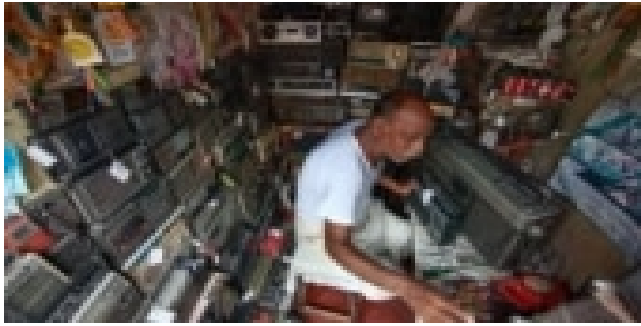


This Mahalaya, meet Kolkata's last radio man



As Bengalis across the globe prepare to listen to the iconic radio programme "Mahisasuramardini" at dawn on Mahalaya on Thursday, here's the story of a true radio connoisseur from Kolkata.

◆ There's something unique about radio. Thus, Rabindranath Tagore coined the name Akashvani and it remains immortal forever, ◆ says Amit Ranjan Karmakar, as he sets himself on the difficult task to give life back to an absolutely old and cranky radio set. At 62, he barely has time in hand. After all, he must finish repairing a dozen such radio sets before Mahalaya sets in on Thursday. ◆ Youngsters come to me with just one request! They say, uncle please make this work once again before Mahalaya. My grandfather had given this to my dad, ◆ he quips with a glint in his eyes. For a whole generation growing up watching Youtube on their smartphones, listening to the radio is all but pass ◆, except for this one day in the year when radio waves come alive for every Bengali. The countdown to Durga Puja literally begins with the rich baritone of Birendra Krishna Bhadra reciting the Chandi in the iconic All India Radio programme ◆ Mahisasuramardini ◆ broadcast at dawn on Mahalaya day. As Bengalis across the globe prepare to listen to the iconic radio programme "Mahisasuramardini" at dawn on Mahalaya tomorrow, here's the story of a true radio connoisseur from Kolkata! @iindrojit | #ReporterDiary Full video-<https://t.co/IFvRBmXkTY> pic.twitter.com/20kHgvMbJB Today ◆s generation has several options, be it on Youtube or other digital platforms, but for puritans, especially among elders, listening to the programme on Akashvani on a radio set is a must. ◆ There is no comparison between radio and a mobile phone. I can never accept it, ◆ Karmakar butts in. He does have a mobile phone but knows very little how to operate. ◆ I keep the numbers handy on a note book to dial, ◆ he adds. But his eyes sparkle as soon as anyone peaks into tiny store filled with hundreds of vintage radio sets - Phillips, Murphy, Bush, Telefunken et al. Located in the heart of Kumartuli, the idol makers hub in Kolkata on 40 Banamali Sarkar Street, Karmakar ◆s workshop may seem like a collectors paradise, but he sells none! Till sometime back there were a number of shops that used to repair radio sets in Kolkata but with fast-changing technology, people like Karmakar are rare to find. No wonder he still gets customers not just from the city but even outside. It was in 1976 that Karmakar began working as a radio mechanic, long before television arrived on the scene. For him, radio is nothing but pure nostalgia. ◆ These days there are many shows on TV for Mahalaya but none could diminish the popularity of the original radio programme! ◆ he says.

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