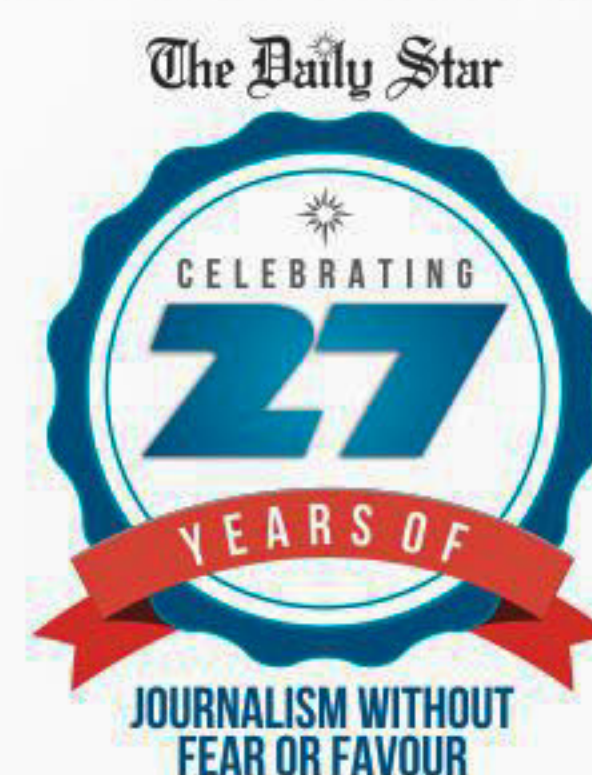


# CHANGES THAT MAKE US #NOWINLIFESTYLE



DHAKA SATURDAY  
FEBRUARY 24, 2018  
FALGUN 12, 1424 BS

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## The soul sings folk

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

Adding a guitar to a traditional piece depending on the tabla is fusion. He mentions that even with classic Rabindra or Nazrul Sangeet, every singer has a personal touch that adds a bit of fusion. After all, we do prefer one singer over the other, specifically for these personal touches even though it is the same song that they sing.

As he mentions performances, he also shares his high optimism with the folk fests that have been taking place in recent years. The cultural exchange that takes place through these fests are essential in making music truly globalised. From his perspective, Ahad calls this a 'revolutionary development' as people are seeing professional international performers right here on the home turf!

Ahad also mentions that it is fusion, which ultimately makes the younger generations interested in the original folk songs. Their tastes have changed greatly in the last couple of years. He hopes that these youths will be inspired not only as listeners, but eventually as performers and connoisseurs, but to do that, they need to be interested first, and this is where fusion plays the important role.

Folk music or songs, are the embodiment of nature, climate, heritage and lifestyle of the people. Ahad emphasises on these as the ingredients of folk songs and brings in cooking as a relatable example. Just as there are special recipes that require using an exact process, there is also the scope to add local ingredients into a typical western dish to make it a fusion dish.

Folk songs too are like that; an artist can take local lyrics to a western ensemble or take western lyrics to mix it with local musical style to create fusion.

Ahad finally says that folk songs left by

Folk music are the embodiment of nature, climate, heritage and lifestyle of the people. Songs left by masters like Lalon are spines that need the flesh of fusion to carry them through the ages.

the masters like Lalon are actually spines that need the flesh of fusion to carry them through the ages. If the true tune is preserved, then no matter the fusion, generation after generation can enjoy the best of the art.

Syed Waqel Ahad is a baul lover and a gifted artist. While he received institutional training on Nazrul Sangeet and classical Bangla songs in his early years, he has explored other genres of music to the best of his abilities.

### READING INTO FOLK SONGS

As YouTube videos and channels are overflowing with various performances and interpretations of Bangladeshi folk songs, some may wonder where the true roots lie. While many will scoff at the idea of reading up on folk music, interested people often do not find what the right read should be. If you are looking to brush up on folk music and its roots, here are some sug-

gested reads.

Bangladesher Lokosonget (Folksongs of Bangladesh) by Saymon Zakaria

This is a compact and insight-filled book for those who are looking to get the modern concise take on the various styles of folk songs of Bangladesh. A must-read chapter in this book is on folk songs and technology with a very relatable piece on mobile phones!

- Bangladesher Lokagiti: Eki Samajtattvik Adhayan (Folksongs of Bangladesh: A Sociological Study) by Dr Abdul Wahab. For those who want to go into details of the folk songs of this region with information on geographical and historical context, this three-part selection (compiled in two books) is a must-read. Filled with quotes, observations and well researched insight into the various facets of folk songs, this is essential for anyone looking to start with a good grasp on local folk songs.

- Bangladesher Lokosangit Samikha (Folksongs of Bangladesh — A Fieldwork-based Survey) Edited by Shamsuzzaman Khan. Coming from Bangla Academy, this is a detailed book that upholds the modernisation of Bangladeshi folk songs. The compilation includes description of performances as seen during the survey and information on artists and singers of various districts. The most attractive segment of the book is the part with English translations and western staff notation plus pronunciation guides for the folk songs.

The mentioned books are available from online book sellers with many more titles. Do bear in mind that you will not be reading to be an expert on folk songs, but rather develop a deeper sense of appreciation and see the connecting lines that were previously absent from your musical perspective.

Photo: LS Archive



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