

The 20th American Music Awards Spécial Telecast on STAR PLUS

The highest-rated music awards programme on US network television will this year be broadcast across STAR PLUS' 38-country footprint, being seen for the first time in many of those countries.

The 20th Annual American Music Awards, which presents the popular music vote from a varied cross-section of the American public, will air on the entertainment channel on Sunday, January 31 at 6 pm Bangladesh time direct from the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

The American Music Awards combines the award announcements with popular and live musical performances. This year artists will include Bon Jovi, Michael Bolton, Bobby Brown, Boyz II Men, Billy Ray Cyrus, Gloria Estefan, Kris Kross, Reba McEntire and Vince Gill, Metallica, Wynonna and, in a rare television performance, Michael Jackson.

Three previous American Music Award-winners have been chosen to host this year's event.

Double American Music Award winner, Bobby Brown, has established himself as a singer, songwriter, producer and electrifying stage performer. Since leaving New Edition to embark on a solo career he has garnered a string of chart-topping hits and awards.

Gloria Estefan was honoured along with the Miami Sound Machine with an American Music Award in 1989. Her relationship with the show is exemplified by her choosing to make her comeback performance in January, 1991, following her near-fatal bus accident, on the same stage where she will serve as one of this year's co-hosts.

After seven years of chart-topping success as lead singer of the most successful duo in country music, and along with her mother, Naomi Judd, a double American Music Award winner in 1987, Wynonna's solo career took off following her debut solo performance at the 1992 American Music Awards.

Winners of the American Music Awards are selected by the public. A national sampling of approximately 20,000 taking into account geographic location, age, sex and ethnic origin, have been sent ballots. Names of the nominees on the ballot will be compiled from data supplied by the music industry trade publication, Radio & Records, and the Sound Scan Inc., management information system. Results of the voting are kept secret until the envelopes are opened during the presentation ceremonies.

The Backyard Mini Meat Factory

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cost, fast breeding, easy to feed animal and of course in a predominantly Moslem country, it had to be 'halal', acceptable by the food restrictions in the Holy Koran.

At the end of our trip through West-Java in a small teashop the concept of the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' was born. Considering various possibilities we came to the conclusion that rabbit meat would be the best source of protein that poor people could produce. First of all rabbits multiply rapidly. They can easily give birth four times a year and each time produce four to eight kindlings. They can live on most green feeds that are available, such as grass, leaves, shoots and legumes. On a small scale these feeds are available at no cost. Rabbits also require little raising space. Rabbit meat has a high nutritional value.

The 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' concept was first introduced in Lembang, a small village close to the city of Bandung on the slope of the Tangkuban Prahua volcano. The whole village, the poor and the relatively better-off families, participated in the project. The idea was not to introduce rabbit meat as a source of protein for poor people only. Better-off villagers who had been to Mecca for the 'haj' pilgrimage would also be included and of course the local 'mullah'. As such rabbit breeding would become an affair involving the whole community. A second objective was to motivate the villagers to consume their own rabbits and as such improve their standard of nutrition. Thursday was chosen to be 'Rabbit Day', the day that every family would slaughter at least one rabbit. Another condition was that families were able to receive two to three rabbits, but would promise to return double the number they had received. All within a period of six months. By that time the offspring of two adult rabbits would already be more than eight, so returning four or six would not be any problem.

The 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' project in Lembang became a great success. Malnutrition that had plagued the village for generations disappeared and a healthy community spirit developed. The



A rabbit banquet with wives of all state ministers at the President Suharto Palace.

concept was tried out in a number of other villages. The Lembang village became the training centre for these villages. For a small fee the villagers were taught the technicalities of rabbit breeding. Motivation training was no problem as the 'trainees' could see the direct results of the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' with their own eyes. Within a year hundreds of families in West and Central Java became active rabbit breeders. The principle of the distribution of the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' concept was very simple. You start with four motivated families in a chosen village, teach them to become instructors and within one or a half year all the village families would be involved.

Hoping that the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' concept could be introduced on a large scale Mamur Suriaatmadja and

Deasy Tuwo contracted the Department of Livestock in Jakarta. The government officers showed little concern. They were more interested in the importation of expensive high-breed cows from Australia and the Netherlands. Fortunately President Suharto took a different attitude. He invited Mamur Suriaatmadja, Deasy Tuwo and the rabbit breeders from the Lembang village to his Palace. The meeting with the President became an important happening. The President took a serious interest in the different type of rabbit farming background he fully understood the significance of the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' concept and issued an order to introduce it on a national scale. After the rabbit presentation Suharto invited all the state Minister to taste the various rabbit dishes prepared by the villagers. During the tasting session the Minister of Religion publicly stated that rabbit meat was hundred per cent 'halal'. Following the meeting with the President which received widespread publicity, the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' really got a momentum. The Livestock Department established a nationwide programme and implemented pilot-projects in many of Indonesia's provinces. NGOs, private people, commercial breeders became interested and so the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' became an accepted institution. Rabbit breeding for home consumption and commercial use is now very common in Indonesia.

Looking back at the last fifteen years Mamur Suriaatmadja concludes: "We succeeded because we designed something that was simple and produced quick results. Than of course we had support from the strongest man in the country."

Could the 'Backyard Mini-Meat Factory' concept be introduced in Bangladesh? At first sight Indonesia and Bangladesh have a lot in common. A similar history, a language and culture influenced by more or less the same sources, a climate that is not very different, the same religious background, so one can easily conclude why not? The fact is that various institutions

like the Department of Health and Nutrition of the Dhaka University and the Grameen Bank have already taken some encouraging initiatives. A number of NGOs have made similar efforts. The problem however is, that these activities of promotion are implemented in a scattered way and therefore not very effective. Coordination and cooperation, sharing of experiences, would be very useful and prevent wasteful duplication. The Government, the Department of Livestock or like in Indonesia, the Prime-Minister herself could take positive measures to bring the various interested parties together and provide them with facilities for the import of new breeding stock and other requirements.

The author, a citizen of the Netherlands is currently working as a team leader of Adarsha Gram Project.

A Radiant Dew-drop of Beauty and Purity

by Waheedul Haque

SHALL we compare thee to a summer's rose? Now that she is gone rather prematurely at 63, we Bengalees could compare Audrey Hepburn with our home-grown Kanan Devi, if she would only live a bit longer. For with both of them it was love-at-first-sight for millions of fans. A love that would not

Novelist Shankar

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of which have been screened by film-makers including Satyajit Ray. But, as Mani Shankar Mukherji, he is a successful business executive. In the interview he tells Scrajur Rahman the Secret of how he manages to juggle these two competing careers. Quite simply, he writes between three and eight in the morning before the business executive takes over.

Shankar can also be heard discussing some of his works and exchanges reminiscences on some of the most outstanding novelists of the recent past, including Bibhuti Bhushan Bandopadhyaya. 'Variety' can be heard on the BBC Bengali Service at 2200 (Bangladesh) on 6065, 7105, 7315, 9605 and 9725 klz in the 49, 41 and 31 metre bands.

diminish with years and even after decades. While Kanan was exclusively Bengali, her charms having a privacy of regionality, Audrey's beauty of the person as well as of her personality together with her histrionic charms cast a spell transcending national and racial differences. It was not for nothing that Danny Kay was succeeded as UN ambassador to world's children by none other than Audrey Hepburn, her whole being radiating a simplicity that comes only to children.



Playing the female lead in 'War and Peace': 1956.



Visiting Bangladesh as Goodwill Ambassador of UNICEF: October, 1989.

Although she won an Oscar and four other nominations to the same and did ravishing leads in such romantic classics as My Fair Lady, Sabrina and Breakfast at Tiffany's, you name her and pat comes to mind the young lady of Roman Holiday — the Belgian-born girl's Hollywood debut.

A war-orphan surviving in Holland on a diet of mainly



In February, 1992, also as UNICEF emissary.

turnip, she was a constant source of solace and happiness for distressed children all over the world, something that cannot be said of any from the tinsel town — except for that noble couple Joan Woodward and Paul Newman.

Who but Liz Taylor would have the nicest word on the passing of such a radiant dew-drop of purity and beauty?

God has a most beautiful new angel, said she. We have

no doubt millions upon millions would share her feeling. Audrey emerged into the glare of high cinema from an existence of anonymous loneliness and before passing she chose to return to that self-

same solitude. Her loneliness seems to have been lined with some divine contentment accessible only very rarely to mortals. We shall ever cherish her memory.

When On This Path My Footprints No Longer Fall

When on this path my footprints no longer fall,
My ferryboat no more makes this port of call,
Then finished will be my money-making, accounts
will close — the giving and taking —
Done will be my coming and going in the marketing
mall

Then to no one's memory will I fall;
And scanning about the crowded mall,
No longer will my name they call
When on this path my footprints no longer fall.

When the dust collects upon the strings of my lyre,
Brambles at the gate of my house creep higher and
higher
The flower garden thick with grass in a jungle mass,
The pond be enclosed on every side with bushes and
brier.

Then to no one's memory will fall...
(two verses remaining)

by Rabindranath Tagore
translation by John Thorpe

Christmas Trees in January

A Short Story by Purabi Basu

Christmas sale. Coming back to the parking lot with the buys I found the car nowhere.

"Could be that you parked it at a different place. Did you look around very carefully?"

"Yah, Dad. We checked quite thoroughly. The parking lot security guards also searched for it. It's really lost."

"I hope it's insured."

"That's right. But that's something which can wait, Dad. I'm in a fix now what to do."

"Shall I take you back from the police station?"

"No. That's not necessary. Our house is not far from here. We can just walk down. But the problem is David has to go to Norway tomorrow morning at seven. He is due to work in Food Mart. Would it be possible to give him a ride tomorrow in the morning?"

"Of course. Don't get anxious. I shall even take him back in the afternoon after his work. It's only a matter of ten to twelve miles. I've not done away with driving yet."

standing in an ungainly fashion in the winter-fog.

A dim light can be seen in the pantry of the neighbouring house of the Pauls. On the other side Maria is sleeping in her bed looking very quiet. Maria, Joseph's wife. They are having a conjugal life for forty years. The dog is still sleeping in the other room. Joseph comes down. Opens the living room door. Comes out in the verandah in the front. The boy has not failed to deliver the newspaper. Takes up the newspaper. Moves to the garage and starts the car to warm the engine up. The car is old and it's winter. Needs good warming up for a good drive. Then he again comes back to the bedroom. Sipping the coffee and browsing on the first page of the newspaper together. Glances at the watch again and again. Time moves so slow now. It's still five minutes to six. Suddenly the telephone rings.

"Hallo"
"Dad"
"Yah, it's me."
"I'm David. I've something good to deliver."



"Thanks, Dad. You've saved us. David was feeling shy to ask you this favour."

Putting down the receiver Joseph Pinto took the key-bunch. He was whistling as he came down the stairs. His wife, John's mother was busy in the kitchen. "Nancy's car has been stolen. I am getting out for some time. Let me fill my tank." He just peeped in to throw these words and vanished himself instantly.

John's mother came out of the kitchen to know more details of the incident. She finds her husband has already given start to the car. Joseph comes back home with his car duly filled in with gasoline from the gas station. He examines the fuel and regular the car in the garage. An old car. Not put to regular drive. Should have checked the air filter. Sometimes the start is put off while the car is on unless the engine is warmed up enough. Checks the air filter very carefully. No, it's quite clean. He feels certain and comes back to the dining table. Ravioli filled with spinach and cheese plus home-made tomato and cream sauce. Joseph's favourite menu. The couple again converse over David's car-theft.

Tonight Joseph goes to bed a little early. Have to get up quite early in the morning. He puts the watch crock on the night table. So that he can look at it with a little turn. Examines twice to check whether the alarm has been properly fixed. These digital watches are a little complicated. If you don't fix the alarm properly in tune with am and pm, the alarm may ring at six in the evening instead six in the morning. Joseph cannot sleep well at night. He awakes twice or thrice. At two, at half past three and at quarter to five. Drinks some water. Walks about. After a long span of time he feels an excitement and throb within. He feels that he is not finished yet. At five in the morning he finally gets up. Washes, shaves and takes a quick shower in hot water. He enjoys the white soapy foam and the vapour of hot water, softly sings some tune. He has already put the automatic coffee-maker on. Now puts on his black pair of trousers, white shirt and brown sweater and starts sipping the hot coffee. Looks at the backyard through the window. It is still dark. The bare trees are

"What's that, David?"

"Last night at about twelve the police called on us. They said our car has been traced. I went out at that hour. And have brought the car back. It was left on the other side of the river. They've only stolen the stereo out of it. Everything else is okay, I think."

"That's something very good, David."

"Yah, I know you have been quite anxious. But did not want to wake you up at night to convey the news. Thought that it's 'better to let you know in the morning.' After a pause David says 'You don't have to take the trouble, Dad. I'm going to work driving my own car. Thank you, anyway'."

"You are always welcome, David."
The words came out as if tearing the old man's throat. And then the alarm rang. He stops it immediately with some force and sits on the chair by his side. Suddenly he feels very exhausted. What to do now? He feels the entire world narrowing down within his sight. Maria was awake from sleep by the noise of the phone. She shivers to look at the shape of her husband sitting so silent on the chair.

"Joseph. What's wrong with you? Joseph. Who phoned? Anything bad?"

"No, Nancys have got back their car. David phoned me."

"Oh, that's relieving. A good news in the morning. They are free from a great anxiety."
Maria heave a sigh of relief. Wraps her up and lies down again. Joseph does not respond. With his outdoor dress, he pushes himself into the easy chair. How long has he to wait for the sunlight?

III

It was almost three when we reached the mafia house as stated by John. Quite an old house, but quite clean, neat and clean. In front can be seen the beautifully arranged lawn and a garden of flowers. Everything is quiet around. This house is just across three or four houses from John's. John was born here and lived in it till he got married. John's mother was watching the TV in the living room. I was introduced to her. Then John asked, 'Where is Dad, Mum? I

don't see him."

"Find him in the bed-room. Sitting there without a word right from the early morning."

"Why?"

"Don't know. Ask him. Has not taken anything so far."

"Why Mum? Have you quarrelled?"

John's mother felt a little embarrassed as he put such a question while I was present there. Then she smilingly said, "No, no, nothing of the sort. I've not talked to him yet since morning."

"Then what's the matter?"

"Why don't you stop talking and go up and see for yourself?"

John went up. I followed him. Joseph was still sitting on the easy chair in a relaxed fashion beside the window.

"Dad."

"What?" Joseph asks without turning to him.

"Look, Dad, who has come. I told you about my Bangalee colleague."

"No. Joseph looks towards the door. Forces a smile. But the eyes don't speak. Lifts his hand as he eyes me. I come a little closer to him."

"Hoi."

"Hoi."

John stands just in front of his father.

"Tell me what's the matter? You've put on outdoor dress. But why sitting quite in the bed-room? Are you going out somewhere?"

"No."

"So?"

"Thought of going somewhere."

"Then?"

"No need to go any more."

"You could go to my place. Come on, you will visit my house."

"No, I'll not go anywhere today. Don't feel like."

Joseph again looks out. Awake for a moment as if he again droops down somewhere unknown. John takes a stool and sits beside him. Slowly I get out of the room. An enlarged photograph hangs on the wall of the hallway just at the bottom of the stairs. I had no difficulty to identify the person, healthy and smiling, standing there with five sons and daughters engaged in playing volleyball. Joseph, John's father. John seems to be quite young as if he has not left the high school. A lovely photograph. By a very expert hand. He deserves praise.

Everybody's face is clear. Yet their involvement in the play says that they were not posing for it. I came downstairs. Maria, John's mother was preparing some snacks for us standing in the kitchen. She looks happy as I have come down. Asks me a lot of curious questions. She has great curiosity about our country and our society. I felt happy that she did not ask anything about our saris and bindis. I told her time and again that Bangladesh and India are two different countries. Yet she went on referring to our food and dress as Indian. I restrained myself to remind her of the difference any more. Let me bear this middle-aged woman who doesn't care to know all that has happened in the Indian subcontinent in the last fifty years. I did not tell her that we became Pakistanis for twenty-four years before our present Bangladesh identity. She herself is tired enough of inhabiting in and sharing cultures of more than one country. It's no use to burden her with the information of the partition of a country, its different cultures and independent existence. The English John's mother was speaking was more broken even though she came to this country before attaining her adulthood. I know she and her husband still speak Italian at home.

We ate the delicious snacks with coffee prepared by Maria. Then we moved to the road. John and I, in John's car. It was already afternoon. On the last moment John's father came down to say good-bye to us. He shook me by the hand and asked me to come again. I opened the car-window and waved my hand to say bye to the Pinto couple. Joseph and Maria also waved their hands.

We have entered the city by then. The ice has begun melting with today's temperature. So the roads and footpaths are inundated. On the footpath along the big houses, there are heaps of Christmas trees. These very trees were bought with so much care and selection. At pretty good prices. Just about a month ago or even later than that. Were taken home. Were decorated with lights of various colours. Were decked with ornaments and garlands. And now they are lying here. On the roads. Bereft of all decoration, with all probable undue humiliation. I was looking at them. I could see how alive are some of the driven-out trees. As our car was turning left, another bare half-dry Christmas tree fell down on the side of the dustbin from the second story of a building. The traffic light turned red. Our car stopped at the square. I saw a bin-truck was standing on the opposite side. And two persons were throwing the Christmas trees inside the dark chamber of the truck from the footpaths.

Looking at that dark, suddenly the face of John's father seen at the close of the day, flashed in my sight. Our car was then moving fast towards the hotel, the venue of our New Year celebration. On both the sides of the road, some of the Christmas illuminations could still be seen, glowing and fading out.

Translated by Shaif Ahmed