



#LITERATURE

The books talk, if you listen

We're going to assume that you've heard of audiobooks (no pun intended). While physical books will never go out of style, audiobooks are certainly making their presence known in the modern world.

It's an amazing idea, especially when you think about visually challenged people. For people who cannot see or whose eyesight is poor; audiobooks are a revolutionary medium.

The benefits don't just stop there. Audiobooks are said to increase reading accuracy. Since listening is faster than reading, and these books are narrated by professionals, your reading speed increases significantly. This is extremely helpful for those serial readers who aim to finish books quickly and move on to the next one so that they can finish their targeted number of books.

If you are one of those people who are always busy but deep down, you wish that you had more time, then audiobooks are definitely for you. You can play a book in the background while you take care of your chores or walk to the market.

Stuck in the unavoidable traffic jam in the streets of Dhaka? Plug in your headphones and play an audiobook.

We recommend audiobooks over physical books in vehicles. Firstly, because the roads can get bumpy and it's difficult to keep your focus on your pages, resulting in a strain on your eyes which is a health hazard, along with motion sickness. Secondly, audiobooks can be soothing and intense at the same time, adding to your travel experience.

As mentioned earlier, audiobooks are narrated by professionals. Therefore, one will get the chance to work on his pronunciations while playing an audiobook. Whether you are playing an audiobook for study purpose or just to appreciate the literature, it's an innovative approach.

Listening to the same book while reading it can increase your comprehension and it also helps you process the information with more efficiency.

But this is the month of February. The month of language and we remember all those who laid down their lives for our mother tongue. And with that in mind, we want to appreciate Bengali literature.

Our literature is who we are. It is a reflection of our history and we strongly



recommend that you pick one of our native classics every now and then so that we can comprehend how rich our culture is. It is easy to get lost in the apps in your smartphone but if you allow it, audiobooks will provide you with moments that will be embedded in your memory, even years later.

"Khokike ekbar dekhite paibo na?" — those words hit me in ways I never imagined before. I had read Rabindranath's *Kabuliwala* before but this time, with the narrator putting in such effort and emotion behind the words, I actually teared up," said Ahmed, an avid reader and a graduate student at the University of Dhaka.

"I have known about audiobooks for years but only recently, I found out about Bangla audiobooks and discovered how well done they were," he added, pointing out that more and more people are getting interested in audiobooks every day.

At this point, you might be wondering

where can you get Bangla audiobooks. We've looked it up for you and here are some of the ways to get yourself a Bangla audiobook.

Shuni

With its lime green theme, Shuni reminds you of Bangladesh. The app is available on Play Store and App Store. You will need to register to get an audiobook but worry not, the app is completely free. With their podcasts and free audiobooks, Shuni is worth a try if you are interested in Bangla audiobooks.

GolpoKotha

This is another app that you can get on your Android or iOS device and get access to a lofty number of audiobooks. From classics to bestsellers, thrillers to comedy, you have the option to choose from a wide variety of categories. With a panel of narrators like Subrata Nath Mukhopadhyay or Satya Priya Sarkar, you are in for a treat. The compelling



storytelling and well organised app will keep you hooked.

Bongobook

This is a free app that allows you a very user-friendly experience. You can pick a genre as soon as you log onto the app. All it takes is one tap on the thumbnail of the book that you desire. You don't need a subscription to listen to an audiobook from this app.

Sunday Suspense

Sunday Suspense is a long-running radio

show on Radio Mirchi in Kolkata. But one can find their channel on YouTube and amongst their playlists, Sunday suspense contents are available. From *Feluda* to *Byomkesh* and *Sherlock* to original stories, you can find them well organised, playlist by playlist; just pick one and play. Sunday suspense is known for their dramatic manifestation of the stories with added voice and sound effects.

audiobooks.khichuri.net

This one is a website where a number of audiobooks are available for instant play. You don't need an account. You can just go on the web, enter the url and pick a book that you would like to play. Paulo Coelho's *Alchemist* or Rabindranath's *Shesher Kabita*, whichever suits your mood, just hit play and enjoy.

Golpokothon by Kollo

This is a YouTube channel that will draw you as soon as you find it. The well decorated playlist features some of the classics like *Dracula* and *The Invisible Man*. Popular books from our literature such as *Putul Nacher Itikotha* and *Gavi Bittanto* are also available. What's great about this channel is that the host is active and continues to upload new contents.

'Audiobook in Bangla by Fahim' and 'My Audiobook' are two more channels on YouTube that are worth a look.

The Doctor (From *Doctor Who*) once said: "Books are the best weapons in the world. Arm yourself!"

We couldn't agree more. But sometimes physical books can't be reached for many reasons and sometimes you just don't feel like reading from a page. Either way, audiobooks are a great alternative for those who want to keep in touch with books. Let's listen to what they have to say.

By Ashif Ahmed Rudro
Photo: Collected