

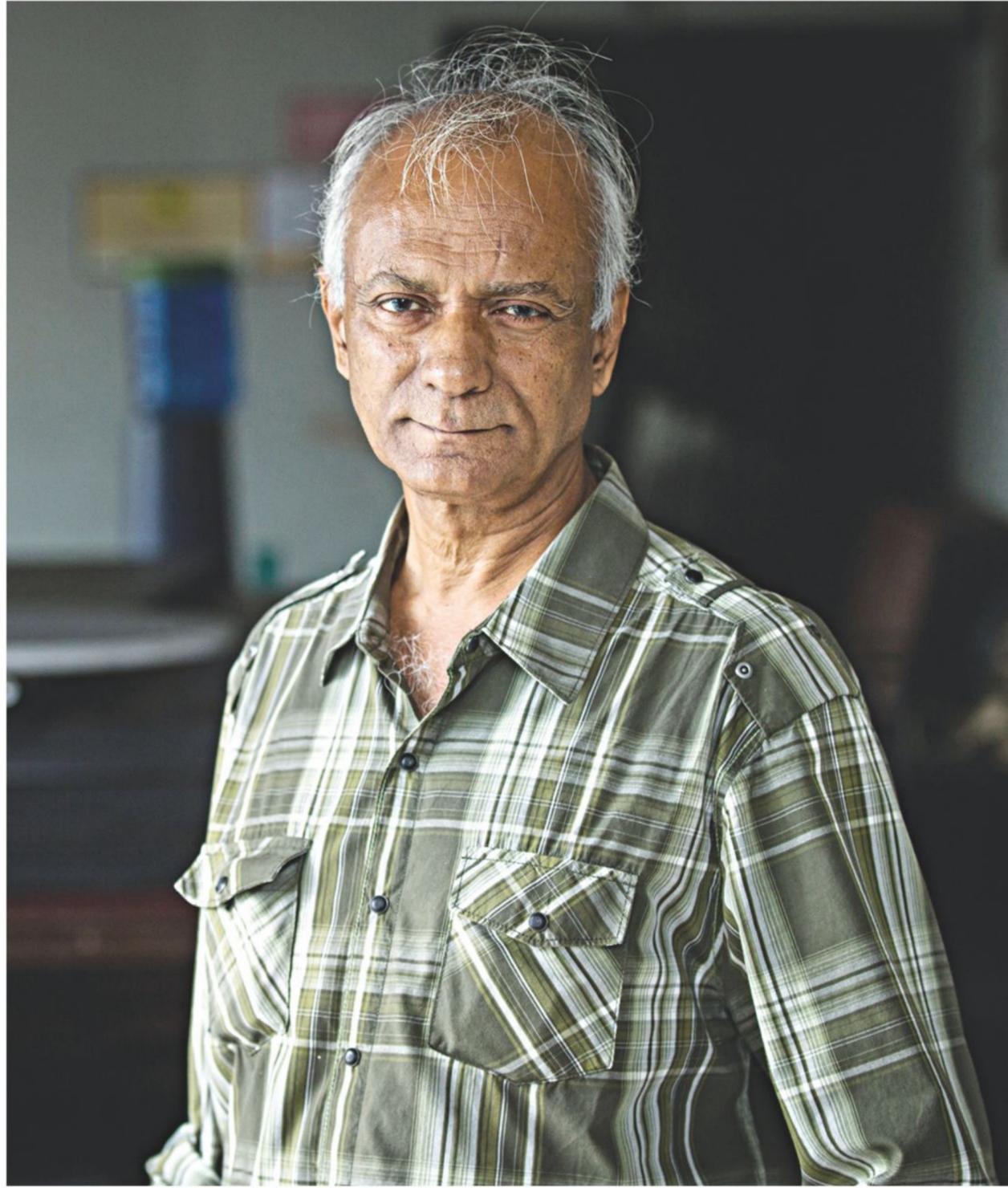
# THE WORLD OF SYED JAMIL AHMED

Any comprehensive discussion regarding Bangladeshi theatre cannot be completed without mentioning Syed Jamil Ahmed. The Founder of the Department of Theatre and Music in Dhaka University has established himself as a prominent scholar in the field of theatre and arts. He is a great contributor to the academic study of theatres in Bangladesh, who has opened doors to the scholarly interpretation of indigenous theatrical forms. In fact, "indigenous theatrical forms" is the term most associated with Dr. Syed Jamil Ahmed's research topics, since he has done extensive research into this specific subject, by bringing out the ingenuity of different cultural and social perspectives when it comes to theatre. It is to be noted that "indigenous theatrical forms" was the subject of his PhD-winning thesis, an honor bestowed upon him by Dhaka University. His thesis is known by experts for bringing out the cultural richness of this nation and contributing greatly to the anthropology of theatre.

Syed Jamil Ahmed is one of the cornerstones of the development of Bangladeshi theatre. He has not only garnered considerable success in theatre production, he has a wide number of books and journals under his name. In his writings, the most common themes include religious and social practices among theatres of various cultures. The titles of some of his most well-received journals are *Theatre and Islam*, *Contemporary Theatre in Bangladesh: A Critique*, *Negotiating Theatre in place of War*, *Buddhist Theatre in Ancient Bengal*, etc. His journals mostly revolve around close examination of theatre from different cultural perspectives, as well as discussions on how religion and society can be represented in theatrical forms.

In his theatrical productions, he has exhibited a variety of indigenous forms like Pala Gan and Shong Jatra, as well as adaptations of famous tales such as *The Thousand and One Nights* and *Padma Puran*. His most notable theatre productions include *Kamala Ranir Sagar Dighi* (1997), *Ek Hazar Aur Ek Thi Rate* (1998), *Behular Bhasan* (2004), *Pahiye* (2006) and *Shong Bhong Chong* (2009), which have been performed all around Dhaka, Karachi and New Delhi. All of his productions have been the subject of praise from critics all around the world, and has earned him multiple prestigious awards, including the Nandikar National Theatre Award of Calcutta and the B.V. Karanth Award of India's National School of Drama (NSD). NSD also happens to be the institution from where he graduated from, in 1978. Moreover, in 1989 he received his Masters of Arts Degree in Theatre from England's University of Warwick. He is also a notable two-time award-winner of the Fulbright Fellowship, a true signifier of his academic prowess.

Syed Jamil Ahmed is a man driven towards constant exploration of knowledge. He has travelled to many parts of the globe to learn more about theatres and arts, and has attended workshops as well as taught classes all over North America, Europe and Asia. His dedication in his field is timeless, and the contribution he has left behind till present day solidifies him as an unshakable cornerstone of Bangladeshi theatre.



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# স্যান্ডালিনা

## সোপ

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