is a shining example of how important culture is to any country, and what beautiful friendships it can forge.

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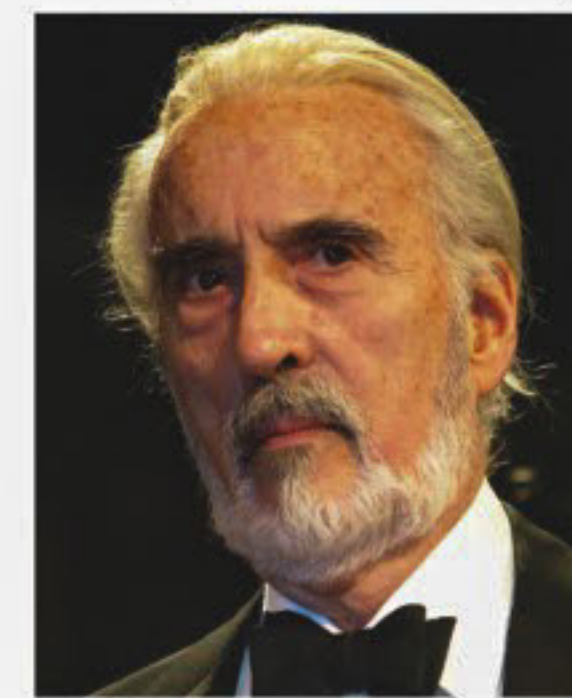
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## NEWS bytes

### Sir Christopher Lee passes away

Sir Christopher Lee has died at the age of 93, after being hospitalised for respiratory problems and heart failure. The veteran actor, best known for a variety of films from "Dracula" to "The Wicker Man" through to the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, passed away on Sunday morning at Chelsea and Westminster Hospital in London, according to sources. The decision to release the news days after was based on his wife's desire to inform family members first.



As well as his career in film, Lee also released a series of heavy metal albums, including "Charlemagne: The Omens of Death". He was knighted in 2009 for services to drama and charity and was awarded the Bafta fellowship in 2011.

His film career started in 1947 with a role in gothic romance Corridor of Mirrors but it wasn't until the late 50s that he started gaining fame. His career saw a resurgence in 2001 with a role as Saruman in the "Lord of the Rings" trilogy and then as Count Dooku in "Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones" and "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith".

Source: Telegraph