

# Fakir Alamgir recalls his journey towards independence

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

*Ekushey Padak* awardee and Shadhin Bangla Betar Kendra singer Fakir Alamgir is one of the leading exponents of Gono Sangeet -- the songs of the masses, in the country. He played an important role as a member of Kranti Shilpi Gosthi and Gono Shilpi Gosthi, during the mass upsurge in 1969. On the Independence Day of Bangladesh, he looks back on 1971.

The days of March 1971 will always be unforgettable for me. After the Language Movement of 1952 and the 1960s, we were determined for revolution, and soon enough, the mass uprising and the Liberation War followed. I am a freedom fighter. At the time of Bangabandhu's iconic speech on 7th March 1971, my peers and I were college goers.

We did something remarkable on March 23, 1971. On that day, people were throwing out Pakistani flags and putting up Bangladeshi flags in different areas and neighborhoods; so, my peers and I did the same. I put up flags of Bangladesh in my neighbourhood, Khilgaon. It was a moment of pride for us. From March 24, we began different cultural activities through Kranti Shilpi



PHOTO: COURTESY

Gosthi and Gono Shilpi Gosthi, which were well received by the public. We continued our cultural programmes till March 25.

I don't think any of us were prepared for what was coming then. Brutalities

and cowardly attacks were carried out by the Pakistani occupation forces on our people that night. We were unarmed. I was woken up by loud gunshots.

Somehow, we managed to go out to Ulon, Badda, and stayed there. Curfews

were imposed on March 26 and 27. After those were lifted, I set out for hometown, Faridpur, from Maora, on foot. I contacted many of my friends in Faridpur once I got there after my tiring journey. Soon, we started training for the war, which was a momentous step for us.

In July, I set out for Kolkata. On the way, we witnessed thousands of deaths. Kolkata had already established Shadhin Bangla Betar Kendra by this time. I stayed at Kankurgachi in northeast Kolkata.

As I started working in Shadhin Bangla Betar Kendra, I grew close to Kamal Lohani, Abdul Jabber, Apel Mahmud, Kaderi Kibria and many other noted artists. My songs, which aired live on the wartime radio station, were a huge source of inspiration for those at the battle grounds. We began travelling to different places around Kolkata with our music. We were clear in our intentions to work for an independent Bangladesh.

I remember we were performing a chorus rendition of the song, *Bijoy Nishan Urche Oi*, when we received the news of Bangladesh's independence. Needless to say, it was an emotional moment for us, and we were all weeping out of sheer joy.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

## Renowned film director Motiur Rahman Panu passes away

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Renowned film director and producer Motiur Rahman Panu breathed his last on March 24, at his house in Uttara. He was suffering from old age complications. Bangladesh Chalachitro Porichalok Samiti and Bangladesh Chalachitro Projojok Samiti expressed their condolences regarding the director's demise.

Born on December 31, 1939, at Bogra, the director's film career started in 1964. His directorial debut film, *Harano Manik*, was released in 1979.

Panu worked as an assistant director with several film directors such as Akbar Kabir Pintu, Syed Awal and Babul Chowdhury among others at the start of his career.

His directorial career started in the eighties though he started producing films from an early stage. Panu produced *Beder Mehe Josna*, the most commercially successful film of the country.

Critically acclaimed film *Moner Majhe Tumi*, featuring Reaz and Shabnur was directed and produced by Panu. Directed by Salahuddin Lavlu and produced by Motiur Rahman Panu, *Molla Barir Bou* was another commercially successful film. *Apon Bhai*, *Nag Mahal*, *Shahosh*, *Man Morjada* and *Tiger Number One*, among others, are films directed and produced by the veteran.

## Poverty never derails 'Dotara Pagol' Suklal Roy

S DILIP ROY, FROM LALMONIRHAT

Suklal Roy, 37, is known as *Dotara Pagol* in his village, where the residents are in awe of his skills with the instrument. The artiste lives in the village Kalishan of Kamlabari union, at Aditmari upazila in Lalmonirhat.

At the age of seven, Suklal fell in love with the mellifluous tone of the dotara. A motorcycle mechanic by profession, he often forgets about his job, moving from village to village with his instrument, singing his heart out with various folk songs. He is especially adept at Bhawaiya.

Often struggling to make a living because of his erratic lifestyle, his wife and two school-going children often have to struggle to feed themselves. Yet, it does not bother Suklal, who considers music to be all that matters.

He teaches the instrument to the children of the village, free of charge. "I have no money and maybe never will, but I will never give up my Dotara. I want to play it till my last breath," said an emotional Suklal.



PHOTO: STAR

## Udichi's precautionary measures to help fight Coronavirus



PHOTO: COURTESY

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Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigosthi produced hand sanitisers in their office premises, and distributed them among the labourers in Dhaka city recently in the Press Club and Paltan areas. General Secretary Jamshed Anwar Topon, members of the Editorial Board, Arif Noor and Mizanur Rahman Sumon among others were present at the time.

Districts branches of Udichi have started various activities across the country, such as distributing hand sanitisers, awareness campaigns and relief distribution among the working labourers.

Members of the Udichi have made hand sanitisers at their offices on Topkhana Road

since the start of the coronavirus outbreak. According to Udichi, they will continue hand sanitiser delivery and awareness activities as long as these poor and helpless people are working to earn their daily bread. Udichi is distributing food and other necessary items to the poor and underprivileged workers across the country.

Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigosthi was established by Satyen Sen and Ranesh Das Gupta on October 29 in 1968, in the wake of the mass uprising against autocracy. The cultural organisation aims to raise awareness through activities comprised of music, theatre, dance, fine arts and literature. The organisation has branches across the country and foreign branches in the USA, England, Australia, Canada and France.

## Artistes' music video instills hope amidst quarantine

*The whole world is going through a crisis, as the novel coronavirus disrupts our day-to-day lives. The only way to prevent this contagious virus from spreading is to stay indoors. With 'Stay Home, Stay Safe', people all around the world has quarantined themselves in order to save humanity.*

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Music has the power to bring together people to fight for a common cause in times of crisis and music artistes are doing so in the confinements of their home. Several Bangladeshi artistes lend their voices to create awareness in these troubling times. Gaan Bangla

Television's Managing director and Music Director Kaushik Hossain Taposh played the piano to the tune of Rabindra Sangeet *Anondoloke Mongolaloke Satya Sundoro*, while Akhi Alamgir, Oishee, Shamim Hasan, Shan Malik, Priyo and other artistes participated.

"Music expresses the infinite power of true love. In any situation,

music can be reached easily at any distance. Stay home, stay safe," the video was recently released on Gaan Bangla TV's official Facebook page along with this concluding message.

Bappa Mazumder, Hridoy Khan and Khayam Sanu Sandhi, among others, are singing to create awareness on social media from their home.

