

"Voice" the Original Social Media: Bangladesh Perspective

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Voice provides the main tool for both semantic and emotional communication and is therefore relevant to auditory perception, psychology, cognition, linguistics and phonetics. The best example of this perhaps is the "Voice" of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman that echoed nationwide from the Racecourse Ground in Dhaka on March 7, 1971 and aroused a nation eventually led to the birth of independent Bangladesh. Voice is window to the soul. It can reveal moods, age or illness. We can be charmed by someone's voice; the voice can be used to calm, but also to provoke or care. The ability of the voice to communicate emotions and to influence others in a positive or negative way is an important factor in today's society.

On April 16, World Voice Day was celebrated in Bangladesh as in all over the globe. A scientific seminar was organized on this occasion at Shaheed Dr. Milon Hall at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University, Dhaka by the Association of Phonosurgeons of Bangladesh, where Mr. Hasanul Haque MP, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Information, Government of Bangladesh was the Chief Guest at the Inaugural Ceremony. The scientific session followed a colourful rally. The main purpose of the day is to demonstrate to the general mass that Voice matters. The motto of World Voice Day 2015 was - Voice, the Original Social Media.

The event started in Brazil in 1999 as the Brazilian National Voice Day. It was the result of mixed initiative of physicians, speech-language pathologists and singing teachers that belonged to the former association 'Sociedade Brasileira de Laringologia e Voz-SBLV' (Brazilian Society of Laryngology and Voice). This initiative was followed by other countries, such as Argentina and Portugal and the Brazilian National Voice Day became the International Voice Day. In the United states, the American Academy of Otolaryngology- Head and Neck Surgery officially recognized this celebration in 2002 and in that year the event was designated as "World Voice day".

By definition voice is the sound made by air passing from lungs through larynx or voice box. A disordered voice is defined as one that has one or more of the following characteristics:

- It is not audible, clear or stable in a wide range of acoustic settings
- It is not appropriate for the gender and age of the speaker
- It is not capable of fulfilling its linguistic and paralinguistic functions
- It fatigues easily
- It is associated with discomfort and pain on phonation

Whether one is a public speaker, celebrity, radio personality, musician, singer, recording or emerging artist, his/her voice is his/her most powerful platform to speak to the world. What he/she say does matter. So in pursuance of the theme of this year's World Voice Day, how can we use our voice more effectively? A few tips on voice care are as follows:

- Avoid clearing throat
- Avoid coughing whenever possible
- Speak in a clear tone
- Avoid talking above loud noise
- Keep volume level low on audio sets
- Wear earplugs at music concerts
- Keep airflow smooth during exercise especially during weight lifting
- Drink plenty of water to avoid vocal cord dehydration; at least 8 glasses per day
- Do not smoke and avoid smoky environments
- If voice quality changes suddenly, rest voice and consult physician or laryngologist
- If speaking or singing makes voice hoarse or causes discomfort, it should be stopped

Following are few additional tips for performers:

- Always warm up before a performance

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- Rest the voice when there is no need to use it
- Get formal voice training if you have not already
- Be careful with "character" voices and "emotional" releases

It is perhaps no overstatement that career longevity to great extent is dependent on maintaining a healthy voice. Therefore whenever there is any voice problem, it should be addressed immediately.