Between Politics, Cinema and Art

In a post-war society, distinctive and innovative filmmaker Alamgir Kabir embraced cinema as a medium for bringing change in the socio-political scenario of the country. His co-workers, compatriot filmmakers and students aptly call him *Cholochitracharya* for his enormous contribution to the cinema movement, writing's on films, and documentation of the 1971 war for liberation, and for activism both home and abroad. This week *the Star* traces the remarkable journey of the maestro of Bangla cinema.

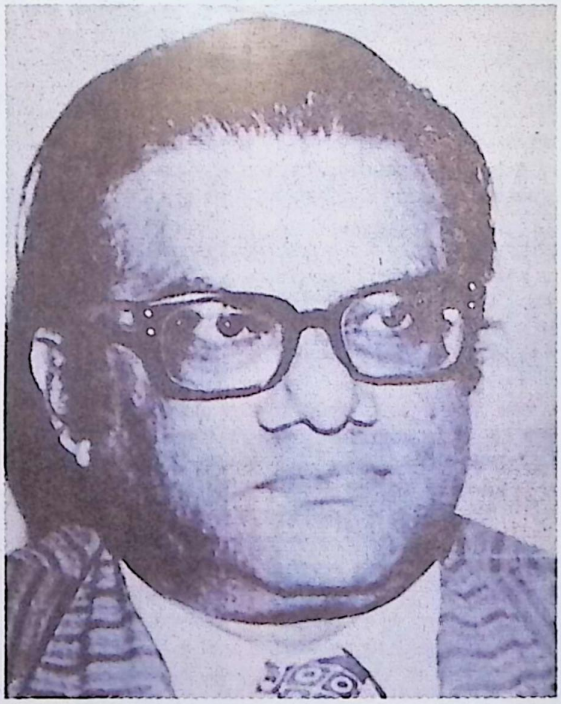


PHOTO COURTESY: MIR SHAMSUL ALAM

Alamgir Kabir

ANANTA YUSUF

"It was around 6pm when we arrived at the Nagarbari ferry terminal after attending a film related programme in Bogra. Kabir Bhai parked the car at the edge of the ferry. Morshed (Filmmaker Morshedul Islam) went to buy the tickets." Munira Morshed Munni, who is working as a photo editor at Drik Picture Library, takes a pause before continuing. As if she was trying to recall a blocked out incident from the past. Munira, more commonly known as Munni amidst friends and family, and film actress Tina Khan were feeling scared as Alamgir Kabir jokingly threatened to throw the car into the river. Suddenly, they saw a heavily loaded truck entering the ferry at a high speed. The truck's headlights flashed on their car's windshield. Kabir shouted at the truck driver to stop but it was too late. The driver probably had lost control truck by then, as he crashed into the car at high speed. Munni was the lone survivor of the accident. With the death of Alamgir Kabir, on January 20 1989, the country lost the loudest dissenting voice of its cinema.

Alamgir Kabir is usually remembered as one of the most significant directors who emerged in the wave of Bangladeshi post-war cinema in the early 70's. For Bangladeshis, however, Kabir was much more than just a distinctive and innovative