



Chirkutt gives Bangla music Latin twist

A CORRESPONDENT

Popular Bangla fusion band Chirkutt has set out to enrich the rich tapestry of Bangla music through a collaboration with 24 Horas, a famous Latin American band from the Dominican Republic. Robi-Yonder Music brings together two greats of the rich genres of music. The result is the unique song "Ontore Bahire", released on the app during last Eid-ul-Fitr.

The music video of the song was released today at a press conference at

the Robi Corporate Office. Chirkutt also played the unplugged version of the song at the event. A recorded message from 24 Horas was shared at the programme.

Talking about Chirkutt's experience of working with 24 Horas, the band's lyricist and vocal Sharmin Sultana Sumi said that both bands worked on the song by introducing their genres to one another which helped to develop mutual respect for each other's style of music.

Sumi went on to say that based on their common understanding she

came up with the lyrics for "Ontore Bahire" within 15 minutes and gave it twist of "bachata" (a Latin-American form of music that originated from the Dominican Republic). "24 Horas loved it and following our recording they joined in to put their mark on the song with their unique bachata music. It was an unbelievable experience."

She said that they only had one day to shoot the video in New York. This was the first ever collaboration between a Bangla and Latin band, she added.

SELIM SH CHOWDHURY

A silent cultural frontliner



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Cultural personality Selim Shamsul Huda Chowdhury is the chief of leading theatre group Padatik Bangladesh, but that is not the only hat he wears. He is also the organising secretary of Sammilita Sangskritik Jote. His creative faculties extend to set and light designs for theatre productions, drawing and painting. A seasoned organiser, he is working away tirelessly in the background for the country's cultural development.

Padatik began its journey on January 21, 1978 with a core team of spirited Dhaka University students. The troupe has produced popular plays like "Shojon Badiar Ghat", "Monoshar Pala", "Maa", "Chandraboti", "Shey", "Khetmojur Khoimuddin", "Poramati", "Khyapa Paglar Pyachal" and "Jol Balika".

"We promote original plays based on literary classics and our rich folk heritage. The founding chief of our troupe was SM Solaiman, who had an affinity with our folk culture. That's why our productions reflect on folk traditions," says Chowdhury.

"The spirit of Liberation War shaped our theatre, but it has gone a little stagnant now due to our socio-economic dynamics. Many theatre activists want to be full-time professionals but are constrained by socio-economic considerations. Many throng to TV channels for an alternative career," he adds.

But it's not all gloom and doom. Chowdhury, publication secretary of International Theatre Institute (ITI) Bangladesh Centre, was the editor of the daily bulletin of the Dhaka International Theatre Festival. "We also published a daily bulletin at 33rd ITI world conference held in China in 2011. I feel proud of this achievement as the bulletin created a stir among world theatre activists," recalls Chowdhury.

Padatik Sangeet Sangsad, the musical wing of Padatik, in association with Kolkata-based cultural organisation Mitali, has been arranging a Rabindra Sangeet talent hunt programme for the last 12 years. Young talents from Bangladesh, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura [of India] participate in the competition. "We also hold the Padatik Ekushey Cultural Congress in Dhaka and introduced 'Kachi Smriti Padak' in 2004 in memory of its founder member Abu Mohammad Murtaash Kachi," says Chowdhury.

As general manager (Production and Events) of The Daily Star, he is also the artistic director of cultural programmes like Star Melodies, organised by the newspaper. He is at the helm of The Daily Star's O- and A-Level Award ceremony programmes for years. He also organised cultural programmes on behalf of The Daily Star by cultural troupes from English medium schools across Dhaka, Chittagong, Sylhet and Narayanganj featuring "The Practice of Bangla Culture in English Medium Schools" for the last 16 years.

But there's a long road ahead. "Digital archiving of our culture, history, and heritage is required for Bangladesh. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA) regularly publishes monthly Shilpakala bulletin with which I am currently involved with. I have suggested that BSA authorities launch an effective website to preserve our cultural heritage," he adds.

Despite all these responsibilities, Chowdhury holds an important role in his professional life. He started his professional career in The Daily Sangbad in 1983 and switched careers multiple times before settling at The Daily Star in 2000.

Cultural practice is a cornerstone of Chowdhury's family life. His wife Nargis Chowdhury is a Rabindra Sangeet artiste while his son, Maher Sayeed Chowdhury, is a multi-instrumentalist, lyricist and composer, pursuing rock music.

Nirob: Work is his mantra

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Actor Nirob is all wired up for a new film titled "Ami Shudhu Tor Hobo", directed by Rafiq Shikder. Momo plays the lead opposite him--their first on screen romantic roles together. The duo worked together in a TV play eight years ago.

The new film will be shot in Pabna and is likely to be completed in 20 days. On his role in the film, Nirob said, "I loved the script, and this is the first time I have co-starred with Momo in a film. I hope that we slip into our roles well."

The actor is also busy with another film titled, "Game Returns", directed by Royal Khan. He is cast opposite Toma Mirza.



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The Nazrul Memorial Mural in the capital's Sonargaon Intersection of the Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue seems to have undergone some beautification, as promised by Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Annisul Huq in the face of protest by Nazrul artistes against its derelict state. The Daily Star had run a photo of the sorry state of the memorial of the National Poet on May 14, drawing the attention of the mayor. The mayor then attended a protest stand-in on May 23 and promised to take better care of the two memorials along the avenue. Although the DNCC's facelift initiative is highly appreciable, there is certainly room for improvement -- appropriate colour, with potential spot-lighting and usage of plantation in an extended tiled area.

PHOTO: STAR



Award and open studio at Bidyapeeth

A CORRESPONDENT

Aminul Islam Young Artist Award 2015 will be conferred tomorrow (July 23) at 5:30pm at Gyantapas Abdur Razzaq Bidyapeeth, Dhanmondi. Bengal Foundation, as the managing partner for the award, has also organised an open studio at the Bidyapeeth at 5pm.

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