

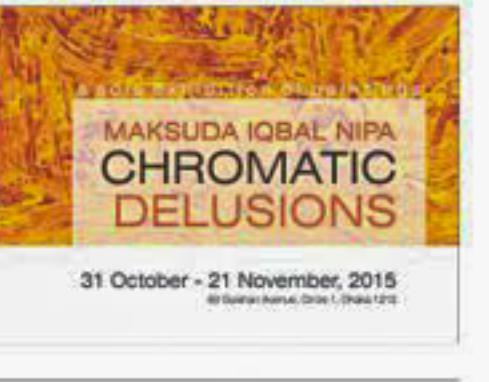
Dhaka International Folk Fest
Venue: Bangladesh Army Stadium, Banani
Date: Nov 12-14
Time: 5pm-12am



Group Exhibition
Title: Drawings
Venue: Galleri Kaya
Date: Nov 13-27
Time: 11am-8pm



Solo Exhibition
Chromatic Delusions
Artist: Maksuda Iqbal Nipa
Venue: Bengal Art Lounge
Date: Oct 31-Nov 21
Time: 12-8pm



Korean Film Festival
Organiser: Embassy of the Republic of Korea
Venue: Bangladesh Motional Museum
Date: Nov 13-14
Time: 3pm onwards



Solo Oriental Painting Exhibition
Artist: Amit Nandi
Venue: Zainul Gallery, FFA, DU
Date: Nov 10-15
Time: 10am-8pm



MUSIC OF THE ROOTS

Dhaka Int'l Folk Fest opens buoyantly

FAHMIM FERDOUS

A filled-to-the-brim audience at the capital's Army Stadium enjoyed an assortment of folk music on Thursday, as the Dhaka International Folk Festival 2015 – presented by Meril – opened its doors. Musicians from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan took the stage to present some beautiful melodies and philosophies at a fantastic platform, but there was room for improvements.

Pallavi Dance Theatre opened the three-day festival with a collage of folk dance styles from various parts of the country, before noted Lalon exponent Farida Parveen set the tone for the evening with three popular Lalon songs, "Parey Loyer Jao Amaye", "Milon Hobey Koto Diney" and "Somoy Gele".

Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Square Group MD Anjan Chowdhury and eminent singer Ferdousi Rahman then took part in the formal inauguration.

Chandana Majumdar, next on cue, presented a song each by Lalon, Shah Abdul Karim and Radharaman Dutta in quick succession, followed by Kiran Chandra Roy presenting a

few folk numbers of his choice, including a rather unusual "Bhalo Achi Bhalo Theko".

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Banerjee and later with his band Fiddler's Green, he got the audience on their feet.

Rob Fakir and Shafi Mondal, two of the most respected Lalon musicians of the country, took stage next, accompanied by Labik Kamal Gaurab. After the two senior artistes

further performance.

Saeen Zahoor, the revered Pakistani Sufi singer, was also accommodated time for only three songs, but he displayed his brand of raspy vocals cracking at the edges, colourful stage presence and the beautiful essence of Sufi music, with songs like "Aik Alif" (by Bulleh Shah) and "Allah Hoo".

Papon and the East India Company were the last performers, and they took the audience on a joyride with their very contemporary musical arrangement of Assamese, Punjabi and other folksy songs. The energy of the troupe resembled more of a rock concert than a folk festival, but the audience did not seem to mind.

While arrangements including food, refreshments and amenities were plentiful, mismanagement and flaws here and there left some attendees with a sour taste in the mouth. The sound output, especially at far end of the stadium, was dampened. Many in the audience also complained that while bags were not allowed at the venue, it was announced later in the evening, putting some early attendees in trouble.

(Clockwise from top left): Rob Fakir, Shafi Mondal and Labik Kamal Gaurab; Saeen Zahoor and Arko Mukherjee perform at the fest.

kazoo, a small brass instrument), presented a strangely lengthy set, characterised by blending of various folk inspirations from around the world – from Bengal to the various Indian regions to European gypsy and Middle-Eastern melodies. With Satyaki

had presented two beautiful contemplative Lalon songs, and Labik presented two, the two emcees of the event inexplicably interrupted them on stage, saying their time was up. Despite requests from the audience, the troupe were handed the festival memento without any

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSED

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