

A prolific character actor

In conversation with Tushar Khan

AHSAN HABIB

POPULAR actor Tushar Khan has been working mostly in television at present. Four serials featuring the actor are on air now -- *Dolls House*, *Amader Nurul Huda*, *Syed Barir Bou* and *Chor Kathuri*. Several others are set to air soon.

Tushar has been involved with the theatre troupe Aranyak Natya Dal for nearly 25 years. Since 1983, he has acted in many stage and street plays. On stage, he has worked mostly as a substitute actor until Aranyak Natya Dal's latest production *Uporwala*. The actor is a member of the regular cast in *Uporwala*.

"I work with Aranyak with the same passion and enthusiasm as I did in the beginning. It's true I've become busier with TV plays but that doesn't interfere with my work in theatre," he says.

"While one has to accomplish his/her own designated responsibilities, it is the teamwork that is most important for a theatrical

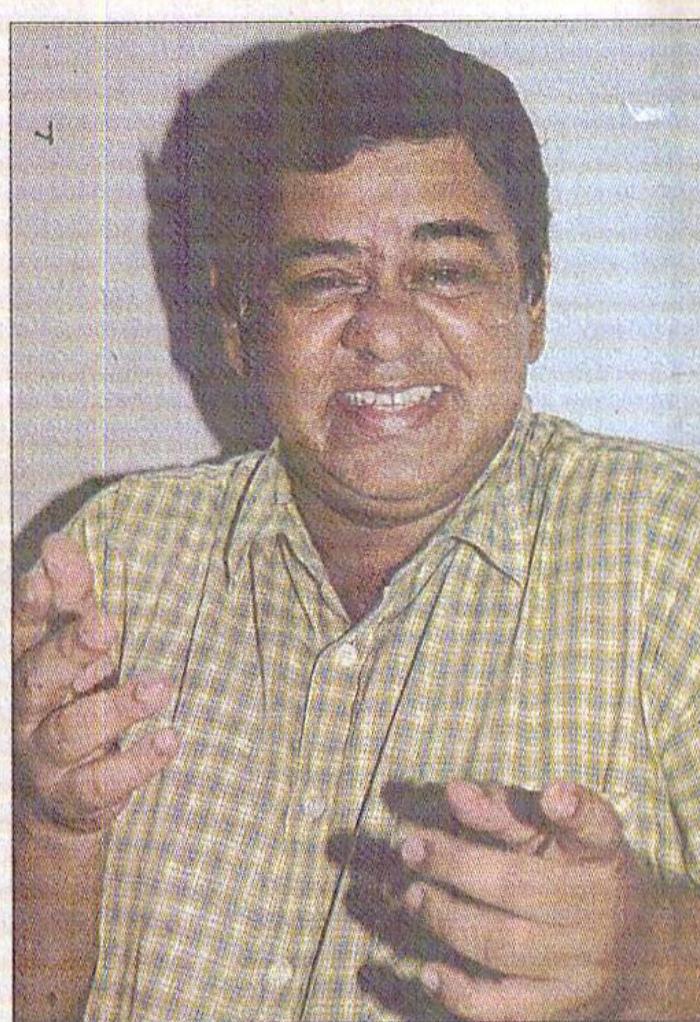


PHOTO: STAR

production. While performing at different places with Aranyak, I found that the audience appreciate

any good performance; whether the performer is a star or not does not matter to them," he adds.

Tushar attained popularity mainly for his comic roles in TV plays during the late '90s. Today, however, he performs in different types of roles with equal flair.

Some of the actor's much-loved roles include Abdullah in *Islam*, a contractor in *Obobahika*, a police officer in the street play *Neela* and an impostor who pretends to be a freedom fighter in *Fevari Nishan*. Among the characters in TV plays *Jamal* in *Itikotha* and his roles in *Shilpi*, *Shundori* and *Bondhon* are his favourites. "Variation fascinates me. Any character that can engage an artiste becomes his/her favourite," he says.

Tushar had been regular in movies up until 1998. After a long seclusion, he recently made a comeback in movies, though according to him, "the range of work has become limited." He has appeared in over 50 films. His performances in movies such as *Bikkhobh*, *Ajker Protibad*, *Wrong Number*, *Hridoyer Kotha*, *Taka*, *Shubha*, *Khude Joddha* and others have been widely appreciated.

Tushar believes artistes need to be socially aware and sensitive enough to respond to different causes. "Artistes have the power to influence many. They need to be honest and empathetic. At least considering the love they receive from the people, they should always think of giving back to the society."

"Acting is my passion. I consider myself fortunate that I can satiate my creative yearning through my profession and am not forced to do anything that I might not enjoy," he says.

Nirjhor's "Aha!": A breath of fresh air

MAMUN RASHID

My friend Enamul Karim Nirjhor has directed a film titled *Aha!*. I could not attend the premier show and therefore had to compensate by watching the movie from the front row of the houseful Cineplex at Bashundhara city.

Nirjhor has not only directed the film, he also wrote the story, screenplay, dialogues and songs and in each field has left an impression of his talent.

From the very title of the film, we get to know that the director's creative thinking is unique from his contemporaries. What does the title imply? Does it connote agony or immeasurable pleasure?

Before going about the film,

one has to mention Impress Telefilm Ltd. For the last few years, Impress Telefilm has produced a range of good films with unique stories and innovative makings. The relentless effort of making decent mainstream films by the production house and its Managing Director, Faridur Reza Sagor, is making significant contribution to our cinema.

Nirjhor is a multi-talented, passionate and enthusiastic individual. He is a poet and a photographer. He is also involved with a welfare organisation called "TRY Foundation". He, along with a few of his friends owns a restaurant in Dhanmondi named "Voot". His architectural designs are marked by his indi-



Scenes from *Aha!*

viduity and exclusivity. That ingenuity is apparent in *Aha!*. This film is about making the audience dream and again pull them back to the harsh reality. It carries one to the world of fantasy and also highlights veracity.

This is a film about love and malice, empathy along with apathy.

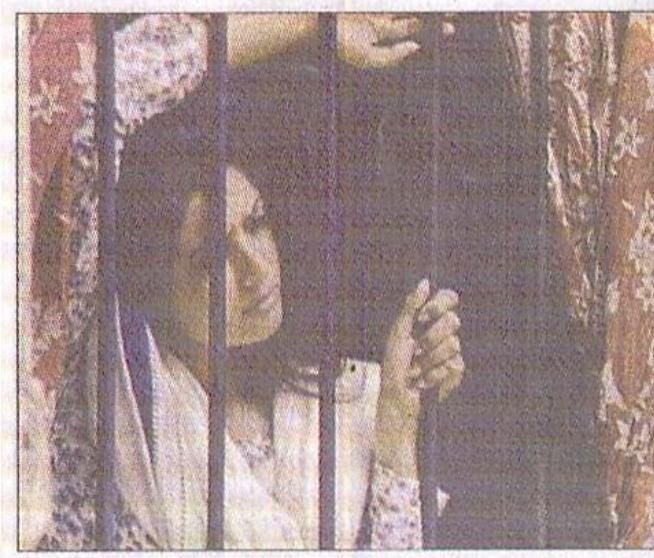
The core of the film is a display of superlative acting by an impressive cast. Tarique Anam Khan is mesmerising, Humayun Faridee is irreplaceable and Fazlur Rahman Babu was simply superb. Newcomer Sathi Yasmin seems comfortable in her role and provides a credible perfor-

mance. Nirjhor has utilised his actors with remarkable competence.

Each and every song of the film strikes a chord -- be it the lyric, tune or vocals. Fahmid Nabi, Kumar Biswajit, Bari Siddiqui and Ornab have all added to the appeal. Kudos to Debajyoti Mishra, the music director, for providing the audience with an enjoyable soundtrack.

We want more such films, highlighting our core values and woes of urbanisation -- a true depiction of our heritage under threat.

The writer is a banker and columnist



Another feather in the hat for "IronEaters"

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Berlin-based Bangladeshi filmmaker Shaheen Dill-Riaz's feature-length documentary film *IronEaters* (Lohakhor) -- a joint collaboration of Bangladeshi and German teams -- has received the best documentary film award at the FILM SOUTHASIA '07 festival held in Kathmandu, organised by the Himal Association, says a press release.

The festival was held from October 11 to 14. Forty-eight documen-

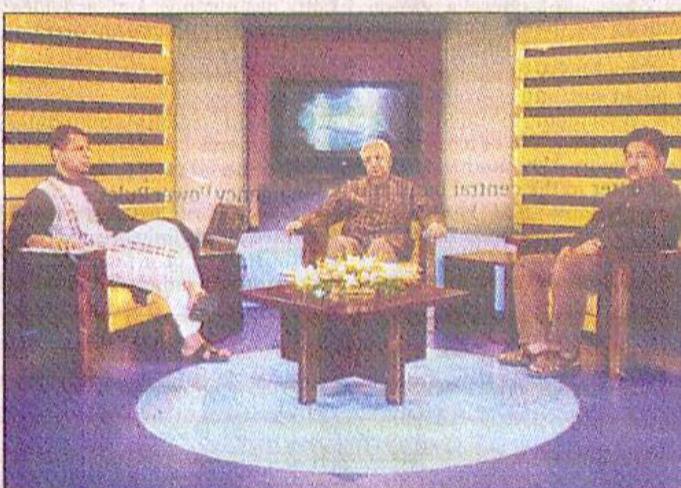
taries were screened at the festival. *IronEaters* zooms in on the living and working conditions of the workers at the ship-breaking yards in Sitakunda, Chittagong. The film is written and directed by Shaheen Dill-Riaz. Dill-Riaz is also the cinematographer of the film. The talented filmmaker is an active member of Bangladesh Documentary Council.

IronEaters also received the prestigious 'One-World Award NRW 2007' in Cologne, Germany recently.



A scene from *IronEaters*

"Shomoyer Kotha" on BTV tonight



The host (L) of the show with tonight's guests

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

BTV will air the discussion programme *Shomoyer Kotha*, tonight at 9:00pm.

Tonight's episode will feature a discussion on the state-run institution -- its past, present and future. Important issues including why BTV has gradually lost its appeal and should the TV channel be granted autonomy and how it can regain its former glory, will be

talked about.

Former deputy director general of BTV, Atiqul Haq Chowdhury and media personality Abdun Noor Tushar will be present at the programme as guests. Video footages containing opinions of noted actor, Subarna Mustafa and former information secretary, Asafuddowla will also be shown.

Shomoyer Kotha is hosted by Syed Munir Khasru and aired every Friday.

TV Watch

"Amra Korbo Jai": Children's programme on ATN Bangla

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

ATN Bangla will air children's programme *Amra Korbo Jai* this evening at 6:20pm.

This award-winning programme focuses on children's rights, entertainment, their likes, dislikes and more. *Amra Korbo Jai* proved to be a great success in

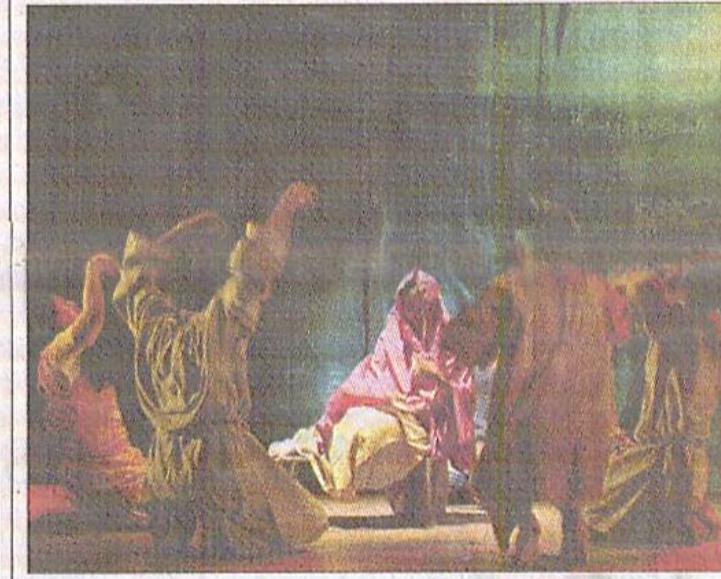
children's journalism in the electronic media. It also plays a role in generating awareness on children's rights.

The programme features different segments including news for children, conversation with eminent personalities, travelogue, documentaries, reports on underprivileged children etc.



A scene from *Amra Korbo Jai*

Prachyanat stages 50th show of "Koinna"



Actors of Prachyanat in *Koinna*

CULTURAL CORRESPONDENT

Theatre troupe Prachyanat celebrated the 50th show of its 9th production, *Koinna* with special arrangements at the Mahila Samity Auditorium on October 24.

The auditorium was decorated in accordance with the set of the play that gave off the impression of a mazaar,

and the music arrangement -- some from the play and some exclusively made for the 50th show -- created an apt nuance.

On the occasion, noted actor Ferdousi Majumdar presented *uttoriyo* to the actors and designers of the play. *Koinna* is written by Murad Khan and directed by Azad Abul Kalam.

Concert to commemorate Gandhi Jayanti

KAVITA CHARANJI, New Delhi

In a world torn hopelessly asunder by discord and disharmony, Mahatma Gandhi's message of peace and non-violence has an enduring appeal. In fact so relevant is the late leader's philosophy even today that the United Nations General Assembly declared his birth anniversary of October 2 as the International Day of Non-violence.

To commemorate this event, the Delhi-based Neemrana Music Foundation recently presented an evening of melody by six choirs and 150 singers. Together the participants in *Singing Together for Peace* took an enthralled audience

through an array of devotional songs, American folk songs, oratorios and world music. Ably conducted by talented Hungarian conductor Gabriella Boda Rechner, the singers kicked off with *Singing all Together*, went on to perform catchy numbers such as *Footloose*, *We are the World* and *Shalom*. The high point of the evening was the rendition of *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram*, Gandhi's favourite hymn.

The musical soiree ended with *Hymn to Freedom* and a repeat of *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram* with the audience joining in.

The talented performers were drawn from six choirs -- Vasant Valley School, Jubilate Golden

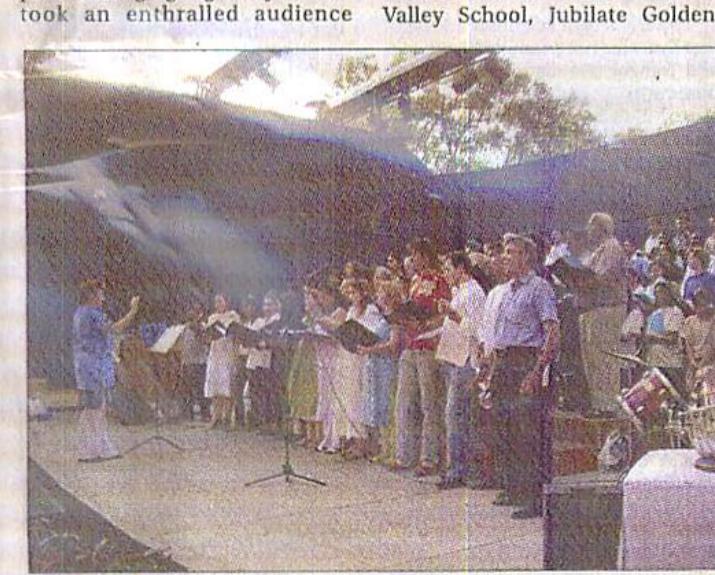
Jubilee Alliance Francaise, Artistes Unlimited, The Neemrana Opera Choir, Delhi Opera Ensemble and The Capital City Minstrels. The function was jointly organised by The Neemrana Music Foundation and The Ashok Hotel where the concert was held.

Apart from the singers, there were other praiseworthy performers such as pianists Anindo Bose and Nise Meruno, singer Shalabh Sharma and danseuse Saffia Livingston. A large part of the credit for the commendable show must go to conductor Gabriella who tirelessly coordinated the singers and musicians.

Says the indefatigable Gabriella, "A choir is an assemblage driven by intelligence but nourished by the heart. It inculcates and nurtures a spirit of friendship, of sharing, of working as a group. Singing in a choir is also a personal challenge as one embarks on a journey of self-improvement."

Bouquets must also go to The Neemrana Opera Choir, which has performed two main Indo-French operas in India over the last few years -- *The Fakir of Benares* and *The Pearl Fishers*. The choir is now being trained by Gabriella and Ariane Gray Hubert for *Carmen*, its next opera and the development of new vocal programmes.

One indicator of the success of the concert is that the Foundation has already signed up a new crop of singers in upcoming music rehearsals.



Members of six choirs perform at the programme

Brick Lane's Tannishtha gets BIFA nomination



Tannishtha Chatterjee in *Brick Lane*

Tannishtha Chatterjee's impressive performance as a young Bangladeshi immigrant in Sarah Gavron's critically acclaimed *Brick Lane* has earned the young actress a best actress nomination and Gavron a best director at the 10th edition of the British Independent Film Awards.

The film is based on Monica Ali's critically acclaimed 2003 novel where Chatterjee plays Ali's protagonist, Nazneen, who is married off at the age of 17 to a middle-aged Bangladeshi ex-pat Chunu (Satish Kaushik).

Also in the running for best actress are Judi Dench (*Notes on a Scandal*), Anne Hathaway (*Becoming Jane*), Sophia Myles (*Hallam Foe*) and Kierston Wareing (*It's a Free World...*).

The nominations announced at London's Haymarket hotel include Anton Corbijn's biopic *Control* with 10 nominations,

And *When Did You Last See Your Father?*, *Hallam Foe* and *Eastern Promises*.

The nominations were decided by a jury comprising actors Hayley Atwell, Archie Panjabi, Kathy Burke, Tony Curran, Chiwetel Ejiofor and Matthew Macfadyen; directors Annie Griffin, Menhaj Huda, Neil Marshall and Peter Webber; London Film Festival artistic director Sandra Heibron; producer Mark Herbert; cinematographer Brian Tufano; distributor Will Clarke; and musician Nitin Sawhney.

The awards ceremony will take place on November 28 at the Roundhouse in London.

Source: Internet



Tannishtha (L) with Sarah Gavron

"The Namesake": A contender at this year's Oscars



Tabu in *The Namesake*

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Acclaimed Indian American director Mira Nair's latest film *The Namesake*, which has earned a great commercial success and critical appreciation in India, the United States and several other countries, will be running for this year's Oscars.

Based on Jhumpa Lahiri's critically acclaimed novel about a Bengali immigrant family in the US, torn between modernity and tradition, the film stars Irrfan Khan and Tabu in the lead roles. Tabu and Nair as well as the film's script-

writer Sooni Taraporewala have left for Los Angeles for the mandatory promo of the film, produced by Fox Searchlight.

The Namesake also elicited a good response in Poland where people are used to watching films by greats like Andrzej Wajda, Roman Polanski and Krzysztof Zanussi.

In the overseas market, Nair's *Salaam Bombay*, a film about the street children in India's commercial capital, had made it to the Oscar nomination finals but failed to win the top honour by the Academy of Motion Pictures Science and Arts.

seven days after it was released there in March.

In the film, national award-winning actress Tabu plays the role of an ageing Bengali woman, a role which was offered first to Bollywood star Rani Mukherjee and then to Konkona Sen Sharma, both of whom turned it down.

Earlier, Mira Nair's *Salaam Bombay*, a film about the street children in India's commercial capital, had made it to the Oscar nomination finals but failed to win the top honour by the Academy of Motion Pictures Science and Arts.