

WHAT'S ON
Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2016
 Organiser: Bangla Academy
 Venue: Bangla Academy premises & Suhrawardi Udyan
 Date: February 1-29
 Time: 3-8pm & 11am-8pm (Fri & Sat)

Solo Art Exhibition
 Title: Time, Coincidence & History by Dhali Al Mamoon
 Venue: Bengal Gallery of Fine Arts, Dhanmondi
 Date: Jan 23-Mar 19
 Time: 12-8pm

Int'l Poets Summit 2016
 Venue: National Art Gallery Auditorium, Shilpakala Academy
 Date: Jan 29-Feb 3
 Time: 6:30pm

Duet Art Exhibition
 Title: Fragments of the Anthropocene
 Artists: Zihan Karim & Shimul Saha
 Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, 60, Gulshan-1
 Date: Jan 30-Feb 27; Time: 12-8pm

Group Art Exhibition
 Title: Gregarious Harmony
 Venue: Zainul Gallery-1, FFA, DU
 Date: Jan 31-Feb 6
 Time: 10am-8pm

Book Fair returns with the spirit of Amar Ekushey

BANGLA BAZAR BUZZING WITH ACTIVITY

SHAH ALAM SHAZU and SAURAV DEY

In line with previous years, Amar Ekushey Book Fair has returned this year with its ever-buoyant spirit. The month-long fair, the largest and most popular book fair in Bangladesh, is set to commence today at Bangla Academy premises and the adjacent Suhrawardi Udyan.

Every year, workers at printing press and binding houses spend sleepless nights to prepare for the fair. However, this year they had to work harder to meet the growing demand of books. According to Bangla Academy, the organiser of the fair, this edition will be bigger as they have expanded the venue and allocated more stalls.

Bangla Bazar, the largest hub of book publishers in Bangladesh, is buzzing with activity as publishers, printers and binders have joined forces to transport the books to the fairground in due time. Though some new books have been shifted to the stalls, they are still putting finishing touches to books which will arrive in the fair soon. Some publishers expressed the hope that this year's sales will see a significant growth in comparison to last two years' fair

which was, to a great extent, marred by political instability.

Abul Kashem, a senior worker at Ahona Printers, said "The political situation is better this year and the country is in a stable situation, so we expect that people will come to the fair and buy books. We are still working hard to meet the deadline."

Panini Printers at Sutrapur Road has a number of modern printing machines, and they have been working for the last couple of months. They informed that most of the work has been done and they are now doing the last-minute work.

Tuhin from Rafa Printers said, "I love to work during this season as we face tremendous pressure to deliver books at the right time."

There are many printing and binding houses in Banglabazar and nearby areas. Also, many publishers



have their own printing press. After printing their own books, they take orders from other publishers.

Workers at Shamim Auto Book Bindings said, "We don't have much work throughout the year, but from December we start getting a heavy workload. We have to work 24/7 in shifts so that we can finish binding books before February."

There is different scenario at publishing houses, as they have piled up new books which will soon garnish

stalls at the fairground. Pearl Publications' owner Hasan Zayed Tuhin said, "This is the season of new books. We love to print new books as readers love to read them. We work hard to supply them with new books by of their favourite writers."

Ananya's owner Monirul Haq said, "Every year we publish over 100 books, and this year is no exception."

On another front at Bangla Academy and Suhrawardi Udyan,

workers were seen busy with last-minute arrangements. Volunteers were seen setting up stalls and putting colours on those makeshift booths. They have been working for one week to set up stalls and pavilions. They are doing their best to make their stalls look beautiful to attract readers.

Some 450 publishers have set up their stalls covering a total area of 478,000 square feet at this year's fairground.

NEWS bytes

KUNG FU PANDA 3 clobbers competition

DreamWorks' animated sequel "Kung Fu Panda 3" is vanquishing its competition at the domestic box office this weekend, outstripping other new releases including "The Finest Hours" and "Fifty Shades of Black" with ease, according to studio estimates.

The Jack Black starrer took in \$10 million on Friday, forecasting a three-day total of \$40 million from 3,955 locations. Friday estimates had suggested the pic would gross as much as \$45 million in its debut.

Po the Panda isn't the only hero at the multiplex. Disney's "The Finest Hours," which follows the courageous Coast Guard rescue mission of 1952, generated \$3.3 million on Friday, portending a weekend haul of \$9.5 million. The Chris Pine starrer unspools in 3,143 locations.

Holdovers "The Revenant" and "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" continue to do big business, this weekend coming in at No. 2 and No. 3 behind "Panda."

EBL ORGANISES ART COMPETITION FOR CHILDREN

A CORRESPONDENT

Eastern Bank Ltd. (EBL) organised an art competition, titled "Chhobir Deshe Ronger Beshe" for the children of its customers at Gulshan North branch on January 29, as part of its customer engagement programme.

Seventy children in two age groups participated in the competition on the subjects "Your Neighborhood" and "Climate Change." Children aged between 6 and 8 years expressed themselves in oil pastels, while the senior group between 9 and 12 years captured their imagination in watercolours.

Ali Reza Iftekhar, managing director and CEO of EBL said, "At EBL we consider our customers as our most valuable asset. Through this programme we aim to establish an emotional attachment between the entire family of our customers with the bank."

Internationally renowned painters Hashem Khan, Abul Barq Alvi and Nisar Hossain were in the jury board, and they selected best six works from the two age groups.

After the competition the judges painted three canvases and invited the participants to complete the paintings. The participating child artists thoroughly enjoyed the interactive art session.

Later, the award winning children were given prizes and books, while each participant was handed a certificate of attendance.



Ali Reza Iftekhar, MD and CEO of EBL, shows a winning art from the junior group.



Muslin Festival 2016: countdown begins

A CORRESPONDENT

A meet-the-press session on the upcoming Muslin Festival was held at Poet Sufia Kamal Auditorium of Bangladesh National Museum on January 31 morning.

The speakers at the press conference included Minister for Cultural Affairs, Asaduzzaman Noor, MP; Begum Akhtari Momtaz, Cultural Affairs Secretary; Dr Muhammad Musa, executive director, BRAC; Faizul Latif Chowdhury, director general, Bangladesh National Museum (BNM), and Saiful Islam, CEO, Drik.

Saiful Islam introduced the festival and its activities to the press invitees. He also referred to the organising partner Bangladesh National Museum (BNM), and special partner, Aarong with the support from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs in hosting this event.

The inauguration ceremony of the month-long festival will take place at Nalinikanta Bhattasali Gallery of BNM on February 5 at 3:30pm.

The month long festival is the culmination of over two years of research into the history of muslin and the nation's contribution to it. The exhibition will bring artefacts, including original muslin and the new muslin woven by the weavers of Drik's Bengal Muslin team. There will also be a book launch, a film screening, and seminars during the festival.

A special cultural evening has been designed to be conducted at Ahsan Manzil on February 6 where muslim's past, present and future will be displayed through a cultural show.

In addition, the festival will feature the launch of international quality publication "Muslin. Our Story", launch of trailer for documentary film "Legend of the Loom", and seminars.

TV WATCH

Bijori and Intekhab pair up for "Kachhakachhi"

A CORRESPONDENT

Popular television actors Bijori Barkatullah and Intekhab Dinar have joined forces for drama serial "Kachhakachhi". Written by Iraj Ahmed and directed by Montasir Bipon, the serial encircles the lives of five youths, and the story of their ups and downs. Bijori will be seen in the serial as a matchmaker while Intekhab plays an engineer.

Jenny, Shotabdi Wadud, Naziba Basher, Anwarul Haq, Shazu Khadem, Swagata and others are in the cast.

The serial will soon go on air on a satellite channel.



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Media organisation Ghasphul organised a programme at AS Mahmud Seminar Hall at The Daily Star Centre in the capital on January 30. The event, "Awakening of Women in Bangla Poetry: Poets and Poems", featured a brief discussion and poetry recitation.

Poet Kazi Rozy, MP attended the

Ghasphul holds recitation programme

programme as special guest along with guest poets Muhammad Nurul Huda, Habibullah Sirajee, and Shamsul Foyez. Poet Ruby Rahman presided over the event.

After a brief opening session, Ghasphul director Rabia Sultana Panna gave a speech followed by the presentation of keynote paper by Poet Shelly Naaz on

leading women poets of Bangla literature.

The programme also featured recitation by other poets including Afroza Aditi, Kazi Tahmina, Jahanara Zaman, Junan Nishat, Tithi Afroze, Novera Hossain, Nur Kamrunnahar, Parvin Akter, Marium Begum Baby, Rafea Abedin, Lily Haque, Shanta Maria, Shamima Chowdhury and Saima Habib.

Coldplay's 'Hymn for the Weekend' faces backlash

Coldplay's "Hymn for the Weekend" video featuring Beyoncé is catching some heat over its Indian inspiration, with some calling the Mumbai-shot clip a work of cultural appropriation while others defend it as an appreciation of the foreign culture.

Parts of the video are based in India during the Holi Festival, the festival of colour and love.

It shows Chris Martin travelling past ancient sites and through crowded streets in a tuk tuk. But, the filming is causing some people to say Coldplay is using India as a backdrop for the wrong reasons. And, what's

causing most of a stir is Beyoncé in traditional Indian dress wearing elaborate dresses, jewelry and henna tattoos.

Despite the debates, the video has become an instant hit for its exotic cinematography soon after its release on January 29. Coldplay and Beyoncé have spent time in India and immersed themselves in the culture for "Hymn for the Weekend," their collaborative cut from the band's "A Head Full of Dreams".

Ben Mor directed the clip, which also stars Bollywood actress Sonam Kapoor.

