

Deplorable state of Bangladesh Betar staff artistes

Betar staff artistes in conversation with Subal Dutta

SADYA AFREEN MALICK

Everyday as Bangladeshis wake up to the familiar "signature tune" of Radio Bangladesh, Subal Dutta feels as if he has been gifted a new lease of life. "The tune captures the spirit of a free nation and I feel honoured to have been able to compose it soon after our Liberation war," says the veteran violinist.

There are only about 500 staff artistes, so resolving this difficulty should not be a challenging task for the authorities.

Dutta, known as 'Subalda' to everyone, has been closely associated with the Bangladesh Betar since its inception. As a member of the Radio Staff Committee he worked tirelessly for the welfare of the musicians throughout his career of more than 45 years. He retired from active service only recently.

"Surprisingly, the musicians are not yet regular government service holders, but are hired on a monthly contractual basis," he says.

"After they retire, the musicians are deprived of provident fund or pension benefits; instead they are handed a mere month's salary as gratuity. If we have the right to vote why shouldn't we be entitled to a right to live with dignity?" says Dutta.

There are only about 500 staff artistes, so resolving this difficulty should not be a challenging task for the authorities.

A convenor of Staff Artistes Action Council for the past decade, Dutta is appalled at the gross neglect of the musicians by the administration. Dutta adds, "There has been a steady rise in the



entertainment world through the rapid spread of the electronic media, but except for a privileged few, most of the musicians remain in an uncertain and deplorable state of affairs.

"In my humble capacity I have so far promoted 213 casual artistes to regular staffs. This has contributed somewhat to partially improving their living standards, but is miles away from the living standards of musicians in neighbouring countries."

Dutta took his first steps as a professional violinist with inspiration from his father, Phatik Chandra Dutta, a staff musician/violinist who

performed right from the debut broadcast of radio in the undivided Bengal. Later, he trained under Sadek Ali Mia, a renowned clarinet player. During the '70s and '80s radio was the cultural hub, where several renowned musicians such as Ustad Phuljhuri Khan (esraj /taar shanai), Ustad Sadek Ali Mian (clarinet), Ustad Mir Kasem Khan (sitar), Ustad Abed Hossain Khan (sarod/sitar), Dhir Ali Mian (music director), Mobarak Ali (tabla) and Ustad Allah Rakhkhia Khan (sarengi) were the heart and soul of the organisation.

Dutta, a Freedom Fighter shares memories of the Liberation War, when he was associated with the Shadhin Bangla Betar Kendra. In one instance, after Liberation, he came to the rescue of veteran artiste Abdul Latif from the hands of an unruly crowd who were disrupting a cultural programme. The pandemonium cost him his favourite Italian violin -- an expensive instrument worth Tk 25,000, that was smashed to pieces. But such was the mindset of Dutta that he remembers the incident only as one where he could come to the assistance of a colleague, not one that nearly cost him his livelihood. He was not able to buy an instrument similar to that, having to cope with a less-expensive model.

"In the pre-Liberation times the erstwhile RD (regional director) of Radio, Zillur Rahman, was proactive in calling up headquarters in Rawalpindi for wage increment for the staff, which would be implemented within weeks," he says with a faint smile. "The current administrative negligence has brought to rot, what would otherwise have been a lucrative, thriving industry," Dutta adds.

"During the '70s and '80s, as cultural ambassadors, musicians/instrumentalists were privileged to perform abroad. They would be well catered to, and the result of that appreciation was the range of unmatched hit songs," says Dutta.

In a quick response to a question about improving the prospect of instrumentalists, Dutta says, "Since 'instrumental music' at Bachelors or Masters level is still a far cry and offered at private institutions only with severe limitations, my suggestion would be to introduce a department specialising on the subject at major educational institutions to attract talents and professionally develop the industry.

"Training sessions at Shilpakala Academy at district levels should also be geared up. In addition, many of our colleagues who have retired can be re-instated on contractual basis to train the new generation and provide a much needed impetus to the industry."

Babita at Monihar movie theatre after two decades

A CORRESPONDENT

Renowned actress Babita set off for her village in Jessore the day after Eid. Initially her plan was to spend the time with her near and dear ones. But she was in for a surprise when her relatives coaxed her to join them to view

"Khodar Porey Ma", a movie in which Babita starred as the protagonist. The movie was released this Eid.

Babita complied but with a rider that it be kept a secret. So ultimately Babita along with her entourage of over 30 relatives went to Monihar cinema hall to watch the movie. Interestingly the theatre was to be closed for good, but was renovated for the release of the film "Khodar Porey Ma".

An elated Babita, in a burkah (veil), enjoyed the movie along with others in the packed hall. According to Babita, the last movie she (along with her sisters Suchanda and Champa) watched at Monihar was Shibly Sadik's "Teen Kanya" in 1986. After two decades she came back to the theatre in Jessore. Shakib Khan plays the male lead, co-starring Shahara, in the film which features Babita as the mother.



Rembrandt lost in post by gallery in Norway

A Norwegian art gallery has admitted losing a Rembrandt etching worth up to \$5,400 in the post, after trying to save money on a courier and insurance.

The Solli Brug Gallery in Greaaker, 80 km south of Oslo, bought the Dutch master's Lieven Willemz, van Coppenol, Writing-Master from a British dealer.

The etching, made around 1658, is now lost in the Norwegian postal system.

The gallery's chairman Ole Derje said they had used regular mail, as couriers and insurance were "quite expensive". He said he received notice to collect the piece. When he arrived, though, it was nowhere to be found.

"It is worth around 40,000 to 50,000

crowns (£4,325 to £5,405)," he said, claiming that the postal service was only offering compensation of between 500 and 1,000 crowns (£54 to £108).

Derje declined to name the seller, citing confidentiality concerns. The Solli Brug Gallery already displays works by Rembrandt, Goya, Munch and Dali.

"We are sorry that this has happened," said Hilde Ebeltoft-Skaugrud, a spokesman for the Norwegian postal service.

"We have advised him to use a more appropriate form of mail when sending items that are worth as much as this with the appropriate insurance connected."

SOURCE: BBC

Sahitya Adda held in Panchagarh

QUAMRUL ISLAM RUBAIYAT, Thakurgaon

A post-Eid 'Sahitya Adda' (informal discussion on literature) was held at Nazrul Pathagar in Panchagarh on Thursday evening.

Deputy Commissioner of Panchagarh Tofazzel Hossain Miah attended the programme as chief guest and also participated in the discussion.

Cultural activist Nurul Huda recited from Jibononanda Das' famous poem "Banalata Sen".

On the heels of the recitation, assistant teacher of Panchagarh Government Girls' High School, Rashida Khatun; Assistant Professor of Panchagarh Government Women College, Ehteshamul Haque; president of Panchagarh Sahitya Shangshad, Ariful Islam Pallab; Assistant Professor of Panchagarh Mokbulur Rahman Government College, Monishangkar Das Gupta and former principal of Mokbulur Rahman Government College Professor Giashuddin participated in the dis-

ussion on the poem.

The discussants thanked the organiser for arranging the event and expressed the hope that it would inspire literature lovers.

Later, a vibrant cultural programme was also held that began with the rendition of a Jari Gaan, "Panchagarh Jari".

Then the artistes including District Primary Education Officer Julfikar Harun, Satyendranath Roy, Prohalla Chandra Barman, Mostaq Ur Rahman, Dhonesh Chandra and Priyanka Ghosh rendered several Rabindra, Nazrul and folk songs.

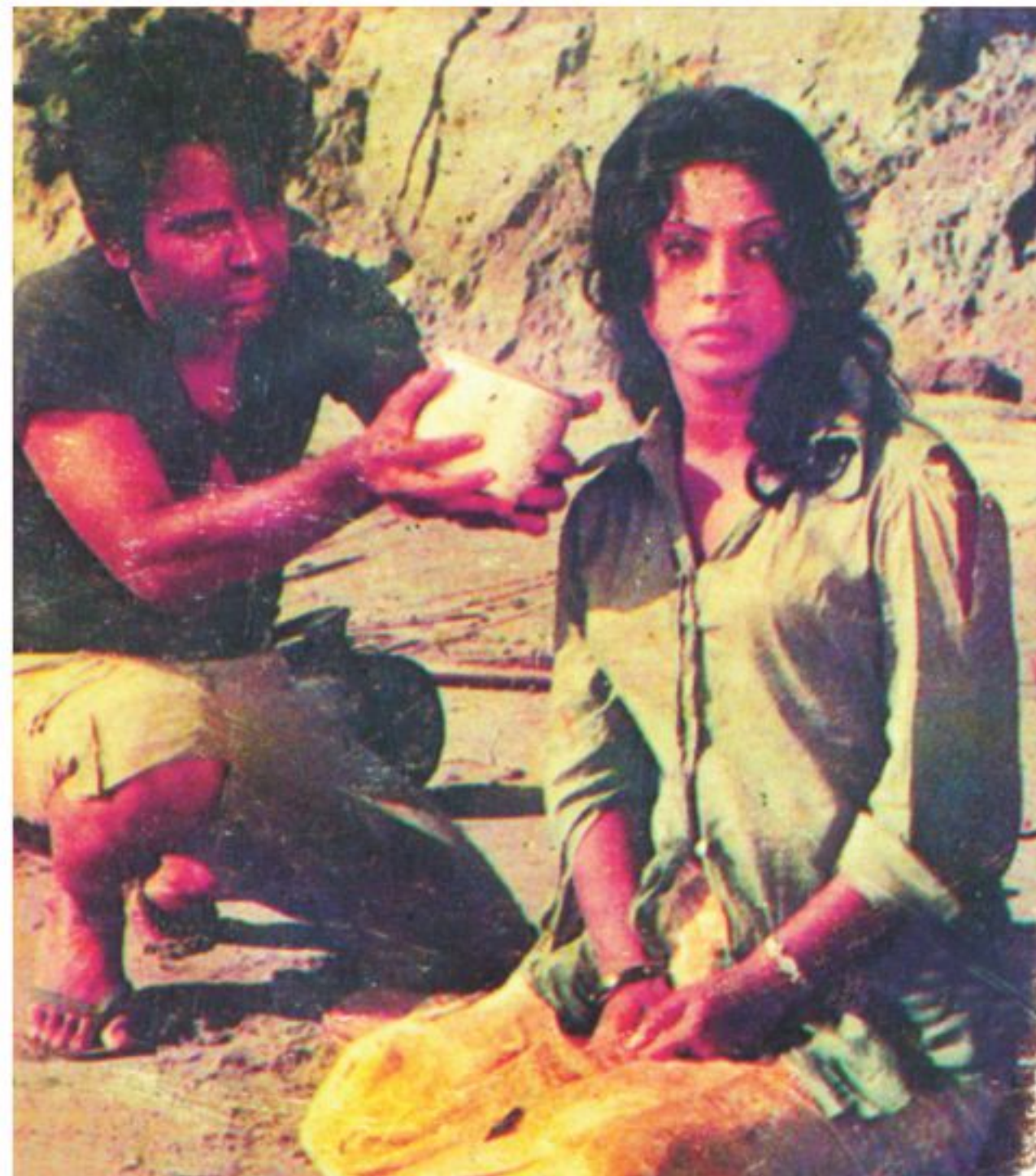
At the end of the programme poet Shah Jamal recited a self-composed poem and president of district Natya Samity Mizanur Rahman Babu recited "Nuruddin Shara Jiban".

Over a hundred poets, litterateurs, cultural activists and literature lovers attended the programme with much enthusiasm.

Nazrul Pathagar organised the event.

100 years of Indian cinema

Joint celebration and Soumitra retrospective in Dhaka



Clockwise (from top-left): Scenes from "Shimana Periyar", "Apu Sansar" and "Raja Harishchandra".



Traditional boat race in Tangail

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

A traditional boat race was held at Kalihati upazila, Tangail on August 22 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Singna Samajkalyan Jubo Sangha (SSS) organised the race on Kumri Bil (lake) in association with Walton, Cate and Bangladesh Rowing Federation.

Around 100 boats were plied by 1,500 men and women from different places of the district. Participants were in four categories -- three for male and one for female.

Amir Hossain and his team of Kalihati upazila, Asgar Ali and his team of Ghatail upazila secured first and second positions respectively in the 50-malla (boatmen) category. Abdur Rahim and his team of Gopalpur and Enamul Haque and his team of Ghatail got the third place in the same category jointly.

Juran Ali and his team of Kalihati upazila, Mohammad Sadek and Ibrahim Miah and their teams of Kalihati upazila secured the first, second and third places in the 25-malla category respectively.

Abdur Rahman and his team of Kalihati upazila and Sujon Miah and

films in different Indian languages such as "Joymati" (Assamese), "Valu" (Marathi) and "Ghatashradha" (Kannada) will also be part of the celebration.

Other Bangladeshi films to be screened at the programme are "Monpura", "Abujh Mon" and "Lathiyal".

The inaugural will take place on September 1 at 11am and will be followed by the first Indian full length feature film "Raja Harishchandra" [directed and produced by Dadasaheb Phalke in 1913]. It will be followed by a screening of "Apu Sansar", Soumitra Chatterjee will be present there and will introduce his first venture with Ray to the audience.

In the evening, Muzaffar Ali and Farooq Sheikh -- respectively, the director and actor of the much acclaimed Hindi film "Umrao Jaan" -- will introduce their film to the audience.

The celebration will end through a screening of "Jodha Akbar" on September 8 evening. (Entry is by invitation only)



Around 100 boats plied by 1,500 men and women from different places of the district participated in four categories.

PHOTO: STAR

Rohiz Uddin and their teams from the same upazila won the first, second and third places in the 7-malla category respectively.

Jharna Begum, Ambia Khatun and Kalpona Akter and their teams from Kalihati upazila got the first, second and third places in the 7-malla (female boatmen) category respectively.

Kalihati Upazila Parishad Chairman Hassan Imam Khan; senior deputy director of RB Group Iqbal Bin Anwar; general secretary of Bangladesh Rowing Federation Abdul Awal Majnu;

Topu ties the knot

A CORRESPONDENT

Popular singer Topu got married to Naziba Selim on August 24 in Dhaka. Naziba is a student of American International University of Bangladesh. The wedding was a low-key family affair.

Topu asked all his fans and well-wishers for blessings as he starts a new chapter of his life. He also expressed the hope to be able to give the audience more good songs.

About her husband, Naziba said, "I haven't known him for long but I've always been a fan. His most admirable quality is his unpretentious personality. Topu is kind and easy going. I'd like to ask everyone for blessings."

Rashed Uddin Ahmed Topu informed that next year, all other formalities of the wedding would be completed; he and Naziba will move



PHOTO COURTESY: FAGOON BHUIYAN

together then. Topu's breakout hit was "Ek Paye Nupur Tomar". His solo albums are "Bondhu Bhabo Ki" and "Shey Ke". He is currently working on his third solo album, "Aar Tomake". Topu played one of the lead roles in Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's film "Third Person Singular Number".

Beetle Baily

by Mort Walker



Henry

by Don Trachte



ATN BANGLA	11:20 Business and Finance	09:30 Bangla Feature Film: Dadima
	01:25 Shurer Madhuri	03:00 Poyogener Gaan
	03:10 Khelar Jagat	06:15 Drama Serial: Radio Chocolate
	06:35 Amra Koro Joy	07:40 Drama: Je Jibon
	08:40 Drama Serial: Shinghar	Phoringer Doyeler
	Shukher Hoy Bedonar	Shumpuno Roning
	Guney	09:20 Drama: Sharadin Por
CHANNEL i	01:05 Ebgong Cinemar Gaan	10:25 Drama Serial: Shubho Bibah
	02:40 Greyey Ghorey Gaaner	11:35 Close-up Call er Gaan
	Utshab	Maaranga Television
	09:35 Drama Serial: Alice in Wonderland	10:00 Cricket (Live)
	Prantik O Jibon	08:30 Drama Serial: Khashtalay
ntv	08:45 Bangla Feature Film	09:00 Tele-quiz
	03:10 Drama Serial: Ronger Manush	11:00 Adda Gaan
	09:00 Drama: Shunno	CHANNEL 9
	11:30 Music Jam	09:15 Bangla Feature Film
ETV		07:45 Drama Serial: Dead And
		09:25 Kobir Loral

RADIO		
abc: Radio FM 89.2	07:30 Hello Dhaka	
09:00 Mokhurto Jiboney	10:00 Morning Express	
12:00 Darun Dupury	12:30 No Tension	
02:05 The Daily Star Jiboner	04:00 Dhaka Calling	
Joggan	09:00 Full Volume	
03:00 Duranto Bileley	11:00 Back to Back music	
05:00 Shondha Tara	RADIO TODAY FM 89.6	
07:00 Shaj er Maya	08:00 Good Morning Dhaka	
09:00 Rank er Mazhey	12:00 Today's Adda	
11:00 Golper Shesh Nei	04:00 U Tam	
RADIO FOORTI	07:00 Tabey Tai Hak	

Priyojoner Gaan
On Desh TV at 03:00pm
Live Musical Programme
Singers: Dinat Jahan Munni & Shabbir

Sucker Punch
On HBO at 09:30pm
Genre: Action/Thriller
Cast: Emily Browning, Vanessa Hudgens & Abbie Cornish

Shunno
On ntv at 09:00pm
Single Episode TV
Play
Cast: Intekhab Dinar, Zakia Bari Momo

11:30 Ekushey-er Business	11:15 Hits & Bits
06:30 Desh Jury Oparadh Porikroma	CHANNEL 24
07:50 Music Station	01:05 Musical Launch
11:45 Ekushey-er Raat	04:30 Made in Bangladesh
Boishakhi TV	08:05 Move with Mocha
10:25 Bangla Feature Film	10:15 Drama Serial: Jolchobhai
02:25 Shudhu Cinemar Gaan	11:35 Sports 24
05:15 Music Video	Ctv
07:35 Amra Duti Kemon Juti	11:30 Bangla Feature Film
09:20 Drama Serial: Ogniporth	Cricket Extra
10:30 Tomar Golpe Shobar Eid	04:00 Sri Lankan Premier
11:30 Shomoy Katur Gaane Gaane	League (Live)
BANGLAVISION	08:00 Cricket Extra
01:05 Bangla Feature Film	08:30 Sri Lankan Premier
06:05 Ebgong Class-er Bairy	League (Live)
08:15 Drama Serial: Ladies First	Fox Movies
11:25 Business Vision	01:30 Men in Black ii
Rtv	03:10 Men in Black ii
12:35 Bangla Feature Film	06:30 Cars 2
08:20 Drama Serial: Chorkaboo	08:20 The Twilight Saga: Eclipse
09:50 Dhrupodi Kahini	10:25 Shark Night
12:05 Shimana Perley	12:00 Are We Done Yet?
	HBO
	10:15 Happy Feet

ATN BANGLA	09:20pm Jhulonto Babura	09:30pm Tattu Ghora
	11:00pm Kanamachchi Bho Bho	BANGLAVISION
CHANNEL i		09:05pm Long March
07:50pm Noorjahan		Rtv
08:15pm Bondhu Amar		09:05pm Oloshpur
ETV		Maaranga Television
		08:00pm Sat Sawdagor
		CHANNEL 24
		08:15pm Jadur Shahar

BTV	News (Bangla) at 12pm, 2pm, 5pm, 6pm, 9pm, 10pm, 11pm	News (English) at 10am, 4pm, 10pm
ATN BANGLA	News (Bangla) at 11am, 12pm, 2pm, 7pm, 10pm	News (English) at 9am, 3pm, 6pm, 9pm
CHANNEL i	News (Bangla) at 2pm, 9pm, 10:30pm	Rtv
ntv	News (Bangla) at 2pm, 7:30pm, 10:30pm	News (Bangla) at 14:00, 6:45pm, 10:45pm
ETV	News (Bangla) at 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm	News (Bangla) at 2pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm
	News (Bangla) at 1pm, 3pm, 5pm, 7pm, 9pm, 11pm	Maaranga Television News (Bangla) at 7pm, 1am

ATN BANGLA	12:30am Lead News	Boishakhi TV
CHANNEL i	09:45am Trito Matra	12:00am Zero Hour
	12:30pm Tonka Kothon	Rtv
		11:30pm Our Democracy
ntv	12:30am Ei Shomoy	Desh TV
	10:10pm Media Gossip	11:45pm Shuja Kotha
		Maaranga Television
		12:00am Stangprotok
		CHANNEL 24
		12:00am Modhyastar Multabak