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Movie "Monpura"

Noted television director Giasuddin Selim's much hyped movie Monpura finally got released on the first day of the spring. The curiosity factor attached with this movie is natural since this movie is remarkable for quite a good number of reasons. First of all, it is the debut film by talented small screen director Selim, secondly, the familiar faces of our television drama Chanchal Chowdhury and Farhana Mili paired for the first time on the big screen through this movie. Thirdly, gifted music director and young craze Arnob for the first time composed music for any Bangla movie. Moreover, because of the overwhelming response of the audio soundtrack of this movie, the expectations increased manifold. Now the question is has Monpura delivered what was expected of it? The answer is a resounding YES.

Although Monpura is a simple love story, but it is the manner in which the story has been revealed is perhaps the high point of the movie. Considering it as a debut initiative by the director, main actor and actresses and music director, one has to admit that it was a good if not the best attempt they made. The cinematography, editing, music and their picturisation, acting everything deserve kudos. I'm sure no other Bangla movie has ever depicted our rural Bangla more beautifully than Monpura did. The main story of Monpura revolved around the love story between Sonai (Chanchal Chowdhury) and Pori (Farhana Mili). As a protagonist, Chanchal did an excellent job and Farhana Mili was good as always. The other characters, like the mentally disabled man (Monir Khan Shimul) and the landlord of Sonai (Mamunur Rashid) also did very well. But it was none other but Chanchal who steals the show with his magnificent

expressions and acting. His emotional outbursts are splendid, and making him break down on several occasions is another human aspect that director explores quite well. Although Monpura primarily revolves around two simple characters Sonai and Pori, the two believable characters, the reason that brings them together is realistic and the conflict that ensues is equally convincing. This factor is its USP. A small section of the audience may not take to the ending wholeheartedly, mainly because it's not a conventionally joyous culmination. But tragic ends have gone down very well with cinegoers.

All in all, barring a few flaws, Monpura is a nice movie to watch with the family. I would have been happier had the producer avoided the scene of suicide by the heroine at the end of the movie. Moreover, the failed attempt by Sonai and Pori to run away from their family and foes is another scene which might give bad impression to our youngsters. As this movie has been termed as "Banglar premer golpo" - The love story of Bangla, so our young people or even the adults might take inspiration from this movie and if they ever try to commit suicide after failing in love, or even if they try to run away with their beloved inspiring by Monpura, than what would be the purpose of making a movie like Monpura's stature? Movies are the reflections of our lives and Monpura is not a 'brainless' movie. So I think the director should have been more careful in this respect.

It is an exceptional but not an extraordinary film and I would like to request our young generation not to copy what Sonai and Pori tried to do to make their love a success.

Nazmus Saquib
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Dhaka

BNP vs. AL

During the general elections held in 2001, the BNP got absolute majority with 193 seats while AL won 58 and according to Sheikh Hasina they were then given only 6 seats in the front row of parliament (apparently 1 seat for every 10 MPs which roughly makes 5 and 4/5th seats for 58). Now in the elections held in 2008, the AL won absolute majority with 230 seats whereas the BNP managed to get only 32 including 2 of the Jamaat. Therefore, following the existing formula, they are entitled to only 3 and 1/5th seats at the most 4 seats but certainly not 7.

As they say, as you sow so shall you reap! Some BNP leaders are now talking of Sheikh Hasina's statement to the effect that she would give more importance to them then their numerical strength in the house. Obviously, she meant the strength of their statements on the floor of the house. It can hardly be taken as a promise to give them more seats on the front row then they are actually entitled to. We wish she had been more careful in the use of her words. It is childish on the part of the BNP to quibble on this point and abstain from parliament sessions.

After the 2001 general elections, the BNP had set up a committee to prepare a white paper on the corruption committed during the 1996-2001 rule of the AL. So, now that the AL government is talking of a white paper on the corruption of the BNP and the CTG during 2001-08, why should the BNP now raise objections at all? The Awami League govt. is only following the lead of BNP in witch hunting!

Abul Mohsin Siddheswari
Circular Road
Dhaka

Bandarban tragedy

Chittagong had become a city of mourners instantly as the tragic report reached the town. People irrespective of age and class were rushing towards Ctg Medical College to see the survivors. Quite a few, fifteen approximately, are undergoing intensive treatment, and some more from them might meet death (God forbid).

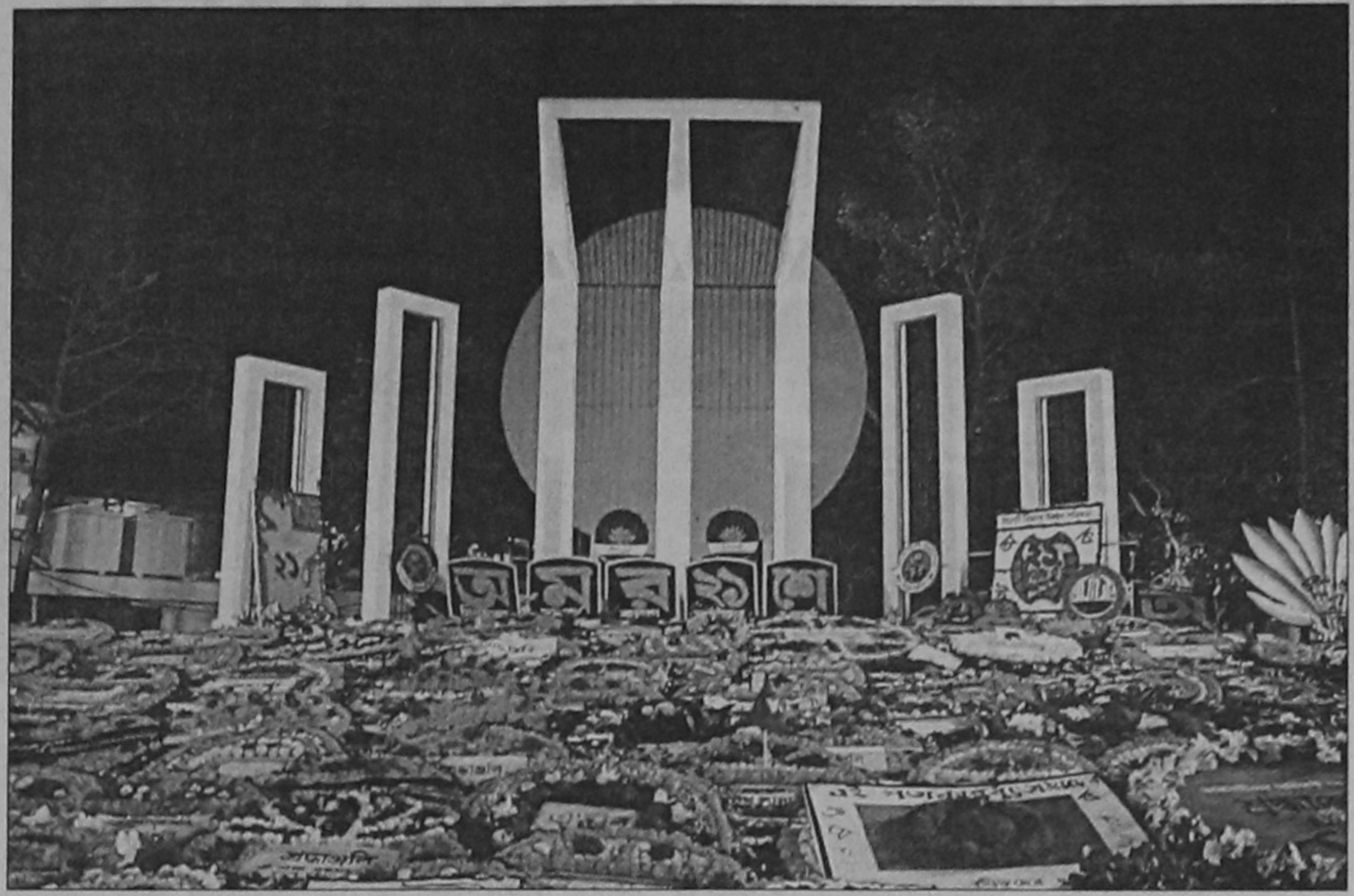
Now, what actually went wrong there-- one can ponder over and ask vigorously. Everyone knows that those hilly areas have roads that zigzag, which means vehicle drivers have to be skilled and careful along with the fitness of those engines/vehicles. The second question might follow if the Ctg College authority that undertook such a journey/tour there took any cautionary measures before the tour. Did they inquire about the driver's credentials? Did they worry and inquire about the fitness of the vehicles that they hired for the trip? Many such questions might usually pop up in one's mind, as we all know that drivers and the vehicles in those parts of the country are not always the standard ones. No wonder, you notice small jeeps, some times the bigger ones as well, running to the destinations with passengers swarming all around those, which are called "Chander Gari", much to one's awe. Travellers in those areas at times happen to enjoy such inter-area trips by those notorious, medieval vehicles.

Unfortunately, unfit vehicles, unfit and unlicensed drivers are a living death bearer on the roads in most of the cases like this. The term "fitness" has been going missing in certain spheres of our lives, which is almost an accepted or "surrendered to" phenomenon with us we tend to live things to "fate", or go totally oblivious.

No words of sympathy or otherwise will heal the wounds that have gone deep into the minds of the kith and kin of the dead, yet we mourn and extend our deepest sympathy to the guardians and other family members of the dead students. We pray to the Almighty to bless the souls that have met the untimely and the most tragic demise.

Rafiqul Islam Rime
Agrabad, Chittagong

Mother Language Day



Undoubtedly, the International Mother Language Day is one of the greatest achievements of our country. The supreme sacrifices of the valiant sons surpassed the national boundaries and are commemorated the world over. Our gallant boys gave up their lives on this day to reinstate Bangla as one of the state languages of Pakistan. The overwhelming protest on this day in 1952 against the announcement of 'Urdu Only' policy resulted in firing on the procession brought

out by the students. The nation as well as the world pays homage to the stars for their heroic protest against the brutal regime. The world needed half a century to fathom the depth of significance of the day. The International Mother Language Day is celebrated not only to respect all the mother languages and to pay homage to the Language Movement Martyrs but also to build awareness to save and promote all the languages, especially the endangered lan-

guages in the world.

The declaration of 21st February as the International Mother Language Day reiterated the relation between our national entity and the international entity and the link between 21st February and the 21st Century.

Subir Das
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Compulsory subjects



A write-up by Professor Dr. Aminul Islam of the Philosophy Department of Dhaka University was published on 08-02-09 in a Bangla daily. The ever smiling respectable teacher has given his opinion in favour of making "Logic" and "Ethics" compulsory at SSC and HSC levels for all students. By reading these subjects one will be able to acquire some valuable knowledge, no doubt.

At the SSC level every student has to read Bangla (200 marks), English (200 marks), Mathematics (100 marks) and Religious Education (100 marks). Besides, Humanities and Business Study group students have to read 'General

Science' and Science group students 'Social Studies'. So, we see out of 1000 marks a student compulsorily reads 700 marks and there is little scope/option in choosing subjects. If new subjects are made compulsory, the students will face more problems.

In my opinion at the SSC level there should be only three compulsory subjects-- Bangla, English and Math and at the HSC level only Bangla and English. The students will choose other subjects on the basis of their future academic plans.

Harun-or-Rashid Sobhanbag, Dhaka

Corruption in education sector

Though this sector receives the highest budgetary allocation each year in national budget, there is a shortage of quality educational institutions in Bangladesh. A significant portion of the allocation is not properly utilized owing to massive corruption in the education sector. Dr Akbar Ali Khan has rightly said, "Corruption in education sector is the root of all kinds of corruption, and it fuels corruption in other sectors."

Many government organisations monitoring and aiding smooth flow of educational activities like SHIKKHA BHABON, NCTB, Secondary & Higher Secondary Education Boards etc. are the places of corruption in which no work is done without money.

Our honourable teachers, especially hailing from rural educational institutions, face corruption during sanctioning of MPO, retirement money, and procuring educational materials etc. Although it is an open secret, the authorities concerned have not yet taken any effective measures to curb corruption in the sector.

Graft has pervaded at all levels of education, from primary to university level. A student who faces corruption in every sphere of his/ her academic life considers it a norm of social system. Students are left without values and integrity. As a result, it persuades them to be corrupt when they work in different organisations. It is difficult to combat corruption emanating from dishonesty, lack of values and ethics.

So it's my earnest request to the government & the ACC to take necessary steps immediately to eliminate corruption in the education sector. Corruption in any other sector can be curbed in four to five years, but it will take some generations to eliminate corruption in the education sector.

Suman Saha
MBA student
University of Dhaka

Women ministers

The Awami League's landslide electoral victory came as a surprise to many. However, the formation of the cabinet is all the more surprising. But the cabinet that has been constituted with young, energetic and promising members of the party was praised by all. More surprisingly, it includes many women lawmakers as ministers with ministries/ portfolios such as home and foreign something unmatched in South and Southeast Asia. With a women prime minister and two important ministers at the helm, it is unprecedented.

If we look at the history of women participation in Bangladesh politics, we can see a bleak picture. Only a handful of women come out as MPs and very few are made ministers.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has no doubt made a bold move.

Md Zonaid Emran
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Role of English

English is the most widely learned and used foreign language in the world. Nowadays we must have thorough knowledge of English to compete with the global business world.

Today we use ATM (Automated Teller Machine) booth to draw cash, as a sign directs us in the booth which is in English. We use computer to make our jobs faster and smoother and the language through which it is being operated is English. The importance of the Internet grows rapidly in all fields of human life including not only education but also entertainment and hobbies. Even marketing is taking place on Internet. This indicates that it is becoming more and more important to know how to use Internet service in digital Bangladesh and to read and write English as part of this.

English is compulsory in Bangladesh like China, India and Taiwan but in name only. The students are not that interested in learning English, some of them are afraid of this language as they do not understand it and there is no one to make them understand. The students of primary schools should be encouraged to have the basic knowledge of this language. The issue must be treated on a priority basis.

It is to be remembered that to show our respect and love for our mother language, we should obtain knowledge of Bengali but to deal with the competitive global business world, we must learn how to speak, write and communicate in English.

Masudur Rahman Manna
President
Rotaract Club
of Dhaka Urbana

Joya Ahsan ad

I suppose some ethics should be maintained by the advertising houses and the corporate bodies. It came as a real shock to me when I found in the ntv that a leading actress of the small screen, Joya Ahsan, was missing for 5 days. In these days of kidnapping, killing and man slaughtering, I was almost certain that something had gone seriously wrong with her and I shared my feeling with my wife. However, later it came as a big relief when we realized that it was an "AD".

"Surprise Ads" are ethical but not the way it has been done in this case. Corporate bodies must look into this before these kind of "ads" are released.

N.Z. Khan
One-mail

Don't weaken ACC

The Anti-Corruption Commission plays a vital role in eradicating corruption. During the regime of caretaker government it took actions against some political stalwarts that made us optimistic. But unfortunately, the elected government has raised some questions regarding the functions of the ACC. Even Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina raised this issue in parliament that made us a little bit pessimistic. Actually, it is true that Bangladesh is infested with all-pervasive corruption and it is ruining our country gradually. We talk about this issue very fervently, but we are not sincere to root out corruption. The last BNP led alliance government formed the ACC under the pressure of donor agencies, but they did not make it functional. Then the ACC was titular. After the political upheaval of 1/11, the military backed caretaker

Drug addiction

A few days ago, the Prothom Alo, ran a story on one Majnu, a young man whose life has arrived on the brink of a precipice as a consequence of his long attachment with the drug like heroin. He has been kept in chains by his parents as he turns violent when he does not get his coveted stuff. With hollow eyes, a shrivelled body, stuck out veins--Majnu is just a classic example of the dangers of drug addiction.

Illicit narcotics--heroin, cannabis, phensidyle and so on-- have flooded the whole country, so to say. It is the young men who take those stuff to get a "high". The nasty habit of regular intake of drugs poses serious health hazards. Bad company, peer pressure, easy availability of the illicit stuff--these are often touted as the probable reasons as to why the young men enter this blind alley of drug intake.

The fact remains that the menace of addiction has spread its tentacles though the length and breadth of this

Day of the valiant

The Language Movement of 1952 marks one of the most important chapters of our history. Every year on Ekushey February the whole nation salutes the Language Martyrs. Thousands throng the central Shaheed Minar to show their respect. It is a special day whose character has now received international recognition. On 17 November, 1999, the UNESCO General Conference unanimously adopted a resolution tabled by Bangladesh proclaiming Shaheed Dibosh as the International Mother Language Day. The courage of those people touched my heart and I felt as if I were just one of them. Surely, I thought, if I were there at that time, I would have joined all the people on the streets and cried out for my rights, fought for my mother tongue. On the other hand, books in the Ekushey Boimela look very smart indeed. Thousands visit the Boimela in February.

The Language Martyrs have ensured our heritage and cultural identity as well as the image of Bangladesh in the outside world. So, we should not forget that the blood of our Language Martyrs had laid the foundation of a free Bangladesh.

AKM Emdadul Haque
Kendua, Netrakona

Music maestro A R Rahman

Western cinema's bigwigs let out a collective twitter of nervous laughter when A R Rahman took the stage for his Golden Globe win. It was probably because they couldn't wrap their tongue around his name, mispronouncing it no less than three times but the humble maestro, gracious as always, acknowledged his surprise and gratitude at receiving the award by thanking the Slumdog Millionaire team.

The maestro has had a predictably busy year working on Ghajini and Yuvraj's soundtracks among others and completed the masterly record in very little time. The movie, accused of packaging romanticized poverty to First World audiences that are equally guilty of lapping it up, is rich in its eclectic score. The global vibes have him collaborating with M.I.A., Gulzar, Ila Arun, Alka Yagnik, Suzanne D'Mello, known for her western

approach to singing and rap artist Blaaze. So, compelling is the story and the soundtrack that screenwriter Simon Beaufoy wants to make a musical of it.

It isn't hard to realize that two of the artist's most appreciated soundtracks in recent times come from underdog movies Guru and Slumdog Millionaire. Young Rahman had a musically rich upbringing, but after his composer father R.K. Shekhar's premature death, the family had to rent out instruments to make ends meet and the maverick ventured into music making himself. "It's a very strange thing...actually going back to my childhood story. I experienced most of the disappointments in my life at that time. So whatever happens now, I suspect that hope, I always suspect that happiness. And even that moment of happiness doesn't exist because I'm waiting for how it's going to fool me and give me a kick again."

Strongly inclined towards

philanthropy, the genius endowed the A R Rahman Foundation and continues to work with it to rid the world of poverty.

Onto Mian
New York, USA

Our culture

Our heartfelt thanks to the print and electronic media for projecting our Bengali culture in the right manner with sincerity and purpose. Being abroad, we were eagerly waiting to watch the live telecast of the major cultural events at "Bakul Tola" of the Charu Kola Academy. The following poem has really touched my feeling and heart:

"Ful Futuk Na Futuk; Aaj Basanta" - Subhas Mukharjee. This is our slogan for this lovely event. We wish success of the day followed by Valentine's Day where flower is the main gift exchange between loved ones, child, young and old.

Areader
One-mail

Maitree Express

The Dhaka-Kolkata-Dhaka Maitree Express is convenient compared to bus travel--spacious with toilet and pantry facilities. But, the travel time for 375 kms which is nearly 14 hrs is the negative point. The main problem is that the immigration checking on both sides takes five hours! I have the following suggestion to make this venture successful and profitable: Immigration formalities should be done at the entry and exit stations.

Since security guards are there in each coach, lock the compartments. Bona fide passengers need

not get down since toilet, pantry facilities are available.

Possibility of increasing speed to reduce travel time should be considered.

The checking staff, security personnel at the two border points can be done away with.

There is scope for further improvement if the basics are implemented.

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