



5 BANGLA DANCE SONGS FOR THE BIYEBARI!

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PHOTOS: COURTESY

Finally the year 2016 comes to its last stop—the month of December. Though winter is yet to show its charms, festivals have started to take the spin. One of the best parts of December is obviously the wedding season – not to mention all the music and choreographies that accompany it! The Star Weekend brings together a list of five Bangla songs that you can groove to at the weddings and holud ceremonies!

Local Bus – Pritom featuring Momtaz and Shafayet

A Holud night is incomplete without the folk queen! Along with her classics, the new hit number – Local Bus – would definitely be one of the top songs on the Holud playlist!

Reshmi Churi – Kona

Kona's songs have always been a favourite in the wedding scene. This year Kona released her hit song Reshmi Churi which already has been a top chart buster on both the radio and television shows. This song will definitely take the Holud glamour to the next level!

Jhoom – Minar

Though the song is a bit on the mellow side, Jhoom is a song which can bring the 'Aww' factor to the Holud playlist. Till now, this romantic ballad has won the hearts of millions and surely will be a great addition to a wedding!

Alu Peyajer Kabbo – Shaan

This love song from the movie Aynabaji has already been buzzing in everyone's headphones. Using Alu (potato) and Peyaj (onion) as metaphorical lovers, this song is sure to help spice up a foodie Holud this winter.

Ure Jai – Adit Featuring Bammy and Shahtaj

Weddings are also platforms for huge reunions! And Adit's Ure Jai is definitely a funky addition to the wedding play list. This song about friends and loved ones can be a terrific dance number at the season.



HERITAGE

THE LEGEND OF MA THIN AND HER UNDYING LOVE

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTOS: COURTESY

It is said that in Bangladesh, nobody visits a police station until s/he is not forced to do so; however, the Teknaf police station has removed this stereotype with a very moving story. In its premises, this busy border police station holds a legendary site that has made it a sacred place for the visitors. Tourists from far and wide come to Teknaf police station to visit this site of a preserved well that has given birth to one of the most popular love legends of Bangladesh.

In the beginning of the 19th century when Teknaf was covered with evergreen tropical forests and sparsely populated with people of the Rakhine tribe, the British government decided to set up a border outpost at this remotest corner of their empire. The outpost was established at the site of the present Teknaf police station and a Bengali police officer named Dhiraj Bhattacharya was posted as in-charge of the outpost.

Dhiraj was born in 1905 in Jessore. An educated young man raised in a crowded Bengali town was presumably disappointed after coming to one of the most inaccessible places on the shore of Bay of Bengal. He had nothing to do in his leisure time except sitting idly or taking a stroll in the courtyard of his office/ bungalow. In one such afternoon, Dhiraj noticed that a group of Rakhine girls were coming towards the well which was the only source of freshwater for Dhiraj and his men.

It was the first time Dhiraj noticed graceful Ma Thin, daughter of Rakhine chief, coming towards the well with her friends to collect water. After a few weeks Dhiraj realised that he could not spend a day without looking at Ma Thin's beautiful face.

Fortunately for Dhiraj, Ma Thin also developed similar feelings for this handsome young man and both used to exchange adoring glances. Gradually the affair intensified and it became a habit for Ma Thin to come to the well before dawn to meet Dhiraj.

Dhiraj decided to marry Ma Thin and informed his parents in Calcutta – a daring decision for him, as the son of an upper caste Hindu family would never do such a thing! One day, Dhiraj received a letter from his parents saying that his father was seriously ill and he should return home at once. Dhiraj left Teknaf but promised Ma Thin that he would return soon.

However, Dhiraj's parents at Calcutta had planned otherwise. As soon as Dhiraj

reached home, his parents revealed their actual intention. His parents informed him that Dhiraj's marriage with Buddhist Ma Thin was impossible and they had already settled Dhiraj's engagement date with a lady from the same caste. Dhiraj's father also insisted Dhiraj on leaving the police department.

Finally, Dhiraj succumbed to the increasing pressure from his family and agreed to marry their chosen bride and left the police department. However, Ma Thin could never forget Dhiraj. After waiting for months, Ma Thin was so heartbroken that she confined herself to her room and refused all food and drink. One day, Ma Thin's parents found her lifeless body lying in her bed.

After leaving the police department, Dhiraj worked in the film industry and starred in fifteen highly popular Bengali movies – Mrinalini, Nouka Dubi, Dhumketu, Hanabari etc. His first movie, Satilakshmi, was released in 1924 and after



Dhiraj Bhattacharya

a successful career, Dhiraj died in 1959. Dhiraj wrote two autobiographical books titled "When I was a Police Officer" and "When I was a Film Star". In his book, "When I was a Police Officer" Dhiraj wrote his accounts of love for Ma Thin.



Currently, the well is known as the Ma Thin's well – reconstructed with tiles and the mouth is sealed with nylon ropes. People of Teknaf still remember this legend and visit the site to pay respect to Ma Thin and her undying love. ■

