

And the winner is...

Channel i Shera Kontho '08 announced amidst razzle dazzle



Channel i Shera Kontho 2008 Jhilik (centre) smiles at the camera (top); Sabina Yasmin (4th from left) and Runa Laila perform with the finalists.

MAINUL HASSAN

The much-awaited grand finale of *Channel i Shera Kontho 2008*, the first musical talent hunt on Channel i, featured several spirited live performances at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre. The results of the neck-to-neck competition, based on both judges' and audiences' opinions, were also revealed at the three-and-half-hour finale on August 30. Zanita Ahmed Jhilik was crowned as 'Shera Kontho 2008'.

Jhilik is a student of class IX at Mohammadpur Preparatory High School and was one of the youngest contestants in *Shera Kontho*.

Md. Anisul Islam Romel and Md. Mahmudul Haque Imran jointly won the second position. The third position went to Sharmin Siddiqui, the youngest contestant of 'Shera Kontho' -- a 13-year-old from Madaripur.



One of highlights was a dance composition by Shibli Muhammad and Shamim Ara Nipa accompanied by young dancers. The mega event was aired live on Channel i.

The programme started with a performance of the song *Aj eshevechay shobai* written by Kabir Bakul and composed by Subir Nandi. The finalists joined the judges.

Runa Laila and Sabina Yasmin, and performed the song *Esho praan khuley gai shudoragamir gaan*.

The theme of the finale was folk songs. Each of the finalists was given a selected song -- classics immortalised by legendary folk artists of the country.

Imran performed the song *Kehoi korey bechakena*. Chompa Banik performed the classic *Shonar moina pakhi* -- made famous by Nina Hamid. Romel sang *Amaye eto raatey kene daak dili* -- originally recorded by Abbas Uddin. Sharmin sang the familiar number *Amar golar haar khuley ney*. Yusuf performed an Abdul Alim song, *Porer jaiga porer jomi* and Jhilik performed *O ki bondhu Kajol bhromora rey*.

A group performance by the *Shera Kontho* judges in the initial phase of the contest -- singers Khurshid Alam, Abdul Jobbar, Kanak Chapa, Shammi Akter, Khalid, Sultana Chowdhury, Salma Ali, Nadira Begum, Agun and others -- was also included in the programme.

The winner of *Shera Kontho* received an amount of Tk 10 lakh, the runner-ups jointly won Tk seven lakh and the third position holder won Tk three lakh.

Shykh Seraj however, explained that the amounts will not be given to the winners right away because, "A sudden rush of money often corrupts young minds." Seraj always went over the plan to highlight these talented young artists. Channel i will provide them with much-needed exposure, for instance giving them opportunities to sing at local and international events. Albums featuring their performances will also be released. Seraj also mentioned that the songs that won at the *Celebrating Life* contest organised by *The Daily Star* and Standard Charter Bank will be recorded by these young artists.

Mahfuz Anam, editor of *The Daily Star* and human rights activist Sultana Kamal unveiled covers of albums featuring performances by the finalists. Mahfuz Anam urged all to support and patronise Bangladeshi artists by buying their CDs.

The finalists received blessings from the judges and expressed their convictions to uphold and promote Bangla songs. Farzana Brownia was the MC of the show.

National Film Awards for the last four years announced

The government has announced National film awards for the years 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007 recently, says a press release. An eleven-member jury board chaired by the additional secretary of the Ministry of Information selected the winners in different categories.

For the year 2004, 15 awards; for 2005, 13 awards; for 2006, 16 awards and for 2007, 14 awards were announced.

For the year 2004, *Jajatra* received seven awards including best producer (Tauquir Ahmed), best director (Tauquir Ahmed), best music director (Shujee Shyam), best supporting actress (Mehbuba Mahnur Chandni), best scriptwriter (Amjad Hossain), best screenplay (Tauquir Ahmed) and best cinematographer (Rafiqul Bari; posthumous). *Shankhonaad* received two awards including best supporting actor (Fazlur Rahman Babu) and best editing (Junaid Halim). The other awardees are -- best actor (Humayun Faridi) for *Matritwa*, best actress (Aupi Karim) for *Bachelor*, best male playback singer (Subir Nandi) for *Megher Porey Megh*, best art direction (Uttam Guha) for *Lalon*, best child artiste (Amal) for *Duratto* and best makeup (M.M. Jasim) for *Ek Khando Jomi*.

For the year 2005, *Hajar Bachhor Dhorey* received six awards including best film, best director (Kohimur Akhter Shuchanda), best music director (Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul), best scriptwriter (Zahir Raihan; posthumous), best cinematographer (Mahfuzur Rahman) and best art director (Mohammad Kalamtar). The other awards recipients are -- best actor (Mahfuz Ahmed) for *Laal Shabuj*, best supporting actor (Ilias Kanchan) for

Shasti, best actress (Shabnur) for *Dui Nayaner Alo*, best supporting actress (Champa) for *Shasti*, best male playback singer (Monir Khan) for *Dui Nayaner Alo*, best female playback singer (Sabina Yasmin) for *Dui Nayaner Alo* and best child artiste (Hridoy Islam) for *Taka*.

For the year 2006, *Ghani* received 12 awards including best film, best director (Kazi Morshed), best music director (Sheikh Sadi Khan), best actor (Arman Parvez Murad), best supporting actor (jointly Masum Aziz and Raisul Islam Asad), best actress (Naznin Hasan Chumki), best supporting actress (Dolly Zahur), best scriptwriter (Kazi Morshed), best screenplay (Kazi Morshed), best dialogue (Kazi Morshed) and best editing (Raisul Islam Asad). Other awardees include best male playback singer (Asif Akbar) and best female playback singer (Samina Chowdhury), both for the film *Ranikuthir Baki Itihas*.

For 2007, among 14 awards *Daruchini Dwip* won seven, *Aha* received four and *Shajghar* received three awards. *Daruchini Dwip* won the best film, best music director (S.I. Tutul), best dance director (Kabirul Islam Ratan), best actor (Riaz), best supporting actor (Abul Hayat), best actress (Zakia Bari Momo) and best screenplay (Humayun Ahmed). *Aha* won best director (Enamul Karim Nirjhor), best female playback singer (Fahmida Nabi), best cinematographer (Saiful Islam Bada) and best editing (Arghya Kamol Mitra). *Shajghar* won best supporting actress (Nipun), best male playback singer (Andrew Kishore) and best lyricist (Munshi Wadud).

Samageet celebrates the birth centenary of Manik Bandyopadhyay



Artistes of Samageet during a performance at the event.

NADIA SARWAT

May 19, 2008 marked the birth centenary of Manik Bandyopadhyay (1908-1956), one of

the most influential novelists in Bengali Literature. Samageet, a Narayanganj-based progressive cultural organisation, celebrated the occasion on August 30 with a discussion

and a cultural programme at the Ali Ahmed Municipal Library auditorium, Narayanganj.

Hasan Zafrul Bipul, a little magazine activist and member of Samageet, presented the main essay at the discussion. Litterateur Mamun Hossain from Rajshahi, poet-writer Kajal Shahnewaz and columnist Faruk Wasif were the discussants at the event presided over by the convener of Samageet, Amol Akash. In his well-written paper, Bipul touched on different aspects of Manik's bohemian and dynamic life and writings -- including a brief discussion on his three major works, *Putul Nacher Itikatha*, *Padma Nadir Majhi* and *Diba Ratir Kabyo*.

"Daring and disturbing, Manik's writing is a form of expression of the person who was driven by the passion to discover the reasons behind every 'why' of human life," he said.

Faruk Wasif noted, "When we try to tear apart a piece of cloth, a particular part of the cloth starts to give in first. Just like that the proletariat takes all the stress of a society. Manik Bandyopadhyay's writings take into concern the plight of the proletariat in the contemporary society, breaking the verge of realism into a surrealistic world of optimism."

In his speech, Amol Akash said, "Even the most insignificant entity may nurture the greatest love and passion. Our endeavour to celebrate Manik Bandyopadhyay's 100th birth anniversary is an expression of our affinity for the litterateur and his works."

The second half of the event started with a group recital titled *Oi jaye, ouponnashik jaye*. A Samageet presentation, it was a vibrant compilation of the diaries and letters of Manik Bandyopadhyay and his contemporaries -- focusing on his poverty-stricken personal life with a connection between Manik as a creative writer and a common man with all the prejudices.

The young artistes of Samageet also rendered songs *Manik Bandyopadhyay* (a musical version of Bishnu Dey's poem with the same title) and *Manik Bandyopadhyay-er Chhobi* (poem by Manindra Roy). The songs have been composed by Amol Akash and Bishwajit Das respectively. *Padma Nadir Majhi*, a song based on the novel and composed by Amol Akash, was also rendered by the artistes of Samageet. The freshness and originality of the theme and music of the song was highly appreciated by the audience.

Chinese extravaganza uses valley as a backdrop

Midway through the grand spectacle "Zen Shaolin," a blue-robed monk on a huge outdoor stage crowded with martial-arts performers appears to banish evil spirits rhythmically with his fists in an artistic meditation of motion and fury.

The extravaganza, with a cast of 500, is staged after nightfall in a valley that sits before a huge mountain in central Henan Province, one of the cradles of Chinese civilisation.

For those who were dazzled by the opening of the Beijing Olympics earlier this month, that ceremony had its roots in shows like this one, which with government backing and private financing are drawing huge audiences to some of China's most scenic or historic spots.

In the new China, investors and the government can team up to acquire a mountain, hire the Academy Award-winning composer Tan Dun and the internationally known dancer and choreographer Huang Dou Dou, and produce a spectacle that includes monks from the famed Shaolin Temple.

And an artist can dare to create music with the sounds of stones being slapped, wind whistling through the brush and recordings of monks chopping at water in a



"Zen Shaolin," a music, dance and martial arts show, has a cast of 500 in a remote valley in China.

tub with their hands. "The most important achievement of this production is that I invented the first rolling-

stone orchestra," said Tan, the Chinese-born composer. The project's investors spent more than

\$15 million to build a theatre set in a valley below three mountains, one rising 4,921 feet, with temples, a wooden pagoda, a martial-arts school, an arched bridge, a stream and a small village with a stone pathway.

One of the hopes of the producers was that "Zen Shaolin," which opened in May 2007, would bolster tourism in a province that has 100 million residents and has largely been left behind by China's economic boom.

And that has begun to happen. More than 300,000 visitors have seen the show in the last 16 months. (The production plays most days, except during the coldest winter months.) NBC came earlier this year to tape a segment that was broadcast during its Olympics coverage. The show employs a mixture of local people and professionals who are brought in.

With China pushing to commercialise its art and cultural industries, state-owned companies, music and theatre troupes and even military dance ensembles are being encouraged to be financially independent and to create shows that might be exported to the rest of the world.

Source: Inletnet



PHOTO: MUMIT M.

Eminent Tagore artiste and exponent Professor Anisur Rahman performs at a solo Rabindra Sangeet programme at the National Theatre Stage, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on August 28. Also a noted economist, Professor Anisur Rahman has a distinctive approach to rendering Rabindra Sangeet, which has been highly acclaimed by leading exponents of Tagore songs in Bangladesh and West Bengal.

Citycell-Channel i Music Awards '08 to be held in December



(From left) Faridur Reza Sagar, Taslim Ahmed, Dr. Anand Rajasingham and Hasan Abidur Reza Jewel at the press conference.

With an aim to promote Bangladeshi music, Citycell-Channel i Music Awards have been conferred to talented artistes and musicians of the country since 2004. At a press conference held yesterday, the organisers addressed this year's Citycell-Channel i music Awards.

The launch of this year's event was formally announced by Dr. Anand Rajasingham, head of marketing, Citycell and Faridur Reza Sagar, managing director of Impress Telefilm Ltd. Taslim Ahmed, deputy general manager, External Affairs, Citycell, presented the event preview at the press conference. He informed about the rules and categories of the award giving programme in detail.

Including the lifetime achievement award, Citycell-Channel i Music Awards will be given in 16 categories. These are, Rabindra Sangeet, Nazrul Geeti, Folk, Adhunik, Classical, Songs from Bengali Feature Films, Band, Underground Band, Lyrics, New Artistes, Sound Engineering, Cover Design, Music Director and Music Video. Besides, popular awards will be given in the categories -- Adhunik, Film Songs, Band and Debut Singer.

Eminent music exponents and artistes of the country will conduct the selection in three different stages. The final announcement will be made at a vibrant event in December this year.