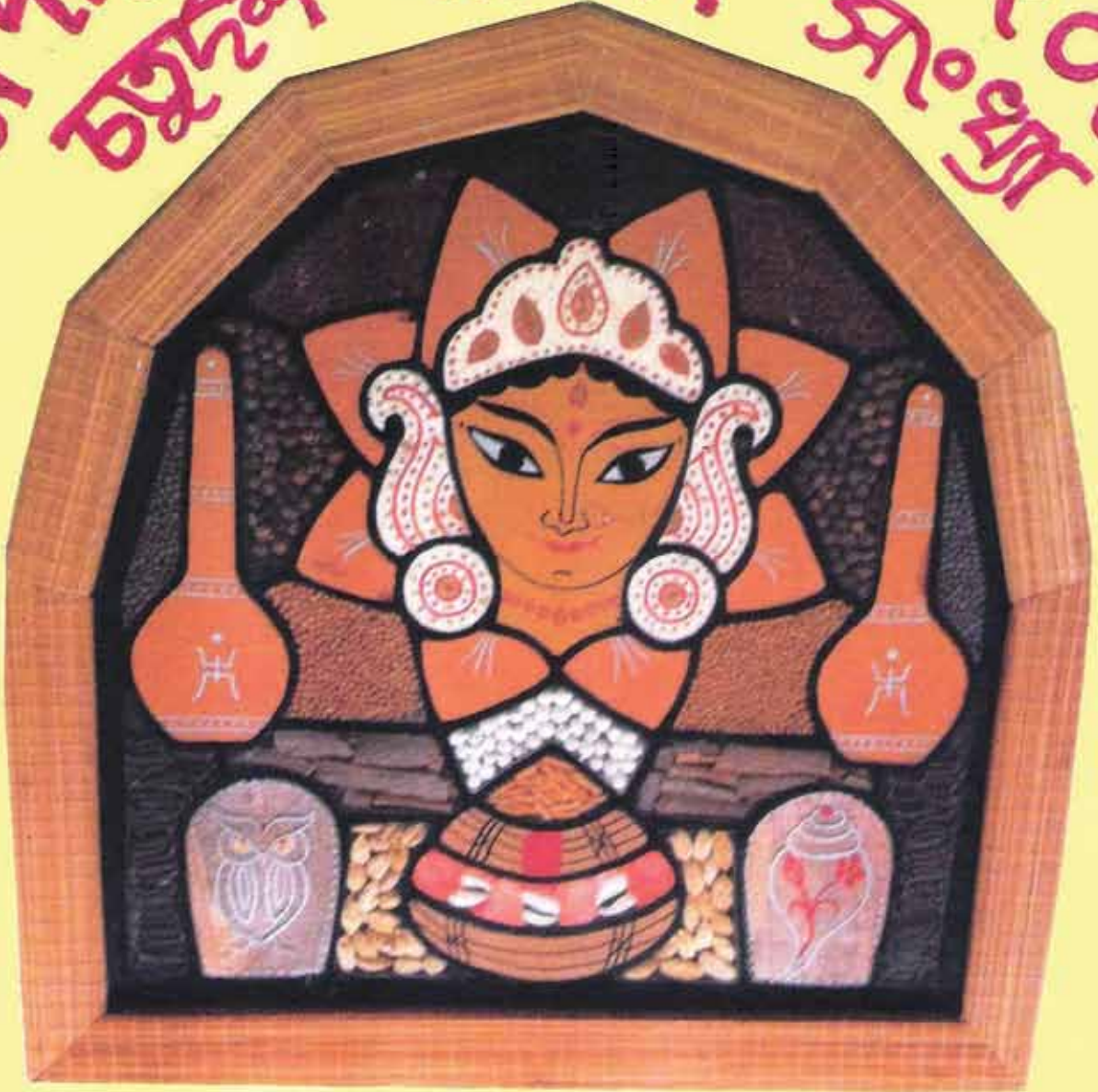


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Hong Kong Bengali
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Durga Puja 2012

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5-6 Nov 2012

Mon-Tues: Parampara Pret by Rotary Club
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Thurs-Sun: HK Int'l Jewellery Manufacturers Show
10am-6pm
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Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you all to the Durga Puja utsab -2012. This is the fourteenth anniversary of this auspicious and joyous event in Hongkong. That we have come such a long way is a testimony to the sprit of the local Bengali community with a great support and encouragement that we have received from the Indian friends and local people of Hongkong.

It is a sense of pride that from the reflection of what we, as a community, have achieved over the past decade since the birth of the HKBA, the Bengali community has made an individual impression on the cultural view in Hongkong. This has been through a great and diverse contribution to the cultural milieu of this city. We have a number of singers, dancers, painters and various other creative artistes, who have all done us proud through their performances in different activities. These cultural, social and charitable activities have enabled us to establish strong ties with a number of other Associations and organizations. Our biggest festival the Durga Puja is no longer confined to just the Bengali community, but rather embraces the entire Indian Community in Hongkong. To organize this kind of event would never be possible without the generosity, help and support of our Indian and Chinese friends. On behalf of The Hongkong Bengali Association I would particularly wish to thank the District Facilities Management Committee of the Yau Tsim Mong District Council and the officials of the Home Affairs Department of the Hongkong Government for their feeling of the importance of this festival and making this excellent venue available to us for this purpose. I would also like to thank to all our patrons, sponsors, friends, well wishers and all other Indian Associations for their tremendous co-operation and help over the years.

Finally I express my grateful to all the members of The Hongkong Bengali Association for making it such a popular and bright Association today and acknowledge the contributions of the past President and EC members whose vision, labour and courage were the materials during the formation of the HKBA. I, personally, owe a debt of gratitude to the members of the present Executive Committee for their so much time and hard work to make this year Durga Puja festival success.

May the blessings of Ma Durga be on us.

Sipanta Kumar Saha
President
The Hongkong Bengali Association



Special Acknowledgements

The Hong Kong Bengali Association wishes to express its heart-felt thanks to all friends, supporters, sponsors and well-wishers for the help they have rendered to the cause of our Association. For this year's Durga Puja, we especially acknowledge the contributions of the following persons:

Mr. Mr R Seshadri
Mr. Raymond Ho
Mr. Sohan Goenka
Mr. Vinod Dhariwal
Ms. LIU Suk-Wa, Connie
Mr. Kanwaljeet Singh Dhillon

Pratima Shilpi
Souvenir cover design
Mandap Decoration
Souvenir Design

Shri Arun Paul, Kolkata
Debasmita Bhattacharya (Rumki)
Sushmita Bakuly, Sawpan Datta
Lui Man Yin, Mandy



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Cultural Sub-Committee	Anindita Bhattacharya Anuradha Sen
Contact HKBA	mailhkba@gmail.com
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Durga Puja 2012 Program Schedule

Venue:
Multipurpose Hall, Henry G Leong Community Center
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon.

Sasthi	Saturday, 20th October	- Puja starts from 6:30 PM - Prasad distribution
Saptami	Sunday, 21st October	- Morning Puja 10:00 – 12:00 - Pushpanjali 11:00-11:30 - Prasad distribution - Evening Puja 18:00 – 19:00 - Prasad distribution 19:00-19:30 - Cultural program 19:30-20:30
Asthami	Monday, 22nd October	- Morning Puja 10:00 – 12:00 - Pushpanjali 11:00-11:30 - Prasad distribution - Sandhi Puja 18:00-19:00 - Prasad distribution 19:00-19:30 - Cultural program 19:30-20:00
Navami	Tuesday, 23rd October	- Morning Puja 10:00 – 12:00 - Pushpanjali 11:00-11:30 - Prasad distribution - Evening Puja 18:00 – 19:00 - Prasad distribution 19:00-19:30 - Cultural program 19:30-20:30
Dashami	Wednesday, 24th October	- Morning Puja 10:00 – 12:00 - Pushpanjali 11:00-11:30 - Dadhi Karma - Prasad distribution - Sindur Khela 16:00-17:00 - Cleaning and packing 17:00-18:00
Lakshmi Puja	Monday, 29th October	- Puja 18:30-20:30
Bijoya Sannamela	Saturday, 15th December	- Get together over dinner 9PM to 11PM

Priest: Shri Shakti Prasad Mukerjee of Kolkata

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A Better Tomorrow

Bikram Mukhopadhyay

Samar is keen to continue his study against all odds. He assists a man called Bablu in his small shop that deals with recycled paper, glass bottle and different kinds of scraped stuffs. Samar is assigned to talk to the customers who come for selling old newspapers, used glass bottles and some metallic items that have good resale value in the recycling industry such as copper wire, copper- insulated/ German silver plated age old utensils which were used in the bygone days mostly by the middle class as well as upper middle class people in the city in order to show off their personal wealth and status as aristocratic Bengalese, but now unfortunately this trend is replaced by stainless steel throughout the country for convenience and faded conventional values. In between waiting for customers, he reads some newspapers for making him updated what's going on in the 'City of Joy' – a tag became quite familiar with the city dwellers since a western Film Director Roland Jaffe made an award winning film in early 90's based on the novel of Dominique Lapierre that reveals the grueling lives of the thousands of Lepers (people suffering from a disease called leprosy) in the heart of the city, how tragic plight they have been forced to embrace despite the local so called Communist Government's stark indifferent and hypocritical vote buying statements come out in every now and then through banners, posters, street cornering using cacophonous loud speakers and many more that they are the savior of the people who are being deprived, exploited, discriminated in this social system for ages. He reads old text books in order to quench his thirst for knowledge as a mark of long cherished unfulfilled aspiration of going to school and continue to study. Normally these old books are sold to the shop by some teens in order to get some pocket money. One day just before lunch Bablu came back from some outside assignment, stepped inside the shop and noticed that Samar was scanning a piece of newspaper advertisement- a rosy caption highlighted in a block amidst light shaded sketch of prospective graduates thronged in the labor market for getting offer of some respectable jobs by themselves challenging the political influence as well as muscle power of MPs and MLAs in the City of Joy, 'Do you want to further your study? Do you want to stand on your own feet and vow to bolster a new career growth ensuring a smooth passage for a better tomorrow? Enroll yourself in a night school at Circus Avenue, fees very nominal, but candidate has to per-

sonally help the owner of the school in rebuilding the campus through fund raising activity time to time.'

Samar had finished reading and as he noticed that Bablu was keeping an eye on him as well as the 'advertisement' as it was not very difficult for Bablu to scan the 'advertisement' from close proximity of the area where Samar was sitting.

Hei, what's up Samar? Anything interesting? Samar just taken aback and said, no, this is just an 'advertisement', I am going through as I like reading newspaper 'advertisement.' Bablu, I know this is a newspaper 'advertisement and I also know that you are reading this 'advertisement' quite intensively without being exposed to anybody looking at you." Samar got a bit embarrassed as well as scared to lose his job, 'may be my Boss Babluda is not happy, he might accuse me for dereliction of duty.' So, in order to impress Bablu and changing the course of the context purposely, Samar cleverly said, 'Babluda, would you like to have masala tea (Spicy tea) tea ,mixed with cardamom and cinnamon that gives really good fragrance and very popular in any major cities in India. Bablu said in a very colloquial way full of humors but a bit authoritative mood, 'just do not try to butter me Samar'. 'Have you finished reading that 'ad'? He said, 'just little is left.' Bablu asked, 'is it very interesting?' Samar started fumbling, 'what to say, should I tell the truth or just leave it, may be if Babluda comes to know that I am willing to continue my study, he might not allow me to work here and as a matter of fact I will lose this job and my mother, my younger sister and me altogether would be starving again. Better not to tell the truth. He replied coolly, 'no, nothing interesting Babluda, just reading this 'advertisement' as I told you earlier that I like reading 'advertisement.' Bablu could make out from his face that he was not telling the truth, he was deliberately trying to hide the truth, but why? 'He is not doing anything wrong. There is no customer in the shop and he is reading a newspaper 'advertisement', so why he is getting scared to tell the truth. Bablu was trying to figure out and unravel the hidden mystery behind this, scratching his head a bit with his elongated fingers and chewing the butts of a ball pen that he was holding in his right hand as matter of common practice during a session that allows him to ponder over something annoying, he immediately got it as it was not unpredictable. Bablu

took the newspaper, read the same 'advertisement' with lots of interests mixed with curiosity and was quite sure about the result why he was not telling him the truth. Bablu was sitting in a cubicle behind the huge pile of old bundles of newspaper, magazine and text book from where the customers or anybody else in the shop could not see him, directly, he called, 'Samar, can you please come here.' Samar came and stood up there, a bit nervous, who knows what was going to happen? Is he going to be fired, what will happen to my family? How could I make a living at this moment? How my mother and sister are going to survive? All these reckless ideas were rattling in his mind. Bablu, quite passionately asked Samar in order to twist him a bit, 'do you want to further your study? Tell me. Samar was aghast and literally in tears, fumbling and mumbling himself, 'what am I supposed to answer. Bablu again said, 'do you want to continue your study'? I can help you. He now broke the ice, broke the pillar of uncertainty about Samar and his family future that largely depends upon a small income generated by the wage he gets every month for his six days a week, 9to 5 job as a shop assistant. He is now a bit relieved but could not aspire for what his aspiration is. 'You remain in this shop till 5 o'clock and after five you go straight to the night school, You do not need to worry about your school fees, I will try to arrange.' Samar got utterly surprised. It was incredible. Now this time without much fear he asked Bablu, 'Babluda, how about my this job? Will you still pay me my wage for working here'? 'Of course, Samar, you will be paid as usual for your nine to five job, there will be no problem, but when you will do your homework? In the night school you got to be there between 6 to 9 pm, After that you got to catch 'Sonarpur local,' a local train that transports commuters from the different parts of the suburbs of Kolkata to the main city, it is located at the southern part of a district called 24pgs (parganas) you will arrive home almost 10 O'clock night. You will be very tired, again next day by 9 O'clock you got to be here, how could you manage all these things.? Samar with a flash of overwhelming joy in his eyes and robust optimism in his heart answered, I will manage Babluda, you see, I will not be late here. I will finish everything on time. I will never give you any chance to complain against me.

Bablu kept his cool, put his right hand on his (Samar) shoulder and said, 'I know Samar, you are a very honest and diligent boy, but what about raising funds? This is one of the conditions that you have to fulfill. 'That's true, I did not think about it'. Bablu told Samar, wait, there is a phone number. Let me talk to the owner of

the night school. 'Hei, Samar, do you remember the name of the school owner, is it given at the bottom part of the advertisement?' 'Yes, I remember, some Malakar. Some Malakar, how about full name? 'Wait, let me check from the newspaper advertisement. Bablu picked up the newspaper, turned the page over in order to find the piece of advertisement he read just now, got the full name, read it a bit loudly, Mr Abhoynanda Malakar, chuckled a bit for his outdated first name and immediately dialed the mobile no 9831052537, A recorded voice came from the other end, Hi, I cannot take your call now. Please, leave your name and contact number, I will get back to you as soon as possible, thank you and there was a blip sound, Bablu just left a short message in his number, hi, Mr Malakar, I am Bablu Biswas here, could you please call me back in this number...9831076676. Wait Samar, I could not talk to this person. I have left a short message in his mobile number, if he returns the call it is well and good, otherwise I will give him one more call. At least till half-past four there was no return call from Mr Malakar 'You go and do your work. I will see to this. Bablu said. Samar found himself a very lucky person in this world. Is it quite believable that a boss is helping his employee out of his way selflessly. I am really a lucky chap. By this time a man came to sell his scrapped stuff such as old magazine, newspapers, uncapped beer glass bottles, for recycling purpose. Samar put everything on a age old manual weighing machine that never gives you the correct weight of the stuffs and ultimately benefits the owner of the shops and frustrates the customers who are selling those scrapped stuffs. "3and 1/2 kg uncle, that means Rs 7 only, Rs 2 per kg, the customer agreed and Samar gave him 7Rs..As soon as the man had left, suddenly Samar looked at the wall clock and he found it was quarter past four.

He saw Bablu was taking a short nap, sitting on a chair in his small cubicle. Samar thought what he should do, 'should I call Babluda and remind him to make a phone call or he might feel disturbed.. Why there was no return call from Mr Malakar? Babluda has left a message in his mobile. Why some people are not quite responsible in this city? When somebody has left a message in your mobile, you should call back, I don't know, may be Mr Malakar is no more interested in the night school business. All these self-made inscrutable thoughts were dawning in his impressionable mind at that time. He felt it was a bit nerve wracking session for him. Finally he chose not to call him. He was again reading a story in a magazine. Suddenly Bablu just woke up, looked at the clock and saw it was half-past four. Samar, it is half

past four. Why didn't you call me? You know that I am supposed to make a phone call to Mr Malakar? I am sorry Babluda, I thought you are taking rest, I should not disturb you, that's why I didn't call you. Anyway, Bablu pressed the redial button of his push button telephone and it was immediately connected to the same mobile number, 9831052537, the phone was ringing, hello, from the other end, from this end Bablu, hello, can I talk to Mr Malakar please, speaking. Mr Malakar, I am Bablu Biswas here, I saw your advertisement regarding your night school, so, I want to know more in details, can you please tell me something about your course? Did you read the advertisement properly? Asked Mr Malakar.Yes I did, said Bablu, you are talking about the fund raising activity isn't it? Yes, this is the prime criteria for the enrollment in this night School, otherwise, the monthly school fees would be charged more around Rs 55 per month, five days a week, three hours a day. And during enrollment two months in advance, this money is adjustable with the school fess for last two months' Malakar continued like an announcement usually made in a railway station for providing information to the passengers regarding the schedule time of the incoming or outgoing trains arriving or departing railway station from a designated platform..

Ok, excuse me Mr Malakar, when the session begins? Very soon, just after Durga Puja, Thank you Mr Malakar. I will get back to you soon. Bablu put down the phone. 'Babluda, what happened? What did he say?' Bablu is bit silent, Samar was just gazing at Bablu. Bablu, no problem, you will start going to this school after Durga Puja. 'Really, Babluda, thank you Babluda, you are very kind to me. But I am thinking Samar, will you be able to raise some funds for this school? Otherwise they are going to charge very high school fees. Yes, Babluda, I can. Bablu: how? I can make some handicrafts, even my mother and sister can make as well. All of us together can make good quantities of handicrafts such as pottery, hand fans and even some kinds of stools made of rattan canes. We will sell it to the local market near our house and can get some money. Bablu was simply looking at Samar when he was explaining to him in details without knowing the harsh reality and at the same time cursing the local so called Communist Leaders who are unscrupulously exploiting these people, giving them false hopes and promises of changing their lives and livelihood in order to get their votes that would help them to establish their regime, maintaining their status quo and accumulating their personal wealth. Bablu: 'But, Samar, you got to spend a lot of money to buy raw materials, isn't it? I know, I can use

a small part of my wage to buy just a small quantity of these raw materials and there is no labor charge as all of us will do it together.' As Samar just concluded his honest and candid explanations, full of optimisms about life and a ray of self-confidence was sparkling from his innocent face, Bablu said, Samar, I did not know that you can make all these things as you said just now. Is it true? Samar: Yes, Babluda, it is. I never told you as we never talked about this. Suddenly, an idea just flashed in his Bablu's mind, 'if I buy those raw materials and ask Samar to make all those things altogether engaging his mother and sister, and he will sell it to local market then it would be a business, whatever profits come up from this small business I will share with him 50 percent as their collective labor charge and commission for selling, that means I do not need to give him his school fees, he can give it from his own earning. That's not a bad idea. There is no large amount of money involved in this small business.' Samar, are you quite sure that you, your mother and sister altogether can make all those stuffs? Yes, Babluda, before coming to work here I did this but we stopped it just because we wear being harassed by the police unnecessarily. How did they harass you? They were demanding high amount of commission from our profits and if we failed they were giving false cases against us, locked me up and caused a great amount of trouble. What a rouge these guys are? He simply murmurs. Listen, Samar, I have an idea. Bablu told emphatically, I will buy those raw materials, you and your mother and sister will make this in your free time. You sell it for me in the local markets both at Sonarpur and here I mean Park Circus market. Whatever profits will come up from this sale we will share it fifty- fifty and you can pay your school fees from this earning. You do not need to be obligated to me as I am not bearing your school fees, you are bearing from your own earning, ok? And, this time no police will harass you. I know the officer in charge of this local police station- I mean this Korea Police Station and I will request him that nobody will harass you in your local area that means Sonarpur area. Hei, Samar, your area comes under Sonarpur Police Station? Yes, Babluda. But one more thing, Samar, can you manage all these things? Just remember, you got to make these handicrafts, sell it to local and sometimes here in this Park circus market, you got to work in my shop quite a long hours and again attending night school and finally going back home, doing home work and sleep. Samar answered unhesitatingly with a very positive frame of mind, yes, Babluda, I can and I will, I know it is not very easy and I also know that it is not very difficult either, to get something to lose something. Just imagine Babluda,

if I can continue my study for few years and if I can do well then that will be more better than a little bit of handwork at present. You do not worry Babluda and one more thing Babluda, so long you are with me I can win over my struggle for existence. As, Samar stopped, Bablu could not control him but hugged him, cuddled him a bit and said to him, Samar, you are very optimistic, you will definitely shine in life, if you keep on doing like this no one can stop you from prospering, I am sure. Thank you Babluda, everybody is not like you, you are something special. Ok, no buttering please Samar. Let me talk to Mr Malakar that you will pay that school fees but no fund raising is possible for you, let me see what does he say. Bablu again redialed the same phone number, can I talk to Mr Malakar please? Speaking, yes Mr Malakar, Bablu Biswas here. Yes, Mr Biswas, tell me, what did you decide? I have decided to enroll without taking fund raising trouble. Is it? Then you have to pay high school fees, I know Bablu said. Now could you please tell me more about the particular course, time of completion and at the end of the course are you going to give any diploma or certificate, is your night school registered? What? You are asking if my school is registered or not? Excuse me, Mr Biswas, whether you will enroll or not, it is completely your choice, but do not finger at me if I am running this night school without registration. No, Mr Malakar, don't get me wrong, I am sorry if I hurt you. I did not mean to say that. I am just trying to make everything clear before making a decision. By the way, Mr Biswas, may I ask you something, are you the candidate or somebody else? Now, Bablu just waited for a while, what he would say, what is his relationship with Samar. He was guessing, how old Samar could be. 15 or 16, if his lost younger brother would have been alive, perhaps he would be at Samar's age. Bablu told Mr Malakar with a firm tone, no, I am not the candidate, my younger brother. What is his name. Samar, Samar Das. Is he your own brother Mr Biswas? Mr Malakar asked. What do you mean by own brother Mr Malakar? Sometimes some relationships do not necessarily depend on blood, it depends on intimacy, feeling, trust and honesty. Mr Malakar did not dare to argue on this issue nor Bablu himself. Ok, Mr Biswas, you please meet me just after Durga Puja, come along with the candidate and of course two months school fees plus Rs hundred for books and other miscellaneous things. Thank you Mr Malakar, I will meet you just after Puja, Ok?

As Bablu put down the phone, Samar was just looking at Bablu, he could not believe his own ears what he heard just now the entire conversation between Bablu and Mr Malakar. 'Babluda, you said to Mr Mal-

akar that I am your younger brother. Yes, so what, If my younger brother would have been alive now he would be of your age and there is nothing wrong if I think you are just like my younger brother. Babluda, you are not only my boss, you are much more than that, I will never be able to repay your debt throughout my life. You don't need to, replied Bablu with a bit of wit, otherwise how could I scold you, how could I say, Samar, where is my masala tea? Samar, where is my mobile phone? Samar, why didn't you clean my astray on the table etc? Yes, Babluda, I don't need to. I don't need to repay your debt as taking help from elder brother is not a debt, rather it is just another form of blessing and I am extremely lucky that apart from my mother and sister there is someone who is very close to my heart, who cares about my future and cares about my other family members as well, Samar could not help but weeping bitterly, perhaps thinking that god is really happy with him now at least. Bablu was trying to hold back his tears and simultaneously pacifying him, Hei Samar, you are brave, you are optimistic, you are clever, shading tear does not suit you, you are full of new ideas, you are a yellow star of today. Tomorrow a new dawn will appear in your life, just wait and see, saying this both Bablu and Samar hugged each other as passionately as they could and waved for a better tomorrow. (PART I)

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The Mystique of a Legend

Neil Chaudhuri

"Where words fail, music speaks" ~
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One can't agree more with this adage after having even a slight inkling of Kishore Kumar.

A genius as accomplished and as extraordinary as Kishore Kumar is an enigma to the entire world. With his sheer ability, distinctive music and as a trend setter, Kishore da is one of the brightest luminaries of the Indian cinema. A singer par excellence, Kishore da wrote a new chapter in the world of playback singing. With perfection in various aspects of film making – being a lyricist, composer, producer, director, screen writer, script writer and actor – Kishore da is an institution in himself.

Born on August 4th 1929, Kishore da dominated the Hindi Film Industry as the leading playback singer from late 1960s until his untimely demise in 1987. Kishore Kumar's early successes as hindi cinema's first Comic Hero, overthrew the traditional concept of a comedian, which was until then nothing more than just a side kick, ensuring the growth in stature of other comic actors to follow.

Dev Anand and S.D. Burman were amongst the first to recognize the talent which was yet to come to the fore. Kishore Kumar became the voice of Dev Anand with evergreen hits created by S. D. Burman in films like Munimji, Taxi Driver, Paying Guest, Guide, Jewel Thief, Prem Pujari, etc.

With S. D. Burman's Aradhana, Kishore da's mellifluous voice came to the limelight. "Mere Sapno Ki Rani" and "Roop Tera Mastana" redefined playback singing and marked the begin-



ning of the Golden Era.

Since early 70's Kishore da's voice inspired and boosted many a career in hindi film industry, transcending generations, genres and geography. His exuberant voice matched with powerful rendition and subtle effortlessness was sheer magic. Kishore da's voice was the undisputed voice for all the top actors from 1970's till late 1980's – Dev Anand, Rajesh Khanna, Amitabh Bachchan and Ri-

shi Kapoor – featured in Kishore da's best songs on-screen.

The present generation too is constantly in touch with the legend's voice, with uncountable remixes of Kishore da's evergreen hits churned out incessantly.

Even Kishore Kumar's legacy has lived on and has been a constant source of inspiration to uncountable successful singers and aspirants. Noted playback singers Kumar Sanu, Abhijit, Vinod Rathod, Babul Supriyo are just to name a few who belong to Kishore da's school of music and genre.

I have been fortunate enough to be born in a musical family and to have grown up during the golden era of Hindi Film Music. Music then meant to be symphony to the ears and would really be well taken into the safe vault of the heart for all times to come. I consider myself blessed to be able to follow Kishore da's gharana in whatever opportunities life has thrown up at me. To millions like me, Kishore da has simply been an unending source of joy with soul stirring musical renditions abound and the ultimate benchmark of a musical prodigy.

Kishore da will always live in our hearts.

Ashchhe Bochhor Aabar Hobe!....

by Sanjana Ganguly

Amidst our jam-packed lives, HKBA is always an excuse for a gathering. The gatherings can be to rejoice united in joy of the auspicious Durga Puja (Worship of Goddess Durga). Be it sunshine or rain, we will always be there to celebrate the homecoming of our pious Goddess. It can also be social gatherings, or an assembly to celebrate India's unique festivals together.

Here, everyone is encouraged to show their talent in relevance to the gathering or our culture and heritage. Drawings, paintings and musical showcases are appreciated and accepted as much as dance performances. The sole purpose of HKBA is to provide a feeling of being at India – mostly Bengal, or being at home during festivals. The Hong Kong Bengali Association is also a social media of interconnection between Bengalis residing here, in Hong Kong.

The love and interdependence in the atmosphere provokes non-members to become members. This is what also motivates the members to eagerly anticipate the next annual puja, or gathering in general.

The "aarti", the performances, and the ambience – all the aspects needed to fulfill the memory of the grand celebrations back in our pristine hometown(s) can be found here. From "dhunuchi naach" to "shindur khela" everything is arranged for you to join in. With assurance, we have the absolute time of our lives during these gatherings. Dance, music, aarti or just the fun-factor – everything is considered.

With every passing day, the eagerness of the gathering gets to me. Friends, family everyone will be there. Merely the thought of puja gets me excited. Over summer, everyone goes to India to buy trendy traditional clothing especially for this occasion. Everybody gets to flaunt their buys during the social events, pujas in particular. "Movies, masti, magic" everyone has a blast!

Pujas are a colourful, mystical sight indeed! From grandparents to children, every person attending comes in ethnic wear. The 'anjali' session is what gives the assembly a touch of bliss. The priest recites

the holy chant first, which is followed by a repetition in unison. It is truly a wonder to hear the hundred plus people chant simultaneously.

Relatives that come from India to attend the puja, are left awe. They had not imagined, the Indian culture would be preserved so pristinely in a foreign country.

An example would be – during some specific days of worship, no non-veg is eaten. This is a part of the Hindu culture we are trying to preserve. Shoes are to be left outside as a sign of respect. This is regularly maintained; everybody comes in and pays their respects to the supreme goddess.

Due to fire control at Hong Kong, we miss the earthly fragrance of dhoop and dhuno.

Bengali becomes the only means of communication. Each person communicates to the other in the same language. This way, the feeling of being at Bengal, and hearing the repetitive Bengali chants and gossips are felt here, at Hong Kong.

The most jaw-dropping sight at puja has to be the idol. Every detail is carefully carved. Goddess seems to be supervising the puja with her dense, dark, kohl lined eyes.

This is also an occasion, where the youth has the privilege of attaining love and blessings from all senior guardians, also referred to as 'gurujon'. We all cherish the feeling of belonging to every family. Everyone is loved equally, despite which families they belong to.

The enjoyment is what makes the ambience magical. Not only does the puja provide a fun, magical atmosphere, it also provides lifelong memories. Especially if you are settled in Hong Kong, and have attended pujas here. These memories will always make you want to come back.

The Journey

By Debasmita Bhattacharya

As he woke up, he realized that he was lying on an operating table and faces in white masks were peering down at him. He recognized the surroundings since he had been in hospital before, but wondered what he was doing there now. Then he felt the pain... It was excruciating. They were extracting his very soul from his body. He struggled under the firm grip of gloved hands. He needed to escape. Somehow. There had to be a way. His life depended on it. Suddenly, a sharper pain hit and the world turned dark.

He was floating aimlessly through nothingness and felt strangely content. Happier than he had ever been in his life. He didn't know why, but he felt as though he had forgotten something. Something extremely important but he just couldn't recall what it was. An uneasy feeling niggled at him but before he could figure out why, he felt a tug in the pit of his stomach and was transported to a somewhat familiar place.

Horrified, he realized he was looking down at himself. Surgeons had dissected his body and were in the process of inserting razor thin, polished metal instruments into his torso. He noticed a syringe hanging out of the crook of his right elbow. He was totally disorientated and could not comprehend what was happening. How could he be in two places at the same time? What was that bizarre, wispy substance floating up from his chest? The terror built up. The fear of not knowing, of being lost in a familiar yet mysterious place, overwhelmed him. Suddenly, he couldn't take it anymore. He let loose a blood-curdling scream and found himself back in his body, right where he belonged. The soul extraction had failed.

Dream World

by Sohini Paul

There were the days when I played in the sun:
A past that is gone, that has now come undone.
Anecdotes, precious, reminiscent of fun,
Caught in my own little dream world.

Maybe I knew this was not meant to last,
Maybe those days were mere hours that passed,
I was so blinded; it all seemed so vast –
Maybe I knew of my dream world.

A landscape of vistas, bathed in white light,
A distant horizon, forgetting the night:
Reviving my lust, and soaring to flight –
As I return to my dream world.

Something that seemed to simple outside,
Reality: mazes that cover my mind.
The past is gone, yet I need to define
Why it is still in my dream world.

Nightmares are true and my dreams turn to ash,
Delicate thorns that caress with each lash,
Ice to the fire – titans that crash:
Breaking the flow of my dream world.

My mind ceases fight, my heart starts to slow,
The dreams of the past which I cannot let go,
Pale as the winter and cold as the snow,
Death in my own little dream world.

As passers do go, and people do die,
If one was to only, close their two eyes,
The resonance whispers: a start is nearby –
A new beginning to my dream world.

Summer holidays

Chinmoy Saha

We all, including me, wait for summer desperately every year mainly for the arrival of summer holidays. At the last week of school, before the endless summer holidays, most students think of distinct events they would do in their never-ending summer holidays, like going to the beach to build sandcastles or to add more seashells to their collection. Some other students, like me, wonder about their new friends and teachers. Some adults, like my parents, are crazy to spend enough time with their family and relatives, while some other people wait impatiently for their endless vacation. The weather is often favorable for fun activities, such as, badminton, swimming, or my favorite sport, basketball. Most people also crave anxiously to eat ice-cream. My sisters and my mom also desire greatly for going shopping, since approximately EVERYTHING is on sale. This is why I and most people enjoy summer holidays.

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ঝকঝকে চৈনিক রাজপথ, ব্যস্ত চিরন্তন
ঢেকে রাখে আর্ত মন, নানা রঙের আবরণ
নিটোল পদযুগল লেসারের ক্রীতদাসে স্বপ্নে
মরিচিকা পথে নির্বাক আর্তনাদ শুধু একটু
অভুক্ত চোখ একাক্ষ সঙ্গী ফুরফুরে মেলবন্ধ
তৃষাতুর গন্তব্য খোঁজে আরও নির্লজ্জ নির
বন্ধন হারা কুমারীর বেণী নয় যে নির্লিপ্ত
লাল ঠোঁট সিজ, চকিত চাহনিত্তে অভিলাষ

সুপ্ত কর্কট কোষে শুধু তুমুল ব্যাথা যন্ত্রণা
প্রথম বিশ্বের এই সমাজে শুধু লালসা আর
রক্তকে এরা শোষণ করে না, দহিতো চিরন্ত
চোখ বন্ধ করে সমাজ ভাবে নারীতৃহানী অ
নির্নিমেষ নিশ্চূপ লাস্যে প্রতিক্ষণ

আমি ও সমাজ মিলিতো জোটে
কামনার রক্তিম জগৎ থেকে,
মস্তব্য ভূষিত করে করতালি
স্মিতহাস্যে আড়চোখে কল্লোলিনী
লোভাতুর কামুক কু-দৃষ্টি দিয়ে ভদ্রমুখোসে
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দূরন্ত পথিকবেশী আমাদের গতিপথ,
নানা ভাবে নানা ফাঁকে সমাজের শ্রোত
নির্নিমেষ নিশ্চূপ বেদনায় পরাভূত।

আশার আলো

(বলরাম পাল)

আকাশ ভরা সূর্য তারা, চাঁদ ভরা ওই কলঙ্ক,
কড়িকাঠের শুকনো হাসি, জরাজীর্ণ পালঙ্ক।
আকাশ ছিল তোমার সাথী, সূর্য তারা ভবিষৎ,
আমার চাঁদের কলঙ্কেতে অতীত ভোলা ক্লিষ্টপথ ॥

তোমার স্বপ্নে সূর্যমুখী অবকাশের বিনোদন,
আমার চাঁদে পূর্ণিমার ওই ক্ষণস্থায়ী সমর্পণ।
পায়রা ওড়া কড়িকাঠে এগিয়ে চলার হাতছানি,
পালঙ্ক নয়, সুপ্নদেখার মিষ্টি মধুর রাতরানি ॥

তোমার সাথী আকাশ আজি আমার আলোর উৎসমুখ,
সূর্য তারা, চাঁদের আলো, হাটভাঙ্গা ওই সুপ্নসুখ।
আকাশ ভরা সূর্য তারা, চাঁদের আলো সুপ্নময়,
কড়িকাঠের মিষ্টি হাসি, এগিয়ে চলাই জীবনজয় ॥

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नमस्तस्मै नमस्तस्मै नमस्तस्मै नमः नमः



মহাষষ্ঠী (Sasthi)	20th October 2012, Saturday
বোধন (Inauguration)	1900 – 2000 HOURS
প্রসাদ (Prasad)	2000 – 2100 HOURS
মহাসপ্তমী (Saptami)	21st October 2012, Sunday
সন্ধ্যারত্নী ও পূজা (Evening Puja)	1800 – 1900 HOURS
প্রসাদ (Prasad)	1900 – 1930 HOURS
সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান (Cultural Programme)	1930 – 2030 HOURS
মহাঅষ্টমী (Astami)	22nd October 2012 Monday
সন্ধ্যাপূজা (Evening Puja)	1800 – 1900 HOURS
প্রসাদ (Prasad)	1900 – 1930 HOURS
সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান (Cultural Programme)	1930 – 2000 HOURS
মহানবমী (Nabomi)	23rd October 2012 Tuesday
সন্ধ্যারত্নী ও পূজা (Evening Puja)	1800 – 1900 HOURS
প্রসাদ (Prasad)	1900 – 1930 HOURS
সাংস্কৃতিক অনুষ্ঠান (Cultural Programme)	1930 – 2030 HOURS
বিজয়া দশমী (Dashami)	24th October 2012 Wednesday
পূজা ও দধীকর্মা (Puja)	1100 – 1230 HOURS
সিঁদুর খেলা ও বিসর্জন (Vermillion Ceremony)	1600 – 1800 HOURS

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Durga Puja 2011







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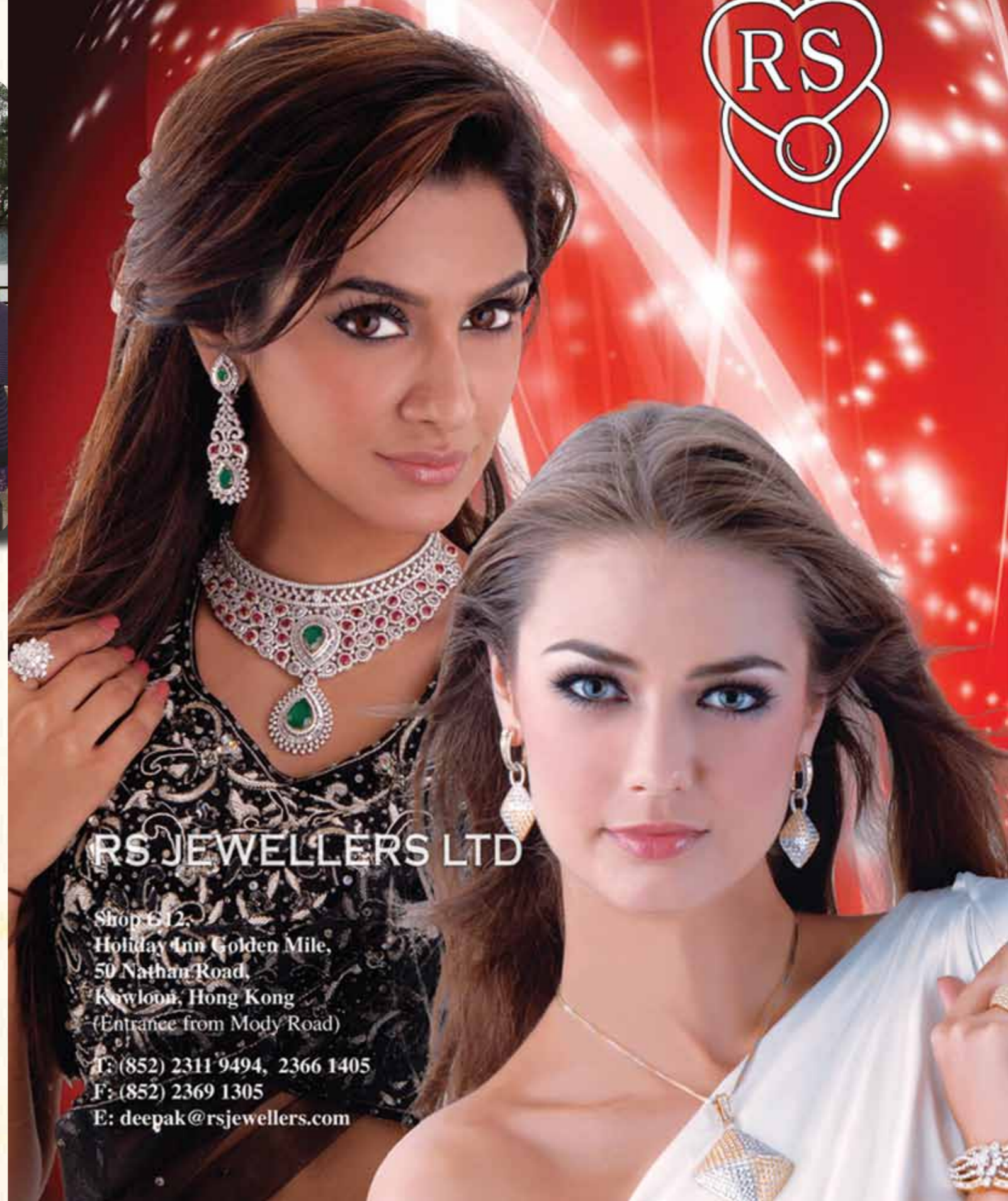
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