



Shah Mohammad Samir Hossain and his troupe, and (below) Shafi Mondal perform on the opening evening of the festival.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Int'l Sufi Festival concludes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

To take Dhaka music lovers towards the spiritual path of Sufism that has been serving humanity for centuries in the world, the second International Sufi Festival is on at the open premises of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA). Organised by Allama Rumi Society of Bangladesh and Hathkhola Foundation in association with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and BSA, the festival is offering the essence of Sufi songs by the artistes of India, Turkey and Iran together with the mystic folk songs of Bangladesh.

The three-day (February 23-25) festival, themed on "Music for Unity", was inaugurated by Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor as chief guest on Friday. Abbas Vaezi Dehnavi, Iranian Ambassador to Bangladesh, and Devrim Öztürk, Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh, attended the inaugural ceremony as special guests. Liaquat Ali Lucky, DG, BSA delivered welcome address while Abdul Karim, president of Allama Rumi Society of Bangladesh, and member-secretary of the festival



organising council Yusuf Muhammad spoke at the event.

"We, the people of Bangladesh, are living here in a multi-religious and cultural ambience. This unity speaks of our non-communal spirit. The songs of Lalon, Hason, Radha Raman and others echo that spirit of unity," said Asaduzzaman Noor.

Singers of Maizbhandari Moromi Goshthi set off the event. On the open-

ing day Rafat rendered several songs like "Musafir Mon" and "Chherey De Nouka Majhi" while Pervaz sang "Barey Barey Ar Asha Hobe Na" and "Ekkin Matir Bhetorey Hobe Ghar". Shah Mohammad Samir Hossain with his troupe performed Qaawali including "Chol Rey Chol Kafela Bendhe" and "Ali Ali Mawla Ali".

Renowned Baul artiste Shafi Mondal mesmerised the audience with his

interactive performance of songs predominantly composed by Lalon Shai. He rendered several songs like "Doyal Guru", "Ami Mon Mondir-e Puja Debo", "Ghar-e Keba Jagey Keba Chumaye" and "Allah Bolo Mon Rey Pakhi". He also demystified the lyrics of a Lalon song "Kanar Haat Bazar" while performing. The opening day's proceedings were wrapped up with the performance sonorous Sufi songs by the Delhi-based troupe Sufi Bawra.

However, the sound system of the programme was rather cacophonous, and left much to be desired.

A seminar on Sufism took place yesterday while Bangladeshi singers Pulak, Shirin and Razzaq, Kiran Chandra Roy and Chandana Majumdar, Tuntun Baul and Hanif Baul and a 22-member troupe from Turkey entertained the audience.

The festival comes to an end today with the performances of Bangladeshi singers -- Hyder and Haroon, Iqbal Hyder, Siraj Baul, Kanganini Sufia, Kajol Dewan and Joler Gaan coupled with the offering of Sufi numbers by Roohani Sisters (India) and an Iranian troupe.

Azam Khan

A banker turned actor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Whenever he can fit the time, busy banker Azam Khan is in front of the camera. Within just a year and a half, he has appeared in 40 TV plays, serials and tele-films. Starting his career in publishing, he switched to the development sector where he worked for 11 years. He has an 18-year illustrious career as a banker. In a recent conversation, the actor shared his journey and experience with The Daily Star. Excerpts:

"During my school and college days I took part in stage plays, debates, extempore speeches and poetry recitation. At university I became associated with social organisations. In 2009, I became head of marketing for a private bank and participated in TV talk shows on trade, commerce, finance and sports. It was then that I became interested in doing TV plays and expressed my interest to Chandan Sinha and Colonel Hassan. They put me in touch with TV play directors. My first assignment was in a tele-film called 'Hero', aired on Channel i and directed by FQ Peter. My first appearance on TV was with actor Shahiduzzaman Selim. Later I worked in a TV serial, aired on BTV and directed by Farhad Faisal. I played the role of a village school teacher, who is committed to social work."

"Later, Chandan Sinha introduced me to director Chayanika Chowdhury, who gave me an opportunity to work for her ambitious Eid play called 'Sheshor Porey'. I donned the role of a lawyer for noted actors Mahfuz Ahmed and Shomi Kaiser in the play. I worked



in TV plays, serials, tele-films directed by Chayanika Chowdhury. I also worked in Mahfuz Ahmed's tele-film 'Shoini Pru' during Eid-ul-Azha. It was an interesting story with Tisha in the role of my daughter who had been lost in a landslide. I also worked for some TV plays, serials and tele-films directed by BO Shubho, Shakhawat Manik and ProgNa Niharika. Based on a popular song by S I Tutul, I featured in a music video, directed by Tania Ahmed."

"I am grateful to Chayanika Chowdhury, who gave me the opportunity to work in many of her TV plays and tele-films including 'Amader Borsha', 'E Ki Sonar Aloye', 'Nilabho Bisshoron' and 'Sobuj Manush'. I have so far worked with the actors of the '80s to present generations. I worked opposite Doly Zahur in 'Life in A Metro'. I have also worked with Sharmili Ahmed, Syed Hasan Imam, Shami Kaiser, Afsana Mimi, Aruna Biswas and picked up a great deal from them."

"Getting leisure time is tough for a banker and I often sacrifice my holidays and family time for shoots. My daughter Ananya misses me a lot," he concludes.

Sharabun Tohura's debut album launched

A CORRESPONDENT

Upcoming Nazrul singer Sharabun Tohura Kanta recently launched her debut album at Bishwo Shahitto Kendro. Titled "Bondhu Poth Chhey Chhey," the album was released under the banner of Laser Vision Ltd.

The album was launched by Mintu Rahman, General Secretary of Nazrul Academy, renowned Nazrul exponent Sadya Aftreen Mallick and Shahid Kabir Polash. Chairman of Laser Vision Ltd AKM Arifur Rahman presided over the event. The ceremony was followed by a solo performance by Sharabun Tohura Kanta.

Sharabun Tohura was trained in music from an early age, but found her calling in Nazrul Sangeet while she was still very young. After years of acclaimed performances, the singer put together ten songs for her first album, which were composed and arranged by Durbadol Chattopadhyay. "I am very proud to be able to release this," she stated, "I have always been enamoured by the works of Kazi Nazrul Islam, and through the songs I have tried my best to represent the diversity of his intellect."

Sharabun Tohura Kanta is currently pursuing her Masters in Geography and Environment at University of Dhaka.



Young singers perform in chorus at the programme.

PHOTO: STAR

Children celebrate Int'l Mother Language Day

KONGKON KARMAKER, Dinajpur

Little school goers of different primary schools of Dinajpur celebrated the International Mother Language Day singing the songs of Ekushey, poem recitation and dances marking the historic day.

The programme was held at M Abdur Rahim Hall of Dinajpur Press Club on Friday evening, organised by Suihari Sangeet Niketan,

a musical training institute in Dinajpur.

The cultural programme began with two chorus songs including Amar Bhaiyer Rakte Rangano Ekushey February. Poem recitations and group dances were also performed at the programme.

A discussion was also organised on the significance of February 21.

Rafiqul Islam district education Officer of Dinajpur attended the programme as chief

guest while Habibul Islam president of Dhruba Parishad Bangladesh of Dinajpur region, Swarup Kumar Bakshi president of Dinajpur Press Club and Dr. Golam Faruk of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute highlighted on the importance of the day.

Mozammel Haque Principal of Dinajpur Government CT College chaired the meeting.

Later, certificates were distributed among the students.

"Danger Girl" movie finds its writer

Constantin's female-fronted action franchise hopeful "Danger Girl" has found its writer. Rising action scribe Umair Aleem has been tapped to pen the script for the film, which was adapted from the 1990s comic book series created by artist J Scott Campbell and writer Andy Hartnell. Robert Kulzer of Constantin Film, Jeremy Bolt of Bolt Pictures, and Adrian Askarieh of Prime Universe Films are producing the feature.

"Danger Girl" follows the adventures of Abbey Chase, an adventurer who was reluctantly recruited into a secret organisation. Chase is then paired with operatives Sydney Savage and Natalia Kastle on a globe-trotting adventure to locate a series of mystical objects and keep them out of the hands of the evil



Hammer Syndicate.

The comic was a blend of Indiana Jones, James Bond and Charlie's Angels and an instant hit when it debuted in 1998 from Jim Lee's Wildstorm imprint.

In April 2010, "Hitman: Agent 47" producer Adrian Askarieh announced he was developing a film based on the comic with Todd Lincoln as director. In November 2017, Constantin Film acquired the rights to develop "Danger Girl" as both a film and potential TV series, in partnership with Askarieh's Prime Universe Films and Jeremy Bolt's Bolt Pictures.

Aleem last year sold action thriller "Kate" to Netflix. The project is being produced by Clubhouse Pictures' Bryan Unkeless ("I, Tonya") and 87Eleven, the producers behind the "John Wick" movies. The script was also on the 2017 "Black List".

Source: Hollywood Reporter