

Concert Runa Laila : All for a good cause

AFSAR AHMED

THE board members of the Society for the Welfare of the Intellectually Disabled, Bangladesh (SWID-Bangladesh) Ramna Branch once requested me to visit their society premises. Being introduced to the intellectually disabled (ID) children, was really a saddening experience," says a visibly moved Runa Laila.

However, Runa was pleasantly surprised when she found that the children knew her by name or face. "Many of them knew my songs, which was very heartening," she comments.

From that momentous encounter onwards, Runa and her husband Alamgir have left no stone unturned to help such unfortunate children. Now they are the driving force behind a forthcoming concert on June 17 at Hotel Sheraton's Winter Garden.

The concert will showcase artists from the world of theatre, TV, music and the silver screen. Among the key personalities are Shakila Zafar, Kumar Bishwajeet, Ayub Bachchu, Asif Akbar, Robi Chowdhury, Ankhil Alamgir, Tishma, Manna, Reaz, Purnima, Poppy, Zahid, Mou, Ratan, Riya, Sohail, Alamgir and Runa Laila herself. According to Runa, the concert is a major milestone. As she amplifies, "So many prominent artists rarely get together to stage a performance for a social cause."

The public response has also been heartwarming. Beginning with a seven-year-old boy who donated his entire pocket money of Taka 600, the concert has drawn the artists, the banks, the donor



Runa Laila

organisations, the multinationals and local organisations as well as the media.

According to Runa, the forthcoming concert disproves the old adage that artists are materialistic and can never unite for a social cause. "This is completely untrue. In fact, the artists were very excited about the concept of such an event and they came forward voluntarily. Some of them are helping by performing free of cost, paying or finding donations or just

helping to sell the concert tickets," asserts Runa.

Ticket sales, adds Runa, are satisfactory so far. She is keeping her fingers crossed that the tickets will be sold out. "The entire proceedings, deducting the unavoidable costs, will be donated to society for the benefit of these children," she points out. Explaining the modus operandi, Runa says, "We have targeted a big sum for donation. We plan to have a fixed deposit for SWID-Bangladesh so that they will be able to draw their monthly expenditure from it."

The concert, believes Runa, will go a long way in clearing the air about intellectual disability. "These children, suffering from Downs Syndrome and other diseases, cannot express themselves. People often make fun of them. We have to make people aware that they are not devoid of sentiments and emotions—even if they cannot always express them," she says.

In fact, maintains Runa, there are many bright children who are intellectually disabled. It is necessary to generate social awareness about their talents—be it in painting, singing, dancing or acting—and enable them to live with dignity.

Right now Runa is so immersed with the concert that she has little time for anything else. But, as she maintains, it is all for a good cause. "Artists have a responsibility to the less privileged. As God has given us special gifts, we can use those attributes for a better cause. We are blessed and should extend blessings to the less fortunate," says Runa.

For the love of cinema Lodi and Dipen on the 250th episode of "Amar Chhobi"

KARIM WAHEED

"Right now our films face a number of crises – lack of preservation and collection of our movies being two of the most important ones," say Shafiqzaman Khan Lodi and Shameem Alam Dipen. Lodi and Dipen have been trying to focus on the obstacles our movies have today and emphatically build up a mass consciousness regarding the issues through their cine-based TV programme, *Amar Chhobi*. The 250th episode of the show is being aired today on Channel i at 6:30pm.

Lodi and Dipen are not just your average film buffs. They love, live and breathe Cinema. Lodi was the general secretary and Dipen was the secretary and later on, president of *Chitrali Pathak Pathika Cholochchitro Shongshod* (Readers' Forum). This organisation had been a driving force in the film related movements in our country. In 1977, the forum protested and held rallies to denounce the barrage of solely commercial, vulgar movies that had no positive message.

How did *Amar Chhobi* start? Dipen explains, "We didn't just decide to start *Amar Chhobi* one fine morning. We had been influenced by quite a few film based shows. In the '90s there was this Indian movie based programme called *Lehren*, and the episodes of the show were released on VHS. We thought that was an innovative idea to entertain people who are into movies, or just even the star struck fans, who want to know more about their favourite stars."

Lodi says, "We released a show called *Star Diary* on VHS, during the Eid of '93 and gradually produced 14 episodes of the show. The show



(R-L) Dipen, Lodi with Afzal on the set of Amar Chhobi

included interviews of popular movie stars, updates on movies and such. In '99, we started a similar show, *Parrot Peacock Ananda Binodon* on the satellite channel ATN but after telecasting 26 episodes, the show was pulled off the air.

"Since movies are our passion, we decided to start another show. But we also realised the perils of star tantrums. This is when we came up with the idea of interviewing directors, producers and 'behind-the-scenes' people. We also wanted to show clips of their films and this is how *Amar Chhobi* was born."

"We decided to host, produce and direct our very own show and the pilot was aired on January 2, 2000 on Channel i," says Dipen.

Both Dipen and Lodi strongly believe that a reform in our movies is overdue and we cannot make a bold step forward if we do not have a strong base. Unfortunately though, it is almost impossible for the younger generation to realise that we once had an opulent movie heritage, as we have no trace of some of the classic Bangla movies. For instance, we have no existing print of the legendary movie, *Joi Bangla*. Directed by Late Faqur Alam, this movie was made in 1970 on the *Chhoi Dafa Dabi* (Six Point Demands) and it was released in 1972. Likewise, no negatives, let alone prints of classic movies such as

Akash Aar Mati and *Matir Pahad*, can be found.

It is an avowed fact that movies and documentaries are an integral part of a nation's history. Then how come we have become so nonchalant about our own movie heritage, our history?

According to Dipen, "We can't point fingers at anyone in particular. The affluent have been ignoring the mainstream Bangla movies for decades now and are indifferent towards the issues of movie collection and preservation."

"Very often the producers and directors do not provide prints of their films to Bangladesh Film Archive."

Lodi adds, "The government needs to take the issue of film preservation seriously. The Book Archive operated by the government requires that every publication must be submitted but there is no similar regulation regarding movie prints. It should be mandatory for the directors to turn in their movies' prints to the Bangladesh Film Archive."

"The film archive needs people with a commitment to our movies. The government has to allocate more funds to film collection and preservation."

To celebrate the 250th episode of *Amar Chhobi*, an informal get together was held recently at the Balaka movie theatre.

Lodi and Dipen reflect, "We need all the help we can get in generating awareness about the lack of movie preservation and collection."

Let's hope they can attain their goal through public efforts.

CULTURAL FEAST

Commemorative Meeting
Occasion: 98th birth anniversary of Begum Sufia Kamal
Organiser: Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
Venue: CIRDP Auditorium, Chamely House
Date: June 20, at 4pm

Musical Soiree
Title: Smitrimoy by Agun and Sraboni
Organiser: Orchestra
Venue: All Community Club Auditorium, House 40, Road 35, Gulshan 2
Date: June 17, at 7pm

Exhibition
Title: Tapestry Exhibition
Artist: Tajul Islam
Venue: Shipanagan Gallery, House 25, Road 5, Dhanmohi
Date: June 18-29, from 10am to 1pm and 5pm to 8pm

Prize Giving Ceremony
Occasion: Prize distribution ceremony of the student design competition *Dwelling in the Delta*
Organiser: Federal Republic of Germany in association with ScanCement and Saif Ul Haque Sthapati
Venue: Goethe-Institut (German Cultural Centre), House 10, Road 9, Dhanmohi
Date: June 16, at 5pm

Photography Exhibition Ah, wilderness!

FAYZA HAO

BKS Inan's photography exhibition "Sundarbans – Sounds of Silence" is on at the Bengal Gallery. Inan has focused his lens on the largest mangrove forest, which covers an area of 10,000-km that involves the southern edge of the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna delta. The site is intersected by a complex network of tidal waterways, mudflats and small islands of salt tolerant mangrove forests. The area is known for its Bengal Tiger, 260 bird species and fauna.

Inan has tried to sketch the breath of this mangrove forest from within. One feels as if the forest is telling its own story in the photographs and is crying out that its life cycle is at stake. Smuggling and illegal felling of trees along with wild animal hunting are destroying the forest's life cycle. Inan, who had gone to the Sundarbans with his students and family, had a feeling of anticipation and determination. He was struck by what he saw and worked feverishly on his rolls when he returned home.

Inan says, "I've seen many places in the course of my roving but have not come across a forest like this which has survived without preservation. Experts, in working on environment and ecology, have highlighted this, but few have shed light on it for its own sake."

"When I took photographs earlier, they were abstract and based on the urban areas of Bangladesh. I am basically an architect. I made my photographs black and white as I wanted the basics of light and shadow without the cluster of distracting colours. The message is stronger when there is not the blue of the sky or the green of the leaves."

"I took 112 shots in three days, of which I selected 26 to exhibit. In the other shots, I had deviated somewhat from my main subject and



The pure wonder of wildness

had included humans as well. I felt, however, that the trees themselves were overpowering on their own. When in the Sundarbans I was not worried about the wild animals. Returning to Dhaka I felt claustrophobic. I hadn't gone to the Sundarbans with the purpose of having an exhibition, but coming back realised that I'd totally underestimated the beauty and grandeur of the Sundarbans. There were *keora*, *shundari* and *dhundul*. I focused on a single thing: the forest itself. I felt enough had been done about its wildlife."

In the image bearing the title *Though I am silent, there is singing around me*, one sees a tangle of roots, and branches on the beach, and the long silent line of trees behind, merging with the sky. *Sacred trees* shows the trees with their upturned roots, the shot being taken from below the branches. The lyricism of bent trunks and branches with their shadows being caught in the water below is seen in *The pure wonder of wildness*. The mystery of the overwhelming growth of the mangrove trees is seen once more in "The clearest way into the universe is through the forest wildness."

Inan has been taking photographs since 1966. He has taken part in international photography exhibitions in France, Spain, Italy and Japan.

Backstreet Boys' new album hits the charts Superstars come back as underdogs

If nothing else, the Backstreet Boys are realistic. Reunited after four years, they don't have any illusions that they'll be able to dominate the pop scene as they did when boy bands ruled the world and they were the kings.

"We know that we're gonna have to pay our dues again and we know that we're going to have to start from scratch because everything has changed," said AJ McLean, the heavily tattooed, shades-wearing member of the group. "We're not looking to be the group that we were in '99 and 2000."

Just a few years ago, the Backstreet Boys burst out of Orlando, Florida to become a pop phenomenon. Their three albums sold a total of more than 35 million copies and ushered in a new teen music craze, buoyed by their soulful harmonies, synchronized dance steps, clean-cut good looks and teen charm.

But then, "Behind the Music"-style troubles plagued the quintet. McLean's substance abuse problems led him to rehab, and infighting, management changes and other problems beset the group. Meanwhile, hip-hop supplanted teen pop from atop the charts, and boy bands became as uncool as New Kids on the Block.

So in 2001, the disillusioned fivesome went their separate ways.

Now, fully recharged, the Backstreet Boys have returned this week to release *Never Gone*, their first full studio album since the 8 million-selling *Black & Blue* in 2000. While they're not expecting an automatic ride to the top of the charts, they think they still have a shot at reaching the No. 1 spot with a more adult, edgier sound that tilts more toward rock than pop.

Nick Carter says, "I love the fact that we're underdogs again."

The Backstreet Boys have left nothing to chance in mounting a comeback. Earlier this year, the group tested the waters for their new material by embarking on a club tour—a marked departure for a group that on their last tour played stadium dates.

They've also visited radio stations to push their new record. So far, the formula has worked their first single, *Incomplete*, reached No. 6 on the Billboard Hot 100, though it has slipped in recent weeks.



The members of Backstreet Boys at a studio

TV GUIDE

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

News Bulletin

BTV
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 1:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm.
News (English) at 3:00 pm, 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:15 am.
Telecast of BTV news (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11:00 pm.
News (English) at 8:20 am, 7:00 pm.

ntv
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 6:15 pm, 9:30 pm.
News (Bangla) at 7:30 am, 2:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm.

Telecast of BTV News (Bangla and English) at 11:30 pm.

TARA BANGLA
News Headlines (Bangla) at 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm.
Tara News (Bangla) at 8:30 pm, 11:30 pm.
Tara News Bangladesh (Bangla) at 9:30 pm.

BBC WORLD
Every hour on the hour

BTV

07:30 *Shubhechha Nin*
09:00 Satellite Programme
12:15 *Shongbad Potrer Pata Thekey*
12:30 Health Bulletin
01:05 Bangla Feature Film
03:30 Live telecast of 1st ODI between Bangladesh and England
10:25 *Teknaf Theke Tetulia*
12:05 Satellite Programme

CHANNEL i

09:30 *Shongbad Potrey Bangladesh and Public Reaction*
09:45 *Tritiyo Matra*
12:30 *Aaj Dupurey*
01:00 *Ebong Cinemar Gaan*
01:25 *Public Reaction Shongbadpotrey Bangladesh*
01:30 *Hridoye Mati O Manusher Daak Banglar Gaan*
03:50 *RC Brain Storming*
05:30 *Music Plus*
06:00 *Aamar Chhobi*
06:30 *Drama Serial: Kebol Raat Hoye Jai*
07:50 *Beast Master*
08:25 *Drama Serial: Shompurna Ranganee*
09:35 *Drama Serial: Pathay Pathay Challey Challey*
10:00

ntv

09:00 *Siddiqua Kabir's Recipe*
09:30 *Budget Special Chalochchitro Katha*
10:05 *Dhakar Cinema*
11:30 *Drama Serial: Sporsher Bairay*
12:35 *Kichu Katha Kichu Gaan*
03:15

03:50 *Drama Serial: Sheola*
04:25 *Shapla Kuri Prologita*
05:20 *Smitir Janalay*
06:20 *Shubho Shondhya*
06:50 *Budget Special*
08:20 *Drama Serial: Kachher Manush Meril Prothom Alo Purushkar 2004*
11:25 *Din Darpan*

ATN BANGLA

12:15 *Bangla Feature Film*
03:50 *ATN Rannaghar*
05:10 *Purakirtir Bangladesh*
06:20 *Mortal Combat Conquest*
08:00 *Drama Serial: Char Dewaler Chand*
08:30 *Drama Serial: Ek Akash Neel*
09:00 *Drama Serial: Britto*
09:30 *Drama Serial: Mohona*
10:35 *Char Dewaler Kabhya*

HBO

9:15 *Sphere*
12:00 *Tale of two wives*
1:45 *Body Snatchers*
3:30 *Intolerable Cruelty*
5:30 *Superbabies: Baby Geniuses 2*
7:15 *Deep Blue Sea*
9:30 *Welcome to the Jungle*
11:45 *Analyze That*
1:45 *Body Snatchers*

STAR MOVIES

9:15 *Hitched*
9:45 *Tremors 3: Back To Perfection*
10:30 *Pit Fighter*
2:00 *Kung Phooey*

PICK OF THE DAY

Char Dewaler Chand
On ATN Bangla at 8:00pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Mahfuz Ahmed, Sharmin Shila

Meril Prothom Alo Award 2004
On ntv at 8:50pm
Award giving ceremony
Hosted by Abul Hayat and Shimul

STAR GOLD

9:00 *Kroadh*
1:00 *Suhaagan*
5:00 *Lakeer - Forbidden Lines*
9:00 *Saajan Chale Sasural*

STAR PLUS

1:30 *Kumkum - Pyara Sa Bandhan*
2:00 *Bhabhi*

STAR WORLD

2:30 *Oprah Winfrey*

3:25 *Hope Floats*
5:25 *Mxp: Most Xtreme Primate*
7:00 *The Gathering*
8:30 *Visitors*
10:05 *Killer Bees*
11:45 *The Paradise Virus*
1:40 *Dorian*

3:00 *Kesar*
3:00 *Saarthi*
6:00 *Maal Hai To Taal Hai*
8:00 *Princess Dollieaurs-kamagicabag*
8:30 *Dekhho Magar Pyar Se*
9:00 *Kasautii Zindagii Kay*
9:30 *Millee*
10:00 *Kavyanjali*
10:30 *Kahaani Ghar Ghar Kii*
11:00 *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bhu Thi*
11:30 *Kahini To Hoga K.Street Pali Hill*

3:30 *Bold And Beautiful*
4:30 *Hollywood Squares*
5:00 *Whose Line Is It Anyway*
5:30 *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*
6:30 *The Simpsons*
7:00 *That 70s Show*
7:30 *Friends*
8:00 *Newsradio*
8:30 *Invasion Iowa*
9:00 *Growing Up Gotti*
9:30 *The Chronicle: News From The E*
10:30 *Police Stop*
11:30 *Newsradio*
12:00 *Friends*

GEOGRAPHIC

1:00 *The Sea Hunters*
2:00 *Cheating Death*
4:00 *Dogs With Jobs*
4:30 *Backyard Science*
4:45 *Doc Eureka*
5:00 *Serious: Arctic*
5:30 *Ng Explorer*
6:30 *Seconds From Disaster*
7:30 *Chimp Diaries*
8:00 *Wildlife Diary*
8:30 *Innovation*
9:30 *Marine Machines*
10:30 *Interpol Investigates*
11:30 *National Geographic's Taboo*

1:00 *Pet Nation*
2:30 *Growing up Wild*
4:30 *Animal Miracles: The Body Electric*
5:30 *Twisted Tales*
6:00 *Monkey Business*
6:30 *The Planet's Funniest Animals*
7:00 *Amazing Animal Videos*
7:30 *Land of the Tiger's Mountains of the Gods*
8:30 *Growing up Wild*
10:30 *From Cradle to Grave*
11:30 *Wild Encounters Survival School*

DISCOVERY CHANNEL

1:30 *Extreme Machines*
2:30 *Legends of the Isles*
3:00 *The Warrior queen*
3:00 *Rivals Lennon Vs McCartney*
3:30 *Past is Wild, Future is Wild*
4:30 *New Detectives*
5:30 *Real Kids Real Adventures*
6:00 *Baby Story*
6:30 *Dangerman, Warrior Women Lozen The Apache Warrior*
7:30 *Probsoc Monkey: Clown Of the Jungle*
8:30 *Aircraft Carrier*
9:00 *Amazing Baby Videos*
9:30 *Days That Shook The World*
10:30 *Great Cars*
11:00 *Massive Engines With Chris Barrie Diggers Racing Cars*
11:30 *Great Crimes And Trials of the 20th Century*
Charles Starkweather

12:00 *After Midnight*

AXN

7:00 *7 Days*
12:30 *Cold Squad*
1:30 *David Blaine: Frozen In Time*
2:30 *Csi: New York*
3:30 *Csi: Miami*
4:30 *7 Days*
5:30 *Global Adventure*
6:30 *Framed*
8:30 *Csi: Crime Scene Investigation*
9:30 *Guinness World Records: Primetime*
10:30 *Csi: New York*
11:30 *Poorman's Bikini Beach*

ESPN

8:00 *Hitz(R)*
8:30 *Sportscenter India(T)*
8:31 *Classroom: Sportsfigures(R)*
9:00 *Mad About Sport(T)*
9:30 *Winter X-Games Mt. Aspen Co Usa (R)*
11:00 *Fifa Confederations Cup 2005 Argentina Vs Tunisia Group Stage (R)*
1:00 *Fifa Confederations Cup 2005 Germany Vs Australia Group Stage(R)*
3:00 *Espn School Quiz 2005 (T)*
3:30 *Hitz(R)*
3:43 *The Natwest Series England Vs Bangladesh 1st Odi (L)*
11:30 *Sportscenter India(R)*
12:00 *Fifa Confederations Cup Pre & Post*

Shows(T)

STAR SPORTS

9:00 *Max Power 2005 (R)*
10:00 *Team India Programming (R)*
11:30 *Tna Wrestling (R)*
12:30 *Extreme Programming(T)*
1:30 *Windsurfing Asian Windsurfing Tour 2004/05 Highlights(R)*
2:00 *Fia World Touring Cars Championship 2005 San Marino Highlights(R)*
2:30 *Brazilian Cup (S)*
4:30 *Tna Impact (T)*
5:30 *Great Manchester Run 2005 (T)*
6:00 *Football Asia (R)*
6:30 *Team India Programming India Glorious (T)*
8:00 *Sportslines (L)*
8:30 *Wimbledon Official Film 2004 (T)*
9:30 *Fifa Confederations Cup 2005 Argentina Vs Tunisia Group Stage (R)*
9:55 *Fifa Confederations Cup 2005 Japan Vs Mexico Group Stage Sportsline(R)*
12:00 **SPORTS**

8:30 *European Tour Weekly*
9:00 *IRB Rugby Highlights*
9:30 *Royal Ascot at York*
1:00 *TVS Futsal*
2:30 *ATP Tennis*
1:00 *Cricket Classics*
4:00 *WWE: The Bottom Line*
5:00 *Transworld Sports*
6:00 *Royal Ascot at York*