

WHAT'S ON



**Solo Art Exhibition**  
Title: Self Depiction  
Artist: Afrida Tanzim Mahi  
Venue: Kalakendra, Mohammadpur  
Date: October 21 – November 12  
Time: 4 pm – 8 pm



**Architectural Exhibition**  
Title: Nogonama: The Future of Our Habitats  
Venue: Bengal Shilpalay, Dhanmondi 27  
Date: November 2 – 30  
Time: 12 noon – 8 pm



**Group Art Exhibition**  
Title: Prachin Prachin Dhara / The Ancient Lineage of The East  
Venue: Gallery Cosmos, New DOHS, Mohakhali  
Date: October 25 – November 10  
Time: 12 noon – 8 pm



**lit fest**  
Title: Dhaka Lit Fest  
Venue: Bangla Academy  
Date: November 7- 9  
Time: 9 am – 7:30 pm



**Musical Workshop**  
Title: RAGA: Theory and practice with Nishit Dey  
Date: November 9  
Venue: Studio 6/6, Mohammadpur  
Time: 5 pm onwards

# A tribute to a legendary thespian

## Aly Zaker's 75th birthday today

SHAH ALAM SHAZU & SADI SHAHNEWAZ

It is, indeed, tricky to narrow down the identity of a personality as significant as Aly Zaker, in simplistic terms. An extraordinary actor, a brave freedom fighter and a successful businessperson, and perhaps above all – an amiable human being – he is a man of diversified talents. Today marks the 75th birthday of the great artiste.

Born in Chittagong, Aly Zaker spent his childhood in Kushtia. After Bangladesh gained independence, Aly Zaker's first appearance on stage was in the play *Kabor*, arranged by Aranyak Natya Dal. However, a number of his memorable work came out when he joined Nagorik Natya Sampradaya, where he famously worked in plays like *Galileo*, *Dewan Gazir Kissa*, *Nurul Diner Shara Jibon*, *Macbeth*, among many others that made him perhaps the most famous stage actor of his time. Through *Dewan Gazir Kissa*, he teamed up with legendary writer and long-time friend Syed Shamsul Haque (1935-2016).

"I would pay to see every show that he played Galileo in," Syed Shamsul Haque had said in a previous interview with *The Daily Star*, "he can breathe life into any character he plays. I had requested him to direct and play a part in *Nurul Diner Shara Jibon*, in which he balanced the roles perfectly."

Some of his famous directorial ventures on stage are – *Baki Itihash*, *Bidogdho Romonikul*, *Toilo Sankat*, *Ei Nishiddho Polli Te* and *Ochloyoton*. On television, his most memorable parts were in *Aj Robibar* and *Bohurbrihi*. He is the recipient of the prestigious Ekushey Padak (1999), Selim Al Deen Padak (2017) and the Shaheed Altaf Mahmud Padak (2017).

In 1975, Aly Zaker married theatre personality, entrepreneur and social activist, Sara Zaker. Their two children, Iresh Zaker and Sriya Sharbojya, are successful individuals, with Iresh achieving a prolific acting career. "He is someone who can do 10 things at once, and he never stepped back from his responsibilities," says Sara Zaker, "he has a big heart, and treats everyone with the same respect. I am grateful to be with him, and I indeed have learned a lot from him over the years."

Eminent Bangladeshi actor Abul Hayat has acted in multiple plays and tele-fictions alongside Aly Zaker. "For many, many years, we have shared the stage together in the same theatre troupe," he says, "Aly Zaker is not only an incomparable artiste, but a dear

friend of mine. Many happy returns of the day to him. I hope that he returns to good health and takes the stage again soon, because we really need him there." The last time that the two giants of the theatre world shared the stage was in 2016, in *Dewan Gazir Kissa*.

An active participant in the Liberation War, Aly Zaker was passionate about ensuring our right to speak our mother tongue. "Is Bangla being wiped off our land?" he would often ask himself as he went into the heart of battle. "When Aly went to fight for the country, he did so because his heart told him to, and a heart full of vengeance was his biggest weapon", Syed Shamsul Haque had said.



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL

"Even though we shared the stage together first in Aranyak Natya Dal, we had worked in Bangladesh Betar together as well," said renowned theatre artiste Mamunur Rashid. Aly Zaker is a true luminary, and I hope that he gets well soon."

Another famous actor and academician, Dr Enamul Haque, told *The Daily Star* that Aly Zaker is the most successful theatre artiste he has had the pleasure of working with. "His name is synonymous to success, and it feels really bad when such an inspiring and jolly personality is ill."

The sentiment is shared by the entire country, who is eager to see their favourite theatre personality back on stage as soon as possible. On this auspicious occasion, *The Daily Star* family wishes the famous and loved theatre hero good health and many happy returns of the day.



PHOTO: COURTESY

# In remembrance of Ronesh Dasgupta

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Ronesh Dasgupta was not only an eminent writer, journalist and cultural activist of Bangladesh, but also one of the founding members of Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigosthi. Marking his 22nd death anniversary, the organisation arranged a cultural programme, on November 4, at their central office.

The event began with the song *Aguner Poroshmoni Chhoro Prane*, a group performance by the singers of the organisation. Later, honouring Dasgupta, his unfinished memoir was read by Sangita Imam, Joint General Secretary, (Organisation Unit) of Udichi Central Committee.

The programme was presided over by Nibash Dey, President of Metropolis of Udichi Shilpigosthi, while Anup Poddar, member of the Central Committee of the organisation, led the event.

President of the Central Committee of the

organisation, Professor Dr Shafiuddin Ahmed, Vice President of the Central Committee Professor Badiur Rahman, General Secretary of the Central Committee Jamshed Anwar Tapan, Vice President of the Metropolis of Udichi Amit Ranjan Dey, General Secretary Iqbalul Haque Khan, former member of the Central Committee M A Aziz Miah, and former organiser Tanuj Kanti Dey, were present at the ceremony, among others. They discussed the struggles, literary goals and different aspects of Dasgupta's life.

In the discussion session, they shared that Ronesh Dasgupta was one of the main founders of the central Khelaghor Ashor, an organisation for children. They also expressed that Dasgupta's writing played an important role towards establishing communal harmony and creating awareness against radicalism.

The writer passed away on November 4, 1997. He was honoured with the Ekushey Padak in 1998, posthumously.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Bangladesh Betar's information and entertainment-based magazine programme *Dorpon* started its journey on November 1, 1983. On completing 37 years of the programme, Bangladesh Betar arranged a celebration event.

# CHHORAY-CHHONDE NRITTYOMALA:

## Nrityanchal's tribute to Muhammad Jahangir

Commemorating the 68th birth anniversary of eminent journalist and media personality Muhammad Jahangir, a dance recital titled, *Chhoray-Chhonde Nrittyomala* was held at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA), recently. The programme, organised by Nrityanchal, presented a series of dance performances by children.

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

The event was coordinated by renowned dancer Shibli Mohammad. The dance routines were conceptualised and choreographed by noted dancer and dance director Shamim Ara Nipa.

The evening kicked off with Shibli Mohammad's welcome address. "Muhammad Jahangir loved kids and this is why Nrityanchal was formed. We dedicate our performances today to him for inspiring us," he said.

His words were followed by an introductory speech by children's writer and audio-visual organiser Ali Imam. Finally, the programme was inaugurated by BSA's Director General



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

'Aha! Ki Anando'

Liaquat Ali Lucky.

Over 250 young dancers from Nrityanchal presented episodic performances on different nursery rhymes and poems. The first performance was 'Phuler Deshe', where dancers, dressed in floral costumes, celebrated the beauty of flowers with the song *Phule Phule Dhole Dhole*. This lead to the episode 'Banger Rajjo', where little frogs leaped beyond their boundaries and embraced music, with the song *O Sona Bang O Kola Bang*.

The third episode, 'Hatti Ma Tim', ended with an actual toddling Hatti Ma Tim coming out of its eggshell and dancing on the song *Hatti Ma Tim Tim*. Plants play an essential part in

restoring natural balance. Bearing that in mind, the necessity of nurturing plants was showcased in the fourth episode 'Phuler Bagan'. The fifth episode, 'Bhorer Alo' depicted the dreamland of an early bird and 'Mamar Bari', the sixth episode, reminisced the childhood summer holidays spent in the front yard of one's maternal uncle's house.

Soon, a peacock took over the stage with its feathers open, scintillating on the tunes of *Megh Gur Gur* in the sixth episode, 'Moyur Naache Eka'. The other episodes included 'Tiyer Biye', 'Kajla Didi', 'Bhombol Das', 'Hature Doctor' and 'Golkonna'. The event came to an end with the dance routine 'Aha! Ki Anando'.



'Moyur Naache Eka'



'Tiyer Biye'



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