

## WHAT'S ON

**Solo Musical Soiree**  
Artist: Khalid Anam Shakil  
Venue: Chhayasat Auditorium, Dharmad  
Date: September 26  
Time: 6:30pm

**Simple Pottery Exposition**  
Artist: Dr. Anurad Islam Sheikh Chandra  
Venue: Zainul Gallery, 1, Tashira Time Arts, DO

**MURTAJA BASEER**  
Solo Art Exhibition  
Artist: Murtaja Baseer  
Venue: Galleri Kaya, H-20, Rd-16, Sec-4, Uttara  
Date: Sep 13-25

**Stand Up Comedy**  
by US Comedian Charles Burks  
Organiser: Nareed's Comedy Club  
Venue: Baridhara DGHS Convention Centre

**Group Art Exhibition**  
Title: Shreebhaby by 11 women artists  
Venue: Gallery Twenty One, 11th Floor, 751 Sarajwadi Road, Dharmad  
Date: Sep 12-Oct 4  
Time: 12-8pm

**Solo Classical Soiree**  
Artist: Dr. Jagadnanda Roy  
Venue: Bidisha Sahitya Kendra, (4<sup>th</sup> floor), Banglamotor  
Date: Sep 25  
Time: 6:30pm

**Mymensingh Geetika**  
Nityashub 2014  
Venue: National Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy  
Date: Sep 25-30  
Time: 7pm everyday

**Solo Painting Exhibition**  
Artist: Gopul Ghose  
Venue: Bengal Shilpalaya, H-42, Rd-27 (old), Dharmad  
Date: Sep 26-Oct 18  
Time: 12-8pm

# HEMANTA KUMAR MUKHOPADHYAY

## The Man with a Golden Voice

PROFESSOR MESBAH-US-SALEHEEN

A quarter of a century ago, on September 26, 1989 to be exact, not only we Bengalis but the people of the entire sub-continent lost one of the most popular and versatile singers and composers — Hemanta Kumar. He was also a film producer. Hemanta Kumar was born on June 16, 1920 in Kashi (now Varanasi), where his maternal family lived.

Most certainly he was born to sing. Hemanta wrote in his autobiography named "Anandadhara", published in 1979, that as a student of class ten in Mitra Institution School of Bhawanipore in Kolkata, he was expelled by the Assistant Head Master for singing in the class-room in a free period with fellow friends. Later, the order expelling him was revoked when his influential father intervened. There he met his longtime friend Subhas Mukhopadhyay, later to become a noted poet. When he was student of second class (class nine now), Subhas took him to audition at the Broadcasting Corporation (later All India Radio). He sailed through the audition and got a letter of acceptance three months later. At first his father did not allow him to take on the assignment, but his mother persuaded her husband to change his mind.

Hemanta's first song, "Amar Ganete Ele Nabarupi Chirantani" was aired on the radio in 1933. The song was written by Subhas Mukhopadhyay. He passed his Matriculation Examination with a first division in 1937 and subsequently was enrolled at Bengal Technical Institution at Jadavpur, Kolkata. However, he dropped academics to pursue a career in music, a decision that evoked the ire of his parents and relatives. In 1937 he recorded his first album with Gramophone Company of India, under Columbia Records.

He started to sing in Bengali movies in 1941 and later on in Hindi films from 1944. Over the same period he continued singing modern songs and also popularised Rabindra Sangeet. In his autobiography he recalled the first Rabindra Sangeet he learnt: "Amar Mollika Bone, Jolkhon Prothom Dhoreche Koli". He migrated from Kolkata to Mumbai in March and started a job as music director at the small sum of Rs. 1500 a month in Filmistan, owned by Sasadhar Mukherjee. Later his songs "Jag Darde Ishq Jag", and "Zindegi Payer Ki Do Char Ghari Hoti Hai", in film "Anarkali" from Filmistan were hits.

Hemanta's major breakthrough came in the same year of 1952 when Sachin Dev



Burman offered him playback singing assignments for Guru Dutt's film "Jaal". The song "Yeh Raat Yeh Chand Ni Fir Kahan", established his position as a major playback singer. However, it was his music composition for the movie "Nagin" that earned him fame and national recognition as a music director. The song "Tann Dole Mera Man Dole" from that movie became a smashing hit and made the snake charmer tune popular in the Indian sub-continent. In 1955, he earned the prestigious Filmfare Award for the Best Music Director.

Although he was very busy as a singer and music director in Mumbai, he took time to sing and gave music direction to Bangla movies in Kolkata. The 1950s and 1960s saw him at his pinnacle as a singer

and music director. In his autobiography he describes 1954, 1955 and 1956 as his golden years. After the success of "Nagin", he got an offer from Kolkata to direct music for the movie "Sap Mochan". Although he was becoming increasingly popular in Mumbai, his contract for the movie gave him a meagre sum of Rs 5,000. When "Sap Mochan" was released, it was a super-hit both as a movie and its songs

also. How one can forget the song "Sono Bondhu Sono, Pranhin Ei Sohoer Eikhota". After "Sap Mochan" he gave music direction to the film "Harano Sur". According to him, it took only half an hour to give music for the song "Tumi Je Amar, Ogo Tumi Je Amar", and 15 minutes to give music to the song "Aj Dujonar Duti Poth, Duti Dike Geche Beke". It is unbe-

lievable, because these two songs are still very popular in our music world.

In Bangla films his voice was recognised as the voice of the Mahanayak Uttam Kumar. Similarly his voice in the Hindi films was recognised as the voice of the legendary actor Dev Anand. He also promoted Rabindra Sangeet and made it immensely popular in our society. How can one forget his songs for dance dramas "Poth o Pothik", "Sap Mochan", and "Chitragada", albeit his solo Tagore songs?

In those years Hemanta was thriving both as a playback singer and as a gifted music composer. He was considered the second hero to popularise Rabindra Sangeet, the first being none other than the legendary singer Pankaj Kumar Mullick.

Apart from Bangla songs, Hemanta Kumar also sang in several other languages like Marathi, Gujarati, Assamese, Oriya, Konkani, Tamil and Bhojpuri. His discography is long. Some of the Tagore songs like, "O Amar Desher Mati", "Aguner Parashmoni", "Sedin Dujone Dulechinu Bone", "Amar Porano Jaha Chae", and "Tumi Ki Keboli Chhobi" are unparalleled. His song "Dhono Dannye Pushpe Bhora", a Dwijendra Geeti and the two songs of Rajanikanta, "Ami Tomare Chahine Jibone" and "Ami Okriti Odhom Boleo To Kichu" are noteworthy. One of his best Adhunik Bangla songs is "Runner". Other super hit adhunik Bangla songs, to name a few are "O Akash Prodipl Jelo Na", "Ami Jiboner Eto Alo", "Ei Meghla Din-e Ekla Chore", "Ei Baluka Belae Ami Likkhechinu", "Ami Duur Hote Tomakei Dekhechi", "O Nodire", and "Obak Pritihibi", written by Sukanta Bhattacharya. His songs for Bangla movies are equally popular. The songs, "Muche Jaowa Din Guli", "Surer Akashe Tumi Je Go Sukarta", "Aj Dujonar Duti Poth", and "Surja Dobar Pala Ashe Jodi" are notable. His song "Ei Poth Jodi Na Sesh Hoi", lip synced by Uttam Kumar on a motorbike with Suchitra Sen, was unique.

Although he sang Nazrul songs at many functions, his recorded songs are few and far between. Among them "Chokh Gelo Pakhine", and "Potho Chhote Jodi Chokite" are notable.

In 1945, Hemanta married Bela Mukherjee, who died on June 25, 2009. They had two children: a son, Jayanta, and a daughter, Ranu. When Ranu was a young girl, she sang the popular song "Aai Khuku Aai, Katena Somoy". Hemanta Kumar's immortal songs continue to thrill countless listeners. And they will in the future...

## Musical evening dedicated to Hemanta at IGCC

A CORRESPONDENT

Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre (IGCC) is organising a musical evening dedicated to Hemanta Mukhopadhyay by eminent Indian artist Soumyen Adhikari today at 6:30pm at IGCC, Gulshan.

Born in Kolkata, Soumyen Adhikari was initiated into music by his father, Golok Nath Adhikari. Later he trained in Rabindra Sangeet, classical music and modern songs from stalwarts like Shyamal Chatterjee, Chittopriyo Mukherjee and Probir Mojumder. His music is deeply influenced by legendary singer Hemanta Mukhopadhyay.

Soumyen Adhikari has won several awards during his illustrious career such as "Hemanta Smriti Puroskar", "Uttam Kumar Smriti Puroskar" and "Lok Nath Award". He is a playback singer in several Bengali films and TV serials. He has performed extensively within India and western countries including UK, USA, Canada, Germany, Belgium, Sweden and Singapore.

Asian Paints, IRCON and Marico Bangladesh are partners of the event.



SHAH ALAM SHAZI

Riaz, who once reigned over the film industry, has scarcely been seen on the silver screen over the last couple of years. But change is round the corner. He has turned in some fine performances on the small screen and signed up for a film recently.

In a recent conversation, the three-time national film award winner talked to The Daily Star about the vagaries of the celluloid world and the ups and downs of his career.

**Do Bangladeshis have the craving to watch films?**  
Riaz: Our people are cine-lovers. Due to Youtube and satellite TV, we now have easy access to well-known movies.

**Is the number of movie theatres on the wane?**

Riaz: There used to be 800 movie halls but that figure is now down to 400. On the face of it, cinema halls are burgeoning. The truth is that they are drastically declining by the day.

**Tell us about the films people watch in movie theatres?**

Riaz: They are nothing but remakes of Hindi, Telugu and Tamil movies. People are fed up with this trend. We try to do remakes of Bollywood movies but the fact is that we lack their technical finesse.

**What are the ingredients for a good film?**

Riaz: A good script, an experienced filmmaker, cinematographer, costume designer, music director and finally a skilled film editor.

**Is there a craze for digital movies?**

Riaz: Due to this trend, anyone can become a director, film artiste, music director and scriptwriter overnight. In most of the cases this doesn't work. Take, for example, a TV director making a film that usually flops at the box office. Are such movies made for boring the audience?

**What about the commercialisation of the media?**  
Riaz: Everyone concerned like directors, producers, artistes and owners of cinema halls are out to make a quick buck. For example, producers expect to rake in Taka 3 lakh after investing Taka 2 lakh in a movie.

**Is there any hope left?**

Riaz: A film is an important cultural platform for any country. The government should step in to boost the film industry. Secondly, it is a positive sign that TV channels are coming forward to make some good movies, though I must add that many are not up to the mark.

**Can corporate houses play a role in film production?**

Riaz: Definitely, they can take a lead from India where many big corporate houses have stepped into film production. As it is now an industry, it is high time to make films professionally where a director will research the plot while another will research the market.

**You played the hero in many hit movies, so why did you take such a long break from the field?**

Riaz: At one stage, I felt a social responsibility and wasn't fully satisfied by my work. There wasn't enough social commitment in filmhood. I am not after money so I left the film industry.

**Do you think it was the right decision?**  
Riaz: Maybe not. But I need an experienced team and if I get one, I plan to make a film in the near future.

**After a long hiatus, you will be seen on the silver screen again. What is your new film?**

Riaz: "Sweetheart", directed by Wazed Ali Sumon. I was keen to act in the film after the producer assured me that he had been doing a film with a difference.

**You are now busy with TV plays?**

Riaz: I'm now very busy shooting TV plays as my audience is keen to see me again. Besides, I want to convey positive messages to the viewers through the dramas.

## CLASSICS

# "High and Low": Contrasts of the human psyche

FAHIM FERDOUS

Akira Kurosawa is considered one of the most influential filmmakers in the history of cinema, mesmerising audiences and critics alike over the decades, from "Drunken Angel" (1948) to "Dreams" (1990). In between, he delivered masterpieces like "Rashomon", "Seven Samurai", "Ikiru", "Yojimbo", "Dreams", "Kagemusha" and "Ran", among others.

A weeklong Akira Kurosawa festival organised jointly by International Academy of Film and Media (IAFM) and Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh was held at the main auditorium of Bangladesh National Museum (BNM). On the penultimate day of the festival (September 23), "High and Low" (1963) was screened, in the retro 35mm film format.

In a nutshell, "High and Low" (also dubbed "Heaven and Hell") is a crime suspense thriller. Based on US writer Ed McBain's novel "King's Ransom", it tells the story of a powerhouse of the Japanese shoe industry, Kingo Gondo (played by Toshiro Mifune, who Kurosawa cast in 16 of his films) of National Shoes, whose plans of accumulating more money to buy off the company falls in jeopardy when a kidnapper attempts to kidnap his son, but takes his chauffeur's son by mistake. A man of principles, Gondo is torn between giving up his ambitions and life as he knows it, and saving an innocent child's life who is in a peril his son was destined for. He eventually pays the ransom and the boy returns, but he is evicted from the company.

The police, meanwhile, through rigorous investigation, find and capture the kidnapper, an intern doctor at a hospital —who, at the opposite end of the social spectrum, committed the crime in a sort of inner break-out from the societal divide. Gondo meets the killer in holding, who is unapologetic and almost satisfied of his deed.

Only in terms of the elements, "High and Low" is a fascinating watch. Thematically, the film is rather Hitchcock-like: a sly crime, suspense, digging and finally finding out who the culprit is, it's also unlike other literary works Kurosawa has adapted from, which were from greats like Shakespeare and Goethe. (It's a very little-known fact that Ed McBain — under the changed name Evan Hunter, wrote the screenplay for Hitchcock's immortal classic "The Birds".) The personal, internal conflicts to the zoomed-out holistic depiction of Japanese society, corporate dynamics, crime investigations — "High and Low" is



quite a few films wrapped in one. The characters are also woven masterfully; Gondo's trusted right-hand man who sells him out fearing that Gondo's is a sinking ship to the meek chauffeur, who is almost apologetic that his son's misdeeds kidnapping is causing him the suffering. The calm, sharp chief detective Tokura who drives the investigation and is not shy to resort to deceit to bring the kidnapper to maximum justice to the bald-headed detective adding deft comic relief, the use of foil characters is perfect.

The film also changes pace and genre, from suspense to moral dilemma and corporate competition to police procedure, a glimpse into the criminal underbelly and calm ruthlessness of the kidnapper — who tries to kill his drug-addicted accomplices, twice, by supplying them overly pure heroin. And then it ends on the enigmatic, film noir sequence where the kidnapper is confronted, and his society is placed in contrast to Gondo's

monomyth-like journey — who has lost all his previous wealth, but is in a way set free working for a smaller shoe company but making the decisions himself.

Cinematographically, the film bears tell-tale signs of classic Kurosawa: the use of long lens, the same scene done from multiple cameras and use of widescreen, crowded frames, brilliant use of static frames to build up tension and swiftly-panning and moving ones to augment action and thrill. Kurosawa's unique idea of using music that conflicts the visual is also seen in it, and serves to great effect. His immaculate attention to detail is also evident all across the storyboard with even small props on the screen adding value.

In an age when filmmaking is becoming more assuring as a career and resources are more accessible to anyone looking for them, films like "High and Low" can be a great lesson; it's not a big budget, technology, extravagant sets and locations that makes a great film, but a good story and great storytelling.

## Farmers' game show Krishoker Eid Ananda on Channel i

A CORRESPONDENT

Farmers' game show "Krishoker Eid Ananda", the popular entertainment TV programme during Eid, will return to the screens of Channel i on the second day of Eid. The initiative of popular agro-documentary "Hridoye Mati O Manush" is the brainchild of Shykh Seraj, Director and Head of News of Channel i and noted development journalist.

The programme features eight interesting games which were shot at the country's northernmost Patgram Upazila under Lalmonirhat district. Thousands of farmers from nearby areas gathered at the Rubberdam ground to enjoy the competition, where farmers participated, taking it time off from their busy schedules.

Apart from the games, Shykh Seraj will also turn the spotlight on the socio-economic problems faced by inhabitants of the enclave.

The show will air at 3:30pm on the second day of Eid on Channel i.



## TV WATCH

# Ittyadi at Uttara Gonobhaban

A CORRESPONDENT

BITV's popular variety show "Ittyadi" showcases the country's culture, history and heritage. Viewers are always captivated by the historic venue segments.

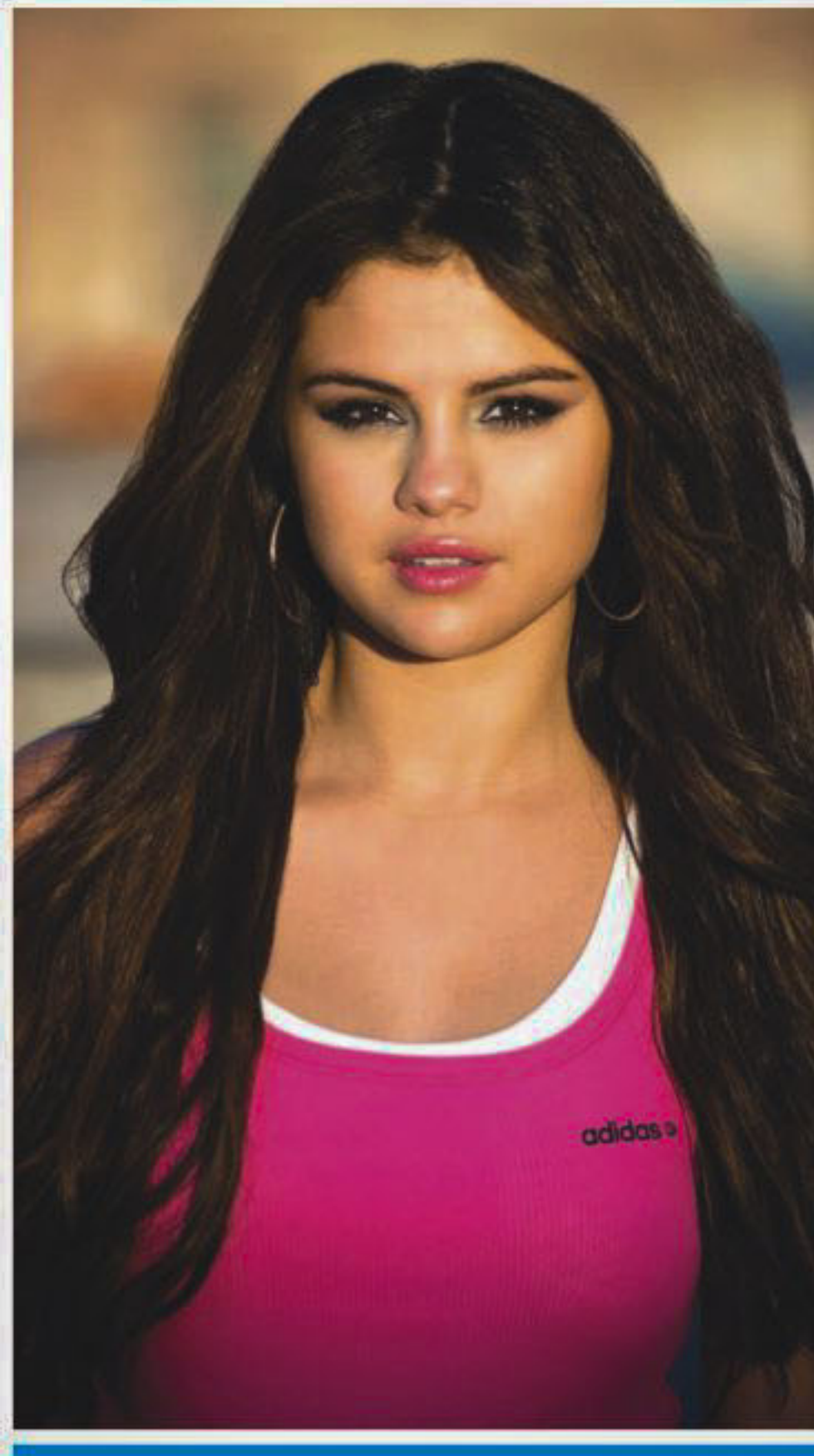
This month's episode of the show was shot at the famed Uttara Gonobhaban in Natore. Formerly known as Dighapata Rajbari, the ancient Uttara Gonobhaban has numerous archaeological wonders. Curious locals gathered at the shooting spot to get a glimpse of the making of their favourite programme.

This episode of "Ittyadi" will air on BITV,



## IT'S TRUE!

US singer-actress Selena Gomez is active in various social and philanthropic works. She is the ambassador of DoSomething.org, after being involved with the charity Island Dog, which helps dogs in Puerto Rico. Gomez is also involved with the charity RAISE Hope For Congo, an initiative of the Enough Project, which helps raise awareness about conflict minerals and violence against Congolese women. Gomez, Demi Lovato, Miley Cyrus, and the Jonas Brothers recorded "Send It On", a charity single with all of its proceeds to the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund.



FAYZA HAQ

Speaking at the photographic exhibition of Shammin Sultana, held recently at the Dhaka Art Centre (DAC), noted artiste and media personality Mustafa Monwar, said that Shammin's poems and her pictures were both worth talking about. Just as a woman's smile is a pleasure to look upon, said Mustafa Monwar, so Shammin's work was a delight to look upon.

Professor Emirates Anisuzzaman, speaking there, said Mustafa Monwar was a skilled photographer apart from being a qualified painter. One finds beauty with time in the work of photographers he said. In order to give a unique flavour such as Shammin had given to her photographs, one has to have something unusual to say, said Prof. Anisuzzaman.

Noted artist Monirul Islam said photography, in Greek, meant making pictures with light. Pictures could have a political bent or they could deal with war or they could even be simple, telling portraits, such as the ones to be

seen in the exhibition. Either you liked a photograph or you didn't, just as you liked a painting or you didn't, he said. He admired the open spaces of Shammin.

Shammin herself said that having read Jibanananda Das and Rabindranath, she would like to share the beauty of Bali and what she saw there, as the poets made her search for beauty in all that she saw.

Bali is more than just a spot for tourism for a traveller from Bangladesh. Shammin, who learnt the art of Photography at an NGO, has learnt the art of the vedic sayings, as Rabindranath did, when going to Bali. Later on, she completed a photographic course at Alliance Française.

Kutta Beach, Bali had the silhouette of Shammin's family seen against the sea, its beach and the golden steak on the horizon. The shadows on the wooden beach were welcoming. Lovina Beach, with its white boat, the pole sticking out to the sky, the sky itself a beauty with the setting sun and the mixture of blue, white and golden

clouds was remarkable.

Ubud, Tegallang, and Kutta Beach, with the girls making castles in the sand, with a large, upturned boat at the backdrop were gorgeous. The sky was fabulous in the case of Kutta Beach, while the green among the palm trees and the layers of cultivation were admirable.

The little girl in the Luwak Coffee plantation, Pulina, with cups of tea and coffee in front of her, holding on to a coffee seed and sporting a blue and pink striped dress was superb. The backdrop of the brown wickerwork wall of the shop is interesting. The inclusion of a bit of the greenery outside the coffee house is also interesting, the pigeon on the beach chair on the sea shore, with the girl walking with her multi coloured dress depicts the place well.

So does the picture of the solitary person walking on Kutta Beach, with the surrounding waves of water and the dark ground in the backdrop, with people on them. The shades of blue of the photograph are scintillating.