



PHOTO:  
SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

## Safa Kabir in the limelight

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Safa Kabir has garnered immense popularity in the showbiz industry over the years, thanks to her versatility and charming personality. An avid actor, model and anchor, the bonafide beauty has many successful ventures to her credit, including a number of tele-fictions. She further hopes to work in movies, once she comes across the right script. Safa opens up about her upcoming projects and aspirations in a recent conversation with *The Daily Star*.

**What are you most looking forward to this year?**

2018 was a great year for me, both on the personal and professional front. I was able to be a part of fantastic projects and I was surrounded by friends and loved ones. This year, I hope to continue doing good work and take part in things that will challenge me as an artiste.

**What can you tell us about your projects for 2019?**

I will be the host as well as a judge of *Teer Little Chef* on Duroonto TV. I am looking forward to the experience because being a judge for a reality show of this caliber will be a new and challenging job for me. On the other hand, I am also thrilled to be hosting the show.

**It seems like you are quite a busy person with your different projects. How do you manage your time and set your goals?** I am constantly immersed in my work and I hardly get any breathers in between for myself. Nonetheless, I love what I do, so, I cannot really complain.

**What factors draw you to a project as an actor?**

I am quite selective about scripts because I want to be a part of stories that the audience can connect with. I want them to remember me for the characters that I bring to life on screen.

**Recently, *Potaka*, a tele-fiction that you acted in, became the centre of attention upon its release. What are your comments on the audience's reaction to *Potaka*?**

I believe that the audience was pleasantly surprised to see me play the role of a housemaid in *Potaka*. It was an avatar in which they had not seen me before. I am still receiving plenty of compliments on my performance in *Potaka*, and it has opened up many opportunities for me.

**Would your fans see you in films any time soon?**

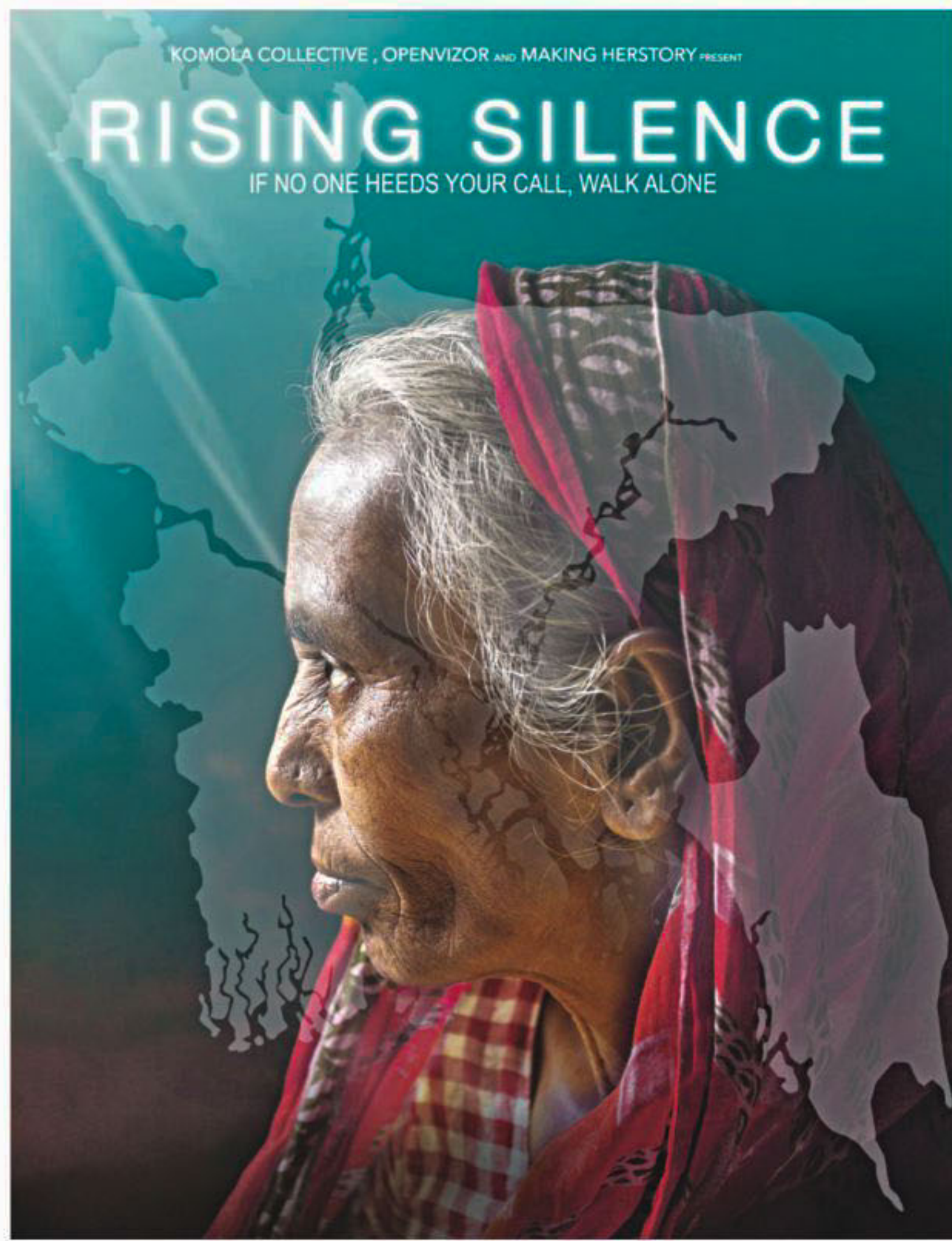
I would love to work in the film industry of our country. Even though I have received many film offers, nothing has interested me as of yet.

SHABABA IQBAL

Leesa Gazi grew up in Bangladesh and was a member of the leading theatre company Nagorik Natya Sampradaya for more than a decade. She migrated to the UK in 1999 and immediately started working as a TV producer at a community TV channel in London. From 2008, she started working as a professional actor and writer for the stage. Then in 2012, she, along with three of her colleagues, Filiz Ozcan, Sohini Alam and Caitlin Abbott, founded Komola Collective, a theatre and arts company that tells stories from women's perspectives.

Leesa came to know about the Birangona women when she was 17 years old from her father, Md Lutfur Rahman, who joined the Liberation War of Bangladesh and worked as Zonal Administrator in Tura in Sector 11. She and her siblings grew up hearing harrowing and heroic stories of the war – but the particular story about the Birangona women always stayed with Leesa.

In 2010, Ishrat Nishat, a theatre personality and dear friend of Leesa, took her to meet 21 Birangona women in Sirajganj. Leesa went to see them with a small camera crew to record their accounts with their permission. Around a year later, Bahaton, one of the Birangona women that Leesa had met, passed away, and this shook her to the core. "Birangona Bahaton's death pushed me to return to Bangladesh with Komola Collective to develop an R&D theatrical piece based on their stories," explains Leesa. "The Offie nominated play, *Birangona: Women of War*, interwove film footage of these women individually." After watching the play, the women wanted their stories to reach people around the globe. Komola



The artwork for the poster is done by Bipasha Hayat.

Collective completed the UK and Bangladesh tours of the play in 2014, written by Samina Luthfa and Leesa Gazi and directed by Filiz Ozcan. "During the touring of the play, the Birangona

women we met and knew were leaving us one by one. I realised that when a Birangona woman dies, her story dies with her," says Leesa. "I felt the urgency to save their stories as a more permanent

record. So, I came up with the idea of making a documentary film around them. My intention is to safeguard the stories of the Birangona women so that they are remembered across countries and time with love and pride."

The film, titled, *Rising Silence*, is directed by Leesa Gazi, executive produced by Openvizor, produced by Komola Collective and co-produced by Making Herstory. It is also supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation and The Osiris Group. Sohini Alam and Oliver Weeks from the British fusion band, Khiyo, directed the soundtrack of the film, which features a song by Moushumi Bhowmik.

*Rising Silence* is a feature-length documentary film that follows the presenter as she travels back to her homeland of Bangladesh in a quest to meet the survivors of the 1971 mass rapes. The presenter takes the audience on a personal journey through her encounters with nine Birangona women. She and the crew live with each of the women and their families for a short period of time, sharing their life experiences and their hopes. The film is about the strength of these women who have picked themselves up after facing unspeakably brutal physical and emotional abuse. It honours their insurmountable courage and brings to the forefront a crucial part of Bangladesh's history that has been widely ignored for far too long. The crew travelled through Thakurgaon, Sirajganj, Shohagpur, Khagrachhori, Dhaka, and Kolkata during the making of the film, which will be screened in the Dhaka International Film Festival on January 12 at 5 pm at the Bangladesh National Museum and on January 18 at 7 pm at the National Public Library. Find the trailers of *Rising Silence* on Komola Collective's YouTube channel.

## 'Brick Lane '78' England tour comes to an end

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Three shows of *Brick Lane '78* will be held on January 20 at Midlands Arts Centre (MAC) in Birmingham, on 21 at George Wood Theatre at Goldsmiths, University of London and on 27 at Townsend Theatre in Leicester respectively. The play is based on the racially motivated killing of a Bangladeshi garment worker named Altab Ali in East London in 1978 that turned into a movement of identity, resistance and recognition of the Bengali diaspora society in 70's Britain. This theatre production can be considered a re-examination of the diaspora community's political history and route to a statement of unity and harmony in the West that is currently in a revival instance of exclusionary practices of the xenophobic political context. The play is written by Murad Khan, directed by Sudip Chakroborthy and performed by professional, semi-professional and community actors from diverse backgrounds. It is produced by the theatre company, Purbanat CIC, and supported by Birmingham City Council, Black Country Touring, Arts Council England and The SBJ Trust.

The play premiered on February 11 2018 at MAC, Birmingham.



PHOTO: COURTESY

## Fun times at Fantasy Kingdom



Escape the urban chaos to unwind and revitalize yourself at Fantasy Kingdom, a Concord Entertainment Co Ltd theme park in Ashulia, which provides a range of fun rides and activities to enjoy, including the Heritage Park and X-treme Racing Go-kart. If you are tired, enter Water Kingdom and enjoy splashing in the pools, or ride the waves. For a private retreat, relax at Motel Atlantis. The resort provides a range of amenities and other recreational facilities including restaurants, so the guests can relax, surrounded by the beautiful landscape.

The residents of the port city can enjoy similar benefits as well. Located at the heart of Chattogram, the Foy's Lake Amusement Park in Pahartoli provides picturesque serenity surrounded by the hills, a lake and forests. There is also a water theme park

called Sea World for the guests.

For school or college picnics at Fantasy Kingdom, entry + all rides (per person) is only Tk 400; in addition, Water Kingdom entry + all rides (per person) is Tk 180. For Corporate Fantasy Kingdom entry + all rides (per person), the price is Tk 500; in addition, Water Kingdom entry + all rides (per person) is Tk 220. This price is applicable for a minimum of 10 persons.

Both the facilities in Dhaka and Chattogram provide a large picnic spot (no rent for spot), delicious food, international standard rides, corporate amenities with AC lounges for seminars, workshops, AGMs, etc. For enquiry, please call 01913-531387 or 01913-531386.

SOURCE: CONCORD ENTERTAINMENT CO LTD

## 'Captain Kathal in Baper Rasta' premiered

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Mighty Punch Studios, a renowned comic book studio, debuted their animated film, *Captain Kathal in Baper Rasta*, yesterday on their Facebook page. The film features the short-tempered, yet lovable superhero, Captain Kathal, who is frustrated with traffic and decides to take matters into his own hands. "Captain Kathal was introduced in the *Shabash* comic series in a cameo," said Samir Asran Rahman, the director of the film. "However, the character became so popular that we decided to feature him in his own animated short film." The animation carries the right amount of charm, wit, as well as a very wholesome message regarding the chaotic traffic system in Bangladesh. The film is now available on Mighty Punch Studios' YouTube channel.



**BPL**  
to air on  
Maasranga  
Television

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

From January 5 onwards, Maasranga Television will air Bangladesh Premiere League (BPL) 2019. A total number of 46 matches will be aired live till February 8. The seven participating teams include Dhaka Dynamites, Chittagong Vikings, Comilla Victorians, Sylhet Sixers, Rajshahi Kings, Khulna Titans and Rangpur Riders.