

WHAT'S ON

**Group Painting Exhibition**  
 Title: Musings in Watercolor  
 Venue: Edge Galleries, Gulshan-2  
 Date: Nov 26-Dec 15  
 Time: 10am-8pm

**Shital Pati Exhibition**  
 Organiser: Bangladesh National Museum  
 Venue: Nalinikantha Bhattashali Gallery, BNM  
 Date: December 5-12  
 Time: 10am-5pm

**Cartoon and Photograph Exhibition**  
 Organiser: TIB  
 Venue: Zainul Gallery, Faculty of Fine Arts (DU)  
 Date: Dec 9-15  
 Time: 12-7pm

**Solo Art Exhibition**  
 Title: Mystery of Innocence  
 Artist: Khandkar Nasir Ahammed  
 Venue: Gallery Chittrak, Rd-6, H-4, Dhanmondi  
 Date: Nov 24-Dec 8  
 Time: 10am-8pm

**Classical Guitar Concert**  
 Flaming Acoustics  
 Organiser: AFD  
 Venue: Auditorium Nouvelle Vague, AFD  
 Date: Dec 9  
 Time: 5:30pm

**Solo art exhibition**  
 Title: Peace  
 Artist: Proshanta Karmakar Buddha  
 Venue: Gallery Cosmos  
 Date: Dec 08-17, Time: 12am-8pm

# ANNISUL HAQ

## A dreamer on a mission

SADYA AFREEN MALLICK

*The year 2017 will always have a cloud of grief around it as the country said their final farewell to a galaxy of cultural personalities in the likes of Syed Shamsul Haque, Karunamaya Goswami, Sudhin Das, Kazi Arif, Kuti Monsur, Abdul Jabbar, Razzak, Bari Siddiqui and on November 30 Annisul Haq.*

Charming presenter, entrepreneur and the dynamic mayor of DCC, it seemed Annisul Haq had the Midas touch. His winning personality and can-do, must-do approach to life will be missed by all who knew him and by all those who have never met him. His tireless work on improving the city we live in and the cultural world we love touched more people than he probably imagined.

Every time I pass by the mural of Kazi Nazrul Islam beside the Saarc Fountain at Nazrul Islam Avenue, I will remember him. The mural had fallen into a state of ruin through years of neglect. Getting no response from the authorities for a long time, I finally texted our family friend Mayor Annisul Haq. He replied almost instantaneously to my idea of an artist's protest in front of the mural. He agreed to attend in person and accept our demands.

On May 24, 2016, true to his word he arrived punctually just as Nazrul artistes assembled at the venue to sing inspirational songs beside the mural. As the TV cameras began to roll, cameras flashed--and to the delight of everyone Annisul bhai joined us in singing "Durgomo Giti", an anthem by the Poet. He loved to sing as much as he loved to be in the company of artistes.

Annisul bhai patiently listened to our concerns, somewhat baffled that the image of our National Poet was in such a state and that no remedial work had been undertaken. Within a week, he called me to say the mural had been repainted and repaired. Was there anything else he could help artistes with? he asked.

The very last time I came across him was at the Westin Dhaka, lending his weight to a campaign to raise money for terminally ill



Annisul Haq (3-R) with the writer (4-R) and other eminent artistes and personalities at the taping of "Jalsha"; (below) The mayor expresses solidarity with Nazrul artistes at his mural at Karwan Bazar.



Yasmin, Subir Nandi, Rezwana Chowdhury Bannya, Shakila Zafar. It was more remarkable to get the veterans to agree to sing not their popular songs but the songs of rock bands. He readily agreed to throw me in with Miles, while others mixed and matched with Feedback, Renaissance and Souls.

The production took two months to be completed. Brilliantly produced by Nawazish Ali Khan with limited resources at BTV in the year 1995, the programme was a grand success. Annisul bhai had managed the time despite running what was to become one of the largest textile companies in Bangladesh.

After seeing the programme on Youtube (3 million views and counting), he sent me a text message with the words, "Thank you so much for Jalsha... I can't recognize myself".

Behind all his smiles, something dangerous caught him unawares, an illness that was draining him. There was a shocked lull in the media, as it kept on broadcasting news that Mayor Annisul Haque was not keeping well and had been diagnosed with cerebral vasculitis. All the prayers and well wishes that must have travelled from people's hearts to his must surely have eased his suffering, we hope. After battling for three months he finally said goodbye to us all last week.

As the sea of people assembled at the army stadium from all walks of life it was difficult to keep one's emotions at bay. Not a dry eye in the crowd, not one without a heavy heart. His love of life and his ever present smile were truly infectious.

If I could text him, I would say- "Thank you so much Annisul bhai for always being there beside us, for showing us that doing big things start with dreaming big."

I am sure he will light up the stars in the theatre that he will call his own.

artists. Thus in November 2016 was born the "Shilpi'r Pashey Foundation", very much an Annisul Haq initiative.

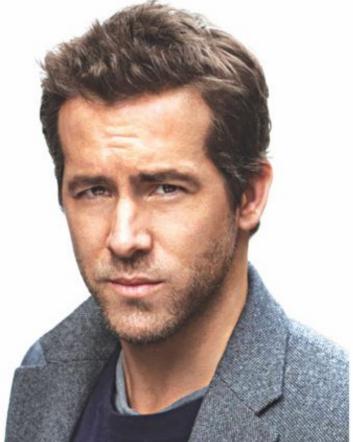
Eminent musical personalities Alaaddin Ali, Lucky Akhand and singer Shammil Akher who were undergoing medical treatment received Taka 40 lacs, 20 lacs and 10 lacs respectively from the foundation. That was also the last time a frail Lucky Akhand came up on stage in a wheelchair with his band Happy Touch, and sang his hit number "Agey Jodi Jantam". All present at the event stood by him singing the song in chorus, in an emotional, symbolic picture of support for the artiste.

Only a few months back I sent him a link to BTV's programme Jalsa--meticulously conceived by him in 1995. I remembered how Annisul bhai and his elegant wife Rubana had invited us over to their apartment to give us an idea on the rather novel programme. It was an achievement to get so many veteran artistes under one roof from Kalim Sharafi, Nilufer



## NEWS bytes

### Ryan Reynolds joins live-action "Detective Pikachu"



Ryan Reynolds is on board to star in the first-ever live-action Pokemon film titled "Detective Pikachu" for Legendary. "Goosebumps" helmer Rob Letterman will direct "Detective Pikachu" from a script by Nicole Perlman and Alex Hirsch. Reynolds is joining Justice Smith and "Big Little Lies" actress Kathryn Newton in the movie, which is based on the popular gaming franchise. The story involves the father of Smith's teenage character being kidnapped, forcing him to team up with Pikachu in order to find him. Newton will portray a journalist. First introduced in Japan in 1996, Pokemon has seen nearly 300 million video games sold worldwide, 23 billion cards shipped to 74 countries, and an animated series spanning 20 seasons. Universal Pictures will handle distribution of the live-action film outside Japan. Reynolds starred as the foul-mouthed lead character in Fox's "Deadpool" last year. The superhero vehicle grossed nearly \$800 million worldwide for Fox, spawning a sequel, "Deadpool 2", which hits theatres June 1, 2018. He starred with Samuel L. Jackson in "The Hitman's Bodyguard" for Lionsgate this year.

### "Let's be outspoken, let's be resilient"

... Jennifer Lawrence

#### Actress calls for Hollywood to embrace strong female voices

Jennifer Lawrence hopes to continue to use her voice for female empowerment. "It's not easy to speak out. It's not easy to face criticism on a global scale. But the fact is I have been given a platform, and if I don't use it, then I don't deserve it," the actress said at The Hollywood Reporter's annual Women in Entertainment breakfast, presented by Lifetime, held Wednesday morning at Los Angeles' Milk Studios.

Lawrence, who stars in Darren Aronofsky's thriller "mother!", made the comments upon being honored with the Sherry Lansing Leadership Award, given annually to a woman who has been a pioneer and philanthropic leader in her industry. Its previous recipients include Barbra Streisand, Shonda Rhimes, Oprah Winfrey, Diane Keaton, Jane Fonda, Helen Mirren, Halle Berry, Jodie Foster, Glenn Close, Barbara Walters and Tina Fey.

"This last year has been a trying and challenging time in our world and our industry specifically. Every day, we wake up to a myriad of headlines that deeply impact us, from around the globe," said Lawrence.

"Let's be outspoken, let's be resilient," concluded Lawrence, after candidly fawning over Wonder Woman star Gal Gadot. "Let's make sure the young women who are receiving \$1 million in scholarships through the remarkable Women in Entertainment Mentorship Program grow in an industry where outspoken women matter, where outspoken women lead, where all of our voices, ideas and the strength of our artistic community creates change in and out of the cinema. By doing so, we give back and give forward in the ways that matter most."

Lawrence is the youngest person ever to receive the Sherry Lansing Leadership Award. In 2016, the four-time Academy Award nominee (and winner for "Silver Linings Playbook") donated \$2 million to establish the Jennifer Lawrence Foundation Cardiac Intensive Care Unit at Kosair Children's Hospital in her hometown, Louisville, Kentucky. The Jennifer Lawrence Foundation also assists a wide range of charitable organizations, supporting abused and neglected youth, along with many educational and health organizations.

The actress recently joined the board of Represent.Us, the nation's largest grassroots anti-corruption campaign, which brings together conservatives, progressives and everyone in between to work toward fixing America's corrupt political system. She also has been outspoken on issues of gender pay disparity and privacy rights in Hollywood. At the breakfast, Sarah Silverman delivered opening remarks; Angelina Jolie gave the keynote speech; and Gal Gadot and Justin Timberlake were on hand to help present over \$1 million in university scholarships to young women from disadvantaged backgrounds who have taken part in THR's highly competitive Women in Entertainment Mentorship Program, now entering its 10th year. Amy Pascal also was honored in absentia with the Equity in Entertainment Award. The VIP event coincided with the publication of THR's annual list of the 100 most powerful women in entertainment.



### "Chol Palai" hits cinemas today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

December is a special month for Bangladeshis, and cinema-goers have been in for a treat with a number of highly anticipated film releases this month. Movie halls are adding another film to their schedules today, as Debashish Biswas-helmed "Chol Palai" hits the big screen.

The film is slated to release in 65 cinema halls countrywide. The lead roles are filled in by Toma Mirza and Shipon Mitra. Actor Shahriar is also appearing in the film.

"Chol Palai" is a romantic thriller, and it had been widely discussed even prior to its release. Cinema hall proprietors have received the film quite positively, and I have high hopes regarding the audience's reactions," stated the director.

Actor Toma Mirza expressed similar views, saying, "Romance and thrillers are the top film genres in our country, and enjoyed most by our viewers. This film has both to offer, and I believe it will attract a large audience. I also immensely enjoyed working on the sets of the film."

Shipon Mitra echoed the same sentiment saying, "Chol Palai" has a compelling narrative, and will deliver the expectations of our audience."