



# An afternoon with FAROOKI AND TISHA

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

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One does not get the opportunity to witness the candid chemistry between the much-loved real-life couple in our industry, Mostofa Sarwar Farooki and Nusrat Imrose Tisha. A Tuesday afternoon spent with them at their residence gave The Daily Star a rare peek into their sweet family life, along with their exciting upcoming projects.

As we began the conversation, their daughter, Ilham Nusrat Farooki, furtively glanced and her curiosity towards us,

"Love stories are better told in the time of xenophobia. I think, when we are surrounded with hatred, then love stories can heal our soul," shared Farooki, who is all set to make his acting debut. He elaborated on *Ministry of Love*, the anthology series consisting of 12 films, out of which *Last Defender of Monogamy* and *Something Like an Autobiography* will be under his watchful lens.

"Tisha was missing the humour in the projects that she watched on OTT, for a long time," shared Farooki, adding that she consumes OTT content more than he does. Tisha pitched in, "I feel like in the US, genres like drama are still popular, but in South Asia, murder-mystery, thrillers are trending. Sarwar and I were discussing about the scarcity of our original dramas, which focused on human relationships."

*Ministry of Love* looks to alleviate that scarcity to a certain extent.

"As we were brainstorming, we thought, why not we create an umbrella project where

we can include individual films, and this is how we approached this plan to Chorki," she added.

The inaugural ceremony of *Ministry of Love* was quite an interesting one too. Afzal Hossain, known as a romantic hero, was in charge of the oath taking ceremony of the 11 'ministers', who will be directing the films. These 11 directors are the perfect combination of both prominent and promising craftsmen. "It was not planned actually, we have focused on particular criteria in which these directors fitted, and they were available for the collaboration as well." Farooki also hinted a second season of the series, where he wishes to work with more directors.

**The celebrated duo will make their momentous on-screen appearance together in 'Something Like an Autobiography'. The excitement surrounding that is tremendous.**

Interestingly, the title, *Something Like an Autobiography* has been taken from the autobiography published in 1981, by eminent Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa. "This film is the very first one co-written by me and Tisha," Farooki informed. "While writing this, we knew that both of us have to act in it." He remarks that this project has several connections with their lives. "Akira's book tells the story of his own life, but the autobiography that he wrote from his perspective, did not convince him to declare an autobiography. Since it was his perspective of a particular event, for someone else, the perspective could be totally different, thus he, proving his humility, named it thus." Farooki further shared that prominent filmmaker Tareq

Masud gifted him this book many years ago.

The two of them remained tight-lipped about spilling anything about which part of their lives will be highlighted in this film. This project will be premiered at the 'In Competition' segment of the 28th Busan International Film Festival, on October 8.

This marks the Farooki-Tisha duo's first momentous appearance on-screen. Tisha grabbed the opportunity to make a comment first, "I felt that he is more senior artiste that I am," she quipped. "The treatment he received from each and everyone from the set, the way everyone pampered him, even more than me, while I was having to do own makeup!"

Tisha shared that initially, Farooki was in dilemma about role, however, she and Redoan Rony managed to convince him.

Moving on to the second project, *Monogamy*, a plot consisting of heterosexual relationship focusing on contemporary times, which comprises of an unusual pairing, Chanchal Chowdhury and Xefar. As we further move on to that, baby Ilham stumbled into the room twice. The couple shared that Ilham was actually responsible for casting Xefar in this project. "Xefar had become a household face in our home, as her song *Jhumka* is one of her most favourite tracks. It is then that Xefar's appearance was imprinted in my mind," shared Farooki. "Additionally, Chanchal has nailed the role, he will make you laugh and cry, it is guaranteed."

Like Farooki was struggling before he acted in his 'autobiography', he asserted that Xefar also had the similar dilemma, especially on transforming her entire look. "I could feel her vulnerability, as I felt the same," he said.

As we were wrapping the conversation and Tisha and Farooki were getting ready for our photoshoot, the couple's quirky conversation on selecting outfits that complement each other would make anyone feel that even after 13 years of marriage, 'couple goals' would be an understatement for them, as they are rightfully inducted in the ministry of love.

## Jyotika Jyoti to star in Liberation War film 'Nishibok'



Actress Jyotika Jyoti signed a new short film, titled *Nishibok*, bringing to life a story from a night during the Liberation War. Director Sajjad Zahir has undertaken this project with the support of a government grant for the fiscal year 2022-23. The production is expected to kick off as early as next month.

"It's a story based on our Liberation War, and the entire narrative unfolds over the course of one night. I was amazed by the storyline, and I have a deep connection with my character. However, for now, I'm under strict instructions to keep further details under wraps," said Jyotika Jyoti to the media.

While Jyotika Jyoti is confirmed for the project, the rest of the cast is yet unknown.



## Quddus Bayati and Islam Uddin Palakar in 'Ityadi'

The latest episode of the beloved Bangladeshi television show *Ityadi*, written, directed, and presented by the renowned Hanif Sanket, promises to captivate viewers with its segments. Scheduled to air on September 29, this episode features singers Quddus Bayati and Islam Uddin Palakar.

The scenic backdrop of Netrakona provides the perfect setting for this year's episode, with a stage meticulously constructed in front of the serene hills of Bijaypur. Quddus Bayati and Islam Uddin Palakar, both hailing from Netrakona, showcased their remarkable vocal skills by performing two songs that are deeply rooted in the region's rich traditions.

## Swagata to get married soon



Actress Zinat Sanu Swagata, currently in the UK, is set to make a significant life decision as she revealed her plans to tie the knot by the end of the year. While she's keeping the identity of her groom-to-be under wraps for now, multiple sources have confirmed that her future husband is Hasan Azad, with whom she has also collaborated on several songs.

"I feel like this person will make my future easier and brighter. We have a good understanding. I urge everyone for their good wishes," said Swagata.

# 'Rising from the Ashes' arrives in Bangladesh

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The noted exhibition, *Rising from the Ashes*, has finally arrived in Bangladesh after travelling through five nations. This collaboration features artworks by Turkish and Bangladeshi artists, focusing on the aftermath of an earthquake.

The five-day exhibition began on September 22 and will continue until September 26 in Aloki. The ceremony was inaugurated by Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Ramis Sen. Many art connoisseurs and social workers attended the programme.

The *Rising from the Ashes Exhibition 2023* has already taken center stage worldwide in New Jersey, Istanbul, Kuwait City, Doha, and Milan. The series' voyage is set to continue with planned exhibits in Kuala Lumpur and Amsterdam, generating escalating excitement.

The exhibition brilliantly demonstrates the strength of human resilience in the face of natural disasters. Humans, like the phoenix rising from the ashes, find a way to thrive even in the face of massive disaster and adversity. This perseverance is expressed through art, whether on canvas of an artist or

through the lens of a photographer.

Turkish artists participating in the exhibition include Tuba Ahsan, Ihami Atalay, Cemal Toy, Mediha Atalay, Canan Aydoğan, Zafer Örs, Rüveyda Görmezoğlu, Faruk Erçetin, Kübra Ökmen, Furkan Türkyılmaz, Elif Tarakçı, Melike Zeynep Yıldırım, Ayşeğül Odabaşı, Barış Görmezoğlu,

Auntora Mehrukh Azad, Taiara Farhana Tareque, Shehzad Shahrir Chowdhury, Sarah Jabin, Soma Surovi Jannat, Najib Tareque, Farhana Afroz Bappy, Kazi Tahsin Agaz Apurbo, Shaharin Sultana, Jannatul Ferdous Mukty, Sadia Khalid Reeti, and Nazia Ahsan Chaity.

The organisers hope to involve local artists in this initiative, aiming to bring out a unique expression of the friendship between Bangladesh and Turkey. They believe this will promote creativity and empathy, creating a unique blend within diversity. This platform also provides young artists in Bangladesh with a different opportunity. They are not just elevating their own art; they are elevating it with a grand purpose. They are not just carrying their own artwork; they carry a great purpose.

The *Rising from the Ashes 2023* series is spearheaded by Istanbul's renowned fashion designer and artist Tuba Ahsan and the Cemal Toy Art School. Their common cause raises funds to finance the construction of long-lasting wooden homes for victims of this year's horrific Turkey-Syria earthquake, which occurred on February 6.



Turkish Ambassador to Bangladesh Ramis Sen and artist Tuba Ahsan at the inaugural ceremony of 'Rising from the Ashes.'

PHOTO: COURTESY

Mustafa Başarır, and Hümeysra Yorgancı.

This bilateral exhibition also features the artworks of several Bangladeshi artists, including Azizee Fawmi Khan, Rakibul Anwar, Hridita Anisha, Masuda Khan, Anannya Mehpar Azad, Suborna Morsheada,



PHOTOS: COURTESY

