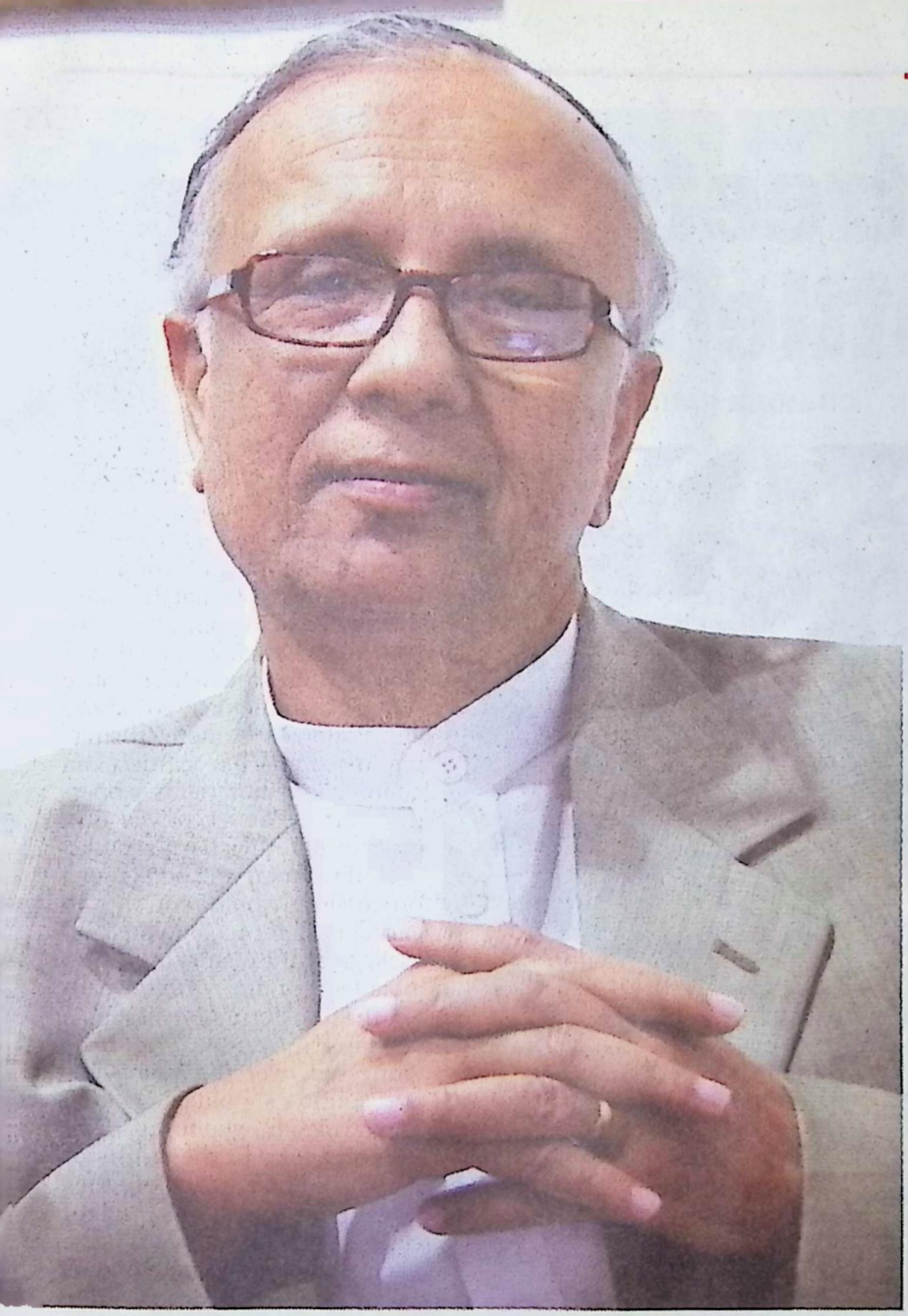


Ramendu Majumder

As the president of ITI, Majumder's first challenge will be to revive the inactive centres of the ITI as well as to increase the funding. Majumder has also chalked out a plan to reach the goal during his recent visit to China to attend a strategic meeting. It was the first formal meeting of the newly elected executive members. The strategic meeting was a part of a theatre festival titled 'Theatre of Nations' in which 36 troupes from 17 countries participated.

Majumder remarks that the ruler of Sharjah donated a big fund, but not enough to run huge programmes. "We have decided to look for sponsorships", he says. "Simultaneously we will try to activate all the centres of ITI so that they also donate regularly. Minutes of the strategic meeting will be finalised at the upcoming meeting in UAE in January."

"In fact, we have to work a lot to make the ITI activities updated to cope with the current scenario of world theatre, as theatre all over the world is in turmoil. For that we have to work together. At the same time I will try to get the nations, who are out of the ITI platform, to be members", he adds.

Majumder further plans to promote the traditional performing art forms. In his words, "We know much about western theatre. But, we have little idea on the diversified presentation style of traditional art forms of different ethnic groups. My vision is to bring these traditional art forms under the focus on ITI."

Theatre practitioners in Bangladesh are expecting that the current ITI president will help boost Bangladeshi theatre. At least technically, our urban theatre is weak in terms of direction and design. Theatre activists in Bangladesh hope that Ramendu Majumder using the ITI platform, will help our theatre practitioners to make up for these flaws through training under the guidance of foreign experts.

Chairman of Bangladesh Group Theatre Federation M. Hamid expresses his satisfaction at the selection of ITI's president: "We are proud of his success. It will take our theatre one step ahead. Moreover, it will enhance the image of the country and its culture amongst foreigners. At the same time we hope the current president will help us to improve."

Majumder, meanwhile is already busy planning the next step. "I've already talked with a Chinese theatre designer who will come to Dhaka soon to train the light designers in Bangladesh", he says. "I'll always try to arrange such workshops to be conducted by the expert foreign artistic directors and designers. They will train up our directors and designers."

"At the same time I'll invite expert theatre directors to work with theatre departments and theatre troupes to produce quality theatre performances", he adds.

Ramendu Majumder also hopes to support the theatre departments of the public universities through the ITI platform. He explains: "Theatre departments of the public universities in Bangladesh can take the same facilities that Delhi based Indian institute National School of Drama (NSD) is taking. I'll always help them to use the ITI platform. ■