



Mr. Hasanul Huq Inu, MP, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Information

"I wholeheartedly thank the organizers for giving me such a huge honor. This really means a lot to me," said the exuberant singer. "While photography in itself is a rather popular practice in Bangladesh nowadays, portrait photography remains to be rather overlooked, and its practice hasn't been that emphasized yet," said Nasir Ali Mamun, the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award for Photography. He then thanked the organizers for bestowing him with the honor and recognizing his hard work in the field of portrait photography. "With all this love and support, I can hopefully keep moving forward with more future projects in store," summed up the veteran photographer.

A few other esteemed cultural personalities of Bangladesh were present to share their experiences with this year's Celebrating Life Lifetime Achievement Award recipients. Among them were Syed Hasan Imam, Gazi Mazharul Anwar, Monirul Islam, Alauddin Ali and Mustafa Monwar. They also expressed their thoughts on the current music and film industry, as well as what is needed to improve the practice of cultural arts in Bangladesh. Moreover, they further welcomed Suchanda, Sabina Yasmin and Nasir Ali Mamun for their noteworthy achievement. It was certainly a gesture of respect the esteemed recipients wholeheartedly appreciated.

After honoring the Lifetime Achievement winners, finally began the award ceremony of the Film, Lyrics and Photography competitions. For his newest short film *Paperfrogs*, Nuhash Humayun grabbed the prize for the Best Debut Film. Salma Moon soon followed with a first-place prize in the Lyrics contest, with Zahangir Alam and Hirendranath Mridha being the first and second runners-up, respectively. Afterwards, the winners of the Photography contest came up on

stage. Hasan Mahmud Prottoy was awarded the first place, while Md. Khalid Rayhan Shawon and Ahmad Raquib followed him as the first and second runners-up in the Photography contest. The first, second and third-place awards were given by the Hon'ble Minister Mr. Hasanul Huq Inu, MP, the certificates were handed over by Abrar A. Anwar, CEO



Swagata and Nima Rahman

of Standard Chartered Bangladesh, and prize money in the form of a cheque was awarded by Mahfuz Anam, the Editor & Publisher of the Daily Star. There were a number of participants being named the Honorable Mention, for which they were given a crest and a certificate as well. All the winning entries of the Photography contest were also granted a place in the 2018 Calendar to be prepared by Standard



Abrar A. Anwar

Chartered Bangladesh.

"There aren't too many events in Bangladesh which honor esteemed cultural personalities, but the need for such initiatives are paramount," stated the Chief Guest Mr. Hasanul Huq Inu, MP, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Information, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh. "A successful

The Daily Star, and everyone involved in making Celebrating Life a success every year. "The theme this year, diversity in Bangladesh, is something we try to encourage in our organization. Diversity is everywhere, and it shows beauty in just about everything around us," stated Abrar A. Anwar. "Commercial activity isn't enough. Sustainable relationship with the community is critical for our success as well," he further added.

The night eventually wrapped itself up with performances by esteemed singers, as well as promising young musicians. Rezwana Choudhury Bannya took the stage with her wonderful Rabindra Sangeet. Shafi Mondol followed with his famous folk songs and after him Adit, Dola and Bammy shook the stage with the song *Ruposhi Bangladesh*, a rendition of a winning entry of the Lyrics contest. A chorus team lead by Sandhi consisted of talented young singers which included Joy Shahriar, Wakil Ahad, Nadia Dora, Joyita, Aanchal, Nandita and Sadi. They sang *Lokkho Praner Binimoye*, also based on another winning entry. Celebrating Life 2017 Gala came to a close after an exciting performance by Xefer.

It is often said how young talents in this country are overlooked by the general populace due to the lack of a proper platform. Individuals attempting to develop a career in experimental film-making, photography or lyric-writing are seldom able to properly express themselves due to a notable lack of opportunities. Celebrating Life, starting from 2008, arrived on scene to remedy this issue. With its 10th year being successfully celebrated through the prestigious Celebrating Life 2017 Gala, it is now clearer than ever that Celebrating Life will keep going on its path to success and glory for years to come.

.....
By Shams Rashid Tonmoy