



# “Acting is my loyal companion”

...DILARA ZAMAN

## “I love working with children”

...SHAMIMA TUSHTI

ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

Hailed as a popular TV actress, Shamima Tushti makes a frequent appearance in dramas aired across various TV networks. However, little is known about her activities off set; the artiste is a passionate activist involved in humanitarian causes, and an active social worker. Professionally she is also a teacher, and has revealed that she loves working with children. In a recent interview with *The Daily Star*, the actress shares insights into her activities beyond the limelight, and more.



**What do you like doing on weekends?**  
Tushti: On my days off I prefer staying in at home, and organise things around the house. Shooting days can leave things quite messy!

**What are you currently working on?**  
Tushti: Right now I am working in a few drama serials; I am involved in programme aired on the brand new children's TV station, Duronto TV, called 'Tirigiri Talk'. I am also playing roles in 'Olpo Sholpo Golpo', 'Babul Pakhri Basha', and 'Radio Jockey. Aside from acting roles, I am a cultural teacher at BAF Shaheen School and College, and I have formed the Aama Manush Foundation along with my students. Our foundation seeks to aid women in need and help them find employment, and we are closely involved with children's development work through education. Currently we are visiting schools to teach them about our Liberation War history. It is a sad truth, but as time goes by Freedom Fighters will not walk among us anymore, and I think it is imperative that children learn to appreciate their sacrifices and bravery while they are still alive.

**What is your favourite getaway?**  
Tushti: I love long drives, but my favourite holiday destination is Cox's Bazaar. I love the vastness of the open seas and skies, and I don't think there is a better place in Bangladesh.

**Could you share three facts about yourself that define you best?**  
Tushti: I try to cook sometimes. I also love a good laugh, and I love working with children.

**Is there a role you would like to portray on screen someday, but haven't had the chance to yet?**  
Tushti: Every role that I have done so far is quite special to me. As an actor, I am free to choose the roles I like, which is one of the amazing things about my job.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Dilara Zaman's acting career took off before the Bangladesh's Independence, establishing her as one of the veterans of the film industry in the '60s. Aside from appearing in a plethora of films and TV plays over the years, the versatile artiste has also been in the teaching profession for over 26 years. Dilara Zaman's acting origins lie in theatre. She performed on stage while still a student. Since then, her career has never slowed, and she remains active today even at the age of 75. In a recent conversation with *The Daily Star*, the Ekushey Padak-awarded actress reflects on her career, and more.

**What has motivated you to stay the course on the acting scene?**

Dilara Zaman: I wouldn't have, if I did not enjoy it so much. Acting is a passion, and was never a means to an end. These days, I take on acting projects to fight the loneliness I feel since my husband and companion of 50 years passed away four

years ago. My two daughters stay in the US and I live here alone. Acting has become my loyal companion.

**You are lovingly recognised for playing many on-screen mothers over generations, and actors off set fondly refer to you as "Ma". How does this feel?**

Dilara Zaman: We are a family, and it gives me great pleasure to be addressed as "Ma". Even those that serve me tea in between takes address me as their mother. I consider all the younger actors and actresses my children, and there are those even younger that call me "Dadi" or "Nani". Not everyone is blessed to have so many loving people around them, and I consider myself most fortunate.

**Which maternal role in particular proved most popular with the audience?**

Dilara Zaman: In the play "Oyomoye", I played Mizta's mother. This in particular proved vastly popular and people still

bring it up today.

**What do you miss most from your long career in the industry?**

Dilara Zaman: What I miss most are the co-artists and dear friends I worked with at the start of my career. Many have departed for the next life.

**What were the challenges you faced when you began acting?**

Dilara Zaman: It was much more difficult than what newcomers face today. I was born in a conservative family, but my parents were liberal and encouraged me to pursue acting. I began acting on stage in my college days, and then moved onto other mediums while in university. My mentor was noted playwright Nurul Momen sir, because of whom I was able to come this far.

**There was a time when TV plays were aired live. How did you tackle that?**

Dilara Zaman: Just like preparing for exams, we had to memorise our lines, and take up exact positions on set. There

was no room for mistakes. TV plays were aired at 8pm, and we were on set by 2pm, and would keep rehearsing until show time. I used to work in DIT towers, and it was very difficult to give live performances.

**Actors often desire to play a particular kind of role. Was there a particular role you set your heart on?**

Dilara Zaman: I have always wanted to portray marginalised women on screen, such as a prostitute, or a 'bitangna' from the Liberation War. But my teaching profession hindered me from taking up such roles, as my students and their families may have been seeing me in a negative light. I have always found this unfulfilling.

**What roles do actors play in shaping society?**

Dilara Zaman: A play's narrative, a character, has the power to change someone's life. Plays and films are the language of a tradition. This makes acting one of the greatest art forms.

# NAUSHEEN returns to the set

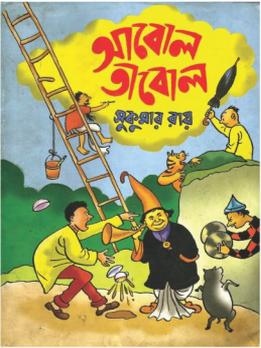
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Popular actress of the small screen Nausheen has already hit the sets after a month-long holiday in USA. The artiste has recently joined the main cast in the long running drama series on Depto TV 'Palki', playing the role of her namesake, Nausheen.

The actress will make a regular appearance on the drama after a few days. She stated, "I have never played a character with the same name as myself, but aside from that, Nausheen and I have very little in common." Nausheen added that the role is slightly villainous in nature.

The actress has also filmed for a new comedy series titled "Comedy 420", and is gearing up for another yet to be titled series, for which shooting will begin soon.

"I am mostly involved with TV plays right now, but I also play host in several programmes. I've been away for a while, and there's quite a bit of preparation needed," she added.



# Sukumar Ray's ABOL TABOL to be adapted into Hindi comedy

Making sense of celebrated playwright and children's writer Sukumar Ray's 'Abol Tabol', an Indian filmmaker is set to helm a Hindi black comedy based on his writings, Hindustan Times has reported.

Auteur Satyajit Ray's father Sukumar, the founder of the Nonesuch Club, is immortalised in children's literature for his oeuvre of pun-riddled poetry and stories, including the cult collection of poems 'Abol Tabol' and novella 'HalaBalaRa', and short story collection Pagla Daslu among others, set in colonial India.

He is often labeled India's Lewis Carroll. "The film will be a black comedy. It is a work of fiction and showcases the use of humour as a weapon. There are various layers and contemporary storyline and the narrative incorporates several of Ray's poems," said Orpheus Mukhoy, the director. The film is expected to go on floors in March-April 2018 and will be shot in Europe, the US and other locations. The project is being backed by a major Bollywood production house, the filmmaker said. "Abol Tabol" brims with fantastic creatures, including hybrid animals, and continues to be the staple of children's literature in West Bengal, India as well as in Bangladesh.

Source: Hindustan Times

# “Music is a wonderful means of cultural diplomacy”

— MIKAEL HEMNITI WINTHER

ZAMANGIR ALOM

Danish ambassador in Dhaka Mikael Hemniti Winther is a connoisseur of art and culture. He is a musical soul, and is known to be admired by musicians in Dhaka and around the world. The ambassador, also a keen guitar player who writes, composes, and performs around the world, is a surprise addition to this year's Dhaka International Folk Festival, to be held November 9-11 at the capital's Army Stadium.

"For the Folk Fest, I will have Thailand-based French pianist Frank Hergott performing with me. I will perform my own song written for the people of Bangladesh, 'Seeing Dhaka', which I have already performed on Bangladeshi television. We will also play a few songs from American songwriters that I admire - including my hero Tom Petty, who passed away only a few weeks ago. I will perform the songs on the acoustic guitar in order for me to match the 'folk music theme' and I hope that with the dynamic support from Hergott that we can catch the

audience with perhaps lesser-known songs but with some new and dynamic interpretations. I am so excited to be playing this festival for the first time and I hope that the audience will receive me and Hergott with curiosity and support our musical efforts," added the musician.

In a bid to promote art and strengthen the relationship between artists across borders, the ambassador had arranged the Art Weekend 2017 at the Royal Danish Embassy in Dhaka earlier this year.

"I am privileged and blessed to receive a warm welcome as a musician," says Winther, who performed at last year's Jazz and Blues Festival in Dhaka. "I am strongly inspired by British and American blues and rock music. When I played at the Dhaka Jazz and Blues Festival 2017, I played two songs with a full band that was blues and jazz oriented, so I chose songs that had a lot of improvisation in it and I used the electric guitar to match the famous Danish saxophone player, Jakob Dinesen to be able to duel and improvise

with him," said the ambassador. As an ambassador, Winther has to travel across the world and meet diverse people, and staunchly believes that music plays an important role in shaping cultural diplomacy.

In the realm of music, he is inspired by many artists: "I am basically a guitar player and singer. I am greatly inspired by David Gilmore of Pink Floyd, Eric Clapton, Robert Cray, Jim Henry and many Western musicians and guitar players. I also get inspira-

tion from music on my travels. Even though I cannot play local instruments but I try to understand what types of music and instruments are played in these areas."

“About fitting in time for music,



the ambassador said, "Of course as an Ambassador of Denmark, I have a full time job. But music has always been my passionate pastime. I started it very seriously in Vietnam back in 2001, when I met a fellow diplomat from UK. We formed a rock band with

professional Vietnamese musicians, and performed at clubs and hotels. That gave us a lot of confidence and exposure. Later, I moved to Thailand where I spent six years as ambassador. I was also familiar with lots of skilled musicians there, but couldn't form a band due to work pressures."

On Bangladeshi musicians with proclivity towards western music, the ambassador said, "Your music and ours have a close affinity. I hope the wonderful opportunity to play one song with the famous Bangladeshi band called Souls."

Elaborating on his dream on the musical front, Winther said, "My dream is, of course, to get close to musicians here in Bangladesh and play more for Bangladeshi audience."

"I would like to thank the people of Bangladesh for all the support and interest they have shown in me, my wife and Denmark. I hope Bangladeshi find that Danish people are friendly and warm, and that we are kindred spirits in our humanity," concluded Winther.