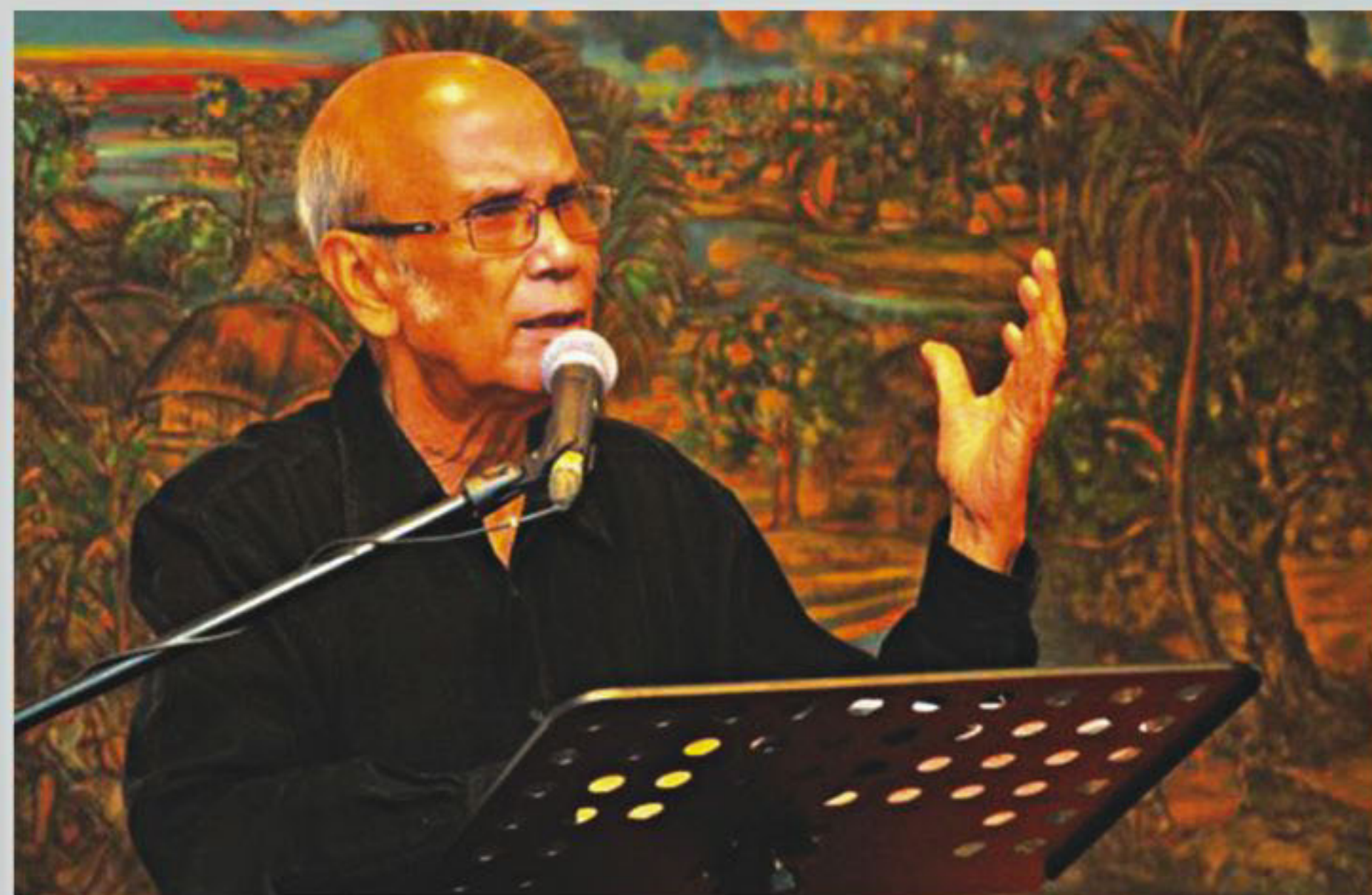


# Through the eyes of a poet

**SYED SHAMSUL HAQ (1935-2016)**

ZAHANGIR ALOM

*Syed Shamsul Haq (December 27, 1935 -- September 27, 2016), the unequivocal 'Sabyasachi' (ambidextrous) wordsmith of modern Bangla literature, absorbed poetry, art and history in his own unique way and blended it in his creations. In a conversation with The Daily Star a couple of years ago, he shared his literary influence and drive, his vision of how art and poetry are intertwined, and deconstructed one of his most famous works. Excerpts:*



"Imagery lies both in poetry and painting; while poetry predominantly revolves around images, painting generates newer imageries. Emergence of new words in poetry might be scarce, but the visuals around us are in constant flux. Sometimes poets reshape old ideas and use age-old words in a newer fashion. Yet, there are poets who discovered images and incorporated those in their works. 'Pakhir Nurer Moto Chokh Tuley Natorer Bonolata Sen' is Jibanananda's invention. Again, in the line 'Banglar Mukh Ami Dekhiachhi, Tai Ami Prithibir Roop Khujitey Jai Na Aar', here 'Bangla' and 'Prithibi' are not images, but when they

reflect into each other, they form a beautiful image that Das discovered...the beauty of eternal Bengal in the earth and vice versa." "I regard Rabindranath Thakur one of my greatest predecessors. He is the greatest poet of Bengali literature. Unlike others, I remember him differently because I have learnt my craft from him," said Syed Haq. "Though Tagore nurtured almost all the genres of literature, art, music and culture, we evaluate him prioritising his angik (viewpoint) rather than his speech. His creation of stance is innovative with regard to his speech. We cannot reach him in these times; because the time we witnessed, such as the country's

partition, shedding blood for language, military rule, genocide and Liberation War of which Tagore experienced nothing. These happenings have greatly influenced my whole perception."

About his famous poem "Amar Porichoy", Syed Haq commented "I wrote 'Amar Porichoy' at a point when I was inspired to write a short history of Bangladesh for young readers. It was to enable them to learn the history and backdrop of our identity. Later, I changed my mind to express my feelings through the most antique form of literature --poetry. Thus, the poem was written and in 1993 but for some reason I do not know, for about 15 years it was not noticed. But suddenly, it surfaced and everybody recites and quotes from it and I am very happy that it gives you a patriotic passion revisiting the roots of our identity. I have tried to include the four pillars -- nationalism, secularism, socialism and democracy -- the essence of the Liberation War. I have tried to assimilate that through my poetic effort... excerpts like, 'Ami To Eshechhi Barendrabhan-e Sona Masjid Theke, Ami To Eshechhi Matir Deul Aul Baul Theke' or 'Ami To Eshechhi Zainul Ar Aban Thakur Theke, Ami Tho Eshechhi Geetanjali O Agniaveena'r Theke' evoke that essence. The most antique work of poetry is to represent a feeling into a memorable sound pattern. The technique is thousands of years old that I have used in the poem."

"Poetry is a kind of performance. Like WH Auden I believe 'poetry is inspired dialogue.' And the way I hear it in my cranium,

I try to reproduce that. Many tell me that I perform my poetry beautifully. In reply, I say that I simply transmit it -- just as I receive it."

The French literary critic and theorist Roland Barthes believes that the death of an author makes readers more responsible towards the creations of the author. He concludes his essay, Death of the Author thus: "The birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author." Here judgment or the birth of a reader takes a prominent place. How will he judge his poetry as a reader? In reply, Syed Haq said, "The moment I am involved in a creative endeavour, an elevation takes place within me. Later, when the job is finished, I am an ordinary man like others. I am no more the poet who wrote it. And I always view my writings as a reader, as a man outside them, and not as a poet who wrote them. If I am asked to evaluate my poetry, I must say it is still miles to go; many things to do. I am not at all happy to see the trend of Bangla poetry, especially in Bangladesh. I don't really come across a good metaphor; a good image. Most of the poems I come across are not even complete and seem unfinished, repetitive and loud. Being loud is not a fault. Nazrul was loud! In poetry, there are two voices -- the private voice and public voice. Nazrul was perhaps the first public voice in our whole milieu of Bengali poetry. But when it seems contrived and doesn't come from within, it generates confusion and appears as if you are trying to attract an audience by being loud," he concluded.



## Moutushi gearing up for Puja festivities

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

*Moutushi Biswas has earned numerous accolades not only as an actor, but also as anchor and model. Focusing mostly on acting, the star prefers to approach her work in a methodical and serious manner, which has attributed to her successes over the years. With today marking Mahalaya, the inception of the Durga Puja festivities, the artiste shared her plans for celebrations, and also about her recent and upcoming work, with The Daily Star.*

**What are your plans for the Puja festival?**  
Moutushi: I plan to go do shopping for my entire family. I have been extremely busy with work lately, and so for Puja I intend to take a couple of days off, and take my family around different Puja mandaps. Before the festivities begin, I will buy new clothes for my entire family and have them tailored as well, so that we can all go out in new attire on the occasion.

**What are you working on at the moment?**  
Moutushi: I am not currently working in films, but I am working in several TV plays and will be working on a reality show very soon, which will begin from October 11, and the grand finale is scheduled for November this year. I have also worked on a public awareness campaign regarding hygienic conditions of garments factories, which will go on air very soon. I enjoyed working in this project in particular.

**What recent works have been completed and on air? How has your experience been during these projects?**

Moutushi: For me acting is work, and my profession. My work is my livelihood. I always believe that hard work will open up doors for you, and I am constantly working on improving myself. Every day I think of myself as an actor, and with this come a lot of discipline as well, and we must think about what will benefit ourselves and the audience. Right now I am working in different TV plays, "Aynaghor", "Circus" and "Corporate". The latter, written and directed by Alvee Ahmed, is doing very well and has garnered positive reviews. There are two or three other TV plays that will air soon as well. I play very different characters in each TV play, and that is what I particularly enjoy about my work.

PHOTO: STAR



## "Baaper Beta" on ntv

A CORRESPONDENT

Mahfuz-Ahmed directed TV series "Baaper Beta" will air tonight at 8:15pm on ntv. The Maruf Rahman-scripted play casts Mosharraf Karim, Richi Solaiman, AKM Hasan, Mithila, Parsa Evana and others. The plot

revolves around a son and father, as evident from the title. The father lives in his wife's house, and strives to stay fit. His son, meanwhile, is busy with writing poetry, music and on social media. The father one day starts using his son's Facebook account, and things take a turn.

## "Fantastic Beasts" trailer ramps up the thrill

Eddie Redmayne learns the rules of New York magic in the brand new trailer for the upcoming Warner Bros. Harry Potter spinoff "Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them".

In the film, Redmayne stars as Newt Scamander, an eccentric wizard who carries a briefcase full

Jacob Kowalski, played by Dan Fogler, who happens upon the world of wizards.

"You wiped my memory, right?" Katherine Waterston as Porpentina 'Tina' Goldstein asks Scamander.

Once inside the magical land in Scamander's briefcase, Kowalski



of monsters -- trouble ensues when the beasts escape.

"Mr. Scamander, do you know anything about the wizarding community in America?" a voiceover asks. "We don't let things loose."

Scamander also has to deal with a No-Maj, or non-wizard named

remarks, "I don't think I'm dreaming. I ain't got the brains to make this up."

Later, Carmen Ejogo as President Seraphina Picquery warns "This could mean war," referring to strained relations between the magical and non-magical communities. It is clear

from the action-packed trailer that war is imminent.

While previous trailers have played up the cute wonders of the film, visual effects are nearing completion so this full trailer really digs into the magic of it all, unveiling a world that is both colorful and dangerous. The trailer is far more serious than previous looks at the film, which is more in line with the latter half of the "Harry Potter" films. And that's perfectly appropriate given that "Fantastic Beasts", unlike Potter, revolves around adults instead of children. It is also helmed by David Yates, who successfully steered the Potter franchise into dark territory by helming "Order of the Phoenix", "Half-Blood Prince", and both "Deathly Hallows" films.

The film is an adaptation of JK Rowling's book. Rowling is producing the movie alongside David Heyman, Steve Kloves, and Lionel Wigram, Alison Sudol and Colin Farrell.

"Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them" opens Nov. 18.

Source: Collider/Variety