

GRAPE VINE



PHOTO: COLLECTED

Celebrating 25 years of 'Tomar Kono Dosh Nai'

Three times Bangladesh National Award-winning singer Monir Khan recently celebrated the silver jubilee of his first solo album, *Tomar Kono Dosh Nai*. The song, *Tomar Kono Dosh Nai* from the album received the most appreciation from the audience. To make the twenty-five years of the album memorable Monir Khan's fan club arranged the celebration. On November 26, Monir Khan honored everyone who worked for the album including the lyricist, composer, among others. Monir Khan said, "I am elated to honor those for whom I have been able to make a name in the industry. I shall continue to work respecting my past and holding the value in me."



KISHORE'S LETTER

Singer Kishore Das recently released a new song, *Cithi dio* written by Mahi Flora and composed by Ringo Basu. The song was released under the banner of *GaanChobi Entertainment*. Kishore Das said, "I enjoyed working for this song. I believe it is a treat to those who waits for good music. I hope the audience will appreciate our hard work. I also request everyone to continue listening to new songs and support the music industry." Besides, *Bangabandhu T20 Cup 2020* commenced on the 24th of November. Singer Kishore Das gave voice to the theme song for the Rajshahi cricket team. The song has been written by Robiul Islam and composed by Kishore himself.



Puja Back After Eight Months!

After eight long months, actor Puja Cherry has returned to filming. She returned to film the Ispahani Arif Jahan directed film *Hridita*. Puja said, "We are filming while maintaining caution. I was a little nervous to return in front of the camera after so long, but in the end, it all worked out. I read the script for this film three months back, and when I went to shoot, I had already memorized the whole script. I also thought about the look I should go for in the film." Aside from this, Puja has also been rumored to appear in the Saikat Nasir film *Masud Rana*. Three films starring Puja is awaiting their releases: *Shaan*, *Jinn* and *Psycho*.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub



COVER STORY

In Tune To The World

Renowned classical music artist Alif Laila evokes her love and passion of music through the tunes of her Sitar. She has received numerous awards for her contribution to classical music, including the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' from ASHA, a welfare organisation for women. In this interview, she talks about her journey and inspirations of classical music and why it is important.

Rafi Hossain: Welcome to *Uncensored with Rafi Hossain*. Today, we are here with classical music artist Alif Laila. Thank you for being with us here today.

Alif Laila: Thank you for having me.

Rafi Hossain: I feel that artists do not pursue instrumental music as much as other forms. Do you agree with me?

Alif Laila: There isn't anything to not agree with. In the past century, it was rare to see women of any religious background perform music in public settings. There were dance performances in temples as a form of prayer and vocal performances as a form of entertainment. Instrumental performances had no place in it. Women performing music publicly meant sacrifice; in fact, any occupation for women meant sacrifice if they had families. Even now, the society that we live in is male-dominated, even if women are liberated much more than in the past. In the case of instruments, we need to be attuned to it twenty-four hours a day. It has to be in every breath and step we take. It is very difficult for a woman to do this as she has to compartmentalise her life. This means that she cannot give her everything to music. For me, my career was delayed because I concentrated most on



PHOTO COURTESY: ALIF LAILA

the instrument is a very difficult task as it is both heavy and fragile.

Rafi Hossain: Can you tell us something about your musical journey?

Alif Laila: I am very fortunate to have been able to learn from many great artists. In 1981, I was in the Middle-East where I used to practise my art as an amateur. I came to America in 1988 and had to face a lot of struggles of life. Here, I could work with Partha Chatterjee. I also got to learn from Pandit Krishna Bhatt and Barun Roy in Kolkata. Kolkata is the hub of classical music, and I love that place. The environment is perfect for someone who wants to be at one with music. Although things are changing because of improvements in technology and anyone can learn anything from anywhere, I still believe that there is something special about Kolkata that gives its music the authentic flavour. Anyone can learn to play instruments through *Youtube*, but the subtle nuances and the soul of the instrument and music can only be learned from Gurus. I hope that this does not die off in the future. It is our duty as artists to sustain this practice for the future generation of artists. In fact, we all have the responsibility to perpetuate the practice of instrumental music. We have to take this to the mainstream. I also had the opportunity to talk with Ravi Shankar. He was an incredible knowledgeable and talented artist. The fact that I'm an established artist today can be credited to him because he revolutionised the path for instrumental music today. He inspired me greatly.

Rafi Hossain: Do you have a parting message for the readers?

Alif Laila: Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity. Music is a universal language and energy of peace and love. It has no borders. We must unite with music as a weapon to overcome any adversity that comes our way. I urge everyone to understand each other and concentrate on their happiness. We should all reflect deeply on ourselves and find what makes us happy and follow that with courage. Music is priceless and healing, and I hope we can use it as such.

Amina Hossain

"I was lucky to have received a lot of support from my family in this matter. I graduated from Charukola Institute while having a small child. I don't think it would have been possible for me to follow my passion had my family not supported me."

my family. In this occupation, we have to deal with a number of difficulties and unwarranted comments from people about how it isn't worth it. However, I believe that it is worth much more than what's on the surface. I was lucky to have received a lot of support from my family in this matter. I graduated from Charukola Institute while having a small child. I don't think it would have been possible for me to follow my passion had my family not supported me. In fact, I don't think any woman who has a family to take care of can follow their passions without proper support. My mother was my biggest inspiration. She wanted to be a Sitar player, but was unable to do so. She was my mentor and my best friend. Our bond was much stronger than that of a mother and a daughter. Another reason behind the disinclination to play musical instruments is the physical aspect of it. Playing the Sitar means having cuts, bruises and callouses on your fingers. Not everyone can be okay with this, and it's understandable. Moreover, carrying

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.

If Anything Happens I Love You

If Anything Happens I Love You is an animated film. It has been directed by Michael Govier and Will McCormack, and produced by Maryann Garger, alongside others, under the banner of Gilbert Films and Oh Good Productions. The movie focuses on two parents who lose their daughter in a school shooting. It was released on *Netflix* on November 20, 2020.



PARANORMAL

Paranormal is an Egyptian fantasy, drama, and horror web television series on *Netflix*, which has been based on the supernatural book series *Ma Waraa Al Tabiaa* by Ahmed Khaled Tawfik. It has been directed by Amr Salama and Majid Al Ansari, produced under the banner of

Netflix, and stars Ahmed Amin, Reem Abd El Kade and Samma Ibrahim, among others. The story follows a professor of haematology who experiences and learns about different supernatural happenings. It was originally released on November 5, 2020.



MANK

Mank is a biographical drama film on *Netflix*. It has been directed by David Fincher, produced by Ceán Chaffin, Douglas Urbanski, and Eric Roth, with Gary Oldman in the lead, alongside Amanda Seyfried, Lily Collins, and Arliss Howard, among others. It narrates the experience of American screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz while he was writing *Citizen Kane*. It was initially released on November 13, 2020.

Shreya Shomoyeeta