



(Front row, from left) Mahfuz Anam, Syed Hasan Imam, Suchanda, Nasir Ali Mamun, Abrar A. Anwar, Sabina Yasmin, Hon'ble Minister Mr. Hasanul Huq Inu, MP, Alauddin Ali, Gazi Mazharul Anwar, Monirul Islam, Mustafa Monwar

CELEBRATING LIFE 2017 GALA

Deemed as the premier competition for budding film-makers, photographers and lyricists, this year was Celebrating Life's 10th iteration. The award ceremony, Celebrating Life 2017 Gala, which also honored timeless contributors to the fields of film, music and photography, was held last Saturday, 28th October, at International Convention City Bashundhara. The unique theme of 'Diversity in Bangladesh' was represented by diverse performances from both young and experienced artists, as well as winning participants from all over the country. It was truly a night of joyous celebration.



Inauguration of the Celebrating Life 2017 Photography Exhibition

With much festivity and glamour, Celebrating Life 2017 Gala lived up its promise of a star-studded event. The night began with a soothing performance by the flute ensemble Aaroho lead by Murtaza Kabir Murad. The harmonized symphony embraced the audience with a warm welcome. Soon came to the stage the model-actress Swagata, the emcee of the event, to open the ceremony and greet the audiences present in the hall. Out of nowhere, the actress Nima Rahman appeared on stage, to host the event as well. The confusion between the two emcees led to a slight dispute, only to be halted just in time by the appearance of Rafi Hossain, the Festival Director of Celebrating Life. He made it clear to both the emcees that they were both chosen to host the event, to represent the theme of "diversity". Since Celebrating Life is a showcase of both the young and the experienced, the emcee combination of Swagata and Nima Rahman served to demonstrate that theme in a rather unexpected yet humorous manner. The applause from the audience certainly indicated the success of such a demonstration.

The two emcees then addressed to the stage Mahfuz Anam, the Editor & Publisher of The Daily Star, for his welcome speech. "A nation can be built in many ways, and cul-

- Winner of the Best Debut Film of Celebrating Life 2017**
Nuhash Humayun for Paperfrogs
- Winners of the Lyrics Contest of Celebrating Life 2017**
Salma Moon (1st Place)
Zahangir Alam (First Runner-up)
Hirendranath Mridha (Second Runner-up)
Sejuti Lima (Honorable Mention)
Md. Golam Rabbani (Honorable Mention)
Moniruzzaman Palash (Honorable Mention)
Rana Masud (Honorable Mention)
Hijol Jobayer (Honorable Mention)

- Winners of the Photography Contest of Celebrating Life 2017**
Hasan Mahmud Prottoy (1st)
Md. Khalid Rayhan Shawon (First Runner-up)
Ahmad Raquib (Second Runner-up)
Pankaj Sikder (Honorable Mention)
Shamir Shorif Susom (Honorable Mention)
Neamul Hasan (Honorable Mention)
Salim Rahman (Honorable Mention)
Pranesh Chakma (Honorable Mention)
Mofrad Hossain (Honorable Mention)
Muhammed Shaiful Islam (Honorable Mention)
Md. Hasan Koraishi (Honorable Mention)
Sabina Akter (Honorable Mention)

ture is an important part of that. A song or a film can invoke emotions in us, and make us see things in ways we didn't think of before," said Mahfuz Anam. "There are lyricists, film-makers and photographers hidden in the nooks and crannies of Bangladesh, and through this 10-year long initiative, we have given birth to many of these young talents," he stated the purpose of Celebrating Life. He then discussed the importance of holding onto cultural practice and that we as a nation should emphasize more on the field of creative arts. "There are

countless creative artists in this country, and with the help of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, we have been able to put more emphasis into cultural arts. Furthermore, we also honor actors, musicians, singers, photographers, and many other renowned personalities who have tirelessly contributed in these fields with the Lifetime Achievement Awards," said Mahfuz Anam.

Special documentaries created in honor of the three Lifetime Achievement winners were displayed once the welcome speech had ended. Featuring the works and contri-

butions of Nasir Ali Mamun, Suchanda and Sabina Yasmin, the documentaries paid tribute to these three esteemed personalities as they were eventually welcomed to the stage. The Chief Guest Mr. Hasanul Huq Inu, MP, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Information, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, and Abrar A. Anwar, CEO of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, were requested to join them on the stage as well. Thus began the Lifetime Achievement Award ceremony, with the awards handed by the Hon'ble Minister Mr. Hasanul Huq Inu, MP. Of course, the award ceremony could not be completed without a few words from the winners themselves.

"The path to being an actor was certainly a long and difficult one," reminisced Suchanda, the Lifetime Achievement Award winner for Film. "My biggest achievement was being able to not only act, but produce and direct films that have been considered significant in the film scene of this country," continued the timeless actor, "and of course, the love I have gotten from all my fans have made all these much more worthwhile." Sabina Yasmin, the Lifetime Achievement Award winner for Music, began her speech by expressing gratitude to The Daily Star and Standard Chartered Bangladesh for hosting an initiative like Celebrating Life.