

LEGENDARY LUCKY AKHAND EXITS THE STAGE...

Tributes pour in from all corners

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Lucky Akhand is a name synonymous with modern trends in Bangla songs. He was a soul that serenaded the saga of refined melody during his lifetime. He created timeless songs and inspired generations. Noted musicians and singers remember the contributions of the pioneer of post liberation *adhunik* Bangla music. **Naquib Khan, singer-musician and the frontman of Renaissance**

Lucky Bhai (Lucky Akhand) was a proud singer of Shadheen Bangla Betar Kendra and instituted the modern trend of *adhunik* Bangla song. We find a fine melodic sync of both Eastern and Western music in his compositions. His simple musical works touch many hearts. We are followers of the genre he created and try to carry forward his musical legacy. It is a wonder that composing less songs for film, how a person can create several popular songs? He ruled the realm of Bangla music so silently and will remain forever as one of the brightest stars in the sky of Bangla music.

Shafin Ahmed, singer-musician and the frontman of Miles

As I evolved as a musician, I gradually understood Lucky Bhai's (Lucky Akhand) musical genius. I felt a deep respect for him whenever I met him. He was the

creator of many timeless songs like "Jekhoney Seemanto Tomar", "Ei Neel Monihar", "Agye Jodi Jantam", "Abar Elo Je Sondhya", "Amaye Dekona" and more. I came to know that many of my favourite songs were his compositions. His contributions to Bangla music are immense. The audience will remember him forever. The striking characteristics of his songs are: so mellifluous and a simple flow of melody. Lucky Akhand had an outstanding partnership with renowned lyricist Kawsar Ahmed Chowdhury. A deep understanding between them helped create artistic fulfilment. His younger brother Happy Akhand was a founding member of Miles and continued with us till his last. I can recall that I played bass with the original record of the song "Ei Neel Monihar". Only a true artist can understand and measure his profound influence on music. My hat's off to him. May he forever remain in peace! Deep down, I would like to do something for his bereaved family.

Fahmida Nabi, noted singer

Starting from the renaissance period of Bangla songs, Lucky Akhand constructed a new era in the history of *adhunik* Bangla music. He took the responsibility of creating good music. His heart was a fine canvas; a refined diary... where melody would fascinate with lyrics. An artist never dies. He beautifies the culture

and the heritage of civilisation. As a clean soul, Lucky Chacha did it perfectly. He never ran after fame and material gain. He had immense mental strength and an indomitable passion for music; even at such a critical stage of life, he played the keyboard just the day before he died. Timeless artistes like Lucky Akhand are rarely born. It is our duty to immortalise his memory by revisiting his contributions. The cultural fraternity, TV channels and his large fan following and forthcoming artistes should perform his songs with precise emotion and depth.

Bappa Mazumder, singer-musician and the frontman of Dalchhut

The works that Lucky Akhand accomplished during his lifetime are daily assignments and regular curriculum for us. They will remain so in future. Lucky Bhai and his contemporary musicians are our preceptors. We are blessed to have you as our mentor.

Agun, noted singer

The realm of Bangla music received a jolt with the departure of legendary singer Lucky Akhand. The audience will remember him for his great contributions to Bangla music. Eminent musicians -- Alauddin Ali, Alam Khan and Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul -- composed various types of songs, but Lucky Akhand composed songs that evoke a unique homogeneity.



A Masterclass in Visual Storytelling

Naseeruddin Shah and family bring "Ismat Apa Ke Naam" to Dhaka

FAHMIM FERDOUS

Theatre is far from one of the most popular forms of performing art in Dhaka, so it was a refreshing change to see long, winding queues outside a hall for a theatrical performance long before the gates opened, under an ominously cloudy sky at the International Convention City Bashundhara. Naseeruddin Shah's Motley Theatre Company brought Dhaka's social elites and theatre aficionados alike for a performance of "Ismat Apa Ke Naam" on Friday, a three-piece performance of short stories by avant-garde Urdu litterateur Ismat Chughtai, and left a lasting impression on those who cared to pay attention.

In eloquent Urdu, Naseeruddin Shah greeted the houseful audience and gave an introduction to his troupe -- comprising wife Ratna Pathak Shah and daughter Heeba Shah -- and the legacy of Ismat Chughtai, a writer so far ahead of her time that her works are still considered bold and mold-breaking even today. He also explained that the production is not a typical theatrical adaptation, but a verbatim telling of three short stories -- "Chhui Mui", "Mughal Baccha" and "Gharwali", each performed solo by the cast members.

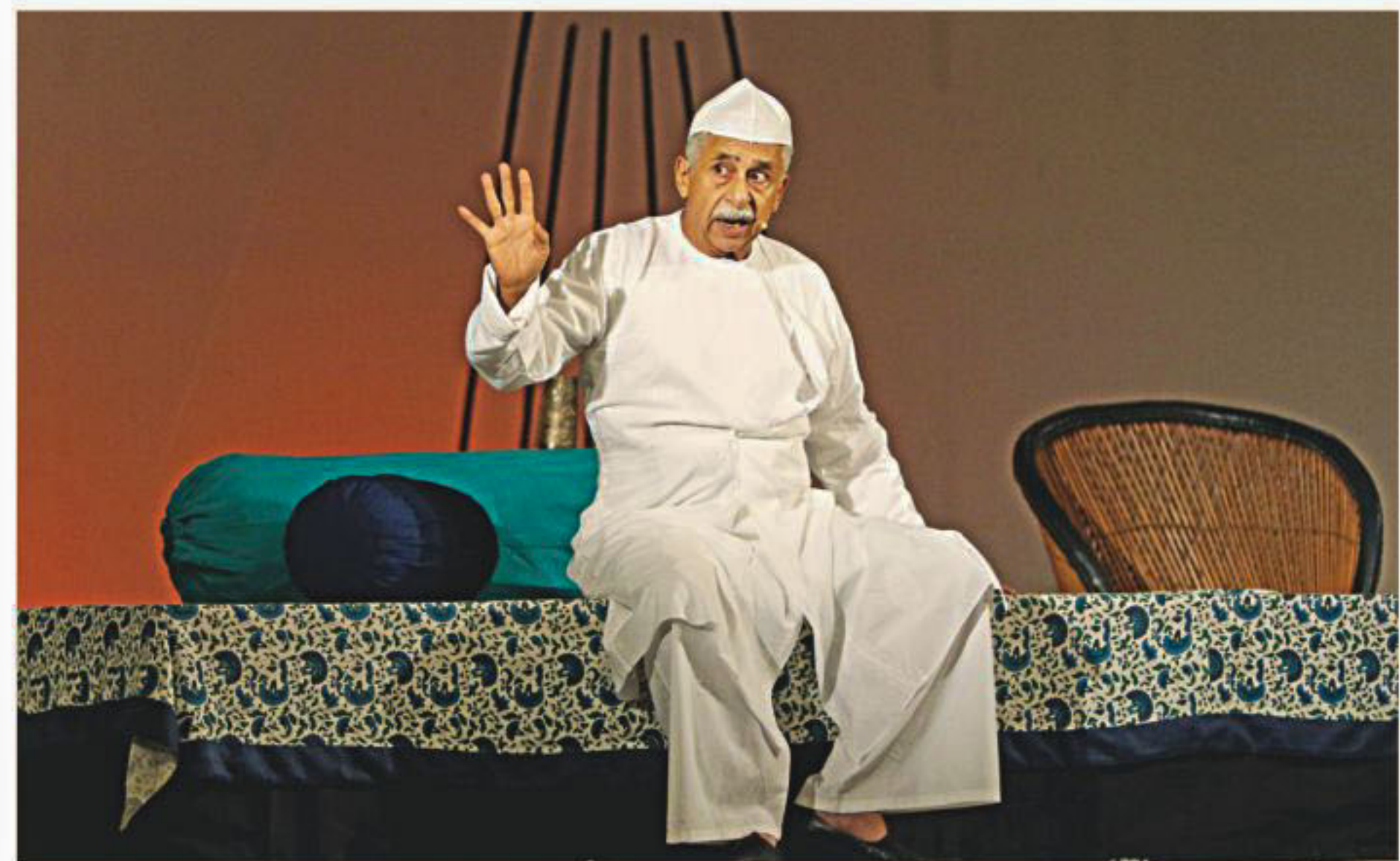


PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Heeba Shah opens the show with "Chhui Mui" (which is what a touch-me-not plant that shrinks and folds upon contact with something, is called), a story narrated first-person from a young girl's perspective about her sister-in-law's pregnancy. In a vivid act,

Heeba takes the audience through a train journey with her pregnant sister-in-law and mother, ending with a visceral contrast of the classist divides of 19th century Muslim society in India.

Ratna Pathak Shah's name may not immediately

ring a bell to the Bangladeshi audience, but she is an instantly-recognisable face to anyone who has followed Indian TV and film in the last three decades. Her presentation, "Mughal Baccha" is credited as "Ghoonghat" in many Ismat Chughtai catalogues, but Naseeruddin Shah explained at the beginning that they decided to keep the former name because it better describes the period the play takes place in. It is the tale of Kale Miyaan and Gori Bi, a dark-skinned young man of Mughal descent and a gorgeous, angelically beautiful young girl who get married but never get to see each other eye in eye. Post-Mughal era superiority complex of men and how Muslim women were automatically expected to be subdued and shy come alive as Ratna seamlessly switches between the characters and their complex emotional dynamics.

The final act, "Gharwali", brings Naseeruddin Shah to the stage, and it is clear headliner of the show. The story between Mirza, a wealthy bachelor and Laajo, his beautiful maid-turned-mistress-turned-wife, is a magnificent journey of shifts and turns in their relationship filled with love, lust, affection, fear, shame and everything in between. The 66-year old actor effortlessly embodies the spirit of

a flamboyant young girl, a moody young man, and a number of other smaller characters in an exemplary show of physical theatre, and makes the stage his canvas.

The minimalist stage, with a simple backdrop and a platform with a few pillows, underwent subtle changes across the stories, and the use of props, while very limited, were on point. The music and lighting played a big role in setting the scenes as well, never too abrupt and always precisely timed.

While the numbers would definitely make organisers Blues Communications (who by the way did an expectedly superb job managing the event) and title sponsor City Bank happy, it is the quality of the audience that was a bit of a bad taste in the mouth for the serious audience. It was rather unsettling to see a steady stream of front-row attendees walk out of their seats mid-performance to go buy sandwiches, ice cream and coffee, or taking phone calls. While the language (the entire performance was in Urdu) may have been a barrier to appreciating the performance and many of the attendees may not be theatre regulars, but their callousness revealed a rather ugly truth: Dhaka's social elite are not nearly as cultural as they like to think of themselves.



RUPCHANDA-THE DAILY STAR SUPER CHEF THE GLITZY AND GLAM WEDDING CHALLENGE

MEHRIN MUBDI CHOWDHURY

The grand "Wedding Challenge" at Rupchanda-The Daily Star Super Chef 2017 witnessed celebrity couple Nayeem and Nadia as invited guest judges to the show in the latest episode. Dressed gorgeously in a wedding trousseau, Nadia looked beautiful and Nayeem looked no less salient. The entire stage adorned a wedding theme, with live shehnai and traditional band music sprucing up in the intervals. Each of the contestants and the contest judges were dressed up in elegant wedding attires, adding on to the festive mood. The format of the wedding challenge had been equally interesting as the get-up.

The format required contestants to be teamed up in pairs for the wedding challenge; the teams were named after the many occasions pertaining to the wedding ceremony

such as 'Gaye Holud', 'Biye Bari', 'Boubhat' and 'Mehedi'.

The wedding challenge required the contestants to cook a complete wedding menu based on their preference, like kacchi biriyani, chicken roast, jali kebab, beef rezala, fish fry etc. Building upon the established format of the TV show, two teams were in the safe zone while the remaining teams consisting of four contestants in total were transferred to the danger zone. "In this session, we were a little inattentive; the beef rezala was a little bit undercooked and the decoration very plain" said Shampa Rahman, a contestant. "Tariq Anam, the respected judge of the show expected a bit more from our team, Biye Bari; since he considered us, me and Syesha Siddika (Pinky), as strong contestants. With plain decorations for such a grand episode, we disappointed him a little", she added.

In the 'tike thakar lorai' - the elimination challenge round, Shampa Rahman, the talented housewife from Dinajpur, lost the challenge in a 'Malai' contest. The contest judges asked the bottom four contestants to prepare any dish including desserts with malai as the key ingredient. Shampa might have been unable to please the judges in this section but thanks to the earlier episode of 'Pitha Festival' where she became the top contestant, winning an immunity pin. Shampa used her immunity in this episode, saving her place and sticking around for more competitions in the future.

With time the contests are getting more heated at Rupchanda - The Daily Star Super Chef 2017. Look out for more interesting episodes in the future and tougher challenges, to witness who comes out as the ultimate winner.

ASK ME ANYTHING

Nusraat Faria coming on Facebook Live at The Daily Star

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Save the date! Nusraat Faria, one of the biggest film stars of the country, is coming to The Daily Star, and you get to be there too.

Faria, riding high on the success of her latest big screen release "Dhat Teri Ki", has decided to take a sabbatical from her busy schedules to prepare for her upcoming Law degree exams, but she will make time for followers of The Daily Star's Facebook page (facebook.com/dailystarnews) on Monday, April 24 at 6pm to join a Facebook Live 'Ask Me Anything' session.

Anyone subscribed to The Daily Star's Facebook page can join the Live session from 6pm tomorrow, and pour in their love, adulation and questions to Faria.



RUPCHANDA The Daily Star Super Chef 2017 SUMON'S T20 CHALLENGE

Watch it on Every Saturday & Sunday At 9pm **n tv**

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