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PHOTO: AFTAB UZZAMAN

Surrealism had a great effect on me because then I realised that the imagery in my mind wasn't insanity. Surrealism to me is reality. — *John Lennon, The Beatles*

**SNAPSHOT**

**FESTIVAL**

# LOCAL PERFORMERS TO LOOK OUT FOR AT THE BCMF'16

**NAZIBA BASHER**

PHOTOS: COURTESY

Every year, with the arrival of Bengal Classical Music Fest (BCMF), music aficionados from the country and abroad gather to listen to some of the most fantastic tunes in the world. While big names like Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, and son Rahul, Pandit Harisprasad Chaurasiya, Vidushi Girija Devi and more come and enchant us, our Bangladeshi counter-parts prove to the rest of the world that they are no less when it comes to amazing the audience.

The first day of the BCMF 2016 will kick off with a performance by a local dance troupe, lead by **Sharmila Banerjee**. The 60-member troupe will give dance presentations of Manipuri, Bharatanatyam, Odissi and Kathak set to Rabindranath's works and other songs. A Manipuri exponent, Sharmila Banerjee has participated in numerous solo, duet and group dance performances. She has been working with Odissi, Chayanaut and many other prominent cultural organisations of the country.

**Priyanka Gope**, a promising and celebrated classical singer, will not only be performing her own solo khayal, but will also lead the Dhaka University's Music Department's students during their performance. Trained under maestros such as Ananda Chakrabarty, Dr. Asit Roy, Wahidul Haque, Prof. Subir Nandy, Smt. Shubhra Guha and Falguni Mitra, Priyanka Gope completed her M.A. from the Department of Music, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata. She is an enlisted A Grade artist of Bangladesh Betar in the categories of Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Sangeet and classical music.

**Dhaka University's Music Department** will also be performing, with their Guru

**Priyanka Gope**, leading the troupe. In 1998, the Department of Music, DU, introduced a 5 year-long Honours and Master's course on Classical, Folk, Tagore and Nazrul music. Currently there are about 200 students are studying in the department. These students will be presenting their music on the biggest classical music platform in the world this year.

**Munmun Ahmed**, following the theme of Guru Shishya Parampara, will be performing with her troupe consisting of her students, all of whom have been learning under her tutelage for almost a decade. The group will perform a traditional kathak piece. After completing high school, Munmun Ahmed went to India. There she studied at the Ram Bharatia Kala Kendra under Ram Mohan Maharaj and Raj Kumar Sharma. In 1989, she became a student of Pandit Birju Maharaj in Delhi Kathak Kendra. Ahmed runs a dance school, Rewaaz Performing School.

**Mohammad Shoyeb's** performance will also be something to look forward to. One of the most acclaimed classical singers of this generation, Shoyeb shot to fame commercially over the past few years will some collaborations and popular songs.

**Bengal Parampara Sangeetalaya** will be performing at the BCMF this year, with exquisite instrumental pieces with the sitar and sarod. Bengal Parampara Sangeetalay has been founded on a modern interpretation of the Guru-Shishya parampara mode of learning. The ambition of the sangeetalaya is that each pupil, under such eminent guidance, will refine their skill set and achieve the ability to represent our country to an international audience and become world class musicians.

**Ishrat Fuljhuri Khan** will be the youngest performer at the festival. Granddaughter of prominent Bangladeshi esraj player, Ustad Fuljhuri Khan, 7-year-old Ishrat will be a part of the Sarod ensemble, and will definitely be the one to look out for! ■



1) Mohammad Shoyeb 2) Bengal Parampara Sangeetalaya 3) Priyanka Gope 4) Munmun Ahmed 5) Sharmila Banerjee 6) Dhaka University's Music Department.

## MAILBOX

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### Ethnic Cleansing in Myanmar

Recently, Myanmar army has carried out a planned ethnic cleaning in its Rakhaine state against the Rohingya Muslims, an ethnic minority in Myanmar. It has been reported that at least 160 people were killed and 16 thousand Rohingya Muslims were displaced with thousands others got stranded in between Bangladesh-Myanmar borders. Bangladeshi boarder force intercepted the fleeing Rohingyas from entering into our country. During the last couple of days, many of them were pushed back to Myanmar by our border guards. It is quite impossible to know the real condition of the savagery committed by Myanmar army as they have cordoned off the vast Rakhine province and imposed restrictions on entering aid workers and independent observers. Democratically elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi who is also a Nobel peace prize winner has maintained mysterious silence on the entire crisis. We hope UN and the global leaders will force the Myanmar government to restore peace in the region and give recognition to the Rohingyas as the citizens of the country.

*Md Zonaeed Imran Banasree, Dhaka*

### From Rags to Kantha

The article titled "From Rags to Kantha" dated November 18, 2016, will definitely make every Bangladeshi woman nostalgic. The tradition of making kanthas (decorated quilt) is a unique artistic creation of our women, although it was never recognised as an art form. This is one of the best ways to recycle our wastes. Women of our rural areas have been stitching kanthas with love and devotion. The culture of gifting kanthas to the loved ones and relatives has been practiced from ancient times. Persons living far away from home can feel the presence of their loved ones by touching this decorated garment. It strengthens the family ties. Our government should take initiative to obtain geographical identification certificate for this heritage piece. Finally, I would like to thank Fayeka Zabeen Siddiqua for introducing this hidden contribution of our women to our society.

*Arif Billah  
Department of Law, University of Dhaka*



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

### Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Thanks to Naziba Basher for her informative article titled "5 ways to Detect Breast Cancer Yourself" published on October 29, 2016. Nowadays, breast cancer is the second common cancer in Bangladesh. October was the month of breast cancer awareness. But very few women know about this important issue. On the other hand, breast cancer treatment is still very expensive in our country. Therefore, many women in Bangladesh, especially in the rural areas, die without proper treatment. Our Government should take more initiatives to ensure proper medical treatment for the poor cancer patients at low cost. To conclude, I hope that every woman of our country will be aware of this silent killer disease.

*Marshia Afrin  
Mirpur, Dhaka*

The opinions expressed in these letters do not necessarily represent the views of the Star Weekend.



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**Earthquakes Don't Kill People.  
Buildings Do! Build Safe!**

