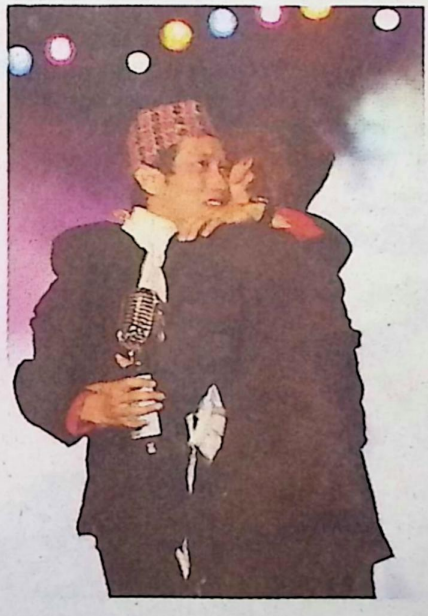
Indian Idol and Bangladeshi admirers

Dr Binoy Barman

THERE was enormous buzzing around after the matter of Indian Idol was settled on 23 September, 2007. At the end of about seven-month long waiting, people as if burst into endless talks. They chattered and pattered on a par with the media hype as the excitement continued to hover in the air. Prashant Tamang was declared Indian Idol. A police constable from Darjeeling, Prashant demonstrated extraordinary feat of singing. He won the heart of millions and clinched the number one position in the grand gala aired on Sony Entertainment Television. He was awarded a Maruti car and a contract of one crore rupees. Despite having no institutional training in music, amid insolvency in family and education not beyond high school, he could make it to the top. He made the impossible possible. He overcame all limitations around him and reached the point of success he desired and deserved.

The entertainment programme like 'Indian Idol' is tremendously popular among spectators not only in India but also in Bangladesh and elsewhere. It is favourite to the young and old - male and female alike. It is liked for several obvious reasons. First, it provides good amusement which may be enjoyed with the family. Secondly, it directly involves the audience who have a say in the matter. Thirdly, it gives the audience a taste of competition, not simply among the participants but also among themselves. Fourthly, it ensures the best position for the best person regardless of his/her personal and community identities. Fifthly and lastly, it is well organised with the involvement of expert personalities who can manage things up to the expectation of the audience.

Now, is there anything wrong with the people of Bangladesh getting into frenzy with Indian Idol, Sa-Re-Ga-Ma, Kasautti Zindagii Kay, or Kaun Banega Crorepati? They attract audience from all around the world in their own merit. They are enjoyable and full of brilliant ideas. People like them, not under any pressure or compulsion, but spontaneously, from the natural impulse of their heart. The expression of true feeling cannot be suppressed with the thought of narrow nationalism. In this age of globalisation any event transcends national and geographical boundary to knock at the door of anybody. If anything is good, it will be appreciated by people; and if it is bad it will be outright discarded by them. The cultures of the world will come close to each other in the way and be mutually benefited through constant interactions. There is nothing to be intimidated. Good things will survive and bad things will perish. That is beneficial for the total humanity, isn't that? Internationalism is the order of the day and we should accept the reality.



Alien cultural elements are pouring in our country through television, radio, internet and migration. It cannot be stopped. Notice, on the other side, wherever the residents of Bangladesh are going, they are carrying Bengali culture with them. Whenever programmes are being broadcast in Bangla, they are spreading to an international audience. When our cultural troupes are performing in foreign lands, they are disseminating our cultural richness there. What we should do in the changing world reality is to enrich ourselves culturally so that we get sharper competitive edge and ensure better place in the flux of currents. We must not confine ourselves inside cocoons; rather we shall open our windows to let air in from every nook and corner of the world, as others might also do so. Protectionism is not the right way. It is against the spirit of the day. It is true for economy as well as culture.

In recent past Bangladesh also produced some entertaining TV programmes which attracted a huge number of beholders. Recall Close-up 1. The programme created quite a stir among the viewers of the country, especially the young generation. With great interest they watched every episode and actively took part in the process of voting from time to time. It was a massive success as a programme, I can tell you. People still remember the triumphant faces of local origin when Indian Idol comes in the way now. People probably expect more such programmes, of superior quality. They want more talents to be searched out - talents who they can feel proud of. They want Bangladeshi Idol in front of their eyes to adore. Indian Idol is not anything to be shunned, but we can learn from it and pave our own way forward.

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