

<p><b>WHAT'S ON</b></p> <p><b>Amar Ekushey Book Fair 2016</b> Organiser: Bangla Academy Venue: Bangla Academy premises &amp; Suhrawardi Udyan Date: February 1-29 Time: 3-8pm &amp; 11am-8pm (Fri &amp; Sat)</p>	<p><b>Solo Art Exhibition</b> Censored Image Artist: Wakilur Rahman Venue: Kalakendra Date: Feb 3-23 Time: 12-8pm</p>	<p><b>Solo Watercolour Exhibition</b> Title: Koto Ojanare Artist: Saeeda Kamal Venue: EMK Center, Dhanmondi Date: Feb 6-18; Time: 9am-8pm</p>	<p><b>Duet Art Exhibition</b> Title: Fragments of the Anthropocene Artists: Zihan Karim &amp; Shimul Saha Venue: Bengal Art Lounge, 60, Gulshan-1 Date: Jan 30-Feb 27; Time: 12-8pm</p>	<p><b>Solo Art Exhibition</b> Title: Unknown Spirit Artist: Esperanza Romero (Spain) Venue: Gallery Cosmos, H-115, Lane-6, New DOHS, Mohakhali Date: February 20-29 Time: 12-8pm</p>
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**NEWS bytes**

**BSA to mark 42nd anniversary**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) has arranged a celebration programme marking 42nd founding anniversary (February 19) of the institution.

It has also arranged a two-day (February 20-21) programme participated by different lingual groups on the occasion of International Mother



Language Day (February 21), along with another five day (February 22-26) programme titled "Smriti, Shotta, Bhubishot", in memory of nine late playwrights.

A press conference was held on February 17 in this regard at the seminar hall of BSA where BSA DG Liaquat Ali Lucky, along with other officials, elaborated the upcoming cultural programmes.



(L-R) Foad Nasser Babu, Nahim Razzaq, Hamin Ahmed, Shezan and Shaju at the event.

**A leap of faith for Bangla music**

**Music streaming app 'Gaan' launched**

**FAHMIM FERDOUS**

The names Shaju Kazi and Saef Al Nazi may not be instantly recognisable to the country's youth, but to anyone who followed urban Bangla music in the 2000s and beyond, 'Shaju and Shezan from Artcell' will ring a familiar bell. The drummer and bassist of the progressive rock band that inspired a generation of musicians and listeners left to pursue higher studies to Australia, and have been under the radar for a few years now. But when they announced a return to Bangladesh's music on Monday, it was very different in terms of capacity but potentially similar to their impact as musicians.

Shaju and Shezan launched GAAN, the first proper music streaming app for smartphones targeting only Bangla songs, in a press conference at the AS Mahmud Seminar Hall of The

Daily Star Centre. "When we were abroad, one of the things we missed most was Bangla songs at our fingertips. We had to either scour the internet for an illegal pirated download, or stream it on Youtube. And we saw all other Bangladeshi expats had the same craving, and that is where the idea germinated from," said Shaju.

The app, currently available on the Play Store for android smartphones, has a growing library controlled by the company. Registration is free, and users can listen to Bangla music even without registering. The app owners promised not to control entry of any music as long as it is Bangladeshi, and would let the app users decide the success of it. It also has artist, genre or timeline-based curated streaming radios, options for creating custom playlists and social sharing plugins.

Eventually, the app will move

into taking ads and giving users options of a monthly subscription fee for an ad-free and enhanced user experience (like offline mode), and owners promised to share the revenue generated through it with musicians. The subscription model, they hoped, would catch on very well with Bangladeshis living abroad.

"Technologically, we are always playing catch-up with the rest of the world," said Shaju, adding that the rest of the world is moving on to subscription-based models of entertainment, while users here still depend on downloads. In a demonstration of the app, he also explained how it would practically give the app user a massive music library on their music player without using any additional memory, just with the help of internet connectivity.

Shezan, meanwhile, said all content uploaded will be taken

with permission from either the artiste or their record label as required, and will be non-exclusive. No user will have 'ownership' of the content, but they can access it through the app.

Also speaking at the event, parliament member Nahim Razzaq, veteran musicians Foad Nasser Babu and Hamin Ahmed, and pop diva Elita thoroughly welcomed the initiative, terming it a timely move and wishing it success.

"We know there are going to be obstacles, but we are moving forward with the right intentions," Shaju told The Daily Star.

There is still a fair way to go for the startup, in terms of enriching its library to fighting business competition, keeping it legally clean and reaching it out to the masses, but it sure is good to see someone come up with a timely technological forward step for the country's music industry.

**Publisher with panache**  
In conversation with Shahadat Hossain

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Mohammad Shahadat Hossain is one of the key figures in the country's publishing scene and has put in much effort to boost the industry. Proprietor of Annesha Prokashan, Shahadat has been in the industry for over a decade. He has brought out more than 600 books in this period.

Under the banner of his publishing house, over 60 books -- on children, research and Liberation War; and prose, essays, novels and many more are being published at this year's Ekushey Book Fair.

In its long career span, Annesha has brought out books of many noted writers like Hasan Azizul Haque, Sarder Fazlul Karim, Syed Shamsul Haq, Selina Hossain, Anisul Hoque and Humayun Ahmed. Of them, Humayun Ahmed's bestselling novel "Rupa" and 23 other books have been published by the publishing house.

This year, the publication house will bring out a book on the Language Movement penned by Dr Sheikh Mehedi Hasan. Apart from this, it will publish the books of Shamsuzzaman Khan, director general of Bangla Academy, Anisul Hoque, Taslima Nasrin and other noted writers from the country.

On the book fair, Shahadat said, "I believe we will see a good fair as the political situation remains stable this year."

Asked about the best asset of the house, the publisher said, "Every year we pave the way for three new writers to publish their books from Annesha. I believe we will find a skilled writer among them one day."

Recalling his early days, Shahadat said he was the student of KL Jubilee School near Banglabazar. During his school days, he noticed that many noted writers could be seen at the houses of publishers of Banglabazar. "I often took autographs from the writers those days. At one stage, I took publishing industry as career out of hobby. And publishing is now my profession," he says.



PHOTO: STAR



**Nisho and Peiya pair up for 'Biprotip'**

**A CORRESPONDENT**

Popular actors Afran Nisho and Peiya Bipasha have paired up for the first time for a single-episode television play, titled "Biprotip". Written and directed by Saiful Alam Shamim, the play is themed on love.

About the play, Nisho said, "I had the story in my mind, and when I discussed it with Shamim he instantaneously agreed to write a script based on it. He has made the play with care. I hope the audience will appreciate it."

Peiya said, "Afran is a skilled actor, and while working with him I got to learn a lot of things. I am hopeful about the play."

Both Nisho and Peiya have packed schedule. Nisho is working in 10 serials, while Peiya has a number of films on her hand.

"Biprotip" will go on air on Rtv in March.

**Yearlong programmes marking Abdul Karim's birth centenary**

**SAURAV DEY**

Marking the birth centenary of Baul Shah Abdul Karim, a year-long celebration began across the country on February 16. The inauguration ceremony of the

Cultural Affairs Secretary Akhtari Momtaz was special guest. Among others, BSA director general Liaquat Ali Lucky, Kolkata-based band Dohar's vocal Kalika Prasad, Sammilito Sangskritik Jote president and convenor of

that despite Abdul Karim had no formal education, his philosophy is world-class. And to understand his writings one has to delve deep into his creations and has to have great comprehensive power.

Kalika Prasad sought help from Bangladesh cultural organisations to celebrate Karim's birth centenary in Kolkata. He also recalled his first meeting with Abdul Karim.

The cultural performances began with two group dance in sync with "Ashi Bole Gelo Bondhu" and "Shokhi Kunjo Sajao Go". Popular artistes Subir Nandi, Chandana Majumdar, Kanon Bala Sarkar, Fakir Shahabuddin, Shahnaz Belli and Shotabdi Roy rendered solo and duet songs. Dohar then swayed the audience with their mellifluous renditions of Karim's popular numbers including "Boshonto Batashe", "Gari Cholena", "Jhilmil Jhilmil Kore Re", "Ami Kulhara Kolonkini", and "Ami Bangla Maa-er Chhele".

The programme has been arranged by Abdul Karim Birth Centenary Celebration Committee in association with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.



Dancers perform at the programme. PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

programme took place at Nandan Mancha of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) on Karim's birth anniversary, the first Tuesday of Bangla month Falgun.

Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor inaugurated the ceremony as chief guest, while

Asaduzzaman Noor observed

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**Daughters to pay tribute to Sohrab Hossain**

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**

Indira Gandhi Culture Centre (IGCC) is organising a duet musical evening of Nazrul, folk and adhunik Bangla songs by Rowshan Ara Shoma and Rahat Ara Geeti at 6:30pm on February 19, at the IGCC auditorium in Gulshan-1, Dhaka.

Rowshan Ara Shoma and Rahat Ara Geeti are daughters of eminent Bangladeshi singer Sohrab Hossain. The two sisters first learnt music from their father. Thereafter, they completed a course in Music from Chhayanaut Sangeet Biddyat. They also trained in classical music from Ustad Ful Mohammed, Akter Sadmani and Narayan Chandra Basak. Shoma was also trained at Nazrul Academy and Nazrul Institute.

"As February is the month of Language, we have planned to set off the event with a patriotic song. Besides, we will perform Nazrul Sangeet, folk songs, golden oldies, Shyama Sangeet, Islamic songs at the event," said Rowshan Ara Shoma. "We'll also perform the songs that Abba (Sohrab Hossain) taught us and had a liking to," added the artiste.

Both sisters have released solo albums on Nazrul Sangeet and Islamic songs and also released a duet CD of adhunik Bangla songs with music by their legendary father.



Rahat Ara Geeti



Rowshan Ara Shoma

**Priyanka's Chopra to play villain in "Baywatch"**



**A CORRESPONDENT**

There has been rife speculation that Bollywood's leading lady Priyanka Chopra, who has been making waves in the USA with her debut TV show "Quantico", joining a certain Hollywood film (right after Deepika Padukone signed for "xx: Return of Xander Cage"). Those speculations did amount for something, as Dwayne 'The Rock' Johnson, who is leading the film reboot of "Baywatch", made a video announcement, introducing Priyanka as a cast member of the 2017 film.

The two engage in some mutual admiration of each others' star status, and then in some banter in the brief video on a gorgeous

beachside. The video was posted on Priyanka and Johnson's social media pages, and fans cooked up a storm in the comments. Although it was not discussed explicitly in the video, many news outlets reported that Priyanka will play the villain in the Seth Gordon-directed film.

The film adaptation of "Baywatch", the TV drama about lifeguards that aired for 11 years and made Pamela Anderson a household name alongside David Hasslehoff, has already racked up an impressive cast, with Zac Efron, Hannibal Buress, Kelly Rohrbach (who will reprise Pamela's role, CJ Parker) and Alexandra Daddario, and with the inclusion of Priyanka, seems to be headed the right direction.