

## A lifetime of preserving Nazrul's music

In conversation with Sudhin and Neelima Das

NADIA SARWAT

Nazrul Sangeet exponent and artiste Sudhin Das needs no introduction; his contribution in identifying and publishing the accurate notations of Nazrul Sangeet helps a lot to ensure the originality of melody of the genre. His wife, Neelima Das, has never enjoyed mass media exposure but is considered one of the most talented radio artistes of the '50s (Television was yet to come) and has been effectively assisting her husband in the research. In an interview with *The Daily Star*, this artiste duo talked about their passion for Nazrul Sangeet, life and more.

Neelima and Sudhin got to know each other through music. Neelima's father, the late Sukumar Kar, was the headmaster of the renowned school in Comilla, called Ishwar Pathshala. At a very early age, Neelima was drawn to the magic of music. According to her, "Wherever I heard music, I was glued. My father was also a music enthusiast. At that time no one had heard of radio; we had a gramophone. When I listened to the songs of singers like Utpala Sen, Suprava Sarker, I used dream that one day I too will sing. Our family lived in Brahmanbaria for a few years. There I received my first lessons in music from *Ustad* Gajendra Roy. It's an interesting story. He was actually teaching a girl, a neighbour, called Maya. Out of curiosity, I secretly watched the *taalmim*. I often approached Mayadi, nagging, to let me touch her harmonium and sing. Gajendra Roy discovered me one day and after hearing my voice he insisted my father that I should learn music."

Later in Comilla, Neelima took lessons in classical music from Acharya Surendra Narayan, elder brother of Sudhin Das. Sudhin Das was also his disciple. Afraid of Suren's solemn personality, many of his students including Neelima approached his younger brother to explain some difficult lessons. Neelima showed a clear fondness of the songs, which are known as *adhunik*. Sudhin was enlisted in



Sudhin Das and Neelima Das

PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Radio Pakistan when he was a college student in 1948. Neelima first performed in radio in 1952, after finishing school.

Sudhin Das reminisces, "In those days, recording for radio was not that easy, we had to stay all day. The journey between Comilla and Dhaka was also quite hectic. When I got a cheque for Tk 10, I felt like a prince -- it was a huge amount for a college student at that time."

"My father himself took me to Dhaka for the recording. I was mainly an artiste of *adhunik* songs, there was nothing called *Nazrul Sangeet* then. The authorities mentioned Kazi Nazrul Islam's name as a composer. I have performed many songs composed by Sudhin Das also," Neelima said.

Subsequently singers tended to sing the same Nazrul Sangeet in different tunes and Sudhin Das felt the need to collect and pre-

serve the original notations from the records that was released before 1942/43, before Nazrul's illness, either under his direction or with his permission. Twenty-five among the 31 books on the original notations of Nazrul Sangeet are by Sudhin Das (published both from Nazrul Academy and Nazrul Institute). The 29th and 31st parts are done by Neelima; she is now working on the 32nd edition.

Sudhin Das is a member of the 'Nazrul Sangeet Promanikoron Board', Nazrul Institute (from 1985 to the present). Eminent artiste Laila Arjumand Banu was the first president of the board, which works to ensure the authenticity of the notations of Nazrul Sangeet. Sudhin Das also teaches Nazrul sangeet to the young artistes of the institute. Neelima Das is now teaching at several renowned institutes such as *Sangeet Bhawan*, *Sursaptak*

and *Agni Beena*. They are also involved in directing several musical programmes on Nazrul Sangeet on different TV channels.

"The young students want to learn Nazrul Sangeet accurately; it is our responsibility to help them. There are many young talents, but our media seems to highlight only the established ones. If this tendency does not change, how would the young singers demonstrate their talents?" asks Sudhin Das.

About Sudhin, Neelima said, "I am proud to be his companion. He was my guru and I am still learning from him."

Sudhin Das' response was, "Now, perhaps many don't know who Neelima is but she is one of the most talented artistes in the country. In the '50s, people knew her better than me as an artiste."

Music means everything to this exponent-duo and they want to continue this journey till death.

## Tracing the track of the comet

Documentary on Kazi Nazrul Islam screened by Indian High Commission

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

The Indian High Commission in Dhaka screened a documentary, *Kazi Nazrul Islam: The Rebel Poet*, by Anjan Das on August 23 at the Indian Cultural Centre in Gulshan. The documentary, which was recently released in India by Indian External Affairs Minister, Pranab Mukherjee, is produced by the Public Diplomacy Division, Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India.

Indian High Commissioner Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty welcomed the audience that included eminent cultural personalities of Bangladesh. "There is not much to say about the poet, specially in Bangladesh and India as Nazrul is an integral part of our culture. On a personal note, he represents the finest and the most sublime expression of humanism to me," he said.

The 40-minute documentary tries to trace the path of this blazing comet, a *Dhumketu* as Rabindranath Tagore called him, across the literary firmament of Bengal. Starting from the socio-political context of the time where Nazrul emerged as the Rebel Poet, the documentary explores the nature of Nazrul's rebellion.

With a humble background from a village named Churulia in Burdwan of West Bengal where a poverty-stricken life christened him with the name *Dukhu Mia* (the sorrowful one), Nazrul's life is as diverse as his works. Nazrul's literary rebellion was a clear departure from the dominant grandeur of Tagore's poetry and also from Gandhian Pacifism. His poems and works reflect his socialistic concerns, revolutionary thoughts as well as the passionate expression of love, parting, devotion and spiritualism. Another significant characteristic of Nazrul's writings is his strong flavour of equality—whether religious, gender or socio-economic; and secularism are also focused in the documentary.

The documentary also takes into account the poet's personal life, including his life in military service, receiving a jail term and a ban on many of his works, his inter-religious marriage with



Prameela Sengupta, the death of his beloved son Arindam Khalid (Bulbul), achievements and the most tragic incident, his loss of the power of speech at the age of 43. Bengali Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, eminent Nazrul Sangeet exponent Deepali Nag, and Nazrul's daughter-in-law Kalyani Kazi, and granddaughter Kazi Anindita were interviewed on the

poet. The documentary ended with an account of his death in Dhaka in 1976. An audio CD featuring Nazrul songs and poems by artistes like Feroza Begum, Suprava Sarker, Asha Bhonsle, Satinath Mukherjee, Anup Jalota, Mohammad Rafi, Kazi Sabyasachi, Kazi Aniruddha and Kazi Nazrul Islam himself was also provided with the documentary.

The documentary screening was complemented by the performance of eminent Nazrul sangeet artiste Khairul Anam Shakil. The artiste rendered several songs from different sub-genres including *Nohe nohe priyo e noi ankhijal*, *Kano diley e kanta jodi go kushum diley*, *Boshia bijoney kano aka mone*, *Ma go chinmoyee rup dhorey aye* and *Aay maru parer hawoa*.



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

On Air

### 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-1**  
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 a.m., 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.  
**BANGLAVISION**  
News (Bangla) at 7:30 am, 1:30 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:15 pm, 10:30 pm.  
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 am, 4:00 pm.  
News (English) at 6:00 pm.  
**Riv**  
News (Bangla) at 7:00 pm, and 10:00 pm.  
**ntv**  
News (Bangla) 7:30 am, 12:02 pm, 2:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 1:00 am.  
**ETV**  
News (Bangla) 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 11:00 pm.

### BTV

08:20 Shuprobhat  
09:05 Anjoli Lohor Mor  
10:05 Recitation Programme  
10:30 Alok Bhora Bhobon  
11:20 Amarey Debo Na Bhulitay  
12:10 Bazarey Bina Bajey  
01:00 Musical Programme: Amar Gaan-er Bhela  
01:30 Dolon Chapa  
02:15 Tirtha Pathik  
03:00 Children's Programme  
03:30 Recitation Programme  
04:05 Anjoli Lohomor  
04:30 Musical Programme: Dolon Chapa  
05:05 Sisimpur  
05:30 Talk Show  
06:15 Bhuli Kemoney  
07:00 Bajorey Bina Bajey  
07:25 Talk Show  
08:35 Drama: Shapurey  
10:30 Tirtha Pathik

### ATN BANGLA

08:15 Aker Shanbadpotro  
08:30 Drama Serial: Syed Barir Bou  
09:15 Comillaye Nazrul  
10:30 Talk Show: Onyodrishti  
11:05 A/ Kaal Porshu  
12:15 Computer Show: IT Zone  
01:30 Band View  
02:30 Drama Serial: Laarey Lappa  
03:15 Lukiye Thakey Amar Katha  
03:45 Chhotoder Nazrul  
04:20 Dolon Chapa  
05:10 Islamic Programme  
05:40 Talk Show: Proshongo  
06:20 Take Care  
08:00 Drama Serial: Master Da Shujoshen  
08:35 Drama Serial: Ghar Jamai

09:00 Drama Serial: Raangila Bao  
11:30 Talking Point  
12:00 Grameenphone Lead News  
**CHANNEL-i**  
09:30 Shangbad Potrey Bangladesh  
09:45 Public Reaction  
09:50 Grameenphone Tritio Matra  
11:05 Shishu Jadukaar  
12:30 Talk Show: Citycell Tarakathan  
01:05 Ebong Cinemar Gaan  
01:30 Musical Programme: Sa Re Ga Ma  
02:35 Selected Programme  
03:05 Shora Shori Nazrul  
05:30 Mukhtijudho Protidin  
06:20 Cookery Show: Desh Bideshey Ranna

10:03 Talk Show: Shangbad Bhitik  
11:00 Kingfisher Taroka Alap  
11:30 Just Band  
12:35 Recitation Programme: Momo Ek Hastey Baka Bansher Banshi  
01:03 Protidin  
02:30 Drama: Amar Naam Nazrul  
05:20 Shey Choley Gecchey Boley  
06:00 Belar-ey Nazrul  
08:00 Shorashori Nazrul  
11:30 Nirapod Asroy  
**ntv**  
08:30 Aker Shokaal  
08:55 Nazrul-er Chithi  
10:05 Gallery  
10:30 Music Express  
11:30 Gaan-er Pakhi



Otripto Kamona  
On Channel i at 7:50am  
Single Episode TV Play  
Cast: Shifat, Nova

07:50 Drama: Otripto Kamona  
09:35 Musical Programme: Shoroney Boroney Nazrul  
11:30 Special Programme: Bangladesh-ey Nazrul  
12:00 Grameenphone Aker Shangbadpotro  
**RTV**  
09:00 Talk Show: Shornoyer Dorpon  
09:30 Naari O Nokhoro

12:10 Ei Shomoy  
01:05 Japan Video Topic  
02:30 Drama: Rider Beedon  
03:50 Drama Serial: Neer  
05:30 Apnar Jigyasha  
06:20 Shubho Shondhya  
06:45 Ei Nogorey Nazrul  
08:15 Cookery Show: Siddiqua Kabir's Recipe  
09:00 Musical Programme: Kichhu Katha Kichhu Gaan

09:45 Drama Serial: Neer  
11:30 Talk Show: Ei Shomoy  
**BANGLAVISION**  
08:30 Street Show: Raat Biraaley  
09:00 Ebong Class-er Bairey  
09:30 Bangla Feature Film  
02:00 Daily Soap: Mohanagar  
02:30 Top Story  
03:05 Daily Soap: Gulshan Avenue  
04:20 Drama Serial: Swapno Chura  
05:30 Cinebit  
06:05 Talk Show: Din-er Sheshey  
06:50 Dhakay Nazrul Smriti  
08:25 Special Programme: Amar Gaan-er Mala  
09:05 Drama: Tomarey Porechhey Mone-y  
09:45 Drama Serial: Gulshan Avenue

**Radio Foorti 88.0 FM**  
07:00am Hello Dhaka  
11:00am Amar 88  
03:00pm Dhaka Calling  
07:00pm Seven Eleven  
12:00am Back to Back music  
**Radio Today 89.6 FM**  
07:15am Good Morning Dhaka  
11:00am Masti Unlimited  
01:00pm Today's Adda  
04:00pm U-turn  
08:00pm Tobe Tai Hok  
11:00pm Raat Vor Gan  
02:00 am Back to Back

04:30 Music One  
05:15 Srijoyey Shondha  
06:00 Saaj Bela  
07:00 Jaya O Jononi  
08:15 Drama: Shondha Tara  
09:30 Musical Programme  
**HBO**  
12:30 Charlie's Angels  
02:30 Single White Female 2: The Psycho  
04:15 Babylon 5: The Lost Tales  
05:45 Time Bomb  
07:30 Hideaway  
09:30 Longford  
12:30 Soldier  
**STAR MOVIES**  
08:10 Miracle Dogs Too

09:30 My Name Is Earl  
10:00 Stacked  
10:30 Koffee With Karan  
11:30 The Moment Of Truth  
12:30 Prison Break  
01:30 Jimmy Kimmel Live  
02:30 The Ellen Degeneres Show  
03:30 The Bold And The Beautiful  
04:00 General Hospital  
05:00 Koffee With Karan  
06:00 Falcon Beach  
07:00 The Simpsons  
07:30 Friends  
08:00 Seinfeld  
08:30 That '70s Show  
09:00 Hope And Faith  
09:30 America's Got Talent  
10:30 Bones

07:30 Super Croc  
08:30 Super Snake  
09:30 World's Deadliest Animals  
10:30 Super Snake  
11:30 World's Deadliest Animals  
12:30 Super Croc

### HISTORY

09:15 Eye Max  
09:30 World's Strongest II  
10:30 Great Train Robberies  
11:30 Eye Max  
11:45 Dent King  
12:30 Longitude  
01:30 Moon  
02:30 India Unlimited  
03:30 1975 Firebird  
04:30 World's Strongest II  
05:30 Presidential Trains  
06:30 Longitude  
07:30 Mysteries of Freemason  
08:30 Ink  
09:30 Digging for the Truth  
10:30 Human Weapon  
11:30 Moon  
12:30 Baumeister Killings

### ZEE STUDIO

08:30 Behind Enemy Lines  
10:30 Gone In Sixty Seconds  
01:00 A Low Down Dirty Shame  
03:15 A Lot Like Love  
05:30 Charlie Chaplin  
06:00 The Quick And The Dead  
08:30 Mansfield Park  
11:00 The Hurricane

### DISCOVERY CHANNEL

08:30 Ghost Bears Of The Rain Forest  
09:30 Deadliest Catch Season 4 (Intl. Version)  
10:30 Man Vs Wild (Season 2, 2x60 Versions)  
11:30 Futureweapons (Season 2)  
12:30 Amazing Baby Videos  
01:00 All New Planet's Funniest Animals  
01:30 Wild China  
02:30 Fight Quest  
03:30 Building The Future  
04:30 Ghost Bears Of The Rain Forest  
06:00 Futureweapons (Season 2)  
06:30 Extreme Machines II  
07:30 Wild China  
08:30 Kashmir Among The Gods  
09:30 Rhodes Across India  
10:30 Haunting: A Season II  
11:30 Smash Lab  
12:30 Svalbard - Where Polar Bears Reign

### NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

08:30 Super Croc  
09:30 Dangerous Encounters  
10:30 Telemail- Sauna Belt  
11:30 Long Way Down  
12:30 Amazing Moments  
01:30 Super Croc  
02:30 Kick Fighters  
03:30 World's Deadliest Animals  
04:30 Rattlesnake Road Trip  
05:00 I Didn't Know That  
05:30 Pit Viper  
06:00 Big Bang  
06:30 I Didn't Know That  
07:00 What Would Happen If

**Dolon Champa**  
On ATN Bangla at 4:20 pm  
Special Programme on Nazrul Death Anniversary

09:50 Predator  
11:40 Just My Luck  
01:25 Rundown, The  
03:15 Hollywoodland  
05:25 Messengers, The  
07:00 Wicker Man, The  
10:35 Out Of Sight  
12:45 Lucky Number Slevin  
**STAR WORLD**  
08:30 Seinfeld  
09:00 Friends