

WHAT'S ON

**Amar Ekushey Book Fair**  
Organiser: Bangla Academy  
Venue: Suhrawardy Udyan & Bangla Academy Premises  
Date: Feb 1-28  
Time: 3-9pm (Sun-Thurs), 11am-9pm (Fri-Sat)



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Title: Antorjatra  
Artist: Karu Titas  
Venue: Shilpangan Gallery, H-7, Rd-13 (New), Dhanmondi  
Date: Feb 16- Mar 2; Time: 3-8pm



**Int'l Sufi Fest 2017**  
Venue: Nandan Mancha, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy  
Date: Feb 23-25  
Time: 3-10pm



**Subtext**  
Organiser: Bengal Foundation Arts Programme  
Venue: Gyantapas Abur Razzak Bidyapeeth  
Date: Feb 4-24  
Time: 11am-7pm



**Photography Exhibition**  
Faces of Empowerment  
Artist: GMB Akash  
Venue: La Galerie, AFD  
Date: Feb 20-26  
Time: 3-9pm (weekdays), 10am-12, 5-8pm (weekends)



Guests get a tour of the exhibit after the inauguration ceremony.

# "Faces of Empowerment" at Alliance Francaise

## GMB Akash's portrait exhibit underway

A CORRESPONDENT

Eminent photographer GMB Akash is exhibiting a series of his works at the La Galerie of the Alliance Française de Dhaka (AFD). The exhibition, titled "Faces of Empowerment" and organised jointly by AFD and the Embassy of Denmark, was inaugurated on February 20.

Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor graced the occasion as chief guest while Mikael Hemniti Winther, Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh attended the programme as special guest. In cooperation with the Embassy of Denmark in Bangladesh, GMB Akash has captured 20 photos as part of the "Faces of Empowerment" series - are portrayals of some of the poorest and most stigmatized people in Bangladesh. These are people, who have all been enrolled in Danish-funded development programmes in rural Bangladesh under Danida.

"Faces of Empowerment" shows the faces and tells the stories of people who prevailed when life was unlivable. They are stories of injustice, torture and broken families, but also stories of salvation, strength and economic empowerment. Akash, with his signature style of striking portraits combined with touching, personal essays, gives these people a voice, offering a rare look into the lives and destinies that do not hit the headlines. The guest of honor of the inauguration ceremony was 29-year old Rotna from rural Rajshahi. Rotna

endured mental and physical abuse at the hands of her husband and her in-laws for years. With help from a One-Stop-Crisis Centre at the local public hospital, she managed to escape the violence. Her husband was brought to justice through the One-Stop-Crisis Centre, which is supported by Danida. Today, Rotna owns a beauty parlour in her village and her children attend school. The exhibition is open to all till February 26, from 3pm-9pm Monday to Thursday, and 9am-12 noon and 5pm-8pm on Fridays and Saturdays.

# Afzal Hossain brings two books to Boi Mela

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Afzal Hossain rose to fame as a popular TV actor, but over the years he shone as a painter, director, and a writer. The artiste has authored poetry, short stories and novels, and published a book of poems during last year's Ekushey Boi Mela. This year Afzal Hossain has launched two volumes, one of which is an anthology titled "Chaar Dorja", containing four novels. "I used to publish each novel separately before," he stated, "but this year I wanted to give readers a richer reading experience by giving them a four in one book." His second work this year is a novel titled "Jahangir Badshah'r Ghora", published by Ananya Prokashon. In this work the artiste takes the reader back in time with his stories. Afzal Hossain has been publishing books around this time of the year for a few years now, and this month he can be found at Ananya's stall signing books for fans. "I enjoy meeting and interacting with my readers, and it's something I look forward to each year," he shared.



A scene from the play.

PHOTO: STAR

# Twelve-day theatre fest begins in Sylhet

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, Sylhet

Munier Chowdhury's iconic play "Kobor", staged by Naboshikha Natyadal, opened a 12-day theatre festival in Sylhet's Kobi Nazrul Auditorium on Thursday February 22. The festival is being organized by Sammilita Natya Parishad Sylhet marking International Mother Language Day. As the audience entered the hall, a large procession rumbled on stage with the slogan "Rastro Bhasha Bangla Chai", symbolizing the Language Movement. The houseful audience were taken back to the 1952 and the Language Movement, as they witnessed the play in pin-drop

silence. The play was directed by Faridul Fardeen, while reputed thespian Sudip Chakrabarty supervised the production and Tanmoy Nath assisted the director. Earlier in the afternoon, the festival was inaugurated at the open stage of the auditorium by lighting clay lamps. Ekushey Padak Laurette Sujeyo Shyam inaugurated the festival. Momin Uddin Bhuiyan was posthumously honoured at the inaugural ceremony for his contribution to the theatre movement. Thokcham Anil Kishan Singha was also honoured for his contribution to the cultural movement in Sylhet. The festival will showcase a total of 12 plays throughout the festival.

## NEWS bytes

### Zayn Malik teases new music on Instagram

British pop star Zayn Malik has dropped hints about new music on the horizon, in a series of Instagram posts. The former One Direction member uploaded five clips of him playing the piano on the social media app. The first video is simply captioned "Singing", the second reads "Part 2", and the third says "No mic", reports Complex. The other two are uploaded without a caption, adding to the cryptic rollout. It's been two years since Malik dropped his debut solo album, "Mind of Mine". Back in September, he said he 'kind of finalized' his sophomore album but he's still coming up with new ideas. At the time, Malik also shared that he didn't have a title for his forthcoming album, but he plans on releasing it in an unorthodox way. "It's kind of going to be something weird with it—I don't want to say more," he said. "It's not your usual way of putting out an album, let's say that." It's been five months since Malik's last single, the Sia-featured track "Dusk Till Dawn" was released, which nabbed a Grammy Award for Producer of the Year (Non-Classical). Source: **Yahoo Music**



## Joss Whedon exits DCEU's "Batgirl"

Joss Whedon has left as writer and director of the "Batgirl" movie for Warner Bros. and DC Entertainment, citing story issues as the reason for his departure. "Batgirl is such an exciting project, and Warners/DC such collaborative and supportive partners, that it took me months to realize I really didn't have a story," Whedon said in a statement. Whedon thanked DC president Geoff Johns and Warners Picture Group president Toby Emmerich, saying, "I'm grateful to Geoff and Toby and everyone who was so welcoming when I arrived, and so understanding when I... uh, is there a sexier word for 'failed'?" Variety first reported last March that Whedon had come on to "Batgirl" following a meeting between Whedon, studio exec Jon Berg, and Johns. Sources close to the situation told Variety that the decision for Whedon to depart was a mutual one and reflects the studio's desire to seek more female directors — particularly on projects centered on female characters. "Batgirl" has been a popular superhero for more than 50 years, but has never gotten her own movie. The movie was to be based on the Batgirl story that was first unveiled in DC Comics in 1967, when Barbara Gordon, the daughter of Gotham City police commissioner James Gordon, appeared as the character in "The Million Dollar Debut of Batgirl!" by writer Gardner Fox and artist Carmine Infantino. Source: **Variety**

With Whedon's departure, it's uncertain whether Warner Bros. will continue development of a "Batgirl" movie, says Variety. The project would be the second movie from DC Films to feature a female lead after Gal Gadot's "Wonder Woman" - one of the biggest box office hits of 2017. The studio is moving ahead with a "Wonder Woman" sequel with Gadot and director Patty Jenkins returning and has set a November 1, 2019, release date. Warner Bros. has also been developing a "Gotham City Sirens" project with Margot Robbie starring as her Harley Quinn character from "Suicide Squad" and David Ayer directing. Whedon had seen considerable success in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, having written and directed 2012's "The Avengers" and 2015's "Avengers: Age of Ultron" for Disney-Marvel. He also created the television series "Buffy the Vampire Slayer", "Angel", "Firefly", "Dollhouse" and "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D." Whedon stepped in last spring to handle the reshoots and finish "Justice League" for Warner Bros. last spring after director Zack Snyder publicly excused himself from the project, following his daughter's suicide in March. "Aquaman", starring Jason Momoa, is the next title in the DC Extended Universe with a December 21 release date. "Wonder Woman 2" is the only other film in the DCEU that has been set for release. Source: **Variety**



# "I did not decide to become actor" ...Rani Mukerji

Bollywood actress Rani Mukerji has said she became an actor by default, as it was a decision that was taken by her mother.

"I did not decide (to become actor), my mum decided for me. When we were young it was a different generation, unlike what happens today. I was an obedient child. So I did whatever my mum said; she said become an actor, so I became an actor. She realised my thing ( penchant for acting) before me. I became an actor by default. I

thank my mum today as I don't think I would be anything else than an actor," Rani said at a promotional event of her upcoming film "Hichki". Rani also advocated that girls these days should learn self defense techniques, and said she would want her daughter Adira to take up both boxing and dancing, reports Hindustan Times. "I believe today all girls should learn martial arts, self defense and then learn dance after that. So I would like my daughter to learn both," she said. Source: **Hindustan Times**

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