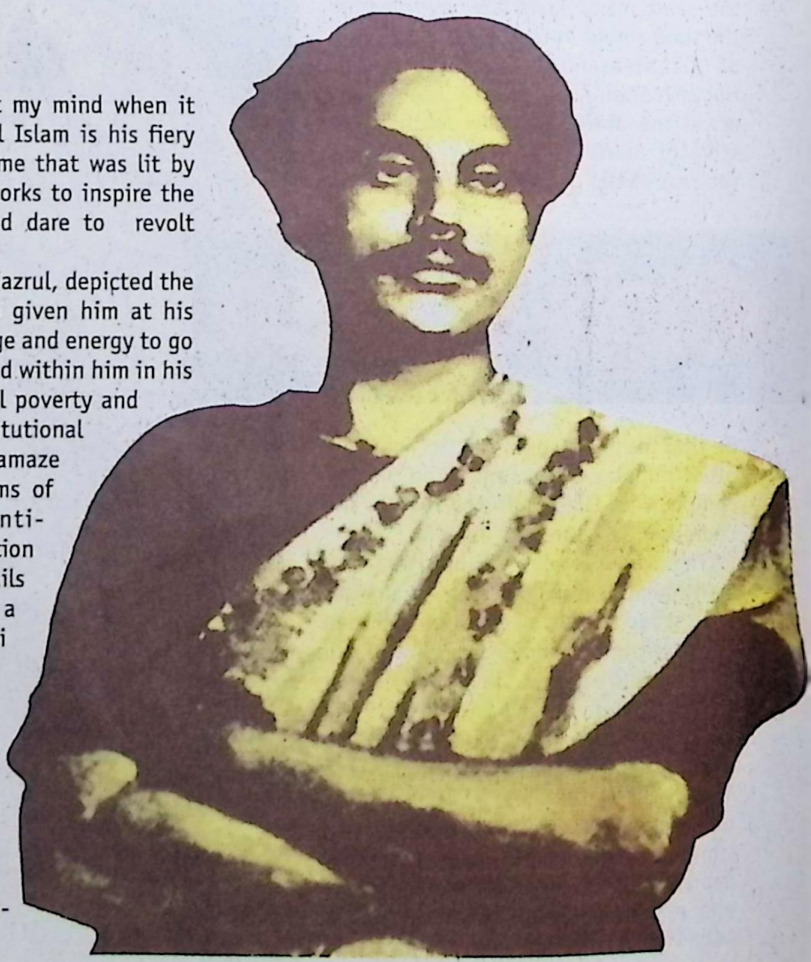
If three strands of Bengali culture are singled out- nature, festivals, and aspirations to be free- then Tagore and Nazrul represent the persona of Bangladesh and Bengalis. They complement each other perfectly. There is not one single Bengali event or festival where the compositions of at least one of the two maestros has not or cannot inspire. In times of festivity when all are happy Tagore and Nazrul sing the hearts and minds of Bengalis. At times of crises, when the Bengali nation needs to unite to face adversities, Tagore and Nazrul also sing for all Bengalis. It is the portrayal of this universality of the Bengali psyche and persona that makes Tagore and Nazrul so appealing and indispensable to Bangladesh and Bangla culture. Yet, in all this simplicity, the depth of complexity stands out. Tagore is the poet of poets. Nazrul is the composer of composers; the musician of musicians.

Poetry and music are grand dishes sitting at the table waiting to be enjoyed alone or in union. That is the beauty of art and the artiste. They express for us our latent thoughts and emotions. Through their art they speak and sing that resonate in our hearts and our minds. Bangladesh and Bengal are very lucky to have two such great poets and composers who spoke and sang the heart and the mind of their people. They addressed universal emotions and aspirations of the Bengali nation. That is what has made them men of all seasons; and men for all times. Let us see the two as one and not 'the' one as two. Let us enjoy their treats in union. In union, Tagore and Nazrul are synonymous to magic. Let this magic play for as long as the Bengali nation remains alive.

Kazi Nazrul Islam, the Rebel Poet

Md. Naibur Rahman Uupol



THE first thing which hit my mind when it comes about Kazi Nazrul Islam is his fiery poem "Bidrohi". The flame that was lit by this magnificent poem still works to inspire the oppressed to rise as one and dare to revolt against all odds.

"Dukhu Mia", nickname of Nazrul, depicted the reception that the world had given him at his birth. But the indomitable urge and energy to go against the wild wind generated within him in his childhood. Despite his familial poverty and failure to obtain a proper institutional education, he continued to amaze people with his magical poems of different moods. His anti-establishment and pro-liberation poems often landed him in jails but his pen transformed into a sword and he wrote "Karar Oi Louhokopat". He was a born adventurer who took risks on life to see and know the unknown. This was the reason behind his joining the Indian Army in 1917. In 1920 he left the army and settled in Calcutta. His vast experiences inspired him to write some memorable prose and poetry.