

# Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi: A harbinger of divine love

ABU SYED GOLAM DASTGIR

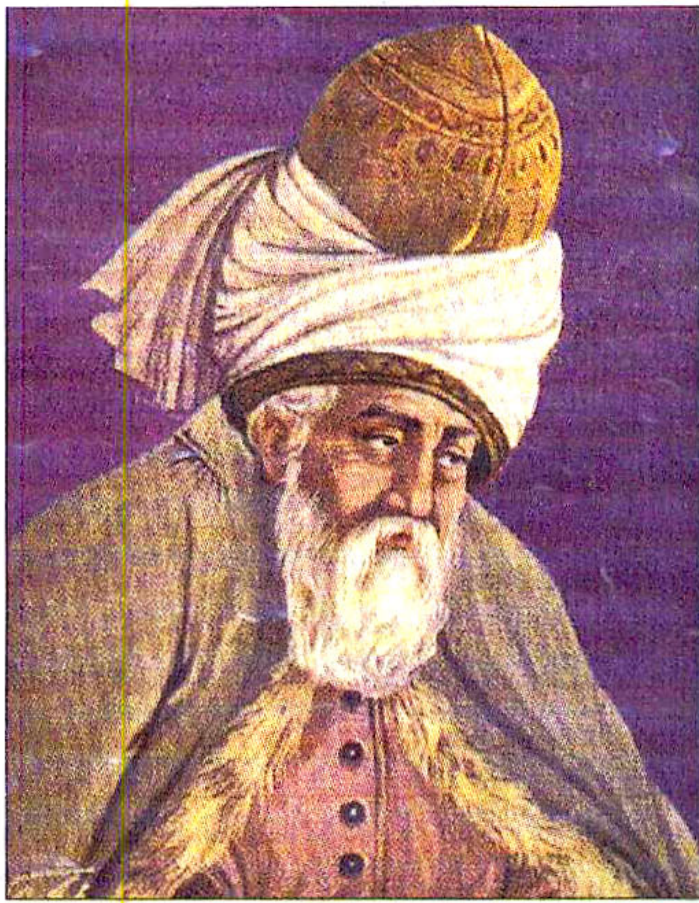
SOME months ago, the Rumi Society held a seminar in which I presented a paper on Jalaluddin Rumi's Sufi philosophy at the RC Majumdar Hall, Dhaka University.

In May, I attended an International Symposium on Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi in Turkey. The title of my paper was "Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi's Divine Love for World Peace".

Jalaluddin Rumi was a harbinger of divine love. It is this love that made him humble, a prerequisite to understand Allah as the Quran states: "Seek help in patience and prayer; and truly it is hard save for the humble-minded, who know that they will have to meet their Lord, and that unto Him they are returning. (2:45-46)".

In seeking this true divine love, a devotee finds an inexplicable beauty with unlimited inspiration to return to the origin from which separation has taken place. One can realise the mysteries of creation when one understands the meaning of this divine love. He/she blissfully rises above the everyday narrow-mindedness. Once love empowers one with the sense of reality, man attains the strength of humility and nobility.

Osman Bechcet, teacher at the Kadikoy Imperial College, Turkey, has aptly written in his book on Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi: "Mawlana sips from the elixir of divine love of Allah the Almighty as he reaches His nearness with his



A portrait of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi

religious ecstasy..."

In fact, the theme of Rumi's famous *Masnavi* is love and separation, that is, the sublime, profound and perennial union of the

individual soul with the pure universal soul. Professor Dr. Dilawar Gul of the Seljuk University's Department of Theology wrote, "According to Islamic mysticism in

reaching the Almighty Creator Allah, the nearest sample to a human being is again he himself. The more people who love each other for Allah's sake, are genuine and deep in their love, the better they help each other and become each other's step to reach the divine truth to be in the immediate vicinity to the eminent Creator Allah."

Mawlana Rumi described 'Miraj' (ascension to the presence of Allah in heaven) of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as an ineffable condition of seeking divine love, Rumi said, "Jisme khak az Ishq her aflak shod," which means, "Due to the power of divine love, the body made of earth could rise to the heavens."

The inaugural programme of the symposium was attended by 162 participants from nearly 32 countries.

On the second day, I delivered a speech under the chairmanship of Professor Nasrollah Pourjavady from Iran. Later, I was interviewed by a TV Channel, on three subjects: Hazrat Ali (Radiallahuanhu), Mawlana Rumi, and Sufism.

After sunset, we had a gala dinner at Hotel Ciragan Kempinski, a spectacular palace of Sultan Abdul Majid, by the Bosphorus strait.

Sacred relics of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) collected during the long Turkish rule are preserved in Turkey with love and respect. Although Kamal Atatürk modernised Turkey and freed it from religious fanaticism, symbols of valuable Islamic heritage were carefully guarded.

We also went to Konya where

Mawlana Rumi was buried 800 years back.

We attended the Sema Ceremony, typical of the Mevlevi Sufi Order, at the Mevlana Cultural Center for. It had a sober, solemn environment. To explain briefly, Dr. Jalaluddin Bakir, grandson of Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi, had written, "Sema is the unification with Allah in order to hear the question of Allah to spirit particles: Am I not your Lord and the answer of them, 'Yes you are our Lord' and be in an ecstatic attitude. Those particles whirl around the light of the Sun performing Sema like Sufis; however, no one knows which tune, which beat, and with what sort of instrument they do that. Sema is a greeting from the secret corners of the heart...Sema is the comfort and peace to the soul of the living. The ones who have spirit in their soul know this." We loved the Sema Ceremony.

On our last day in Konya, in the morning after saying prayers, we reached the Mevlana Cultural Center for a two-and-a-half-hour symposium, chaired by Professor Dr. Mahmud.

After exchanging greetings, we were taken on a guided tour to the shrines of Hazrat Mawlana Rumi, Hazrat Shams-i Tabrizi, Hazrat Sadeddin Konevi and Sircali Madrasah.

The visit was greatly educational - a hub for a large number of scholars, mystics, writers and poets and learned Sufis.

Group Captain Abu Syed Golam Dastgir (Retd) is former Director of Education, Bangladesh Air Force.

## Call to highlight the ethnic heritage in Channel i programmes

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

Speakers in a discussion held on October 1 said, Electronic media Channel i is making outstanding contribution both nationally and internationally. Several encouraging programmes on the channel are appreciated by millions. *Hridoy Mati o Manush*, directed and hosted by Shykh Siraj, has done wonders in educating and informing not just the farmers of the country but also people interested in agriculture and related issues.

The discussion was organised by 'Amra Channel i Darshok' at Khagrachhari Zilla Shilpakala Academy.

Mohammad Shanay Alam, district president of 'Amra Channel i Darshok' presided over the discussion while Khagrachhari Hill District Council (KHDC) Chairman Monindra Lal Tripura was present as the chief guest.

Discussions also expected that Channel i will play a key role in broadcasting programmes that highlight the heritages of the 12 local ethnic communities of Chittagong Hill Tracts.



'Amra Channel i Darshok' brought out a rally in Khagrachhari

PHOTO: STAR

Among others Khagrachhari District Channel i correspondent Dilip Chowdhury, KHDC member Sanu Mong Marma, Animesh Chakma Rinku and *Dainik Pratidin* Khagrachhari editor Tarun Kumar Bhattacharjee also

spoke at the event.

Prior to the discussion a colourful rally led by Khagrachhari Hill District Council Chairman Monindra Lal Tripura marched the major roads of the hill town.

## Hugo Chavez releases CD of traditional Venezuelan music



Huge Chavez poses with his CD

AFP, Caracas

President Hugo Chavez has released a CD of traditional Venezuelan folk music that features him singing, and which will be distributed free inside the country, presidential sources said.

The CD, titled *Canciones de Siempre* which roughly translates to *Songs For All Time*, includes tunes that Chavez has sung during his regular Sunday *Hello, President* television and radio program.

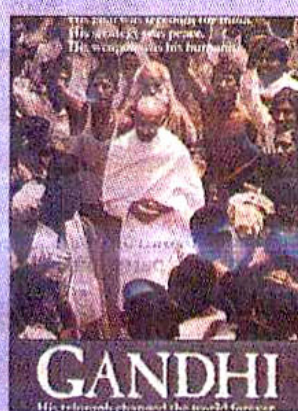
At the close of each broadcast, Chavez regularly sings folk songs along with guest musicians and dancers.

### CULTURAL FEAST

#### Film Screening

Organiser: The High Commission of India, Dhaka.

Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, House 25, Road 96, Gulshan-2



**GANDHI**  
The story of the life of Mahatma

Date: October 03  
Time: 6 pm  
Documentary: Mahatma



## Profile Naima Haque: From painting to graphics

FAYZA HAQ

Naima Haque, who is an illustrator, freelance artist and teacher (at the Institute of Fine Arts, DU), did her Masters in Graphics Design from Baroda. Her teachers in India included Jai Ram Patel and Sant, while her teachers in Bangladesh were Aminul Islam, Abdul Basset, and Rafiqun Nabi.

"Farida Zaman and Shamim Shikdar are my batch mates," she says, adding "I wanted to

study painting but was compelled to study graphics as my arrival at Baroda was late thanks to the unfortunate delay due to bureaucratic red-tapism. I received a lot of encouragement while preparing my final presentation portfolio. As graphics was not my choice, I treated the subject as a challenge."

Initially Naima didn't think much of illustrations but later she realised that it was parallel to painting. The only difference was that in graphics "one waited for the client to provide the

subject". Hashem Khan, Rafiqun Nabi and Qayyum Chowdhury, in their paintings illustrated their experiences and thoughts, bringing in scenes dear to their hearts. Similarly, in my illustrations I also put in my own feelings and not just what the client's dictate," says Naima.

Asked about how the female artists fared vis-à-vis their male counterparts, Naima says that there is a constant tussle between the genders. "When scholarships are selected, men are preferred, as the authorities feel that opportunities are wasted on women who end up rearing children and tending their homes," she says.

Naima is comfortable in any media, whether it be oil or acrylic or water-colour or even crayon. She loves to vary her style. "In my compositions I'm trying to say something. The colours and forms communicate to many. When artists sometimes don't care to reach out to all levels, they paint according to their own wishes, without much care for the viewers," the artist says.

After her battling in the world of graphics, she came home to take up the role of a mother. Thus she had a break in her creative work and found it difficult to paint and draw. Painting is something like singing, she says. If you don't practice, lines and colours won't flow freely from your hand, she comments. However, today the rooms in her home are overflowing with her creations.

Talking about patrons and critics, she says, "A critic can create and destroy artists. Similarly, support of patrons is necessary for an artist to survive."

Naima has exhibited in Russia, Germany, Japan and India. Her painting collections are in USA, UK and Africa. She received four Japanese prizes for her picture books. As a student she received an Institute of Fine Arts Award in 1975.



An artwork by Naima Haque

## Anubis, god of dead, floats down Thames

AP, London

A giant statue of the ancient Egyptian god of the dead floated down the Thames on Monday, turning heads as it crossed under London's Tower Bridge.

The 25-foot fiberglass representation of the jackal-headed god was taken down the river on the back of a cargo ship to Trafalgar Square, where it will stand for three days before moving to various locations around the capital.

Anubis' arrival is part of an effort to promote an exhibition of the treasures taken from the tomb of the ancient Egyptian King Tutankhamun. The show, "Tutankhamun and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs," opens November 15 at London's O2, previously known as the Millennium Dome.

Tutankhamun ascended to the throne more than 3,000 years ago -- during Egypt's 18th dynasty period -- while still a child. He reigned for only nine years and had no surviving children. His two stillborn babies were buried with him.

The exhibit, which has previously been touring the United States since June 2005, includes the golden diadem worn by the mummified king when archaeologist Howard Carter uncovered the tomb in 1922 and four miniature gold coffinettes that held Tutankhamun's internal organs. Items from other royal 18th-dynasty graves will also be on display.

Organisers said the presence of the 5.6-ton black-and-gold statue was a nod to ancient Egyptian belief that Anubis escorted the dead to the underworld and



The golden Anubis passes under Tower Bridge in London protected them on their journey.

"That's really his role here, today: He's protecting the Tutankhamun exhibition as it leaves America and heads for the U.K.," said Ken Kelling, spokesman for Visit London, the city's tourism authority.

More than 300,000 tickets already have been sold or reserved for the exhibition, which runs until August 30, next year, organisers said.

## ON AIR

### PICK OF THE DAY



Ei Shob Ondhokar

On Banglavisian at 9:45 pm

Drama Serial

Cast: Pijush Bandyopadhyay, Farah Ruma



Dark Water

On Star Movies at 8:45pm

Genre: Horror/Thriller

Cast: Jennifer Connelly, John C. Reilly

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) 11:30 pm. (To be telecast on all Bangla channels).

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.

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) 8:20 am, 7:00 pm.

Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00 am, 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

CHANNEL 1

News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:00 pm, 12:30 am.

BANGLAVISIAN

News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 2:00 pm, 6:00 pm, 7:15 pm, 10:30 pm.

News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 4:00 pm.

News Headlines (English) at 8:05 pm

BTV

11:15 Drama Serial: Shapshoptok

12:04 Max O Shishur Kotla

12:30 Butul

01:30 Hijo Tomal

02:15 Golpo Theke Nafok

03:05 Cartoon

03:30 Shukhi Pontar

04:05 Computer

04:30 Cookery Show

04:50 Sisimpur

05:10 Documentary

05:15 Malla Rajan

06:10 Shilpogram

06:40 Shodhya Maloi

07:00 Mafi O Manush

07:30 Gortho Koltho

08:35 Drama Serial: Aho Amar Alo

09:05 Drama Serial: Godhuli Alo

09:30 Talk Show

10:30 Prothom Ontora

ATN Bangla

09:15 Drama Serial: Kafi

10:30 ATN Commentary Box

11:05 Islamic Programme

12:15 Amar Computer

01:30 Islamic Programme

02:30 Drama Serial: Doll's House

03:10 Drama Serial: Rupel Marush

03:45 Children's Programme

04:20 Islamic Programme

05:00 Grami Goni Khobor

05:10 Khatmay Quran

05:30 Islamic Programme

06:20 Hand Nath

06:25 Fashion Show

08:00 Drama Serial: Jago Thiko

08:35

Drama Serial: Bohariyan

09:00 Drama Serial: Chhayamukh

11:30 Talking Point

12:00 Gramephone Lead News

CHANNEL-i

09:30 Selected Programme

11:05 Sports Time

12:30 Citycell Tarokathan

01:05 Tax Helpline

01:15 Ebong Cinema Gaan

01:30 Selected Programme

02:40 Mega Serial: Probash

03:05 Talk show: Microcredit

03:30 Sa Re Ga Ma

04:05 Mukhtijudho Proidin

04:30 Eid Anondo

05:20 Sroshitar Shakhkhori

05:30 Cookery Show

06:00 Cookery Show

06:30 Drama Serial: Sheth Goenda

07:50 Jibon Jekhanyer

08:20 Adhutoray

09:35 Aloye Bhuban

10:30 Drama

11:30 Ekanyo Bari

12:00 Gramephone Aker

03:10 Drama Serial: Rupel Marush

03:45 Children's Programme

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