

WHAT'S ON Mobile Film Festival Title: Dhaka International Mobile Film Festival 2019 Venue: University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh Date: February 15	Live Art Show Title: Dhaka Live Art Biennale Venue: University of Dhaka Date: Jan 21 - Feb 14 Time: 10 am - 8 pm	Exhibition Title: LAL - An Ode to the Moon & Menstrual Cycle Venue: Jatra Biroti, Banani Date: February 19 - 23 Details: www.facebook.com/jatrabirotiworld	Book Fair Title: Ekushey Boi Mela 2019 Venue: Suhrawardi Udyan and Bangla Academy, Dhaka Date: Feb 1 - 28 Time: 3 pm - 8:30 pm	Theatre Festival Title: Jatiyo Patho Natya Utshab 2019 Venue: Central Shaheed Minar Date: Jan 31 - Feb 7 Time: 4 pm onwards
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PHOTO: COURTESY

"I am eternally grateful to my readers"

IMDADUL HAQ MILAN

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

A novelist, dramatist, columnist and television personality, Imdadul Haq Milan is a well-known name in the Bangladeshi literary circuit. He has around 200 successful short stories and novels to his credit. His writings have also earned him the prestigious Bangla Academy Award. A number of his novels are available at this year's Ekushey Boi Mela. Milan reflects on his career in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star.

How do you feel to be attending this year's Ekushey Boi Mela?
 The Ekushey Boi Mela is an event I eagerly wait for every year. Even though I get anxious about my book releases, it is a really happy occasion for me. I love meeting up with my peers in the writers' community throughout the month. So far, what are your thoughts on this year's Boi Mela?
 I would say the organising committee of the Boi Mela has done a great job this year. A special mention should go out to the architect, Enamul Karim Nirjhar. He has done a brilliant job in bringing a fresh and modern look to the Boi Mela. I believe that visitors and readers will have a fulfilling experience at the fair this year.
Did you attend the first ever Ekushey Boi Mela?
 Yes, I attended the first ever Ekushey Boi Mela, held in 1972, after our inde-

pendence. I was a student back then. Chittaranjan Saha of Muktohdara Publishing took the initiative. The Boi Mela started merely as a book fair and today, it has evolved into a national cultural festival reflecting the spirit of a modern Bangladesh. It is delightful to see thousands of people gather to purchase books and to spend time in the company of books and their authors with a patriotic zeal.

Tell us about some of your most notable books at this year's Boi Mela.
 My novel, *Ekattor O Ekjon Maa*, published by Annanya, is my biggest release this year. It revolves around the Liberation War of Bangladesh. I hope that my readers will enjoy the novel.

What would you say was a highlight in your career as a novelist?
 My novel, *Bhalobashar Shukh Dukh*, which came out in 1993, was a massive success. I remember readers flocked around our stall at the Boi Mela that year to grab it. We had sold thousands of copies. That was quite an unforgettable moment.

Would you like to convey any message to your loyal readers?
 Over the years, many parents have approached me to say that they have grown up reading my novels and now, they have passed on my stories to their children. It is incredible to see that different generations in a family are familiar with my work. I am eternally grateful to my readers.

PORTRAIT OF A COVER ARTIST

Reesham Shahab Tirtho

An architect and artist, Reesham Shahab Tirtho, has stood out with his remarkable illustrations over the years. Often inspired by the work of Sabyasachi Hazra, Sabyasachi Mistry and Mehedi Haque, he believes that the contemporary artists of Bangladesh are producing world-class artworks these days.

AFSANA AZIZ NITOL

This year, in the Ekushey Boi Mela, Tirtho has designed covers of books by renowned writers, including the likes of Habibullah Siraji and Khasru Choudhury. He is the creative mind behind the covers of *Bangladesh Er Bagher Golpo* by Khasru Choudhury, *Aat Rohosho* by Ahmed Riaz, *Milti* by Habibullah Siraji, and *One Down* by Rashat Rahman Zico, among others.

As a cover artist, Tirtho attempts to not give any spoilers to the readers. "I generally read the scripts before designing a cover. When I design, I leave a few things to the readers' interpretation," says Tirtho. "There will be no fun, if a reader can predict the story just by looking at the cover." However, he makes sure the cover is relevant to the story of the book.

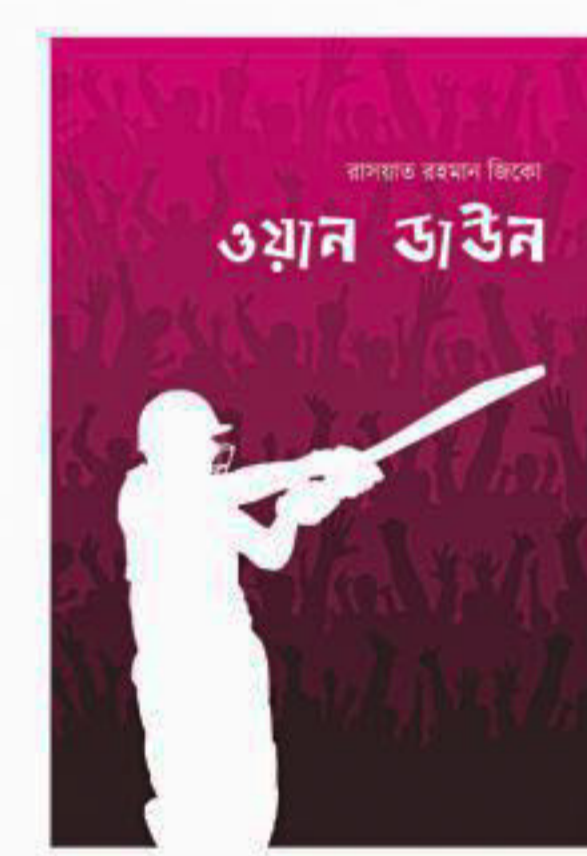


Among the different genres of books, he finds it difficult to design covers for children's books, since their psychology works differently than most adults. He mainly uses the digital medium.

Tirtho has few more covers on his plate for the Boi Mela, that he is currently working on, and he hopes that the fair stays well-organised this year.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Kamal Ahmed releases 16th solo album

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

In the month of the International Mother Language Day, award-winning musician Kamal Ahmed kicked off the release of his 16th solo album, *Ekusher Shorolipi*, with the music video of the song, *Ekush Maney Oasundor Aar Oakollyaner Biruthdhe*. The video was released on Laser Vision's YouTube channel on February 1.

Kamal Ahmed is the first singer in Bangladesh who published a solo album in honour of February 21. Other songs of this album include *Antorjatik Matrivaasha Dibosh*, *Ekushe February Amar Oahongkar*, *Ekush Tumi Lal Potaka*, *Amar Vasha Matrivaasha*, *Matrivaasha Rashtravasha Jatiyovasha Bangla*, *Ma Matrivumi Matrivaashar Chetona*, *Banglalir Itihashe Ase Somman*, *Vasha Shaheedera*, *Kotha Bollei Tomay Mone Pore*, *Mayer Moto Matrivaasha* and *Amar Vaiyer Praner Binimoye*.

The lyricists of the album are K G Mostafa, Fazal-e-Khoda, Azad Rahman, Shafat Khoiyam, MR Monju, Mujahidul Hoque Lenin, Shyamoli Mondol and Md Faysal Khan.

The music for the album is directed by Azad Rahman, Ali Hossain, Shekh Sadi Khan, Md Shah Newaz, Md Nazrul Islam, Ibne Razon, Muzahidul Hoque Lenin, Soumitra Banarjee and Md Masud Rana.

Sushama Sarker on HER NEW SHORT FILM

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Sushama Sarker recently wrapped up the short film, *Women of No Religion*, directed by Taufiq Elahi. It was shot in Doulatdia.

She plays the role of a sex-worker in the film. "It was a challenging project for me," says the actor. "I spent days inside a brothel to get into the skin of the character."

Sushama is currently working on the films, *Jam*, *Shaap Ludo* and *Gor*.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



PHOTO: COURTESY

Sabbir Nasir makes a comeback

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

90's musician Sabbir Nasir has returned with a new song titled, *Tumi Jodi Bolo*, composed by Muntasir Tusher. The singer has teamed up with promising artist Nasir Nasha for the song. *Tumi Jodi Bolo* has been released on Gaanchill Music's YouTube channel.

'Hobbs & Shaw' trailer out

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Even without the presence of Vin Diesel, the latest trailer of the spinoff from the *Fast and Furious* franchise seems to be packing a punch. It brings back the duo, Luke Hobbs (Dwayne Johnson) and Deckard Shaw (Jason Statham), as they team up to fight a new threat - a genetically enhanced villain, played by Idris Elba.

Following in the footsteps of the previous installments, *Hobbs & Shaw* builds up the adrenaline rush with fast and modified vehicles and road chase sequences along with fire and muscle power. The film is slated for release during summer.

