



HERE TO STAY BALAM

Balam is one of the most popular solo artists in the country. Small wonder when you consider the fact that he used to be the front man and lead guitarist for the famous band Warfaze. What makes him a hit with his fans is his versatile voice and pop-fusion signature. Despite such widespread popularity in both home and abroad, he has been absent from the industry for quite some time. This week, Star Showbiz sits down with the famous singer to know what makes this versatile singer tick.

COVER STORY

Tell us a bit about your ventures in relationships. I was unsuccessful in my very first romantic relationship. It was very serious at that time but unfortunately it did not work out. I was quite shaken by the experience, and despite liking many people along the way, nothing else happened in that department. I ended up being married to the next person I got involved with, but it was a much more rational and mature relationship.

Any stories regarding the scores of adoring fans you have?

There are always people who take the singer more seriously than the songs.

Many of my female fans called me quite frequently to confess how they felt about me and my work. There were the occasional few eccentrics for whom I had to change my cell phone number. I always behaved well with them and tried to make them understand that their demands were just not feasible.

Honestly I look back on these encounters as amusing anecdotes with bitter-sweet experiences. I still enjoy the attention from the female fans, maybe even miss the endless phone calls from time to time, but the existence of such strong affection from my fans has always served as inspiration.

How did you meet your wife? What's her opinion on your legion of adoring female fans?

My wife takes these things as interesting anecdotes. There is no insecurity as she knows how I see these things as inspirational energy from the fans. She's very liberal and supportive of my career. She was a friend of a fan and after we went out for a few days, I made up my mind that I would be in it for the long haul with her.

Why the hiatus from your work? Well, the break is unplanned really. My wife has been dealing with some health issues and so I decided to give her more time. The situation as a whole made me lose motivation to work on

something new, but I have continued live performances from time to time. Plus the fall in remunerations in the industry added to the effect.

What would you say is the cause of the fall in income from the music industry?

The advent of the internet and the telecom industry has made fans more accessible to the content, but pirated content is more easily available as well, hurting the artists' incomes. Still there are talented artists in the industry, but the guidance system that was previously there is not present anymore. There is no proper guidance to hone those talents. We should take the commercial aspects seriously through professional agencies who manage the talent so that the recognition is maintained. While ad firms do provide some aspects of the service, the proper management does not happen as we need them to focus on maintaining the marketing side and generate shows while artists can focus on the creative sides. I do miss the old days of gaining mass popularity through recording and launching CDs. The tangibility of buying, owning and listening to a bought CD is a feeling the people are missing out on. But times have changed and I have signed up with "Galaxy" as my agency which will help me concentrate on the creative aspects of my work while they focus on the commercial sides.

What inspired you to make the comeback?

I kept running into Taposh bhai from time to time in various events and occasions around Dhaka, and every time I ran into him, he was insistent that I make a comeback. A few of my friends insisted as well, but it was primarily Taposh bhai whose insistence and offer to direct a music video if I made a



new single, that led me to decide on making a comeback. So what are the fans to expect from Balam now that he's returning to a much changed music industry?

My first HD music video "Tui Chara Shob E Meghe Dhaka" is out now on YouTube and GaanBangla TV. It has created quite an impact in the market and we have received a great response from the fans for this. I also plan on bringing out a singles album since it's much better to make 3 or 4 good, memorable songs rather than a full album where only a few songs are hits. But regardless of any changes that may come along, I plan on continuing in the industry.

Any concluding words for the fans?

I wish to convey my love to all the fans that made me who I am today, and I hope to keep up a consistency that would keep all my fans happy.

*Interviewed by Rafi Hossain & Narrated by Mohaiminul Islam
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