

### WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

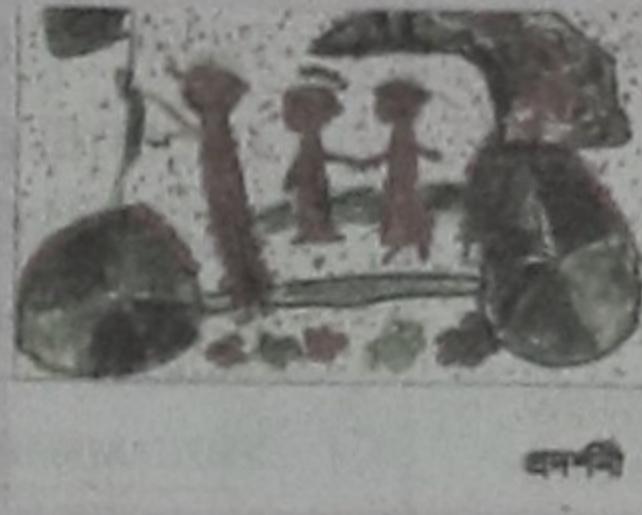
**Calligraphy Exhibition**  
Title: Calligraphy on Quranic Cosmology  
Calligrapher: Syed Zulfiqar Zahoor  
Venue: Drik Gallery, H 58, Rd 15/A (new), Dhanmondi  
Date: August 20-26  
Time: 10am-6pm



**Photo Exhibition**  
Title: Liberation War of 1971  
Organiser: High Commission of India  
Venue: Indian Cultural Centre, H 35, Rd 24, Gulshan 1  
Date: August 20-25  
Time: 10am-6pm



**Children's Art Exhibition**  
Title: Bangladesh Through the Children's Eyes  
Organiser: Nitya Upahar  
Venue: Gallery Nitya Upahar, Aziz Co-operative Market, Shahbagh  
Date: August 18-24  
Time: 10am-8pm



**Photography Exhibition**  
Title: Survivors  
Artist: GMB Akash  
Organiser: Alliance Francaise of Dhaka  
Venue: Alliance Francaise of Dhaka, 26, Mirpur Road, Dhanmondi  
Date: August 14-27



## Mazharul Islam: The booming voice on radio

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

As the young Mazharul Islam entered the stage in shining armor in the role of Tipu Sultan's son, he had little idea that his budding career in the media world was fated to take a detour.

Mazharul Islam is a name synonymous with voiceovers in commercials, and a sought after name for the movie directors and advertisers.

His unique talent of mastering his voice and tonal qualities during his presentations has made him a hit in the media.

Islam says that his voice frequency is at par with those of Sabina Yasmeen, Runa Laila or Momtaz although he is quite content to concede that he does not have the same talent for singing!

His ability to hit the right notes, the right modulation has catapulted many of the products he advertises to success.

How did he get into this unusual line of voiceover?

The meager pay as casual artiste in radio was not enough to maintain my family. My unusual career took root with the sudden demise of noted actor Fateh Lohani. The distressed directors were on the lookout for someone to dub his voice. With the talent to imitate others with ease I



**"With the talent to imitate others with ease I offered my services to the directors, and I struck gold."**

offered my services to the directors, and I struck gold."

Islam's first venture in movie voiceovers began with the blockbuster *Rang baj*. "

Haa bhai...ebaar ashitechhey suuuppperr hit..." his voice would have the atypical message to stir the imagination of the viewers. "The voice

of Mohammad Ali the well known Pakistani actor, was dubbed in mine for the movie *Afsos*. I did a similar job for the Iranian film *Messenger*."

"Besides lending voice to around 10,000 commercials, I have played lead roles in about 170 radio plays," adds Islam. He shares an anecdote of how 11 prison inmates wrote to him praising his character as *Devdas* in a radio play. They wrote that they had forgotten their miseries while listening to the play. "It's possibly my height that prevented me from performing in any other media," he adds impishly.

Over the years, Islam has created a niche for himself where he communicates with listeners of all echelons through radio commercials in a manner typical of him, that appeals to all.

But how did he innovate this style? "It was only when I came to understand that the style is rather fascinating to the mass that I began to be more attentive and gradually it was a new trend that I set in the commercials of the country."

A founding member of the commercial service of Radio Bangladesh, Islam was honoured the Best Sound Editor and presenter for six programmes broadcast on Radio. But Islam feels he has reasons to feel dejected, as he has not been awarded or recog-

nised outside of the studio.

In the post Liberation era, Islam conducted two folk festivals that continued for seven days each. One was inaugurated by president Abu Sayeed Chowdhury ('73) and the other by Bangabandhu ('74).

Why haven't many people followed in your footsteps? "When I trod the rocky path, my initial payment was Tk 30/- only. That too, I was paid partially. However, I am open to any competition. I innovated new ideas, to attract my audience. It's the turn of others to make their own," he says.

Any particular training needed? "Since I trained in music and recitation, it helped me immensely. Besides that, it was only instincts and intuition that guided me to develop my presentation," adds Islam.

"I am content with my studio Shetha which I have turned into a small transcription service. I have rare collection of songs and interviews which often come to use for others."

As a media consultant of Radio Today and R1 of all radio, Mazharul Islam is still innovating different ways to attract his audience though he still prefers to work from behind the scenes, to be the voice that everyone knows.

## Black's new album in the pipeline



CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

After the success of its last studio album "Abar" (2008), Black is ready to offer its fans a whole new range of songs. Work on the band's latest album (yet to be titled) is in full swing.

"We hope to release the album as soon as possible; hopefully around or right after Eid," said Jon, vocalist of Black.

Members of the band are busy as beavers, trying to wrap up the album.

"Currently all of us are doing a lot of research on the tunes and sounds," Jon added.

"A lot depends on finding the right tune. We always put a lot of effort when it comes to setting tune to a song," the singer said.

Speaking on the songs featured in the

upcoming album, Jon said, "Majority of the tracks in the album belong to the rock genre. Some are a tad mellow though, while a couple of the numbers have tinge of pop. We've also done a few grunge numbers."

"We are pretty optimistic about the album. We have our own practice pad now, and the crew is spending all their time on recording of the album," said Tony, drummer of Black.

"We will try to give the fans something extra and make this album special," said Jahan, guitarist of the band.

Lyrics of the songs have been jointly written by Zubair Hossain Emon and Jon.

The current lineup of Black is: Tony on drums, Jahan (guitar), Sagar (bass) and Jon (vocals).

## An evening dedicated to monsoon ragas



Sarod performance by Amaan Ali Khan and Ayaan Ali Khan at the programme.

KAVITA, New Delhi

Just when it seemed that the monsoon had bypassed many parts of India, the skies finally opened up. Aply a three-day concert organised by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), titled 'Malhar -- a Festival to Celebrate the Spirit of the Monsoon,' was recently inaugurated by the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan

Singh's wife Gursharan Kaur in New Delhi on August 17.

The curtains went up with a sarod recital of "Raga Desh" by the redoubtable brothers Amaan Ali Khan and Ayaan Ali Khan -- greeted with much applause from music lovers. The duo, sons of the famous sarod maestro Amjad Ali Khan, represent the seventh generation of a musical lineage known as the 'Senia Bangash' School. They were backed up by Sandeep Das

and Fateh Singh who displayed effortless mastery over the tabla.

Next came ghazal singer Shanti Hiranand who rendered *thumri*, *kajri*, *chaiti* and *dadra*. Shanti has the distinction of having the legendary Begum Akhtar as her guru, guide and mentor. In fact, Begum Akhtar thought so highly of Shanti that just before her death at a concert in Vadodara she remarked, "If you want to

hear my music after my death, hear it through Shanti's singing." Today Shanti has won much acclaim and her albums titled "Ye Hai Ghazal" and "Expressions of Love -- Thumri and Dadra," have received superb reviews from both critics and the media.

August 18 showcased the talented Kanak Chaturvedi (Hindustani light classical vocal), brothers Umakant Gundecha and Ramakant Gundecha (Hindustani vocal) and a sitar recital by Padmabhushan Pandit Debu Chaudhuri. August 19, the concluding day of the festival, saw performances by Shruti Sadolikar (Hindustani vocal) and seasoned singers Pandit Rajan and Sajan Mishra.

Legend has it that the "Raga Malhar" when sung impeccably, brings down rain. Many great artistes of the medieval era and much earlier used to sing this raga. Among the singers who are said to have invoked the rain gods through this melodious medium are Tansen, Baiju Bawra, Baba Ramdas and Krishna devotee Meera.

## Abdullah Al Mamun death anniversary

**Special programme on Banglavision**

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Special programme "Shongsaptak Abdul Al Mamun" will be aired on Banglavision this evening at 6:30 pm on the occasion of the theatre icon's first death anniversary.

Writer, actor, director, cinematographer Mamun is the creator of many timeless TV and stage plays and films.

"Shongsaptak," "Borofgola Nodi," "Ekhon Duhsomoy," "Subachon Nirboshoney," "Meraj Fakirer Ma," "Sareng Bou" and "Dui Jibon" are some of Mamun's notable works.

The programme also includes a special segment on Mamun's life and works.

National Professor Kabir Chowdhury; theatre personalities Ferdousi Majumdar, Ramendu Majumdar, Ataur Rahman, Mamunur Rashid, Tarik Anam and media personalities Kamal Lohani, Muhammad Jahangir will reminisce on Mamun.

Compiled by Kajol Rashid Shaheen, the programme has been produced by Shah Mainul Moon.

## Simon Cowell lends support to Paula Abdul

Music mogul Simon Cowell has reached out to former "American Idol" judge Paula Abdul following her departure from the hit show, dismissing rumours of a rift between the pair.

The singer quit her role on the judging panel earlier this month, following a reported dispute with the show's bosses over her multi-million dollar pay deal.

Cowell has been forced to bring in a string of celebrity guests judges, including Victoria Beckham, Katy Perry and Mary J. Blige, to fill Abdul's place as he searches for a permanent replacement.

But the Brit is adamant he is not bitter about Abdul's decision to quit and insists he will always be a friend to the star.

He tells Fox news, "She's taken the decision in her life now, which you have to respect her for making the decision. I didn't want to get involved in what was going on because it wasn't really any of my business but I spoke to her a lot through the whole process.

"I always thought she was the heart of the show. I'm not the heart, I'm not even the brain actually. But she was the heart, so you've taken that away so it's a different show. I'm sad, I am. I'll probably see her next week. I'm going to listen to what she wants to do next. I will support her in anything she wants to do next. I think she is TV gold, genuinely."

Source: Internet

## If Britney were President...

A bikini-clad Britney Spears appeared on The Late Show with David Letterman -- her first visit to the CBS talk show since 2006 -- last Tuesday night to give a special, pre-taped Top 10 list of the top ways the country would be different if the pop princess were the President of the United States.

The list:

1. I'd be the first president to wear eye shadow since Nixon.
2. We would only invade fun places, like Cabo.
3. My situation room would be a cabana at the Palms Casino in Las Vegas.
4. I'd lure Osama (Bin Laden) out of hiding with the irresistible scent of my new fragrance "Circus Fantasy."
5. Every presidential news conference would feature costume changes.
6. America might have a more coherent fiscal strategy.
7. Challenge U.S. to put a nightclub on the Moon by the end of the decade.
8. Three words: Vice President Diddy
9. Finally the media would pay some attention to me!



## Generating awareness through dance

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Bandhu Social Welfare Society (BSWS), a human rights organisation that mainly works with MSMs and the intersexed (*hijra*) community, performed a dance recital at Shaheed Zia Auditorium, National Museum on August 18.

Artists of Shotta and others performed with songs including "Orey sampaawala," "Ei kotha amader jonno," "Dhitang dhitang boley," "Aajibon khujey pabi," and more.

Sharmila Bandopadhyay, Abdur Rashid, Swapan Barua, Farhana Zarif Kanta, Anisul Islam Hero were the choreographers of the compositions.

The programme also featured a fashion show by members of the intersexed community.

Founded in 1996, BSWS provides support to MSMs and intersexed individuals, and generates awareness on HIV/AIDS and other STDs.



A dance performance at the event.

Source: Internet