

WHAT'S ON Live Performance Title: Black & Jatra Bholi Venue: Jatra Bholi, Banani Date: Today Time: 7 pm onwards Tickets: BOT 300	Group Art Exhibition Title: Project 3 Venue: Dhaka Gallery, Banani Date: July 13 - August 9 Time: 3 pm - 9 pm	Photography & Poetry Exhibition Title: Project 3: Revolutionary Venue: Dhaka Gallery, Banani Date: July 13 - August 9 Time: 3 pm - 9 pm	Concert Title: 3 for 1 Date: Today Time: 6:30 pm onwards Venue: 3rd Space, Dharmamandi	Art Exhibition Title: Mukherjee solo art exhibition by Shamset Tubergie Venue: Dhaka Gallery, Lalmonira Date: July 27 - August 22 (except Mondays) Time: 5 pm - 9 pm
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INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES 2019

Today marks International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. On the occasion, we bring you stories of individuals from the indigenous community of Bangladesh, who are making a mark in their respective fields.

Aang Rakhine: A mind without fear

PRIRANKA CHOWDHURY

Aung Rakhine flaunts his identity as an indigenous filmmaker. The cinematographer turned director made his breakthrough with a full length film in Chakma language, *Muvor Theng Gaari* or *My Bicycle* in 2015. The indomitable director took the film to global platforms, and received Best Screenplay at the Silver Azkubath Ethnic Cinema Festival 2016 in Ufa, Russia. It also received an honourable mention in the Cine Kurumin - International Indigenous Film Festival 2016, Brazil.

"No one else has the reason to come and tell my story, but me. It is my responsibility and commitment to my community to showcase these stories," says Aung Rakhine. His unconventional approach in storytelling sets him apart from his fellow filmmakers. Harbours a keen interest on telling indigenous



PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSEH

"Dance is a form of prayer to me" - Fifa Chakma

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Hailing from Rangamati, talented dancer Fifa Chakma is a specialised researcher in Bangladeshi tribal folk dances and a distinguished academic in the field of Kathak. With an ICCR scholarship, the dancer completed her BA and MA in Kathak from Rabindra Bharati University in Kolkata.

Fifa started learning dance at the age of four. She took lessons on folk and creative dance under the tutelage of Guru Sanchana Chakma and Guru Humayun Kabir in Rangamati. Later, she was trained at Nriyanchal and took personal lessons on Kathak from Shibli Mohammad. She was also trained under the tutelage of Guru Smt Nandini Chakraborty in Kolkata.

"Dance is form of prayer to me. I find immense peace and pleasure in my practice and perseverance of dance," said Fifa Chakma, the only classically trained dancer among the indigenous communities of Bangladesh. "I dream of depicting the different shades and the essence of dance through my performances."

Aside from being a fantastic performer, choreographer and dance director, Fifa is currently working as a dance instructor at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. She is also a guest lecturer at the Department of Dance, University of Dhaka. She has also worked as a dance instructor at Khudra Nri-goshi Cultural Institute, Khagrachhari and Jum Aesthetics Council, Rangamati. The dedicated artiste is also the founder and director of Tapasya Dance Academy, which is based in both Dhaka and Rangamati.

Fifa participated as a dance director in London this year on behalf of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs to celebrate the occasion of the Independence Day of Bangladesh. She also took part as a dance director in Philippines on behalf of the same ministry at Philippine International Indigenous Peoples Festival 2018. As a part of the cultural exchange programme between Bangladesh and Bhutan, Fifa participated as a dance artiste in Bhutan twice in 2017 and 2018. She represented the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Bangladesh, as a dance ambassador in India during the cultural exchange programme between the two countries.

Furthermore, Fifa has participated in a number of dance workshops and seminars, held in Bangladesh and abroad. In 2008, she took part in a contemporary dance workshop, conducted by renowned Indian dancer Sulakshana Bhattacharya, at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. In 2013, she participated in a Kathak workshop at Padatik Dance Centre, Kolkata. Legendary dance maestro Pt Birju Maharaj and his disciple Saswati Sen conducted the workshop.

She was also granted a scholarship from All India Children Music Conference as a young dance artiste in 2014, and she was similarly granted first in Folk, Rabindra Dance and Kathak at the conference. She also secured the first position at the pre-summit dance competition held at the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, as a part of the National Education Summit 2014.

Among many other festivals, Fifa has performed in the Dhaka International Folk Festival 2018, Classical Music and Dance Festival 2017 at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Indigenous Cultural Festivals at Rangamati and Khagrachhari, Sufi Festival 2014 at Nalanda and Maha Utsav 2014 at Guwahati.

Australian High Commission in Bangladesh celebrates International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK
 Today marks the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. To commemorate the day, Julia Niblett, the Australian High Commissioner to Bangladesh, hosted a screening of the documentary film, *The Song Keepers*. Members from the Bangladesh indigenous community representatives, human rights activists, local media representatives, diplomats and others were present at the occasion. Themed 'Indigenous Languages', the event recognised the United Nations' observance of 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages. *The Song Keepers* revolves around the churches of remote Central Australia, which nurtures a musical legacy of ancient

Aboriginal languages, sacred poetry and a baroque music being preserved by four generations of Aboriginal women who encompass the Central Australian Aboriginal Women's Choir. Against all odds and with the help of their choir conductor, they travel to Germany, to take back the hymns that were presented to their great grandparents by German missionaries, now sung in their own Aboriginal languages. Advancing indigenous peoples' rights globally is a pillar of Australia's Human Rights Council (HRC) membership. Australia has supported the Kapangeng Foundation, a human rights organisation for indigenous Peoples in Bangladesh, to strengthen the unity amongst the indigenous communities and assist them in various other matters.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Musical virtuoso Ranjit Dewan

Ranjit Dewan is a renowned Chakma singer, lyricist and composer. He is considered one of the most successful Chakma musicians of all time. His songs 'O Mor Sonar Dechsan', 'O Lakkobi O Chittibi', 'Mo Nangan Nonyeram', 'O Hala Hogil', 'Nosang Jebari Jagaan Sari' and 'Jodi Honodin Eedot Udhe' are evergreen, heart touching tunes.

ZAHANGIR ALOM

The melodious and rhythmic song *Chenge Meyeni Hajolong Karnaphuli, Shahana Matamuhuri* is an all-time popular Ranjit Dewan composition. Legendary singer-musician Lucky Akhond recorded the Bangla version of the song, while Ranjit Dewan rendered the original Chakma song. Renowned artist-filmmaker Khalid Mahmood Mithu created the music video for the song that was aired on Bangladesh Television many times.

In a recent conversation with *The Daily Star*, the extremely humble artiste shared many things with the correspondent. Ranjit Dewan's passion for music dates back to his early childhood days. When he was a student in third grade, little Ranjit was barred from entering a cultural programme that was held at the Kowali Thana of Rangamati. The incident left a permanent trauma on his psyche. He promised himself that he will sing someday once he grows up.

The God-gifted artiste has kept his words with writing, composing and singing hundreds of Chakma songs that evoke patriotism, nostalgia, romance, melancholy, bliss of the harvesting time of Jum, love for untainted hilly landscapes and nature, vibrant indigenous cultures and diverse socio-religious aspects.

He took musical lessons from Surendra Lal Tripura, Kalan Mitra Barua, Himangshu Dutta and Suniti Bikash Barua. "I have just tried to take a few sips of melody from what used to be



PHOTO: ANTA CHARAKMA

of music. Many of my songs have been lost due to toiling curfews in the hill tracts years ago," said Ranjit Dewan, who earnestly seeks everyone's assistance in preserving his songs. "In the Chakma language, there are certain complexities that have to be gauged while writing and composing songs. I hope that the younger generation of Chakma singers will work in this regard to nourish our own language and culture." Contemporary singers Tripti Talukdar, Shahana Dewan, Nilufa Dewan, Kalayan Chakma, Subrata Chakma, Bachchu Chakma, Ananya Chakma, Jinuka Chakma, Jayanti Chakma, Sourav Dewan, Ananta Dey, Ripon Ghosh, Bidyut Shankar Tripura amongst others are performing the songwriter's tracks far and wide. "I sincerely hope that the upcoming generation of Chakma singers will excel in musical practice and perseverance. They will glorify our distinctive culture in front of the world. If I had financial support, I would nurture their talents personally," said Ranjit Dewan.

Ranjit Dewan has two solo audio albums and a solo music video album to his credit. He has also lent his voice for recording six other albums featuring religious songs. Bangladeshi Adivasi Forum has recently taken initiative of publishing a compilation of Ranjit Dewan's compositions. The artiste has shared his best wishes on World Indigenous Day with hopes to build a harmonious society full of life and colours.

Jyoti Sinha the light of Manipuri theatre

PRIRANKA CHOWDHURY

"I believe I am universal, and with that belief, I want to work in my own land," Jyoti Sinha said with beaming confidence during our interview session. Despite luring opportunities of joining mainstream theatre groups during her time at Jahangirnagar University, Jyoti Sinha, along with her peers, embarked on a mission to build a group for Manipuri theatre in Kamalganj's Ghoramara village. "Besides Manipuri dance, we wanted to explore the Manipuri *Pala-Kritras*, which are powerful theatrical performances," said Jyoti. She mentioned *Srikrishna Kiran* by Rat Chandiass, *Kohle Birangana* by Michael Madhusudan Dutt, *Debtar Crash* by Rabindranath Tagore, *Leima* by Federico Garcia Lorca, and *Ingal Adhar Pala* by Shuvashis Sinha as notable productions which linked local literature with world literature.

"I was only 12 when I was ushered into the world of Manipuri theatre. Now, it is a long-term relationship. I enjoy translating world literature for the stage because it takes on a completely new avatar," Jyoti explained. Her last two works were based on world literature. *Mia Couto's The Birds of God* will be her next translated work, titled *O Mon Pahiya* in Manipuri language. Jyoti is known for her impeccable solo performances which never fail to mesmerise the audience. When asked how she practices for her roles, she laughed and said, "I try to take notice of real people in my surroundings who possess similar characteristics to those of the character I'm playing and follow their gestures and postures. Then comes practicing in front of the mirror. I only show my performance to the director when I feel it is in shape. I work on the characterization further under the guidance from the director to make the role more credible."



PHOTO: COURTESY

SCARY STORIES TO TELL IN THE DARK at Star Cineplex

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

'Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark' is a film based upon Alvin Schwartz' children's book series of the same name. A horror-thriller, it shows how a group of teens are forced to save their own lives by tackling their worst fears.

Starring Zoe Colletti, Michael Garza, Gabriel Rush, Austin Abrams, Dean Norris, Gil Bellows, Lorraine Toussaint, Austin Zajur and Natalie Ganzhorn, its screenplay is written by Dan Hageman, Kevin Hageman and Guillermo del Toro. It is directed by André Øverland and executive produced by Roberto Grande and Joshua Long. The film releases at Star Cineplex today.



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSEH

MUJIB MANE MUKTI A heartfelt tribute to the Father of the Nation

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADAR

Commemorating the 44th death anniversary of Bangladeshu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) has organised a series of events for the month of August, under the title, *Shilper Aalay Bangladeshu*. The play, *Mujib Mane Mukti*, scripted and

directed by the Director General of BSA, Liaquat Ali Lucky, premiered on August 6 at the National Theatre Hall of BSA in Dhaka. The event began with a brief discussion on Bangladeshu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's journey to becoming the Father of the Nation. Historic events such as the Language Movement, the Agartala Conspiracy Case, Bangladeshu's March 7 speech, the Liberation War and Bangladeshu's tragic

death on August 15, 1975, were integral parts of the production. The play was performed by actors of Loko Natyya Dol, with assistance from Shahrinar Kamal in sound effects, Masud Shamon and Bazrul Rahman in lighting and Habib Tarashi in stage management. It will be staged by different actors and theatre artistes across the country, throughout the month of August.

Bangladesh Dotara Shilpi Gosthi hosts programme at BSA

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Dotara has always been an essential instrument of Bengali folk music. The one who introduced Dotara to this subcontinent was maestro Kanai Lal Shil. Traditional musicians worked relentlessly in order to honour his legacy and to preserve the art of traditional instrumental music. The newly formed central committee of Bangladesh Dotara Shilpi Gosthi hosted a discussion session and cultural programme at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) recently. The programme was attended by the chief advisor of the organisation, Md Nasiruddin, Ashutosh Shil, the son of Maestro Kanai Lal Shil, among many others.



PHOTO: COURTESY

PHOTO: COURTESY

Dining out with Adnan Faruque Hillol



Adnan indulging in the famous seafood platter and grilled lamb chops at Britto's in Goa. PHOTO: COURTESY

MINAM HAQ

Making his television debut early in 1999, Adnan Faruque Hillol later took acting as a profession and pursued it for more than a decade. During late 2017, he realised that with the nation joining the global race in digitisation, a digital identity was a crucial requirement. Having conducted his research, Adnan figured that there was a demand for online culinary content, but not many people in Bangladesh to meet the requirement.

Already nurturing a passion for food and travelling, he decided to combine the two and embark on a new journey, with his programme, *Dine Out With Adnan*, a food vlogging show on YouTube. On the show, Adnan tours around various restaurants, at home and abroad. He not only tastes the food and provides his opinions, but he also reflects on the prices, locations and other factors, to deliver a broader picture to the audience. Inspired by the renowned food adventurer Mark Wiens, Adnan tries to focus on content with creativity, while keeping up with the quality of his research and what is trending. With a small yet efficient team comprising of Rocky (camera), Zubair (editing), Shommo (transcripts) and at times, his spouse Nasween, he releases two videos per week, on Sundays and Thursdays. As of this writing, his channel has a total of 290,662 subscribers.

"I initially began by shooting four videos in one day, just to see how it turns out, and released them over a period of time. Fortunately, they were well-received," explains Adnan. "Overtime, I noticed that my viewers from West Bengal were on a steady rise. That is when I decided to visit and vlog in Kolkata." Through his quick-witted decision to shoot videos on the other side of Bengal, the viewership of *Dine Out with Adnan* got a wholesome boost. By then, much

of the Bengali speaking people, and also non-Bengalis, were familiar with the show. This, in turn, helped him build a strong community across India, whereby if Adnan requires any kind of assistance or suggestions with anything while there, it is just an online post away. He has released more than 150 vlogs so far. "I have toured many cities including, Dhaka, Chattogram, Sylhet, Kolkata, Mumbai, Goa, Hyderabad, Kathmandu, New York and Dubai, among others," adds Adnan.



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSEH

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