

RECOMMENDATIONS

Anniversary

June 18 is the first death anniversary of Neelima Ibrahim, one of the country's pioneer female educationists, litterateur and social activist. Neelima Ibrahim Bangladesh Study Centre will observe the occasion with several activities. A discussion and a launching ceremony of a book titled 'Neelima Ibrahim Smarak Grantha' (Neelima Ibrahim Memorial Book) will be held at the VIP Lounge of the National Press Club. Nurjahan Begum, editor of the well-known magazine for women Begum will attend the event as the chief guest. The programme will start at 4.30 p.m.

Exhibition

June 06-16 A photography exhibition titled 'Cityscape' is being held at the Shilparag gallery (House 15, Road 16, Dhamondi R/A, Dhaka 1209) from June 6. The exhibition will continue till June 16.

June 6-19

A painting exhibition of Rashid Amin titled 'Happenings' is going on at the German Cultural Centre, Goethe Institut Dhaka from June 6th to 19th, from 2-8 pm.

June 14-24

Dhaka Shahitya Sanskriti Kendra is holding the 6th calligraphy exhibition at the National Museum gallery on the occasion of Holy Srivatarnabhi (Sm). The exhibition presents works of 42 artists. The exhibition is open for visitors everyday from 10 am to 5 pm.

Theatre

June 27-30

To mark the fourth Biannual Conference of Shattwik Natya Somprodya, the theatre group arranges a drama festival at the Shawkat ATM auditorium of Begum Sufia Kamal Library. Entitled Moliere Drama Festival, the festival features staging of Moliere's drama by four reputed theatre groups of Dhaka. Besides, a seminar titled Moliere's Drama in Bangladesh will also take place during the 4-day long conference of Shattwik.

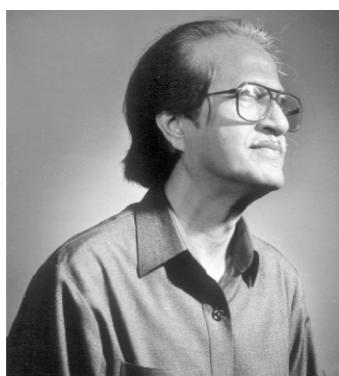
Personality

The Genius of Mustafa Monowar

The mentor of a generation of budding artistes.

NASHID KAMAL

We had been rehearsing for more than three weeks before we boarded the chartered plane for Zambia. Those



Mustafa Monowar—a rare manifestation of multifaceted person.

three weeks had resulted in creating new dimensions in the history of dance in Bangladesh. Mustafa

pose, he asked her to lift the other leg! Nipa had asked whether Jewel Aichi was going to join in, as she herself knew of no other dance technique other than 'magic' which would enable her to attain a floating position. These jokes and many more were propagated by other dancers. Sometimes when I joined

part of a cultural entourage. He was a hard task master, he was very dedicated in his pursuits to attain perfection, specially in the dance items which were the apple of his eye. I was going to be the compere of this programme and having known me and having groomed me from my childhood, he weaved the

ever, we looked forward to the grandeur of the palace or National theatre where the programme was to be held the next afternoon. Next morning, we were to be taken to the premises where the Zambian government wanted us to host our cultural programme. As the microbus full of participants entered the well guarded palace, one had

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme would be held there! There was no backdrop (apart from the azure sky with floating white clouds), no green-room, and no sound system. The cackling of the peacocks and the playful mirth of the deer would be the only background music for our compact programme! We were all at a loss, specially me because I needed to change my sari four times during the show and appear back into the stage in the minimum possible time.

Montu Chacha assured us that he would think of something and he asked them for some kind of a screen which would shield us from the audience. They brought in a huge canvas which was completely barren and told us to change our clothes behind this screen. We had



Puppetry, a previously neglected folk-art, has attained enormous heights of popularity with the Midas touch of Mustafa Monowar.

a beautiful African scenery. It was unbelievable how he captured the Zambian landscape in a few seconds, the same seconds in which we had hardly looked around to realize that so many elements existed in the surrounding. Starting from the wide array of colours displayed by the healthy peacocks to the minutest details of bumble bees sitting in the particular species of ferns in the gardens of Zambia, he had it all in his painting! During the cultural show, we actually went behind it to change our clothes and make a success of our complete programme originally meant for an indoor presentation. Keeneth Kaunda came to greet us on stage and actually told me 'Oh You are so small and on stage you look so big! I felt that I was able to stand tall because of the way Mustafa Monowar had construed the garland of cultural items, each sparkling in its own content yet complete in unification.

As I see various write ups on Mustafa Monowar, sometimes as a puppeteer, sometimes as a drama director, sometimes as an artist or designer of *Notun Kuri*, I wonder whether we have actually captured all his qualities to represent the true persona. Mustafa Monowar is one of those rare persons who can recognize a ring on Ferdousi Rahman's finger and choose it to be

one on the Raja of Tagore's 'Rokto korobi'. He can sing his father's (Poet Ghulam Mustafa) songs 'Ogo Madina Monowara' and just bask in the glory by saying 'Evu can you imagine a desert being compared with a lush green garden? *Morobhumi nou ko tumi Turnije gul bagicha*

He's the one who can sing Talat Mahmud's ghazals and also draw pencil sketches in the children's programme. But above all, I feel, that his contribution to this society has been in creating the new generation of artists. He has been able to nurture many of us from our childhood days during the inception of TV in 1964, and not only implant the seeds of art in us but also cultivate it enough to see us bloom to its fullest satisfaction. Sample names like Nima Raman, Shimul Billah, Kashfia Nahreen, Faridur Reza Sagar, Ali Imam, Rita Shabnam, Dilshad Khanam, Al Monsor and my own humble self are all his creations. Mustafa Monowar alias, my Montu Chacha, is not only an artist himself but is also a creator of what can be termed as the post independence cultural cadre.

The author is a renowned vocal artiste, compere and Professor of Population Environment, Independent University, Bangladesh.

The weather was like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

in the rehearsals from my busy class schedules in the Dhaka University, where I worked, I was flabbergasted by the prickly wounds arising from these comments of other fellow artists. They referred to Mustafa

entire programme around my abilities to speak, recite, sing and join in the dance. As an anchor of the programme he set me up in such a manner that I would speak of Bangladesh and demonstrate the effect of rain with the song (slight excerpt) *Allah Megh De, Pani De* when the dancers would fill the stage with the entire version of this dance and the song would be played in the background. I had to change my sari four times to match the moods of various seasons, colours like green for serenity, yellow to match spring, red to denote fiery summer and lastly white to denote peace. Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda was particularly lauded for his role of peace and our cultural presentation ended with a poem in English while the dancers would flock in behind me, all attired in white, carrying banners of peace and joining in silent mime as I recited the entire poem. It was a very compact programme and only Mustafa Monowar knew how to bring out the best in everyone and assemble an appropriate combination.

When we landed in Zambia, it was 2 am and we were very disappointed with the local hospitality, because the hotel rooms were dismal and no food was available even from the room service. How-

ever, we looked forward to the grandeur of the palace or National theatre where the programme was to be held the next afternoon. Next morning, we were to be taken to the premises where the Zambian government wanted us to host our cultural programme. As the microbus full of participants entered the well guarded palace, one had

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would be held there!

the feeling that we were entering a safari park. It was the month of June and the weather was in the twenties

like the Bangladeshi winter and amidst miles and miles of lush green grass we were greeted by everfriendly peacocks and deer, who came peeking into the car windows as if they were receiving us. As the car sauntered through the

gardens we half expected to see some amphitheatre where the show would be held. The hosts brought us to this open air place where there was an elevated stage of grass and told us that the programme

would