

# Professor Anisuzzaman: Scholar, Mentor, Friend



Niaz Zaman  
is a retired academic, writer, translator, and publisher. She was nominated for the Ekushey Padak in 2025 for her contribution to education.

NIAZ ZAMAN

He was known just as Professor Anisuzzaman. Most people of his generation used to have longer names; and indeed he did have a longer name as I learnt when I started to check online: Abu Tayab Muhammad Anisuzzaman. But he was always known by just one name.

Born in Bashirhat on February 18, 1937, he moved with his family to Kolkata, then, after Partition, to Khulna, and finally to Dhaka which became his home. An academic, a scholar, and a writer; he was also an activist, taking part in the Language Movement in 1952 and working for the Bangladesh government in exile in Kolkata during the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. When the Constitution of Bangladesh was written, it was written in English and then translated into Bangla. Dr Anisuzzaman was responsible for the Bangla translation. In 2008, Dhaka University awarded him the title of Professor Emeritus. Ten years later, in 2018, the government honoured him as National Professor. He served as chairman of the Trustee Board at the Nazrul Institute and was president of the Bangla Academy from 2011 till his death from Covid in 2020.

Professor Anisuzzaman completed his master's in 1957 in Bangla from the University of Dhaka. Five years later, in 1962, he completed his PhD at the age of 25 from his alma mater. A true scholar, during 1964-1965, he was a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Chicago, and during 1974-1975, a Commonwealth Academic Staff fellow at the University of London. He was a visiting fellow at the University of Paris (1994), the North Carolina State University (1995) and the University of Calcutta (2010), and a visiting professor at the Visva-Bharati (2008-2009, 2011).

His PhD thesis was published in 1964, titled *Muslim Manas o Bangla Sahitya* (The Muslim Mind and Bangla Literature). Among Professor Anisuzzaman's numerous publications, his study of factory correspondence in the India Office Library is significant. Published as *Factory correspondence and other Bengali documents in the India Office Library and Records* (1981), the volume catalogues a collection of Bangla correspondence dated between 1774 to about 1814, between the East India Company Representative in Dhaka with agents who ordered and supplied cotton textiles for export to Europe. These documents had not previously attracted the attention of cataloguers or readers. As KN Chaudhuri, in his brief review of the *Bulletin of SOAS*, volume 46, issue 1 (1983), notes, "The catalogue would be of great assistance to any historian interested in the economic history of Bengal at the end of the 18th century." Professor Anisuzzaman's book *Creativity, Reality and Identity* (1993), which contains four papers presented on different occasions, includes part of the introduction to this volume.

Professor Anisuzzaman received the top national awards: the Bangla Academy Literary Award for research (1970), the Ekushey Padak for education (1985), and the Swadhinata Padak for literature (2015). Rabindra Bharati University, Calcutta, honoured him with an Honorary D.Lit. (2005), Asiatic Society of Kolkata awarded him the Pandit Iswarchandra Vidyasagar Gold Plaque (2011) and the Government of India honoured him with the Padma Bhushan for his contribution to literature and education (2014).

In 1961, when I enrolled in the Department of English at Dhaka University, Professor Anisuzzaman was working on his doctoral dissertation. As a student of the English department, I had no reason or occasion to meet Dr Anisuzzaman. By 1969, however, Dr Anisuzzaman had started teaching at the

newly founded Chittagong University. The university was looking for English teachers—even a teacher with a simple BA Pass, but with a First Class MA degree, was welcome. Chittagong University was several miles away from Chittagong town, and one got to know not only the teachers of one's own department but of others as well. It was then that I first met Dr Anisuzzaman. It was not an exceptional meeting, but my husband was



Dr Anisuzzaman (1937-2020) was a lighthouse to the nation.

FILE PHOTO: STAR

very excited when I told him about meeting Prof Anisuzzaman. My husband's family had migrated from Kolkata shortly after Partition. It so happened that Dr Anisuzzaman's family had lived in the same area. His father, a homoeopathic doctor, was well-known to my husband's family.

In December 1970, I had to resign from the university for personal reasons. In 1972, I joined Dhaka University. I lost touch with Dr Anisuzzaman, who remained at Chittagong University. However, he must have visited Dhaka frequently at the time because his supervision of the Bangla version of the constitution would be ready in November that year. At the time, I did not know Dr Anisuzzaman's role; I only knew that Dr Kamal Hossain was actively involved in preparing it—and that Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin had been in charge of its aesthetic aspect. Little did we know at the time, that the constitution, prepared with such pride, would undergo several amendments and, by 2024, prove controversial.

In 1985, Dr Anisuzzaman rejoined the Department of Bangla at Dhaka University. I was not in the country at the time, and it was only after I returned that I would see him in the teachers' lounge. Then he retired—as I did a couple of years later. I was appointed supernumerary professor in my department, teaching one class every Tuesday. After class, I would have lunch at Dhaka Club. I would see him also at the Club very often, and we would exchange pleasantries. If he or I had already started eating, I did not feel obliged to accept his offer to move to his table. A couple of times, however, we both entered at the same time and then I could not refuse his offer to lunch with him.

In October 2011, I received an invitation from Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan, to present a paper on Rabindranath Tagore at their conference on "Redefining Paradigms of Sustainable Development in South Asia" to be held in Islamabad in December that year. I informed the organisers that I was not a Tagore scholar. There were several excellent Tagore scholars in Bangladesh, and I could pass on their names to them. The organisers insisted that the invitation was for me. I had been specifically invited by Mr Ahmed Salim, one of the organisers, a poet and short story writer, who had been jailed in 1971 for his support for Bangladesh.

I didn't see how a paper on Tagore would fit into the conference theme, but I was assured that there would be other papers on writers and my paper would be quite in place. In other words, a paper on Tagore was expected from me. What could I write on Tagore that would be of interest to a Pakistani audience? In the 1960s, the central government had banned Tagore songs on East Pakistan radio and television, but the people of Bangladesh had resisted. During 1971, Tagore's "Amar Sonar Bangla" had been the tune that reverberated through every Bangalee mind. And, in 1972, the song became our national anthem. Tagore is the only poet whose songs have become the national anthems of two nations. How does "Amar Sonar Bangla" represent Bangladesh? And how does Tagore's "Jana Gana Mana" represent India? I decided to write on "Rabindranath Tagore and the Creation of National Identity." However, where did I begin?

I knew Dr Anisuzzaman was a scholar. Hopefully, he could guide me. I called him, and he was most welcoming. When I reached his house, he was ready with photocopied material that he thought would be helpful. Yes, I was able to get a lot of information online, but that discussion with Dr Anisuzzaman gave me the courage to write a paper on a subject I had never studied before. Mrs Anisuzzaman had been the librarian at IBA where my daughter-in-law studied, so I briefly knew about her. What I was not prepared for was the hospitality she showed someone taking up her husband's time. A tea trolley rolled in with sweet and savoury snacks. Siddiqua Zaman, to give her her own name, must have shown that hospitality to the many visitors who came to meet her husband, and she must have greeted them with the same smile. Afterwards, I learned that she had met Dr Anisuzzaman in 1959 and married him two years later, in 1961. Apart from hosting guests who came to visit her husband, Siddiqua Zaman had to suffer his long absences when he went off on his foreign teaching assignments. It was only the nine months when he was in London, from 1974-1975, that the family accompanied him. The best years of her life, she told me later, were the three months they spent at Santiniketan.

That was the first of several visits to their place. The last few I remember because of the police guard at their entrance. In 2015, bloggers Avijit Roy, Washiqur Rahman, Ananta Bijoy Das, and Niloy Neel were hacked to death with machetes. In October of that year, publisher Faisal Arefin Dipon was similarly killed in his office. Dr Anisuzzaman had condemned these killings. He received a death threat; he, too, would be killed in exactly the same way. The threat was serious, and he was provided police protection.

I met Dr Anisuzzaman at the launch of Syed Waliullah's posthumously published *The Ugly Asian* at the Dhaka Lit Fest in 2018. He looked quite well in his white kurta and white *dheela pyjama*. He did not look quite so well when I last met him on January 25, 2019, at a conference at East West University. A little over a year later, on May 14, 2020, he passed away from Covid. A personal loss for his family, his death was also a loss to the nation of a lighthouse, and, to me, of a mentor and friend.

## গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার নার্সিং ও মিডিওয়াইকারি অধিদপ্তর (শিক্ষা শাখা) মহাখালী, ঢাকা-১২১২ www.dgnm.gov.bd

স্মারক নং: ১৫-০৩-০০০০-০০২-০১-২৭৯, ২০২৪-৮

তারিখ: ১৮/০২/২০২৫ খ্রি

### এমএসসি ইন নার্সিং কোর্সে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, ঢাকাৰ গত ০৯-০৬-২০২৪ খ্রি: তারিখেৰ ৮/১৮/ক্র.প ও ০৯-০৬-২০২৪ খ্রি: তারিখেৰ ৮/১৯/ক্র.প এবং স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা ও পরিবার কল্যাণ বিভাগৰ ০১-০৮-২০২৪ খ্রি: তারিখেৰ ১৯,০০,০০০,১৪০,৯১,০০০,২০-২৬ স্বাস্থ্যসূলৈ মাত্রকেতুৰ চকিৎসা বিভাগ ও গবেষণা অনুষদেৰ অধিকৃত সরকারি ০২ (দুই) টি নার্সিং শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠানে ০২ বছৰ মেয়াদি নিয়োবৰ্তী এমএসসি ইন নার্সিং কোর্সে ২০২৫-২৬ শিক্ষাবৰ্ষে ৮০ টি আসনেৰ বিপ্রয়োগে শিক্ষার্থী ভর্তিৰ জন্য অনলাইনে আবেদন আহ্বান কৰা যাবে:

কোড	কলেজেৰ নাম	কোর্সেৰ নাম	আসন সংখ্যা	মোট আসন
০১	ঢাকা নার্সিং কলেজ, ঢাকা	১. এমএসসি ইন নার্সিং মাইনিন্টেনেন্ট (১০)	১০টি	৬০ (ষাট)টি
		২. এমএসসি ইন কমিউনিটি হেলথ নার্সিং (১০২)	১০টি	
		৩. এমএসসি ইন চাইট হেলথ নার্সিং (১০৩)	১০টি	
		৪. এমএসসি ইন একাল্ট এন্ড এক্সালি হেলথ নার্সিং (১০৪)	১০টি	
		৫. এমএসসি ইন মেন্টাল হেলথ এন্ড সাইকিয়াটিক নার্সিং (১০৫)	১০টি	
		৬. এমএসসি ইন ওমেন হেলথ এন্ড মিডিওয়াইকারি (১০৬)	১০টি	
০২	কলেজ অব নার্সিং, শেরেবাংলা নগর, ঢাকা	১. এমএসসি ইন একাল্ট এন্ড এক্সালি হেলথ নার্সিং (১০৭)	১০টি	২০ (বিশ) টি
		২. এমএসসি ইন কমিউনিটি হেলথ নার্সিং (১০৮)	১০টি	
সর্বমোট আসন সংখ্যা: ৮০ টি				

#### ০১। স্বাস্থ্য ও পরিবার কোর্সে ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি:

- আবেদনকারীকে বাংলাদেশেৰ স্বাস্থ্য নাগরিক হতে হবে। আবেদনকারীকে কেৱল স্বাস্থ্য বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় অথবা বাংলাদেশ নার্সিং ও মিডিওয়াইকারি কাউন্সিল কৰ্তৃক নির্বাচিত নার্সিং শিক্ষা প্রতিষ্ঠান হতে ০২ বছৰ মেয়াদি ব্যাচেলোৰ অব সালেস ইন পোস্ট মেসিন নার্সিং/ ব্যাচেলোৰ অব সালেস ইন নার্সিং ডিপ্রি থাকতে হবে।
- এ বিজ্ঞপ্তি প্রকাশেৰ তাৰিখে আবেদনকারীৰ সৰ্বোচ্চ বয়সসীমা ৪৫ বছৰ হতে হবে।
- এমএসসি ইন নার্সিং কোর্সে স্বৰ্ণকৃত বিদ্যারিত তথ্য স্বাস্থ্য শিক্ষা ও পরিবার কল্যাণ বিভাগৰ ওয়েবসাইট [www.mefwd.gov.bd](http://www.mefwd.gov.bd) এবং স্বাস্থ্য ও মিডিওয়াইকারি অধিদপ্তরৰ ওয়েবসাইট [www.dgnm.gov.bd](http://www.dgnm.gov.bd) এৰ মাধ্যমে জানা যাবে।
- প্রার্থীদেৰ বাংলাদেশ নার্সিং ও মিডিওয়াইকারি কাউন্সিল এৰ নার্সিং রেজিস্ট্রেশন হালনাগাদ নথায়ন থাকতে হাকতে।
- সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানে কৰ্মসূল প্রার্থীদেৰ ক্ষেত্ৰে উক্ত ভর্তি বিজ্ঞপ্তি আবেদনৰ মাধ্যমে জন্য কৰতে হবে।
- সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানেৰ জন্য যথাযথ কৃত্ত্বপূৰ্ণ মাধ্যমে আবেদন কৰতে হবে এবং অভিজ্ঞতাৰ স্বপ্নক্ষে স্বাস্থ্য কৃত্ত্বপূৰ্ণ নিকট হতে প্রত্যুহ ন পৰি।
- এমএসএন কোর্সে অধ্যয়নকালীন কোন বেসরকারি প্রার্থী সরকারি চাকুৱিতে যোগদান কৰলে উক্ত প্রার্থীৰ কোৱাস স্বয়ংক্রিয়তাৰ বাবে বালি কৰতে হবে।
- সরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানেৰ জন্য যথাযথ কৃত্ত্বপূৰ্ণ মাধ্যমে আবেদন কৰতে হবে এবং অভিজ্ঞতাৰ স্বপ্নক্ষে চাকুৱিতে যোগদান কৰলে উক্ত প্রার্থীৰ কোৱাস স্বয়ংক্রিয়তাৰ বাবে বালি কৰতে হবে।
- নথি কোন সরকারি প্রার্থী তথ্য পোপন কৰে বেসরকারিভাবে আবেদন কৰে এবং তা প্রমাণিত হৈলে তাৰ বিৰুদ্ধে প্রশাসনিক ব্যবস্থা প্রহণ কৰা হবে।
- বেসরকারি প্রার্থীদেৰ ক্ষেত্ৰে রেজিস্ট্রেশন নার্স হিসাবে ০২ (দুই) বছৰে ইন প্রিমিয়াম প্রার্থী হৈলে কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানে আবেদন কৰতে হবে।
- অগ্রণী প্রার্থীগণ [www.dgnmmsc.teletalk.com.bd](http://www.dgnmmsc.teletalk.com.bd) ওয়েবসাইটে আবেদনপত্র পূরণ কৰতে পারবেন।

#### ০৩। অনলাইন আবেদন, প্রবেশপত্র ভাউনলোড ও প্রক্রিয়া সময়সীমা নির্দেশন:

অনলাইন (Online) আবেদন (Application) শুরু তাৰিখ:	১৭-০২-২০২৫ খ্রি: (সেৱাৰাৰ, সকাল-১০.০০ ঘটকা হতে)
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