



**CELEBRATING LIFE 2016 LIFETIME  
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD WINNER**

# FERDAUSI MAJUMDAR

## TALE OF THE THESPIAN

*The days were dark and fear lurked at the corners of the patriotic Bengali hearts. During that time, under the Pakistani military dictatorship, presentation of the Bengali culture in any form beckoned trouble. In this gloomy period, it was out of sheer valour, that the handful of Bengali artists, including Ferdausi Majumdar, took it upon themselves to fight the "artistic" war, daringly. Some were unable to overcome that fear, but many did so, in their own faithful ways. This is the tale of one such female warrior. Despite having a strict religious father, she embraced the stage as a performer and did her best to support the cause. Even though the latitude to perform was vague, she availed whatever opportunity there was and pursued her passion for plays. Ferdausi Majumdar also acted in the first drama that was aired on Bangladesh Television (BTV). We are proud to announce that she will be awarded in the upcoming gala night of Celebrating Life 2016 with a lifetime achievement award for her immense contributions.*



Her brother Munier Chowdhury first asked her to partake in a play. Astounded, she could not figure how to act, let alone delude her father's authoritarian eyes. With the support of her sibling, she managed to act her part in the play. Ever since then, she acquired a liking towards the essence of the stage and never looked back. Even as an adult, her absence at home would continue to worry her father and he would often inquire about her whereabouts to her mother, suspecting she was at the cinema with her friend, Bokul. Despite knowing, her gracious mother would pretend that she was unaware. Early one morning, Ferdausi Majumdar noticed her father inspecting the newspaper. Curiously, she figured that he was gladly pointing out to her mother an article which praised the acting skills of their daughter. This was like an indirect assurance for the legend-to-be and all the 'hide and seek' finally seemed to demolish.

In 1972, Ferdausi Majumdar along with Ramendu

Majumdar, Abdullah Al Mamun (director, playwright and actor) and a few others, formed the first theatre troupe. The plays that were produced on their behalf were all written with the actual performers in mind by Abdullah Al Mamun, thus they were able to portray the roles rather vividly and were well appreciated. One such praise-worthy play was "Ekhono Kritodash" which was able to entertain the audience in India as well. Another play "Kokilara" set a milestone for Bengali plays. In a conversation with the Showbiz, Ferdausi Majumdar mentioned that an actor must learn to respect and comprehend fully what the writer demands, only then will they be able to enliven the character. Therefore, when she was given the script for "Kokilara", which was a comparatively lengthy play, she would merge her real life with that of the character's and would often conduct her daily chores while reciting the dialogues. Everyone praised the brilliance of her fearless performance, but she said, "I was a little nervous, but the audience

never noticed. But once I was through with a few dialogues, I was totally fine." Therefore, the maestro believes that a little stage fright is in fact necessary because overconfidence leads to mistakes. She also told us that if a person can prove themselves as actors on the stage, chance are that the person can justify themselves in any given acting platform. With such norms and dedication, Ferdausi Majumdar grew to be the legend that she is.

She met her life partner Ramendu Majumdar when they were at university. Being a soft-spoken gentleman by nature, he always had his gaze downward while talking to someone. So when Ferdausi Majumdar asked him how he had the courage to look at her before choosing her as a life partner, he replied that once he had laid his eyes upon her, he was unable to look away ever since. During those days, it was out of the question to marry someone from a different religion, but against all odds, the couple, a Hindu and a Muslim, proved that love conquers all. Together they had

a daughter, Tropa Majumdar, who now has her own daughter who is the ray in the life of her grandparents.

Her versatility as a performer was proven through various media like theatre, television, film and radio. However, her talent is not confined within acting only, as she is well acquainted with her literary side. She promotes education through teaching and writing. Despite her age, Ferdausi Majumdar still leads a hectic schedule on a daily basis. She is a teacher at a private school from morning till the afternoon. Once she is home, she attends to her family as a wife, daughter-in-law, mother and grandmother. Later on she heads to her beloved profession of acting. She defined that her life is blessed and she has no complaints because of all the supportive members in her family who have all helped her come this far.

By Minam Haq

**COVERSTORY**



Ferdausi Majumdar, Tropa Majumdar (daughter) & Ramendu Majumdar (husband)

