

ENTERTAINMENT'S RISING STARS

SHUVENDU DAS SHUVO
A spellcaster with 6-strings

AAQIB HASIB

"I have been practising music since a very young age. My mother, older brother, uncles, all of them were trained in classical singing. So, it was kind of expected of me. I remember participating in singing competitions at school, where I won prizes as well."



Shuvendu Das Shuvo is an ever-present figure within Coke Studio Bangla. In almost every Coke Studio Bangla video, Shuvendu can be seen, sometimes playing a guitar, a mandolin or just singing. However, he isn't just limited to being a performer. Shuvendu has carefully crafted and arranged a few of the Coke Studio Bangla songs like *Bulbuli*, *Murir Tin* and *Darale Duuarey*. On a Sunday evening, The Daily Star sat down with Shuvendu to learn the story behind the magic.

How did you get started on your musical journey?

I have been practising music since a very young age. My mother, older brother, uncles, all of them were trained in classical singing. So, it was kind of expected of me. I remember participating in singing competitions at school, where I won prizes as well.

However, the inspiration to make music and play the guitar came from my older brother, Autumnal Moon. Seeing him play guitar made me want to learn it. I particularly enjoyed the feeling of singing a song

while playing the guitar. This is where I really got into music of my own accord.

I cannot pinpoint a specific moment, but I feel as if I just fell into music at one point.

At a point, I discovered there was nothing else but music around me in my own world.

Around 2010 is when I first picked up the mandolin. I really enjoyed country, Irish, Scottish and folk music, that is where I got the inspiration to start playing the mandolin.

You're an ever-present figure within Coke Studio Bangla.



PHOTOS: COURTESY

This is a once in a lifetime experience. Working with so many talented artists, most of whom are people quite close to me, has been quite a wonderful experience. In particular, the man who has assembled us, Arnob da—who is very important to me as I see him as an idol—has made the experience even better.

You composed and arranged 'Bulbuli', 'Darale Duuarey' and 'Murir Tin'. What kind of input do you have on the other songs?

In the first season, we all lived together in a house. Living together helped us develop a better understanding of each other. The experience of living together and making music really added the soul to our music. It almost felt like a band, so all our input is taken. We bounce ideas off each other and give suggestions all the time.

Do you have any insight about how big Coke Studio Bangla's international audience is?

While I haven't seen the analytics, I do

feel the support from the international audience. I see a lot of people reviewing our music from neighbouring countries like India and Pakistan. On top of that, people from countries all over the world post their reactions and thoughts about our songs. We are a global platform, so we can see that our music is reaching out far and wide across the world.

I also see that a lot of non-resident Bangladeshi are very proud that after Coke Studio India and Pakistan, there is now a Coke Studio Bangla.

Do you have any advice for the next generation of musicians?

Music is a continuous learning process. My only advice would be to continue to learn music. If you love music, you will always enjoy learning. If we continue to learn music, then we will see even better growth and hear even better music. Don't chase fame, rather pursue the endless love of learning music, as that will make you great.



Tamil actress impressed by Dibyo, sends flowers

Dibyo Jyoti has received a lot of praises for his fantastic performance in Hoichoi's series *Mohanganar*. Recently, the actor received a token of appreciation from an Indian Bengali and Tamil actress, Katha Nandi.

The *Thalaikoothal* actress sent a bouquet of flowers for Dibyo at his house, after being impressed with his acting in the popular web-series.

Actress Shahnaz Khushi, who is the proud mother of twins Dibyo and Soumyo, posted the news on her Facebook account.

New project featuring Shakib Khan unveiled

Topu Khan directorial and Shakib Khan starrer *Leader Amie Bangladesh* received massive responses from the audience this Eid. Now, the duo are ready to grace the screen once again, as hinted by a picture shared by Topu Khan on his Facebook page, alongside the officials of the OTT platform, Deepo Play.



In an interview with the media, Topu Khan revealed, "We are still in the early stages of planning, but one thing is certain—the movie will star Shakib Khan. He has given his agreement, and we have discussed the schedule. Currently, we are working on the story. Moreover, Deepo Play has shown immense interest in the project. With their support, I am hopeful that we can commence shooting this year."

COUNTRYWIDE

Schoolhouse on verge of collapse

Erosion by the Brahmaputra river takes serious turn in Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Latmonirhat*

A large portion including the playground of a high school in Kurigram Sadar upazila have gone into the Brahmaputra river due to severe erosion, while the lone schoolhouse is on the verge of collapse.

Char Bhagabatipur High School, located at remote Bhagabatipur village along the Brahmaputra river, was established by Kurigram district administration, aiming to reduce the number of dropouts in the char areas.

The newly established school started its journey with 130 students in January this year.

But, fearing further erosion and possible collapse of the schoolhouse, the school authorities suspended all academic activities and started shifting the belongings to a safer place.

Local people said after passing primary level most of the students of the village could not continue their studies further as there was no high school previously.

Students, who have a desire to get higher education, have to walk miles of sandy char land in order to study at high school on the mainland, they said.

One of the guardians Saidul Islam said, "If the high school wasn't established here, my daughter's education would have been stopped after passing primary level."

But unfortunately the schoolhouse was gradually going into the Brahmaputra river due to severe erosion for the last two weeks.

Children's education will be badly hampered if the school is not reconstructed elsewhere immediately, he lamented.

Raju Ahmed, an assistant teacher

at Char Bhagabatipur High School, said the school authorities have removed the infrastructure and other belongings of the school and kept those on the land of local UP member Shah Alam.

Journalist Yusuf Alamgir, also a lifetime member of the school managing committee, said the school will be re-established at a safer place soon resume its academic activities within the next week.

Kurigram Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rasedul Hasan, also president of the school managing committee, said it required at least Tk 7 to Tk 8 lakh to reconstruct the schoolhouse in another place.

The previous schoolhouse was on the verge of collapse as high tide continued to hit the institution directly due to emerging chars on the upstream of the Brahmaputra river, the UNO said.



Erosion by the Brahmaputra river is about to devour the entire compound of Char Bhagabatipur High School located in Kurigram Sadar upazila.

42 citizens shocked by comments of Taposh

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mayor are undoubtedly tantamount to "insulting the country's apex court", read the statement.

"We have no words to condemn his indecent and objectionable remarks. By making such remarks, he essentially gave the message that the political party he belongs to is desperate for establishing its control over the country's judiciary like it did over the others."

By making such comments, he not only dishonoured the judiciary, senior lawyers and the civil society, but also disrespected his own professional position and educational background, said the eminent citizens.

The signatories to the statement include rights activist Sultana Kamal, former adviser to a caretaker government Rasheda K Choudhury, former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumder, rights activists Khushi

Kabir, Hameeda Hossain, Shamsul Huda, and Nur Khan, minority community leader Rana Dasgupta, economist Prof Anu Muhammad, women rights activist Shirin Hague, anti-graft campaigner Iftekharuzzaman, jurist Shahdeeb Malik, political scientist Prof Ali Riaz, Prof Asif Nazrul, Prof Gitiara Nasreen, rights activist Sara Hossain, and good governance campaigner Badiul Alam Majumdar.

Form independent body to punish culprits

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enforced disappearances and allows them to evade justice," he said.

He said that nearly 600 people have been victim to enforced disappearances, with only 300 of them returning.

"We want to warn the security agencies. Release the victims immediately. The current and former officers, politicians and the individuals who are responsible for the enforced disappearances in Bangladesh will face the music," Nur Khan said.

Mahmudur Rahman Manna, convener of Nagorik Oikya, claimed that the world now recognises the current government as a fascist.

He pointed out that international

bodies had provided a list to the government requesting information about disappeared individuals since when the government had prohibited Rab from carrying out such acts. Yet some incidents are taking place, he added.

Sanjida Islam, coordinator of Maayer Daak, also the younger sister of BNP leader Sajedul Islam Suman, who was allegedly taken away by Rab in December 2013, said that victim families had filed general diaries, cases, and complaints in Bangladesh but received no assistance from law enforcement agencies and the government.

"The officers of secret detention

bodies where my brothers are kept -- get it in your ear -- we know you. No one will be spared," she warned.

Children of the victims are growing up without knowing the fate of their fathers. Yesterday, they also held placards, desperately seeking any trace of their missing fathers.

Ten-year-old Safa struggled to hold back tears as she tried to express her anguish during the programme. Her father, Mahfuzur Rahman Sohel, a leader of Chhatria Dal in the capital's Bangshal, was allegedly taken away by law enforcers in 2013.

"My father did nothing wrong. I have no idea where he is now. I just want my father back," she sobbed.

China wants repatriation to start soon

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"The vice minister mentioned that an early repatriation would be beneficial for Bangladesh, Myanmar and the entire region," the statement said.

Bangladesh, with Chinese support, signed a bilateral deal with Myanmar for Rohingya repatriation. Later, China also developed a trilateral mechanism involving Bangladesh and Myanmar for the repatriation.

Despite two attempts, no Rohingya volunteered to return to Myanmar, arguing that they lack security and a guarantee of citizenship. They also want back their properties that they had left. After a Rohingya delegation's visit to Rakhine on May 5, some of them expressed the same concerns.

Dhaka conveyed the Rohingya's concerns to Beijing, which said it also sent the message to the Myanmar government, foreign ministry officials told this correspondent.

Bangladesh, which is sheltering more than one million Rohingyas, is concerned that the protracted Rohingya crisis may be a security issue in the whole region and that peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region is not possible without solving the crisis.

Western countries, including the US, say the conditions in Rakhine are not yet conducive for repatriation.

Foreign Secretary Masud emphasised Bangladesh's ongoing efforts to arrange Rohingya repatriation, engaging friendly countries, and regional and international organisations.

At the three-hour FOC, the two countries expressed willingness to build connectivity in South and South East Asia under the China-led BRI as Bangladesh wants to be connected to the greater region through the Indo-Pacific, the focus of the global powers that are competing for influence.

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, China offered Bangladesh to join Global Development Initiative. This was supposed to be discussed in the FOC. However, the foreign ministry made no mention of it.

At the meeting yesterday, the two sides expressed satisfaction with the existing defence cooperation. They discussed the possibilities of regular staff-level talks and specialised training programmes.

China offered its support to build capacity for addressing emerging challenges like online gambling and drug trafficking. The two sides agreed in principle to have dedicated dialogue on public security issues.

The two sides reviewed the progress of different infrastructure projects in Bangladesh and agreed to further streamline the outstanding issues concerning a few additional project proposals in the power and communication sectors.