

# Readers' delight: Special publications on Eid

KARIM WAHEED

ON the occasion of Eid, there are special treats for everyone, including the readers. Literature enthusiasts in the country eagerly await Eid as the newspapers and magazines bring out 'Eid-specials'. These special publications include novels, stories, short stories, memoirs, special features and more by noted and emerging writers, columnists and personalities from different arenas. Although some magazines have started bringing out special issues featuring new designs and trends in clothes for Eid, literature-based publications remain the readers' favourite.

The tradition of Eid-special magazines can be traced to post-Liberation War Bangladesh when Shahadat Chowdhury (founder editor of weekly magazines *Bichitra* and *2000*) took the initiative to bring out a special literature-based publication on Eid. According to Golam Mortoza, acting editor of *Weekly 2000*, the idea and inspiration came from 'Sharadiya-specials' published in West Bengal. Says Mortoza, "Back in those days there was no quality literature-based publication in our country and Shahadat bhai wanted to provide a platform for our writers -- both popular and upcoming. That's how the first Eid-special issue of *Weekly Bichitra* happened. The issue featured fresh new literary works by authors and special features."

"Other magazines soon began to bring out their Eid specials but some of them included works of writers from West Bengal. There is an avid readership of Indian literature in our country. However the attitude of readers in West Bengal has been and still remains nonchalant towards our writers. Which is why *Bichitra* only featured Bangladeshi writers; *2000* is continuing that tradition. It's good to see that other magazines too have started following that trend," Mortoza adds.

The current Eid-special edition of *2000* includes novels by Al Mahmud, Anisul Haque, Faridur Reza Shagor and Dhrubo Esh. Special features include memoirs of renowned food connoisseur and nutritionist Siddiqua Kabir. We have all seen her glory days but the feature brings to light Kabir's fascinating and struggling



days. Another interesting feature is a dance-drama titled *Usha-Utshob* by Selim Al Deen. And *2000* has not forgotten the young readers either. The Eid-special includes 10 short stories by young authors who won at

the 'Nido-Weekly 2000' writing contest.

*Prothom Alo's* Eid-special publication has also found popularity among the readers for its insightful features, exciting fiction and appeal-

ing illustrations. According to Zafar Ahmed Rashed, in-charge of *Prothom Alo's* literature page and chief assistant editor of the Eid publication, "We began working on the special issue six months ahead

of Eid. However the last two months have been crucial." Rashed adds, "Mainly getting the features from writers takes time. However, it is understandable one cannot rush creative work, specifically writing and we have to deliver what we promised to our readers."

The Eid-special issue of *Prothom Alo* includes a science fiction novel by Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, a novel by Monica Ali (of *Brick Lane* fame) translated by Mustafa Kaiser and a fiction by Selina Hossain focusing on Rabindranath Tagore in Shilaidaha. A compilation of letters written by the recently deceased poet Shamsur Rahman, Syed Abul Maqsood's feature on 'Swadhin Bangla Biplobi Betar Kendra' and its role during the Liberation War and an insight on a possible female warrior in Dhaka during the '1857 Uprising' by the sepoy against the British in Shamim Aminur Rahman's write up have already created a buzz.

*Anondobhubon's* Eid-special issue includes a feature on artists who have become regulars in Humayun Ahmed's TV plays and movies, novels by noted author Rabeya Khatun, Alauddin Al Azad and Selina Hossain. Reminiscence of bygone days by singer Fakir Alamgir and a travelogue by Imdadul Haq Milon are special attractions of the publication.

*Begum*, the pioneering women's magazine in the country, has also published an Eid-special. Among its special features, *Nawab Faizunnisa* by Zeenat Azim stands out. The issue also includes poems, stories and more.

And this write up would be incomplete if *Unmad's* Eid-special issue is not mentioned. The cartoon magazine with a cult following has as usual included their take on TV shows and films that have attained public attention. The spoofs include *Daruchiruni Dwip*, *Close down one two 3*, *Amader Niranondo Bari* and more.

With so many choices, the readers are definitely in for a treat this Eid.

## Confessions of an upcoming star "My confidence grew with each award," -- Momo

MAHMUDA AFROZ

"I love wearing sarees and *kajal*, am crazy about *kobdels* and *deshi belis* flowers and dream of roaming the streets of Dhaka on a rickshaw at midnight. My greatest identity is that I am a simple Bengali girl." These were the words of Momo, winner of the Lux Channel i superstar 2006 for whom life has changed forever since winning the competition.

This is one star who knew what she wanted to be right from childhood. It's not the 'by chance' I came into the media' story. From the age of three Momo had been training herself for this day. "I dreamt of being a star for as long as I can remember. I am so lucky that I had my parents' support."

Born in Brahmanbaria, Momo's mother is a lecturer at a college and father a businessman. "I am proud to be from Brahmanbaria, a place with a rich cultural heritage. The love and support I got during the competition from the entire city was amazing." Momo had been enrolled in the Alauddin Sangeet Angon even before she could read. "There is culture and history in each one of its walls and I believe that had a positive impact on me."

*Lichu Chor* by Nazrul was the first poem Momo ever recited for which she won a prize. Soon she got involved in dancing. Seeing her interest her parents thought it would be a good idea to bring her to Dhaka once a week for advanced training in dancing. Shiblee Mohammad was her first dance instructor in Dhaka and Kabirul Islam Rattan her guru. That was way back in 1992 and she continued with the practice for eight long years in which she mastered Kathak and folk dance. In 2001 Momo's family shifted bag and baggage to Dhaka for the sake of this soon to be star.

Not long before Momo became a known face among the category of child artistes. She won the gold medal in the Jatiyo Shikhhka Shoptaho Puroshkar, Jatiyo Sheeshu Shilpi puroshkar, Notun Kuri and many more. "My dreams began to expand as I knew I could achieve better. My confidence grew with each new award." In the meantime Momo had also toured South Korea, Turkey and Malaysia as a member of the cultural group representing Bangladesh in those coun-



tries. After dancing her next step were serials. Her first serial was against Zahid Hassan in 2001. It was aired on ETV and was based on Nazrul's *Meher Neger*.

A Sagittarian, Momo had passed out from Dhaka City College and was in her first year in Jahangirnagar University when her brother saw the ad for the Lux Channel i superstar competition. "My exams were going on and I didn't want to apply for it initially. But as I saw my family wanted it so much I applied knowing that I could tackle both my exams and the competition at the same time. I can work very hard to attain something positive," she asserts.

Sharing her emotion and experience during the competition Momo says, "When I got through the first round I was scared and confused. I felt that my complexion was dark and I wasn't as beautiful as the other girls. However, my father's belief in me and

my mother's support carried me through. Later the judge's comments also gave me the boost I needed."

The shooting of *Daruchinir dwipe* will begin from December. "I am lucky to be working with the who's who of the media world at the very beginning of my career. I want to concentrate on my first movie with utmost dedication. I hope I won't let my well wishers down," says Momo.

With her wings spread out to fly, Momo is ready for the challenges the film industry has to offer. "Unlike a few years back, we have excellent directors, producers and scripts. Hence I believe that golden era of the 60s will return to Bangladesh movies and while the transition period is on I want to be a part of it and do my bit," she concludes.

## EID SPECIALS

### Telefilm 'Suronjona' on Channel 1



*Suronjona* is a triangular love story. Rayan and Sinthi strike up a friendship through the Internet. Rayan's user name is Anando and Sinthi's Suronjona. They decide to meet for the first time in Cox's Bazaar. However, Rayan fails to get accommodation at their planned hotel. Meanwhile Rupa, a film star invites Rayan to stay at a room beside her in a nearby hotel and gradually falls for him. Later Rupa

reveals her affection for Rayan to Sinthi, who is one of her closest friends. What happens next is for the viewers to wait and watch. Mahfuz Ahmed, Auppe Karim, Sumaiya Shimu, Anisur Rahman Milon, Ahsanul Haq Minu, are the main cast members of the telefilm. *Suronjona* is written and directed by Ferdous Hasan. The telefilm will be aired on channel 1 on the third day of Eid at 3pm.

### Special dance programmes on TV



Bharatnatyam dancer, teacher and choreographer Anisul Islam Hero has teamed up with Chandni, dancer, model and actress in several special TV programmes for Eid. In the pipeline: a dance programme on ntv, titled *Mukhorito Chhonde* will feature dancers Anisul Islam Hero, Chandni, Sadia Islam Mou, Likhon, Nadia, Ishita, Sohel, Baby and Cynthia on the third day of Eid. *Anando Mela*, a magazine programme on BTV on Eid day will feature Hero, Chandni, Sohel and Ria. Baishakhi TV and STV will air special dance programmes on Eid day also. "Chandi and myself have jointly directed the programme for NTV. We have incorporated different themes such as endless journey, love for nature and colour on canvas," says Hero.

### Comic play 'Prem O Ghamer Golpo' on Banglavision



Zahid Hasan and co-artists in the play As part of the Eid special programmes arranged by Banglavision, an interesting TV play titled *Prem O Ghamer Golpo* will be aired at 8:00 pm on the third day of Eid. Zahid Hasan and Nova portray the central roles in the play. Animesh Aich's play depicts the story of a simple man who lives in a dormitory in Dhaka. He has a peculiar problem: he sweats severely and, therefore, cannot lead a normal life. Meanwhile, he moves back to his village and gets married to a schoolgirl. So what will happen next? For that, viewers will have to wait till the third day of Eid.

### Telefilm 'Bonus' on ATN Bangla

Written by Brindaban Das and directed by Saidul Anam Tutul, telefilm *Bonus* will be aired on the 2nd day of Eid at 3:45pm on ATN Bangla. Taru, a skilled thief in Barabilla village, along with some of his partners in crime, are brought to Dhaka and appointed in a farm that is involved in organised crime. The organisation systematically carries out different income-generating activities like hijacking, theft and others by highly skilled professionals. Taru is interviewed by Mohor Chowdhury, the owner of the organisation. Taru is asked about his experi-



A scene from Bonus

### Madhuri to make a comeback

The cat is out of the bag. Screen diva Madhuri Dixit is finally making a comeback in films and that too in a grand style. She is doing a movie with India's premier film production house, Yashraj Films. The film is to be directed to by ace cinematographer Anil Mehta.



Apparently, Madhuri loved the script so much that she could not resist the offer. Rumours of her doing Rikku Rakeshnath's film first have been put to rest by her signing Yashraj's film. The lead actor of the film is yet to be decided but going by Yashraj's track record, another superstar is expected to sign very soon. The film promises to be an out and out entertainer. The shooting of the film commences in January 2007. Madhuri is expected to come to India very soon. Source: Internet

## Buzz

### Of donkeys and Bollywood stars



This year "Rani" was sold at the price of Rs. 25,000. She is short and fair. In fact, the buyer of the donkey feels that she is very good looking and his children will love her. "Rani's" sibling named "Aishwarya" however was purchased by a businessman from Haryana. The highest price this year was paid for "Shah Rukh" who fetched Rs. 35,000. On the other hand, Rakhi Sawant went for Rs. 18,000. This fair is a 103-year-old tradition and now it has become a star studded affair. The bigger the name of the star after which the donkey is named, the higher the price of the animal. Be it a modern city or rural countryside, Bollywood sells equally well everywhere. The most interesting example that we heard of recently is use of filmstars' names to sell donkeys on sale at the on-going annual animal fair at the Dewa Sharief Mela near Lucknow. Aishwarya, Rani, Juhi, Preity, Priyanka, Aamir, Salman, Jackie, Shah Rukh, Kangana and the list goes on. And naming the donkeys after the stars has boosted the sales of the animals and added colour to the fair.



### Movie Watch

## Ultraviolet: Ultra let down

It would seem that *Ultraviolet* was designed to cash into the possible success that never came from *Aeon Flux*. It ran off the same formula -- take a stunning actress, dress her up in tights, set her in a futuristic totalitarian society, make her a freedom fighter and proceed to have her kick a whole lot of sorry beings. One of the major factors that helps the film is the presence of Milla Jovovich. Having made a name for herself in "B" sci-fi films like *The Fifth Element* and the *Resident Evil* series, Jovovich looks great in this movie. She fits the character more than Charlize Theron ever did with *Aeon Flux*. However, when the story is boiled down, it is basically the same deal. There was so little confidence in this movie by the studio (Screen Gems, a division of Sony) that they didn't even screen it for critics. *Ultraviolet* is not as bad as *Aeon Flux* though. *Ultraviolet* narrates a futuristic world where the military industrial complex has been replaced by the medical industrial complex. Because a genetically engineered virus has been infecting the human population, people are endlessly paranoid about disease. Those infected are called "hemophages," and they are shunned by society. The hemophages have banded together and are trying to overthrow the humans, which is leading to their systematic

extermination. Violet (Jovovich) is a hemophage soldier sent to intercept a weapon from the humans. However, once it is in her hands, she discovers that it is a human boy, played by overexposed Cameron Bright. She double crosses both the humans and the hemophages in order to save the boy, who is carrying a possible cure for the virus. The line deliveries are laughable, including many given by Nick Chinlund, who plays the main antagonist. Even Jovovich, who is a decent actor in her own right, has to chew through some awful dialogue that makes *Charlie's Angles 2* look like Shakespeare. The biggest fault lies in the writing. The script doesn't make a whole lot of sense, and the story appears to be a wet bandage to link together overblown action and fight sequences. Even these action scenes leave a lot to be desired because they are overly stylised and slathered with cheesy CGI work and unnecessary virtual camera set-ups. In some ways, it's like watching another *Spy Kids* movie. Compiled by Cultural Correspondent



Milla Jovovich in Ultraviolet