



Festival Director, Shahidul Alam (C) at the opening ceremony, along with other esteemed guests.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

'Chobi Mela X' kicks off

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The tenth edition of Chobi Mela, the most prestigious photography festival in Asia begins today with an opening rally from Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, following an inauguration ceremony at Chhayanaud Auditorium.

At the opening ceremony, the guests of honour were curator of USA's Rubin Museum of Art Beth Citron, Nepali publisher, writer and editor Kunda Dixit, Indian photographer Raghu Rai, and economist Rehman Sobhan. The programme was presided over by festival director, Shahidul Alam. At the ceremony, the lifetime achievement award 2019 was presented to the late Dr Nawajesh Ahmed, internationally renowned photographer, agriculture scientist and author, for his outstanding contribution in photography of Bangladesh. The ten day-long festival will go on until March 9, 2019.



Internationally renowned photographer, late Dr Nawajesh Ahmed was presented the lifetime achievement award.



A festive rally kicked off the proceedings.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Two-day FASHION FAIR begins today

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Fashion Design Council of Bangladesh (FDCB) organised a fashion fair from March 1 - 2. Renowned fashion designers from across the country are set to participate in the two-day event, scheduled to take place in Gardenia Grand Hall at Gulshan 2 from 11 am - 8 pm. It will feature designers Kuhu Plamondon, Maria Sultana, Emdad Haque, Farah Anjum Bari, among many others.

FDCB is a non-profit organisation that promotes folk and traditional designs of the nation. It engages in activities for the advancement of the design industry of Bangladesh. Their aim is to put the designs of the country on a platform where they could learn from the experience and also share the rich and complex designs with the citizens.

The City Bank Limited is the title sponsor for fashion fair, in association with IPAB.



PHOTO: KAZI SALAHUDDIN RAZU

Discussion on 'FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND EXPRESSION' at Chobimela X

AFSANA AZIZ NITOL

On the first day of Chobimela X, a discussion session on 'Freedom of Thought and Expression', a topic that is quite relevant in today's context, was held at the Drik-Pathshala under-construction building.

The panelists of the discussion included Kunda Dixit, Editor of Nepali Times, a weekly English language newspaper in Kathmandu, Tanvi Mishra, Photo Editor of The Caravan, a journal on politics and culture, Nurul Kabir, Editor of New Age, a daily English language newspaper in Bangladesh, and Rahnuma Ahmed, writer and anthropologist.

The discussion focused on forming solidarity among journalists, particularly in South Asia, where the media is constantly facing administrative backlash. "Freedom of thought and expression are two things people across the world have been fighting for over the years," said Nurul Kabir, "However circumstances in South Asia show that people here are far more oppressed than those in the West. To make democracy participatory, media should be free to think and express."

The controversial section 57 of the ICT Act was also part of the discussion. "Now that the mainstream media is in control, next target is social media," said Kunda Dixit. "New cyber and privacy laws have been passed in order to constrict the media's freedom of expression."

Furthermore, Rahnuma Ahmad believes that freedom of thought and expression should be exercised by everyone, not only journalists. "We are living in difficult times. Just as fear is contagious, courage is also contagious. When people come forward, it inspires other people."

Tanvi Mishra, on the other hand, thinks that artists will always find a way to use the restrictions to feed their work and be more creative.

AMITABH BACHCHAN raps for 'AUKAAT'



PHOTO: COLLECTED

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After turning rapper for the song Badumbaaa for Umesh Shukla's film 102 Not Out, Hindi cinema's living legend, Amitabh Bachchan is set to spit verses for a song titled Aukaat for his upcoming film Badla, directed by Sujoy Ghosh, co-starring Taapsee Pannu. The song, which will be used for the opening credits of the film, is already garnering plenty of attention. Badla, a remake of the 2016 Spanish thriller film Contratiempo, is scheduled to release on March 8, 2019 and stars Big B in the role of a lawyer named Badal Gupta. The film, produced by Red Chillies Entertainment, will be Amitabh Bachchan and Taapsee Pannu's second film together after their critically acclaimed hit Pink.