



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."



COUNTRYWIDE

AMAN CULTIVATION

Poor rain worries farmers in Lalmonirhat, Kurigram

S DILIP ROY

Aman cultivation in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram is facing a setback due to lack of rain during this time of the year.

Due to scanty rainfall, nearly three lakh farmers in different upazilas of the two districts are worried about preparing their Aman seedbeds and plantation of the saplings in time.

Farmer Nirmal Chandra Barman of Chawratari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila said, "I could not prepare my Aman seedbed in time as there is no rain for the last one month."

Finding no alternative, now he is preparing the seedbeds using underground water with diesel-run shallow machine, Nirmal said.

Locals said some of the farmers are applying the same method like Nirmal, but most of them are still waiting for rain, which may delay the cultivation this year.

Nazrul Islam, another farmer from Singardabari in Kurigram's Rajarhat upazila, said they were able to prepare the Aman seedbeds within May last season, but due to poor rainfall they are yet to prepare the seedbeds this time.

The elderly farmer said all the canals and ponds in the area are dried up.

He had never seen such a drought like weather condition in his entire life, Nazrul added.

Farmer Suresh Chandra Das of the village said after a long wait for rain, he finally prepared his Aman seedbeds on 20 decimals land using underground water.

Suresh said he has a plan to cultivate Aman on 12 bigha of land this year.

According to the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE), Aman is being cultivated on over two lakh hectares of land in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram every year and farmers need to prepare seedbeds on 8,000 to 9,000 hectares for the purpose.

Usually, Aman seedbeds are prepared by May, and it takes about three weeks for the seedlings to be ready for planting.

Although farmers start planting Aman seedlings from mid-June, they could not even prepare their seedbeds this season.

Lalmonirhat DAE Deputy Director Hamidur Rahman said the ongoing drought like weather condition is a threat to agriculture.



Due to inadequate rainfall farmers are compelled to collect underground water, using diesel-run shallow machine, to prepare their Aman seedbeds. The photo was taken from Mahendranagar area in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR