

NEWS bytes

Game of Thrones season finale most pirated ever

The final episode of the third series of "Games of Thrones" was the most pirated TV show ever, according to torrent download site TorrentFreak. The blog says the programme was shared and downloaded on the BitTorrents client a million times in 24 hours.

It also claims there were more than 170,000 simultaneous peers sharing one file of the episode. The previous record was made on the show's season three opener, which was shared by 160,000 people simultaneously.

It was also the most pirated TV show in 2012. The HBO-produced series has already been commissioned for a fourth series in 2014. It's thought it will cover the second half of "A Storm of Swords", the third book in George R.R. Martin's series which the show is based on. The final two books in the series have yet to be written.

Source: BBC

IT'S TRUE!

Maqbool Fida Husain, one of the most prolific painters of the subcontinent, was primarily self-taught and painted cinema posters in Mumbai early in his career. To earn extra money, he worked for a toy company designing and building toys. He often travelled to Gujarat to paint landscapes when he could afford to. His works began to be noticed in the late '40s, and his first solo exhibition in Zurich -- in 1952 -- made way for greater heights in his career.



OF MEN, MUSIC AND MOVIES
Manna Dey: Range and resonance

HQ CHOWDHURY

The news that Padmabhushan Manna Dey is sinking in a Bangalore hospital cast a shadow amongst the music lovers of the subcontinent, especially those associated with Hindi and Bangla songs. At 94, this is not unusual but for us who love him, a day more of his 'company' is worth praying for.

Manna Dey reminds us of the fifties, sixties, seventies when music was the rule and cacophony the exception. And he was unique when giants like Mukesh, Talat, Rafi, Hemanta and later on Kishore held the fort.

But what made him so? The answer is too deep rooted to be visible. Composers barring a few, in order to survive in the industry, could rarely tune songs to their liking. The producer, the actor and of course the 'janata' were the priorities. So, Manna Dey with a connoisseur's art of singing was never the singer of choice -- be it Bombay or Calcutta -- the two major centers of the Indian film music industry. He was called, only when others lacked the capacity to produce the 'ultimate' in song rendition ... classic examples being "Tere Naina talash", "Chham chham baje re payella" in Hindi or "Aami janiini tumi soshi hey", "Raat jaga dooti chhokh" in Bangla.

"Tum bin jeevan kaisa jeevan", "Piya meine kiya kiya", "Phool gendwa na maaro", "Darpan jhoot na boley", "Laga chunri mein daag", are some musical pieces that keep ringing; and in Bangla, "Chander aashai", "Gohono megher dhaya ghonea aashay", "Ami aaj akasher moto ekela", "Sobhai to shukhi hotay chai", "Prokhoru daruno eki deeghdho daugdho deen" are just a few of the thousands he recorded for films and outside, leaving behind some of the most obvious ones.

Nephew of the legendary KC Dey, Manna Dey nee Probodh Chandra Dey left his native Calcutta for Bombay in 1941-2 for his career in singing abandoning his father's cherished dream of sending his son to the Inner Temple. With him all that he carried was his trove of Bhatiali and Bangla light classical music and the teachings of his mentors.

In 1943, he cut his first musical teeth in the film, "Ram Rajya" under the baton of Shanker Rao Vyas. But the big leap was in 1950 in the film "Mashal" when under SD Burman, his fathomless voice range in the number, "Upa gagan vishal" became public. A few years later he stormed the Bangla arena with his self composed number, "Koto durey aaj" placing himself along with Hemanta, Satinath and Shyamal in the popularity chart. Readers may therefore note that the 'singer' Manna Dey that we know is from Bombay (Mumbai) not Calcutta (Kolkata)!

During his entire career, he was at ease with just one kind of song... a comic strip, a qawwali, a romantic refrain, a raaga based piece, a lullaby, a ballad ... just name it. And mind you, as a soloist, not as a co-singer. Only Rafi had that rare quality. He also surmounted the language barrier



by its systematic study and mastered the phonetic presentation of words to sing with perfection, songs in all the major languages. All his contemporaries while singing in a language other than his own had the 'accent' problem except perhaps Talat.

With his range and resonance, he had all his colleagues rolled into him to deliver such airs as "Sur na saje", "Kon aaya mere maan ke duare", "Apne liye jiye to kiya jiye", "Zindagi kaise yeh paheli", "Albeli na pritam duare", "Bodo eka lagey", "Coffee house" or a film singer's favourite, "Aayo khahasey ghan shyam".

While Mukesh, Talat, Rafi and Kishore had been the lead singer in some stages of their career, Manna Dey never had that opportunity. That was even during the hey days of celebrated composers like Anil Biswas, Naushad, Husnlal-Bhagatram, SN Tripathi, C. Ramchandra and Vasant Desai; while the talented two, Jaidev (Chaley ja rahen hai) and Kanu Roy (Phir kahen koi phool khiley) did not get much opportunities to exploit him in full. In fact not even the Burmans who were so close to him gave him that scope. Perhaps his presentation was just too refined for the mundane or stereotyped Indian film heroes.

Few people realize that Manna Dey is also a composer of outstanding merit. He teamed best with the noted Bengali lyricist Pulak Bandhopadhyay. Of course, he also worked

successfully with celebrated lyricists like Gouri Prasanna Majumder and Shyamal Gupta. A CD with his own composed Bangla numbers like "Sei to aabar kachhey eley", "Eto raag noi", "Rongini koto mon", "Koto durey aaj", "Tumi aar dekhona", "Teer bhanga dheu aar", "Jani tomar premer joggo" etc., can easily be a collector's delight.

A straight forward man, Manna Dey considered Rafi to be the most accomplished singer of his time along with Lata Mangeshkar. But he had high regards for those 'specials' from Hemanta, Mukesh, Kishore and Talat. He considered Shanker, of the famous Shanker-Jaikesh duo, as the most powerful film composer of his time; loved SD Burman's art of singing and adored KC Dey as someone second to none in terms of talent. Across the border, he spoke highly of Mehdi Hasan and Ghulam Ali.

An absolute master of his craft, no one like him had the perfect command of the musical language. He perfected an art of singing which today many upcoming artists now consider a matter of pride to follow. As one well-known musicologist rightly observed, that in life we seldom come across a voice that attracts and arrests the attention instantly when just few notes strike our drums; Manna Dey belonged to that category.

The writer is a music and film buff.

THE WEEKENDER
Kona lets her hair down

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Popular contemporary musician Kona's schedule is packed with appointments. From stage shows, live TV shows to album recordings, it's all part of her busy life. She recently returned from London after a live performance. Amid the jungle of appointments, Kona manages to find her own time and space. She shared her weekend plans with The Daily Star.

How do you spend your usual weekends?

Kona: If I'm at home, I like to sleep well into the day. Laziness overwhelms me. After I wake up, I try to spend some time with my niece. I also set aside time for the rest of my family.

Do you cook on weekends?

Kona: I like to cook when I have the time. I can cook all local dishes, but my favourite is making fish bhuna.

What's your favorite weekend destination?

Kona: If it's a long vacation, I like to go abroad. On short breaks, I prefer to go to my native home in Gazipur's Dowabari. My father goes over there every Friday; sometimes I accompany him.

Do you watch movies in your leisure time?

Kona: I do. I like to watch both local and foreign films on my breaks; especially Kolkata movies. I watched "Chitrangada" last weekend.

Do you listen to music?

Kona: I listen to a variety of compositions. Old Bangla scores are on my weekend playlist most of the time.

What about reading books?

Kona: I also read books, but my reading habit has waned a bit. Last weekend, I read Humayun Ahmed's novel "Deyal".

How do you spend time when friends come over on weekends?

Kona: We have a grand time, which includes plenty of adda and loads of food. Recently, two of my friends came over from abroad, and the three of us had tons of fun.

How would you describe an ideal weekend?

Kona: There would be no work; I would be able to sleep in as long as I want, organise my room, and go to a restaurant with my family.

What about long vacations? I like to travel with my family to foreign destinations; or if I stay in the country, our choice would be Cox's Bazaar or Rangamati.



Jewel Aich
An avid collector

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Jewel Aich is a world renowned magician. His hat of tricks also includes a surprise: he is a refined flutist. An avid collector of flutes and books, Jewel Aich recently shared his interests with The Daily Star.

"I started collecting flutes at an early age. It's unfortunate that I don't have my earliest collection as they were all burnt by the Pakistan army during 1971. When I was a kid, another boy in our neighborhood knew how to play the instrument. The secret of playing a flute, he told me was simply in the Sa-Re-Ga-Ma. I already knew the basic musical scales as my sisters used to sing.

"A couple of days later, I approached the boy again and this time he offered me his only flute. Although I refused his gift at first, he insisted that I take it. I eventually accepted, and that was the beginning of my flute collection. Since then, I've collected countless flutes.

"There was a man named Ledu Miah in Pirojpur who played and sold flutes. Back then, I used to get four annas (quarter of a taka) as tiffin money from my father. I would save up enough over time, to buy flutes from Ledu Miah. That's how my collection grew a little bigger.

"After I came to Dhaka, I was amazed at the skillful flutework of Ustad Abdur Rahman Shaheb. It was hard to find someone in those days, but I was determined to locate him and eventually sought him out in Mohammadpur's Baash Bari.

"I was doubtful whether he would accept me as a pupil, or how much he would charge for lessons. When he agreed to give me regular lessons, I asked him about



the cost. He replied that this was a mentorship so there was no charge. The Ustad added that in deference for my respect of him I should learn the skills, and always remember him through my flute playing.

"It was tough to find quality bamboo to make flutes. But Ustad Abdur Rahman Shaheb collected the bamboos himself, heated up the iron to make personalised flutes, and gifted some to me. Those flutes also strengthened my collection.

"Later, I started traveling around the globe and collecting flutes from all around. I'm very proud of a specific item -- a bamboo shaped like the number 7. The sky blue coloured flute was a discovery of mine.

"In my collection, I have flutes from Germany, USA, France, Pakistan, Thailand etc. I once travelled to a music conference in Germany, which opened my eyes to the true range and variety of music. I bought a flute there, and when it was being packed I realised that it was inscribed "Made in Pakistan". I felt divided. I didn't want to buy a product made in a country which had ravaged Bangladesh in '71. But I told myself that music is music, it is not connected to rights. So I eventually bought the flute.

"I also collect books as a hobby. As well as buying books from Bangladesh, my first task when I travel abroad is to head to the book store. When I land at an airport, I start looking for books. I have more than 1,000 books in my collection.

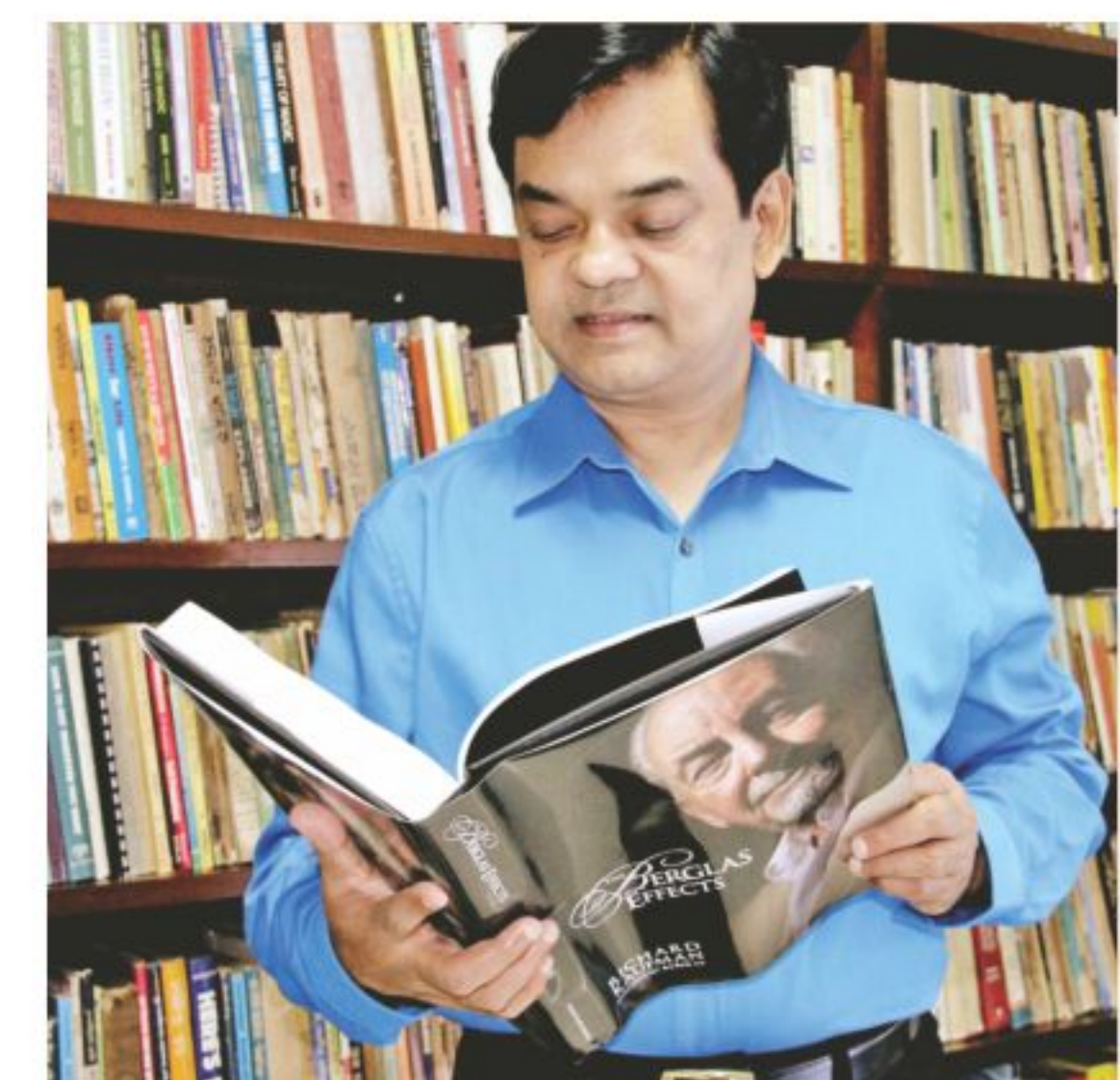


PHOTO: RIDWAN ADDI RUPON

Impress Your PARTNER (Part II)

This week of Pond's Age Miracle My Second Honeymoon will see the remaining five couples honing their craft to dazzle their partners. Last week, five couples successfully re-impressed their significant others, and this episode five more will make attempts to raise the show to an entirely new level. If you have not been keeping up with the episodes, you've been missing one of the most entertaining reality TV shows of international standard, to be ever broadcasted on Bangladeshi television.

On tonight's episode, couples are going to practice and perfect their craft on the way to impress their partners and judges. The couples will perform their chosen activity to prove their love in front of the judges, other contestants and of course their significant other.

This episode is going to feature five of ten couples, competing not only to win in this show but to win their partner's heart. Among the judges this week will be famous singer Partha Barua, cooking-show anchor Sharmin Lucky,

artist Kanak Chanpa Chakma and actress Deepa Khandakar. The couples have been groomed by professionals to ensure an entertainment-packed episode.

It is absolutely enthralling to see such ordinary, real life individuals doing extraordinary stunts and moving far out of their comfort zone to reveal their love for their chosen ones. Viewers this week are bound to learn some new tricks if they want to know the many ways one can impress their better half.

Among the outstanding performances to watch out of this weekend are Rumpa's passionate and dedicated singing, Hasib's original composition, Shama's bike riding skit with music, Mahfuz the Doctor's vibrant dancing, Erfana's heartfelt letter, Zahir's original dish 'Flavor of Eternal Love', Farzana's placards with little love notes in them, Nahin's guitar and dance number, Sumyira's virtuosic keyboard playing and Asif's distinguished voice.

Find out tonight at 9.45pm on Desh Tv

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My 2nd Honeymoon
Come fall in love again

Are there any more ways to impress your life partner?

Watch the remaining loving couples put their hearts out on the stage to charm their partners!

To watch this romantic episode, keep your eyes on Desh TV tonight at 9.45pm
Catch the repeat telecast tomorrow at 12:15pm

TV Partner
desh.tv

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NEW RELEASES

Aakash Paney Haat Baralem
Solo album of Rabindra Sangeet by Papia Sarwar
Source: G-series

Benuka
Solo album of Nazrul Sangeet by Khairul Anam Shakil
Source: Bengal Foundation

Ekoda Tumi Priye
Solo album of Rabindra Sangeet by Paromita
Source: Laser Vision

Otol Joler Gaan
Album of the band Joler Gaan
Self-produced

Ronni Ahmmed's book launch in Venice



Guests at the book launch. (below) Cover of "The Cosmic Ark".

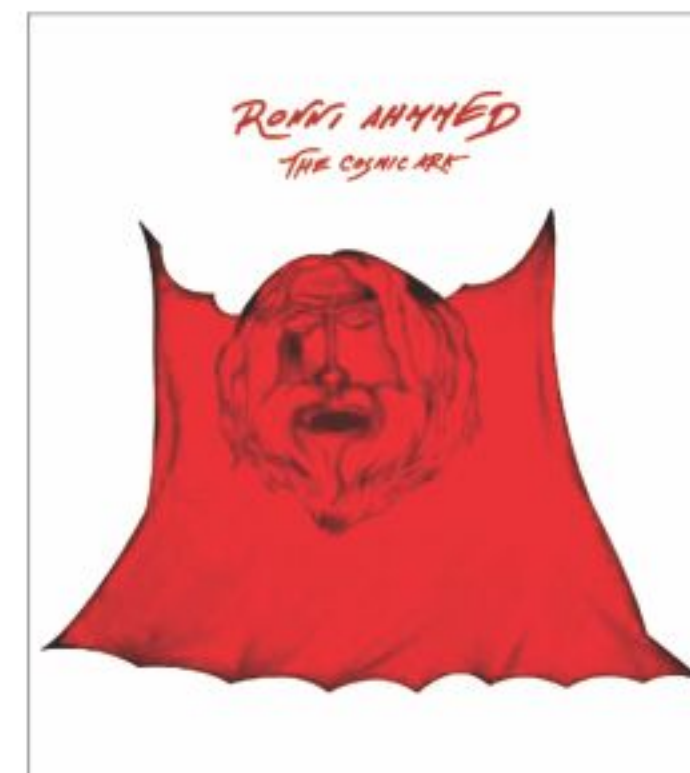
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prominent Bangladeshi artist Ronni Ahmmed's art book "The Cosmic Ark" was officially launched recently at Macao Museum of Art, Arsenale, Campo della Tana Castello in Venice. The launching was followed by Ronni's linguistic performance and a video show.

Curator and President of Arte Communication, Paolo de Grandis; curator and art critic Professor Yacouba Konaté; writer Ebadur Rahman; urban designer and chairperson of Mermaid Art Foundation Ziauddin Pablo Khan and Ronni Ahmmed himself spoke on the occasion.

Sponsored and published by the Mermaid Art Foundation, "The Cosmic Ark" is a compilation of the artist's major works spanning over two decades. The book includes over 300 images of the artist's work including paintings, prints, sketches, sculptures, murals, designs and more.

Ronni's works have a very distinct style; he has been a trendsetter in the Bangladeshi art arena.



Through his paintings, the artist focuses on myths, and merges the past and the future of man, history, political and religious belief and nature. He applies varied symbols, motifs and fantastic elements, using human forms, animals and varied surrealist imageries from his imagination. Ronni's works hold a kind of illusory atmosphere, which seems unfamiliar but this depiction of an apparently unknown civilisation or community expresses the same kind of message one gets when confronted with strange reality. Absurdity, mockery, brutality, power play,

hypocrisy, hallucination, loneliness, science -- all these get diffused in his visions. The artist seems fascinated with myth and its many aspects and his message has been integrated in his tinted paintings. He is mainly a storyteller of the ludicrous and this young exponent tells his stories in an unusually humorous way. He tries to focus on various sides of our society.

Graduating from the Institute of Fine Arts (now the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Dhaka), Ronni has participated in many art events in Bangladesh and abroad, including exhibitions, workshops, residencies, camps, performances and presentations. Most recently, he participated in the Open 15 and Open 14 International exhibitions on Sculptures and Installations and also in the Santorini Biennale of Arts '12 in Greece. In 2011, he participated in the special exhibition in Paris on Bangladesh's 40th year of Independence, and in 2009, he participated in the fourth Fukuoka Asian Art Triennale. His works were also exhibited at various art events in Japan, Egypt, Australia, Poland, Myanmar, India and Jordan.

JUST FOR LAUGHS!

Illustration: Sadat



When love was all...



Bliss in wedlock...



The scowls, the disillusion...



Back to the solo ride...