



A virtuoso named EMON CHOWDHURY

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

For almost two decades, Emon Chowdhury astonished people with his near-celestial guitar playing, a craft which he has given his unique, soulful voice. In the past few years, he emerged as one of the finest Bangladeshi music directors, weaving his magic in films like *Hawa*, *Gumin*, *Raat Jaga Phool*, and *Maya - The Lost Mother*.

Yesterday, the entire country grooved to Coke Studio Bangla's *Kotha Koiyo Na*, orchestrated to perfection by Emon, on lyrics by Hashim Mahmud. The Daily Star sat with him over a cup of raw tea moments before the release, to talk about his own raw talent.

"You are too kind with your words, but I owe all this to the blessings of the Almighty," said the shy musician. "Actually, Sumon (Mejbaur Rahman Sumon), Shiblu (Arfan Mredha Shiblu) and I really wanted to produce another song with Hashim *bhai*. He has beautifully written the song, while we took 6 lines from Maimansingha Gitika and I tuned them."

Emon, who is always on the prowl for new sounds, did not stop there. "I wanted the music of *Kotha Koiyo Na* to sound extremely raw, and have a collusion of string and percussion sections of both eastern and western influences", he said. His words rang true, as his inclusion of Baulmata Aleya Begum, the unique Baul orchestra, and the dulcet whistling of the leaf flute. He dubs the genre of the song to be 'urban folk', and the term does do justice to the marriage of emotions and

instruments that are used in it. Aleya and Arfan Mredha Shiblu, the male voice, complement each other like yin and yang, with their Dohar sets.

The conversation took a different tangent when we asked the musician how he actually decides what the song will employ as instruments, as Emon is no stranger to using objects like water containers or even boat-helms to serve his music, as evident in *Shada Shada Kala Kala*. "I've never really thought about my own processes, to be honest. Whether it be the voice or instruments, I just go for what sounds the most natural to me, whomever or whatever it may be".

Did years on the road as a band musician, and being a virtuoso guitarist himself, help him become a better music producer? Emon, ever-humble, refuses to give a straight answer, "Once again, it is a blessing by the Almighty. I come from a musical family, and this craft is something that I love immensely. That love carries me all the way", he said.

On the work front, Emon Chowdhury can be heard in upcoming films *Antarjal*, *Shurongo* and *Kajal Rekha*, by Dipankar Dipon, Raihan Rafi and Gias Uddin Selim respectively.

"I have never done music for the fame. How many people know me at the end of the day, honestly doesn't matter," Emon asserted. "However, do pray for me and *Kotha Koiyo Na*, we did put a lot of heart into it", concluded the multi-instrumentalist.



UNMAD pays tribute to 'Mohanagar 2'

Popular satire Magazine UNMAD has released its June 2023 edition, which features Ashfaq Nipun's hit web-series *Mohanagar 2* on the cover.

Morshed Mishu posted the illustration reels on his Facebook account which showcased the caricatures of the popular characters in the series.

The *Mohanagar 2* feature was written by Ahsan Habib, while the cover and character caricature was drawn by Morshed Mishu.

Razz returns on-screen in new web-series

After his massive success in *Hawa* and *Poran*, Sariful Razz garnered fame and accolades from the Bangladeshi audiences. After much anticipation, fans will now get to see Razz in a new web-series titled, *Infinity 2*. Meanwhile, the series' first look teaser has already been released.

Directed by Mehedi Hasib, the web-series also stars Shajal Noor, Mumtaheena Chowdhury Toya, Sumon Anowar and more. The series will be released this Eid on the OTT platform, Binge.

Speaking about his project, Razz said, "I believe that the audiences will like this series. It has been a while since I had worked on a project, so I want to know what the audiences' reaction will be. That's all."



NEWS

Will sue Star if requirements in legal notice not fulfilled

FROM PAGE 12
"In the reply, they tried to back up their write-up. They have removed the link to the write-up from their online version, which was one of our requirements. We had also asked them to publish a report offering unconditional apology within 24 hours of receiving the legal notice. Besides, we asked them to give Tk 100 crore in compensation within seven days of receiving the legal notice. But they are yet to do these."

"The write-up, which has undermined the Dhaka South City Corporation and its mayor, has reached readers across the world. We sent the legal notice on June 5 and they received it on June 6. The seven-day period is not over yet. If they communicate with the mayor personally or apologise unconditionally by issuing a statement in the newspaper and give the amount of money mentioned in the legal notice in seven days, then there will be no need to take the next step," the lawyer said.

Asked whether any case will be filed if the money is not paid, the lawyer said he had instructions to take legal action, which means a case will be filed.

He further said The Daily Star in its response tried to defend the write-up. Towards the end of the statement, the newspaper said it's sorry, but it had not apologised unconditionally.

"At the same time, they said they had removed the online link as a gesture of goodwill. Our requirement in the legal notice was unconditional apology. They did not do so... Once the seven-day period is over, the next legal steps will be taken."

The Lex Counsel sent a legal notice dated June 5, 2023, undersigned by Mejbaur, on behalf of DSCC Mayor Taposh. It finds a satirical article, published in the May 13, 2023, issue of SatiReday under the title "Cutting trees to make way for air", highly offensive and defamatory to the notice giver.

The legal notice, which this newspaper received late on June 6 afternoon, allowed it only two

days to respond. But before the newspaper could come up with a response within the stipulated time, Lex Counsel held a press briefing on June 7, 2023. There, the law firm stated that Mayor Taposh has served a legal notice on The Daily Star and sought Tk 100 crore for defamation. It went on to term the satire article a "report" or a "column", which is incorrect.

In reply to the legal notice and the subsequent briefing, The Daily Star said, "We humbly reiterate that it was neither a 'report' nor a 'column', but a satirical piece, which is mostly presented in a parody format in mainstream journalism. Satire relies heavily on irony and deadpan humour. Globally, such satirical articles are written on important and powerful persons and/or institutions. Political leaders, Nobel laureates, famous writers and prominent activists are subjects of satire and irony. It is the standard literary and journalistic practice.

"We, however, are shocked to find ourselves so fundamentally misunderstood. In no way was our article meant to defame, humiliate or hurt anybody; it was simply a satire published in SatiReday, our weekly page designated for satire. The topic was chosen only because it was one of the public interest issues and many reports, articles and editorials had already been written on it.

"It is a long-standing journalistic practice, and it's known all over the world that important leaders and top-level decision makers are subjects of satire. This piece was written to draw more attention to a matter of public concern and assist the authorities to reconsider and re-evaluate their decision, and not, we repeat, not to hurt anyone in any way. It was furthered from our intention. Still, we are sorry to know that our satire piece has ended up upsetting the notice giver.

"As a gesture of goodwill, we have already unpublished the link upon knowledge of the unintended hurt as communicated in the legal notice."

Flurry of pledges on last day

FROM PAGE 1
Shahidul Islam from ward 27 said he also didn't see the AL nominee in his area. "I only saw his posters."

Correspondents of this newspaper visited ward 23, 26, 27, 28 and 30 yesterday and talked to over 30 constituents. All of them said the IAB had more supporters outside the city centre.

Almost 90,000 of the 2,76,298 voters live in nine wards that are away from the city centre.

On his campaign trail, AL nominee Khair mainly talked to professionals, workers in industrial areas, and different association members and leaders.

A significant number of artists, teachers, women, NGO employees and factory workers campaigned for Khair.

The AL camp was also active on social media.

Khair yesterday said, "I am not sure if Jamaat supporters will vote for me. But I am confident that BNP voters will vote for me."

IAB engages WOMEN in CAMPAIGN
A large number of women went door-to-door, seeking votes for the

IAB nominee. Poor neighbourhoods and slum areas were their main target.

IAB nominee Faizul held talks with workers and residents of the Port Road and Town Hall areas yesterday.

Holding prayers in different mosques was another strategy of the party.

"Over the last five years, the government neglected Barishal while allocating resources. Therefore, the ruling Awami League cannot legitimately seek votes for its candidate," Faizul told reporters.

Expelled BNP leader and independent candidate Kamrul claimed that Bilkis Jahan Shirin, organising secretary of Barishal Division BNP, was directly working for the AL camp.

He also claimed that his supporters were harassed, intimidated and arrested.

Contacted, Bilkis said Kamrul was making such comments because he had been expelled by the BNP.

"It is our party's decision that none of our leaders, activists, and supporters will participate in any election. That's why we are requesting people not to go to the polling centres," she said.

Taiwan's armed forces hold coastal drills

AFP, Taiwan
Patrol boats circled and officers descended by rope from a helicopter during a staged hostage crisis in the southern city of Kaohsiung, as Taiwan's armed forces held drills yesterday.

The island holds frequent military drills in the face of increasing military and political pressures from China, including near daily Chinese warplane incursions into its air defence zone.

Beijing claims self-ruled, democratic Taiwan as its territory and has vowed to retake it one day -- by force if necessary.

At Kaohsiung port on Saturday, the coastguard, military, police and airborne services simulated a hostage situation, accompanied by action-movie music and an ongoing narration of the "attack".

"This is (Taiwan) Coast Guard! Stop the engine immediately!" shouted

the announcer. "We are going to board and inspect your ship!"

Smaller patrol boats surrounded the ship while a helicopter hovered overhead. The officers managed to "covertly" board the ship, and they opened fire -- not live rounds -- on the yellow-clad hostage takers.

At the end of the rehearsal, officers saluted President Tsai Ing-wen, who waved from the pier.

"Everyone who participated in today's drill are our country's frontline defenders. I want to emphasise again, we have to strengthen ourselves in order to ensure peace in the Taiwan Strait," Tsai said in a short speech.

"The more we are united, the more secure we are; the more secure Taiwan is, the safer the world will be."

Since Tsai -- who rejects that Taiwan is a part of China -- came to power in 2016, the island has seen increased incursions by Beijing's boats warplanes.

Voters showing little interest

FROM PAGE 1
tomorrow's city corporation election.

"There is almost no competition in the mayoral race. My vote may not have much impact. Now I'm wondering whether I should cast my vote," Didar Hossain, a resident of Sonadanga area, told The Daily Star.

The correspondents spoke to 30 voters in different areas, and they all expressed similar opinions.

Jamal Mollah, a resident of the Tutpara area, said, "We don't have many candidates to choose from. The election has become one-sided. Many, including myself, lost interest."

Qudrat E Khuda, president of Khulna unit of Sushashoner Jonno Nagorik (Sujan), said, "This election is merely a formality. It is being held because it's mandated by the law."

He added that people feel interested in elections that are competitive.

"Khulna city polls lack this. There

is a huge difference between the Awami League nominee and others in terms of political experience and skills. Everybody has an idea as to who will likely win..."

Sheikh Ashrafuzzaman, president of the Greater Khulna Unnayan Samannay Committee

party. But in Khulna, there is a lack of such competition."

CONCERN OVER FAIR POLLS
All mayoral candidates, except the ruling Awami League's Talukder Abdul Khaleque, expressed their concerns over the fairness of the polls.

The candidates said they are concerned as to how the situation would be on election day and accused the administration of playing a biased role.

"The polls will be held in a fair manner if the administration remains impartial. But there is a ploy to foil a fair election, and the administration and law enforcers are playing a silent role to this end," Jatiya Party nominee Shafiqul Islam Madhu told reporters at the party office.

"Were any of the polls held under this government fair? Why did the BNP-Jamaat not take part in the polls? Because the Awami League government snatched the people's

right to vote," he added.

Independent candidate Shafiqul Rahman expressed concerns about the participation of "outsiders" in the election campaign.

"If these disruptive actions continue, the election may not be free and fair," he told The Daily Star.

Nasir Uddin, a spokesperson of the Islami Anodolon Bangladesh, also expressed concerns referring to irregularities that took place in the previous KCC polls.

Zaker Party mayor nominee Sabbir Hossain said the election environment had been favourable so far, but anticipated challenges on election day.

However, Talukder Abdul Khaleque, said he was very hopeful about a fair election.

Contacted, Mohammad Alauddin, returning officer of the KCC polls, said, "A fair election will be held in Khulna which will set an example."

[Our Khulna correspondent contributed to the report]