



Dads Evolve

Bangladeshi two-man band reach for international glory

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

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Just recently, Dads in the Park returned from Indonesia, where they had travelled to perform at the Hammersonic Festival in Indonesia—where they got to perform alongside the likes of Slipknot, Trivium, Amon Amarth, Saosin, Tiny Moving Parts, Story of the Year and many more.

Having closely followed their journey on the way to their first international performance, The Daily Star decided to interview the duo of Tajwar Ul Islam and Ishmam Salim—the two men behind the band. The two performed along with their friends—Samuel Adhikary on drums,

Shahriar Shams on bass and Zafiran Islam Mon on keyboards—who went as touring members.

You guys only recently returned from performing at the Hammersonic Festival. How was the experience?

Ishmam: The overall experience was emotionally overwhelming for both of us. When we started out by making our music in English, we had always dreamed of going international.

I remember even until the last moments, when everything was being confirmed, I did not share this news with anyone because I was worried about jinxing it.

Tajwar: This was not just an opportunity for us, it was the biggest stepping stone that would make a significant difference in our careers.

The community really came forward to support you guys on your journey to Hammersonic. How did that make you feel as a band?

Ishmam: We are eternally grateful for the support we received from the fans, our sponsors and the media.

Tajwar: Personally, I grew up in the industry and many seniors often told us to start making music in Bangla instead of English. But due to our own plans, we were always going to stick to English. We love Bangla music, but that was not our target. So, when we got this opportunity, I thought many would be skeptical. But the support that came instantly was amazing. The donations from our fans really helped us a lot. Even someone who donated as little as BDT 20

helped us on our journey. Some of my friends even got me strings, guitar straps, guitar cases, processors, bags, clothes, etc. all of that helped. Everyone reached out to us with the intention of helping us and that was amazing.

I noticed that many Indonesian locals were sharing pictures of you online or videos of you performing. How was the crowd at the show?

The crowd was amazing. They were cheering our performances from the very beginning. Even when we finished our set, they were chanting for one more song from us. But we wanted to be professional and did not want to exceed the time slot we had been allotted. They also asked us for our guitar picks when we were leaving and we gave it to them. A lot of fans also took pictures with us once we got off stage.

The best part though, was this one guy who was singing all of our songs, from *Lullaby* to *Afeenolove*. The next day, when we returned to watch the other performers, this guy messaged us on Facebook and asked us to meet him. When we met, he bought merch from us and showed his support. It was just amazing to see that people enjoyed our music.

What is next on the horizon for Dads in the Park?

Going forward, our short-term plan is to release three songs, which we currently have in the pipeline, as soon as possible. Some of the songs will also have collaborations with other musicians and bands.



Arbovirus releases first song without Sufi



Popular rock band Arbovirus released a lyrical music video of a new song, *Onubhuti* on their official YouTube page. This is their first song after the vocalist of the band, Sufi Maverick left last year.

The song has been voiced by Shahan Kamal Uday, their new vocalist.

The track is the first release of their fourth studio album *Republic of Arbovirus*. The second song of the album, *Obastob*, will be released this month, according to the band's announcement.

The song is now available on Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, and all other streaming platforms.

'Allen Swapan' sends friend requests on Facebook

In what is considered to be a unique way to promote a web series, a Facebook account named Allen Swapan has started to send friend requests to netizens.



Perhaps it is a ploy of money laundering kingpin Allen Swapan to increase his network?

Chorki has announced *Myself Allen Swapan*, a spinoff of the wildly popular character, conceived by the same director. Fans of the character will be elated to know that the series will delve into both his past, and the future.

Besides Nasir Uddin Khan playing Allen Swapan, the series stars Mithila, Sentu, Shimla and Sumon Anwar, amongst others.

The series will release on Eid-ul-Fitr.

Philomena is phenomenal

LUBABA MAHJABIN PRIMA

"The ancient Greeks invented lots of things we still have today, like medicine and olives. And lots of things that have died out, like democracy and pillars."

As Cunk walks across the shore and talks in *Cunk on Earth*, one gets all the vibes of a documentary. Except for the fact that it isn't.

After being premiered on BBC Two in September 2022, and released on Netflix in January 2023, the British mockumentary television series, *Cunk on Earth* has taken the internet by storm. The series follows the journey of Philomena Cunk—an ill-informed investigative reporter. The amazing cinematography, the knowledgeable insights and most importantly, Cunk make it something you can't miss!

The character Cunk first arrived on *Charlie Brooker's Weekly Wipe*, a BBC satirical news show in the year 2013. The character became popular and soon had longer segments on the show. This eventually led to spinoffs and even a book, *Cunk on Everything*, released in 2019.

Diane Morgan plays her character with impeccable perfection. Her nonchalant and flat delivery brings conviction to the believability of Cunk, which truly binds the whole series together.

The best part about the humour in this series is the

approach of the episodes. The background music, the phrases, the cinematic shots, all seem like they are part of any other documentary. The interviews of the experts add a whole new dimension to the series. On one hand, this makes the watch a truly educational one. But the questions they face from Cunk are extremely hilarious, and make the interviews unique in their own right.

The humour takes a dig at the spontaneity and sheer coincidences that shaped our civilisation. Steps in the journey of mankind that are considered beyond any humour are hit as well. This makes the whole series a lot more important, because not only does it take us through historically accurate facts, but it also narrates the philosophical insignificance of man.

Apart from all of this, the character Cunk also offers a form of catharsis. "A lot of people fantasise about being able to say whatever they want and not care," Morgan said in an interview. "She just genuinely does not give a toss, and that's almost like a superpower."

In a constantly polarising world, this ability to speak one's heart out, to be unabashed is indeed a good feeling. However, the rising post truth era propagandas are also parts of our lives now, and the series hints at that, too.

"Is there a great roof of China?" is something you can certainly blurt out next time!



Bidya Sinha Mim serves customers at Bidyanondo store

"I've seen you in films," exclaimed one of the customers present at the 'Happiness Store' run by Bidyanondo Foundation. The actress was mainly present at the venue to inaugurate the store, that provides grocery items for lower income citizens at a cheaper cost.

The non-profit foundation took to their social media to commend the actress for her admirable behaviour. Mim was present at the store, helping with billing and packaging content for customers.

Recently, singer Tahsan and internet personality Rafsan the Chotobhai were also spotted serving iftar to fasting citizens, joining in with the volunteers who are working to ensure good food for underprivileged individuals this Ramadan.

"Noishobde Ekattor" The Stories of the Liberation War through the Lens of Theatre

Portraying stories that led to the birth of Bangladesh through disability-theatre

In the month of independence, the disability-inclusive theatre play "Noishobde Ekattor" (71 in Silence) was staged on 9 and 10 March at National Theatre, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Produced by the British Council in partnership with Dhaka Theatre, the performance features 15 artists with disabilities from eight divisional cities of Bangladesh and focuses on the country's Liberation War through different acting methods.

When it comes to theatre practices in Bangladesh, disability-inclusive theatre in general is still an area which is in its developing phase in Bangladesh, and the British Council Bangladesh is currently leading the works of disability arts since 2013 when it comes to inclusive theatre.

"Noishobde Ekattor" is one of those productions which tried to portray the calibre of the artists with disabilities by introducing different theatrical methods on stage which is not quite common in the local theatre arena. A silent theatre piece that portrays the story of the birth of Bangladesh – how it was before, how the war started and the consequences of the war; 'Noishobde Ekattor' tells a journey which is narrated using physical storytelling techniques on stage.

Physical Storytelling tends to be a bit more abstract than the regular theatre and focuses on involving improvisational move-

ments to depict the stories on stage. As the theatre piece, "Noishobde Ekattor" did not have any specific dialogue, it was an experiment to narrate the scenarios, the stories through the movement of the performers. There were artists with speech and hearing impairments, physical disabilities and visually challenged artists who have dedicatedly worked on learning the processes to display it on stage.

The theatre piece is directed by Ramesh Meyyappan, a Glasgow-based theatre maker who develops performances using an eclectic mix of visual and physical theatre styles. Ramesh continually seeks to develop and extend his theatrical visual vocabulary. He enjoys the challenge of creating strong narrative visual work.

"When I was explained the significance of the sign name of Bangladesh, I realised the true passion behind the nation's history. The eagerness this bold ensemble has shown in portraying this history through eloquent expression of pain and suffering is truly unmatched. I would like to thank the audience for coming and for seeing the show to give this group of people an opportunity to use their voices – taking us a step closer to ensuring that all voices are heard and seen", said Ramesh.

"I knew nothing about the war and the plight of the people here

during that time, I was not surprised by the ensemble groups eagerness to explore this more and tell the story. 1971 as presented by this ensemble is their understanding of their history, their war, their suffering and genocide. They wanted people to know the stories of the Bengali women who faced double discrimination; having suffered multiple rape from the Pakistani armies they were then ostracized by their own people. These women bore the greatest burden of war", he added.

Noishobde Ekattor has been produced as a part of celebrating The British Council's 70th anniversary in Bangladesh and also Bangladesh's 50th year of independence. This play is a part of the DARE (Disability Arts Redefining Empowerment) project led by the British Council in partnership with Dhaka Theatre. DARE was launched in 2019 in partnership with Dhaka Theatre. Since then, it has been working in eight divisional cities in Bangladesh where both artists with disabilities and artists from local theatre organisations are participating together in order to get a better idea about how to work on disability theatre to create a sustainable platform on disability arts. The performers of this theatre piece have been selected through the inclusive theatre workshops in all eight divisional cities during the past couple of years.



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