



## Heart to heart with fan mail!

### Ferdausi Majumdar

in TV plays again to be telecast on private channels.

**Do you think religion is an obstacle to cultural activities in our country?**

Imran Agrabad, Chittagong

**FM:** I don't think so. It's not the religion, but the hardcore conservative attitude of some people and their wrong notion about cultural activities that are the main obstacle to cultural activities in our country.

**How do you manage to laugh so convincingly and with such intensity in TV plays?**

Zahid One-mail

**FM:** I can't exactly tell you. But this much I can say that laughter and crying depend on the artist's capability of entering deep into the character. However, one has to prepare oneself a bit earlier to be able to laugh or to cry in a play.

**I am a member of my university theatre troupe and have performed in some plays. I want to be a great theatre actor like you. What strategies and ideologies would be helpful for me to achieve my goal?**

Ferdousi Maysa Tulip Dhaka University

**FM:** In my opinion, if you want to succeed in any line of work, you have to do that with sincere love and devotion. If a portrait on the cover page of a magazine, cheap popularity and making money are on top of your mind, you can never achieve your goal in theatre.

**For how many years have you been acting on stage and in TV plays and what is your opinion on the increasing number of Bangla channels?**

Golam Mustafa Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

**FM:** I am doing stage theatre regularly for over three decades and have been participating in TV plays since the very first TV drama of the then PTV in 1965. In my opinion, Bangla channels are too many in our country. Naturally, they don't get enough good material to fill the screens. The viewers too get confused, don't really know which one is a good play and which one to skip off. Moreover, over playing of ads is really annoying.

**Do you think you have attained your goal?**

Md Zahidul Islam Central road, Dhaka

**FM:** Honestly, I didn't have any particular goal. I have come to this stage only because I loved acting from the core of my heart. Now I am fully content and satisfied because of the recognition from cross section of the people, their love, regard and honour for me. I don't have any dissatisfaction or discontent. Acting is my love, my devotion, my pleasure.

**Do you think mega-series go on for too long and weaken the plot?**

Daaner London, UK

**FM:** Certainly. If the story is so long, it is bound to be monotonous at certain points. Again the frequent disruption by ads at dramatic moments, kills the curiosity to watch the serial. However, the scenario is different in case of well written plays or well produced classics.

**How is Bangladeshi theatre compared to that of our neighbouring countries?**

Mousumi Barua Cox's Bazar

**FM:** With all our limitations, particularly technical, we compare favourably with the Bangla theatre of India. Our stage theatre focuses more on



our social realities. Ours is a theatre of passion and protest.

**Do you think a career on stage is seen as a full time profession by the younger generation in your country?**

Subrata Chowdhury, New Delhi

**FM:** Not yet in our country. Many can make a full time profession by acting in TV plays, but not on stage. And I don't think the scene will change in the near future.

**Why should one take part in cultural activities when most people think cultural activists are some sort of ostracised people and do not represent our popular culture?**

Dr Ashraf Siddiqui On e-mail

**FM:** I don't really agree with the statement. Some people might think that way. Cultural activists are very much a part of our society. Cultural activists do have a social responsibility. It's not also true that they don't represent our popular culture.

**If you were a director, whom would you include in your dream cast?**

Kalpna Gulshan-1, Dhaka

**FM:** The director does not cast the same set of artists for all types of plays. It depends on the characters.

Due to space constraints, we could not respond to all the queries sent to Ferdausi Majumdar by her fans.

## Concert for a worthy cause

ALO (an organisation for drug awareness) with co-host djuice (Grameen Phones) will hold a concert at the Gulshan Youth Club grounds (behind Wonderland Park, Gulshan) today, says a press release.

The impressive line up of bands attending are LRB, Warfaze, Artcell, Black, Bangla, Husyn Hyder, Ajob, Nemesis, Echoes and Roots, says a press release. The musical extravaganza aims at spreading the message of drug awareness.

The proceeds will go towards drug awareness activities, rehabilitation and treatment. Gates open at 2 pm.

## 'Amake Bolte Dao' goes to Delhi Open Film Fest '06

Bangladeshi documentary *Amake Bolte Dao*, produced by Steps Towards Development and directed by Fauzia Khan, has been selected for screening at the Delhi Open Film festival '06.

The film festival is organised by Unesco and Public Service Broadcasting Trust (PSBT), India, says a press release.

The documentary on women's issues focuses on the basic problems of women in society. The film also seeks to share insights on rural women. The film has so far bagged awards in many international film festivals.



A scene from the documentary

## New mega serial 'Bhober Haat' goes on air



Salahuddin Lavlu (L) with co-artistes in the mega serial

Salahuddin Lavlu's new mega serial *Bhober Haat* begins from August 26 on Channel i, says a press release. The 104-episode depicts the colourful lifestyle of rural denizens.

The play relates the story of two brothers who sever ties for 25 years. However, the brothers' offspring seek a family reunion. *Bhober Haat* is written by Masum Reza and directed by Lavlu.

Humayun Faridee, ATM Shamsuzzaman, Wahida Mollick Jolly, Salauddin Lavlu, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Tania, Diti, Bonna Mirza and others feature in the serial.

The play will be aired every Saturday and Monday at 7:50 pm.

Born: June 18, 1943  
First stage performance in 1967, Titled: *Daktar Abdullah Karkhana*.  
First TV play: *Ektala Dotala* in 1965  
Awards: Ekushey Padak in 1998, National Television Award in 1975, Sequence Award of Merit in 1975, Kazi Mahbubullah Gold Medal in 1981, William Kerry Award, India in 1998

Here is an opportunity for our readers to connect with their favourite cultural personalities. In the Culture page you can ask questions directly to your favourite star once a month. Here we begin with Ferdausi Majumdar:

**Why are you absent in TV serials?**  
Rusafie Alam One-mail

**FM:** The reason for my temporary absence. On top of that, I happen to be one of the 'blacklisted' artistes in Bangladesh TV for the last five years. Anyway, I have started acting

(Ferdousi Majumdar) **FM:** I was unwell for quite sometime; that was

## Special TV programmes on Nazrul's death anniversary

### CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

To observe the death anniversary of our national poet Kazi Nazrul Islam on August 27, Channel i, Rtv and Channel 1 will offer a combination of special TV plays, feature films, tele-films and magazine programmes. Here are the highlights of the special programmes:

#### Channel 1

**Agnigiri**  
Based on a short story by Kazi Nazrul Islam, a special TV play will be aired at 8:30pm. Directed and adapted by Ononta Hira, the TV play features Khairul Anam Shobuj, Ononta Hira, Sakir Ahmed Roni, Jotika Joti and



Child artistes in a scene from *Lichu Chor*



Shahin Samad and Salauddin Ahmed perform in *Gaaner Bulbul*

other child artistes.

**Lichu Chor**  
Adapted by Safika Nasrin Mimi, a special drama for children based on Nazrul's poetry will be telecast at 4:30pm.

**Mrittu Onneshay Nazrul**  
A special talk show is scheduled to be telecast at 10:50pm. The show is directed by Ershad Ahmed Shahin.

**Gaaner Bulbul**  
Popular artiste Shahin Samad and Salauddin Ahmed will render songs of Nazrul in the programme. Directed by Fuad Naser Babu, the programme will be telecast at 7:00pm.

#### Channel i

**Tritiyo Matra**  
A special episode of open discussion on Nazrul hosted by Faridur Reza Shagor, the programme will be aired at 9:50 am.

**Nazrul Sangeet**  
Popular singers will render Nazrul's patriotic songs. The programme will go on air at 11:05 am.

**Tomare Debona Bhulite**  
This will be aired at 12:05 pm.

**Fagun Furabe Jobe**  
A special programme of Nazrul songs, hosted and directed by Geetali Hassan, will be aired at 1:05 pm.

**Rakkhushee**  
Based on Nazrul's story, the feature film, *Rakkhushee*, featuring Rozina, Ferdous, Purnima and others, will be aired at 2:30 pm. The film is scripted by Ahmed Zaman Chowdhury and directed by Matin Rahman.



Ferdous(L) and Rozina (R) with co-artistes in *Rakkhushee*



Ferdous Ara performs in *Ekok Sangeetanusthan*

Projapoti Projapoti

**Re Bhramor Kobi**  
This is a programme of new songs by Nashid Kamal. It goes on air at 6:00 pm.

**Monjeer**  
A dance programme directed by Rumana Rashid Ishita, this will be aired at 6:30 pm.

**Smarone Boron**  
A programme featuring Nazrul's associates, will be aired at 7:50 pm.

**Ekok Sangeetanusthan**  
A solo musical rendition of Nazrul songs by Ferdous Ara will be aired at 9:35 pm.

**Bohumikhi Nazrul**  
A programme on Nazrul's life and poetry, hosted by Abdul Mannan Syed, can be seen at 10:00 pm.

#### Rtv

**Momo Ek Hatey Banka Bansher Banshori**  
The special poetry recital programme is scheduled to go on air at 05:30pm. Mahidul Islam, Ahkamullah, Mridula, Hasan Arif and Rupa Chakraborty will recite selected poems of Nazrul.

**Dhakay Nazrul**  
Rebel Poet Nazrul Islam first arrived in Dhaka 1925. Taking off from there, a special magazine programme will be aired at 8:pm. Reza Uddin Stalin hosts

the show.

**Amar Naam Nazrul**  
A special single-episode drama produced by Rtv is scheduled to be telecast at 8:50pm. Directed by Minhazur Rahman, the play features Arman Parvez, Nadia, Shujata, Ehsan and others.

**Shey Choley Gachhey Boley**  
A special magazine show on dance, based on Nazrul songs directed by Kabirul Islam Ratan, will be telecast at 10:50pm.



A scene from *Amar Naam Nazrul*

## Behind the scenes Soumitra Chatterjee on Satyajit Ray

"Ray made *Apur Sansar* only after he met me," says well-known actor Soumitra Chatterjee as he talks about his relationships with theatre, cinema and Satyajit Ray.

Soumitra Chatterjee is the only Indian actor who has the distinction of working with the late Satyajit Ray in 14 films. He was to Ray what Toshiro Mifune has been to Akira Kurosawa and Marcello Mastroianni to Federico Fellini. And yet, when one meets the accomplished actor of Bengali cinema he charms one with his modesty.

The renowned Bengali actor who "was always attracted towards theatre" and to whom, cinema just happened" cannot "live without acting" today. And like any other creative genius Chatterjee is also a well-known poet, writer and theatre director. At 72, he is still eager for more. This despite 200 films and counting, over 49 years!

Chatterjee made his entry in Indian cinema with *Apur Sansar*, the third part of the Apu trilogy, directed by Ray and there has been no looking back since. He reminisces, "When I was in college and Satyajit Ray was making *Pathar Panchali*, I just happened to meet him casually.

"A few years later, Ray offered me the part of Apu and there was no way I'd not do it. That set the pace of my long relationship with



Soumitra Chatterjee

Bengali cinema and Ray himself." Having acted in 14 of Ray's 34 films, the relationship certainly merits a thought! But "the fact that still gives me a high is when Ray told me much later that he'd decided to make *Apur Sansar* only after he met me."

And is there a favourite among all the Ray

films that he has done? He instantly states, "All of them. The very fact that Ray directed them, makes them so very special for me." But as he speaks of contemporary Bengali cinema you can tell by the shrug that he doesn't enjoy it anymore: "Bengali cinema today seems to thrive on cheap imitations of Hindi movies. It has lost its essence over time. Hindi cinema thrives on selling dreams and there is no aspect of realism anywhere. Only if they could sell better dreams," he sighs.

"The acting style too has changed for the worse. Though Bengali cinema has grown commercially, it has failed to create actors like Aamir Khan, who can pull off their role as intensely in a commercial film as they would in an art movie," he rues.

So does he feel that the growing exchange of talent between Bengali and Hindi cinema will work towards making better films? He interjects, "This exchange can be very fruitful. But the main reason for Bengali actors moving to Bollywood is the money and the glamour aspect (not creativity)."

Did this aspect never attract him to Bollywood? "When I started off my acting career, I was already working with the best. So Hindi cinema had little temptation for me." And the money? "Oh, I was too young and

inexperienced then to realise the importance of money," he laughs.

Chatterjee even refused the Padmashri way back in the 1970s. "That was my way of protesting on behalf of Bengali cinema against the lack of concern shown by the government for us. And anyway, awards hold no meaning for me. They tie you down." And yet, years later he did give his nod to the Padma Bhushan that came his way. Why? "I was young and impulsive when I refused the Padmashri."

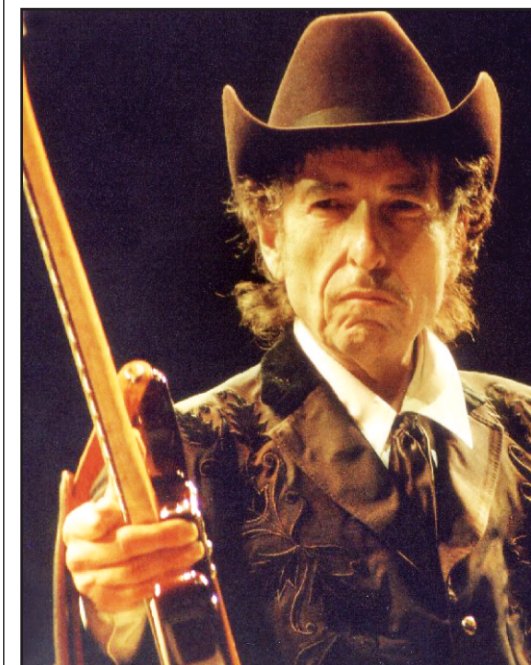
But over this long period, I've become an icon and I didn't want to hurt their feelings by rejecting the love and adulation which was being given to me by way of this award." And you can hear the modesty even as he speaks.

With so much done, is there a role that he still aspires to? "*Ek afsos abhi hai* (I still regret something) that I never got a chance to work in a movie based on a Shakespearean play. I wouldn't mind the film, be it in any language." And one actor that he desires to share the frame with is Naseeruddin Shah. But it's Nandita Das who's really got lucky. She will be acting with Chatterjee in his forthcoming film, *Padukshape*.

So aren't we all glad that he isn't planning his retirement any time soon!

Source: Times of India

## Bob Dylan says modern recordings "atrocious"



Bob Dylan

REUTERS, Los Angeles

Bob Dylan says the quality of modern recordings is "atrocious," and even the songs on his new album sounded much better in the studio than on disc.

"I don't know anybody who's made a record that sounds decent in the past 20 years, really," the 65-year-old rocker said in an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine.

Dylan, who released eight studio albums in the past two decades, returns with his first recording in five years, *Modern Times*, next Tuesday.

Noting the music industry's complaints that illegal downloading means people are getting their music for free, he said, "Well, why not? It ain't worth nothing anyway."

"You listen to these modern records, they're atrocious, they have sound all over them," he added. "There's no definition of nothing, no vocal, no nothing, just like... static."

Dylan said he does his best to fight technology, but it's a losing battle.

"Even these songs probably sounded ten times better in the studio when we recorded 'em. CDs are small. There's no stature to it."