

127TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM

Nazrul: Rebellion, Revolution, Relevance



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AZFAR HUSSAIN

Kazi Nazrul Islam (1899-1976)—one of the greatest Bangla language poets and one of the most formidable revolutionary poets in “world literature”—may well be characterised by inaugurations in more senses than one. His twofold rebellion—literary and political—was spectacularly staged through a series of epoch-making ruptures. Indeed, with his iconic and incomparably insurrectionary poem “Bidrohi” (“The Rebel”), Nazrul inaugurated an entirely new mode of poetic expression in the history of Bangla literature. Electrically charged with revolutionary energy, “Bidrohi” was unprecedented not only in its thematic audacity and political imagination, but also in its stylistic exuberance, rhetorical *éclat* and *élan*, and even mind-boggling metrical experimentation. Nazrul seemed almost instinctively to take to heart—despite having had no familiarity with it in his own time—Karl Marx’s injunction, relatively recently discovered: “[...] rub your conceptual blocs together in such a way that they catch fire!” “Bidrohi” is a poem animated by the fierce dance of the dialectic—a poem at once of negation and affirmation—and thus a momentous, unparalleled gift to the Bangla language.

Now, “Bidrohi” did not merely announce the arrival of a new poet; it announced the arrival of a new poetic consciousness—one profoundly and productively informed, inspired, and inflected by the great trinity of modern revolutions: the Turkish Revolution (1919-1923), the Irish Revolution (1912-1923)

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and, above all, the great October (Russian) Revolution of 1917. In my 2022 book *Path: Shobdo o Noishobder Rajneeti* (Readings: The Politics of Sound and Silence), I wrote something to this effect: had Che Guevara—that legendary Argentine-Cuban



VISUAL: ANWAR SOHEL

revolutionary who himself wrote poetry in both words and blood—known our Kazi Nazrul Islam, Che would have carried not only the verses of the great Latin-American communist poet Pablo Neruda in his pocket, as he famously did, but also Nazrul’s trailblazing poem “Bidrohi” (“The Rebel”), the very poem that earned him the moniker of “the Rebel Poet.”

But, over the years, I have argued in my writings—both in Bangla and in English—on Nazrul that he was far more than a “rebel poet”; that, indeed, by virtue of his own declarations, ideological commitments, and historical praxis, he was fundamentally a revolutionary poet. I would now go even further: Nazrul stands out as the first revolutionary poet—in the fullest historical, political, cultural, and aesthetic senses of the term—in the entire history of Bangla literature. He was also the first major Bangla poet to emerge from the rural proletariat, a fact of enormous historical, cultural, and political significance for understanding both the social grounding and the insurgent energies of his literary imagination.

And indeed, his was a revolutionary, anti-Eurocentric modernism—exemplified in his relatively under-engaged essay on so-called “world literature”—which is fundamentally distinct from the derivative, aestheticist modernism of the 1930s associated with figures such as Buddhadeva Bose, Sudhindranath Dutta, Amiya Chakravarty, and Bishnu Dey. Nazrul’s modernism was neither imitative of European literary

fashions nor confined to rarefied aesthetic preoccupations; rather, it was insurgent, anti-colonial, internationalist, and dialectically responsive to the historical contradictions of colonial modernity itself.

And it was Kazi Nazrul who, for the first time, introduced the *ghazal* form into Bangla poetry. And it was he who became the first Bangla poet to experiment with Arabic and Persian metres such as *Motakarib*, *Motdariq*, *Hajaz*, *Rajaz*, and *Mashaquel*, thereby inaugurating a new and exciting chapter in the history of Bangla metrical innovations. And it was he who became the first Bangla poet to write *ghazals* in Urdu and *bhajans* in Hindi, attesting to his unprecedented poetic multilingualism (in addition to his native Bangla, Nazrul knew at least six languages: English, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Hindi, and Sanskrit). And it was he who most successfully and creatively foregrounded a politically significant and aesthetically stimulating *mélange* of elements drawn from both Hinduism and Islam, thereby blasting open the historical continuum of the dialectic between colonialism and

communalism in so-called British India. And it was Kazi Nazrul who, for the first time, publicly demanded the full independence of India from British colonial rule in the pages of his revolutionary magazine *Dhumketu*. This list is by no means exhaustive. But Nazrul’s inaugural ruptures do not stand as isolated singularities. They are matched by the staggering range of his pursuits and preoccupations—a range

rivalled only by that of Rabindranath Tagore in the history of Bangla literature. Even Nazrul’s nicknames suggest a kind of restless multiplicity: in his village, he came to be known as Dukhu Mia (because he grew up amid acute poverty), Najar Ali (because of his striking physical appearance), Nuru (an elliptical form of “Nazrul”), and Tara Khyapa (because of his fiercely passionate and restless temperament). A poet and musician first and foremost, Nazrul was also a short-story writer, novelist, playwright, essayist, theorist, translator, editor, journalist, filmmaker, actor, and even a drummer and a dancer. Further, Nazrul was a political activist, revolutionary organiser and even, to boot, a founder of a political party.

I cannot possibly do justice to the range, rigour, and richness of Kazi Nazrul Islam’s entire *oeuvre* in a short piece like this. Yet, the pressing question remains: where does Nazrul’s relevance lie today? The three foundational principles proclaimed during Bangladesh’s 1971 Liberation War—*equality*, *human dignity*, and *social justice*—remain, tragically, far from realised in the country

even now. The July uprising of 2024 embraced those emancipatory ideals with remarkable fervour, but its aftermath has unfolded as a series of political disasters, to say the least. And yet, these very principles had already occupied a central place in Nazrul’s literary and political imagination decades earlier. Indeed, his commitment to the revolutionary politics of equality and to the dignity of the oppressed, as well as to social justice, found powerful expression in two of his landmark poetry collections: *Samyabadi* (“The Communist”), published in 1925, and *Sarbahara* (“The Proletariat”), published the following year.

Globally, Kazi Nazrul Islam anticipated, in striking ways, the Caribbean revolutionary theorist-activist Frantz Fanon’s theorisation of colonialism’s “perverted logic”—a logic that has by no means reached the end of its history. Long before the leading African writer-activist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o’s famous call for “decolonising the mind,” Nazrul warned against what he himself called “*moner golami*”—“mental slavery.” And then came his ringing call: “Rise, ye unconscious! Know yourself” (translation is mine). Indeed, Nazrul’s work foregrounds four intertwined sites of anti-colonial—and broadly emancipatory—struggle: *land*, *labour*, *language*, and *the body*, inclusive of the mind itself.

Thus, Nazrul passionately confronted communalism and racism, linking them structurally to colonialism, while also articulating a radical ecological consciousness far ahead of his time. As early as 1920, he warned against humanity’s war on nature. In his remarkably prescient piece “*Roj Keyamat*” (“The Day of Doom”), he exposed the environmental devastation wrought by coal projects, uncannily prefiguring what Naomi Klein today calls “disaster capitalism.” Throughout his nonfiction, Nazrul relentlessly identified and opposed the interconnected systems of capitalism, colonialism, racism, and patriarchy in pursuit of nothing short of total human emancipation. His writings also address cultural reclamation, non-hierarchical leadership, resistance to all forms of oppression, education, the politics of everyday life, and even the contested terrain of world literature itself.

Ironically enough, he is celebrated as the “national poet,” even as Bangladesh’s patriarchal, right-wing, reactionary ruling classes have historically come to stand for nearly everything Nazrul remained opposed to throughout his life and work. And, of course, there remains a profound difference between the actual content of Nazrul’s writings and the routine, stereotypical, fetishised, commodified, and institutionalised celebrations of Kazi Nazrul Islam. Indeed, had the Bangladeshi middle class taken Nazrul’s work seriously, Bangladesh might well have witnessed by now a genuine social revolution—a possibility continually deferred by a class that, by and large, keeps rolling back the wheel of history.



Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Police
Dhaka Metropolitan Police Headquarters
36, Shahid Captain Mansur Ali Sarani, Ramna, Dhaka-1000
www.dmp.gov.bd

Invitation for Open Tender

Sealed tender are hereby invited from the Manufacturers/ Contractors/ Suppliers in their official pad for 2026-2027 Financial year to purchase Outsourcing Manpower of Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

01.	Ministry/Division	Ministry of Home Affairs				
02.	Agency	Bangladesh Police.				
03.	Procuring Entity Name	Dhaka Metropolitan Police.				
04.	Procuring Entity District	Dhaka.				
05.	Invitation for	Outsourcing (Manpower Supply)				
06.	Invitation Ref No	01 (2026-2027)				
07.	Date	24-05-2026				
KEY INFORMATION						
08.	Procurement Method	Open Tendering Method (OTM)				
FUNDING INFORMATION						
09.	Budget and Source of Funds	GOB Revenue.				
PARTICULAR INFORMATION						
10.	Name of Work	Manpower Supply (Outsourcing)				
11.	Pre-Tender Meeting	Date: 04-06-2025, Time: 11.30 AM, Place: DC (Headquarters & Admin) Office-36, Shahid Captain Mansur Ali Sarani, Ramna, Dhaka-1000.				
12.	Tender Last Selling Date	14-06-2026				
13.	Tender Closing Date and Time	15-06-2026 12.00 PM (within).				
14.	Tender Opening Date and Time	15-06-2026 12.30 PM.				
15.	Name & Address of the Office(s)	Selling Tender Document (Principal) Deputy Police Commissioner (Headquarters & Admin), Dhaka Metropolitan Police, 36, Shahid Captain Mansur Ali Sarani, Ramna, Dhaka-1000. Selling Tender Document (Others) 01) Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner (Logistics), Rajarbagh Police Lines, Dhaka. 02) Office of the SP (Admin & Telecom), Rajarbagh, Dhaka. Receiving Tender Document 01) Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner (Headquarters & Admin), Dhaka Metropolitan Police, 36, Shahid Captain Mansur Ali Sarani, Ramna, Dhaka-1000. 2) Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner (Logistics), Rajarbagh Police Lines, Dhaka. 3) Office of the SP (Admin & Telecom), Rajarbagh, Dhaka. Opening Tender Document Office of the Deputy Police Commissioner (Headquarters & Admin), Dhaka Metropolitan Police, 1 st floor Conference room No-219, 36, Shahid Captain Mansur Ali Soroni, Ramna, Dhaka-1000.				
INFORMATION FOR TENDER						
17.	Eligibility of Tender	(a) Renewed & upto date trade Licence of City Corporation/Municipal/UP (b) Renewed Incom Tax Certificate (c) Up to date VAT registration Certificate (d) Bank Solvency Certificate (e) Bank Statement Certificate. (f) 80% Liquid Asset of total price according to Form-6 of PSN-5 (g) National ID Card with one copy PP size color Photograph. (h) Two years for specific & Three years for overall Experience Certificate.				
18.	Brief Description of Goods or Works	Shown at Tender Document.				
19.	Lot/Item	Identification of Lot/Item	Location	Tender Document Price	Tender security	Tender Completion Time
	a	Manpower Supply (Outsourcing)	DMP	2000/-	8,00,000/-	120 Days
PROCURING ENTITY DETAILS						
	Designation of Official Inviting Tender	Deputy Police Commissioner.				
20.	Address of Official Inviting Tender	Deputy Police Commissioner (Headquarters & Admin), Dhaka Metropolitan Police, 36, Shahid Captain Mansur Ali Sarani, Ramna, Dhaka-1000.				
The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject all tenders.						
Signed/- Deputy Police Commissioner (Headquarters & Admin) Dhaka Metropolitan Police.						

GD-1212

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Memo No.44.01.0000.977.01.078/2025/3083

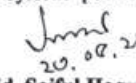
Dated:23/05/2026

e-Tender Notice

E-Tender is invited through the National E-GP portal (www.eprocure.gov.bd) for the procurement of:

Sl. No.	Tender ID	Description	Type, Method	Online notice tender Publish date and time	Online tender Closing date and time
1.	1281326	Procurement of Packaged Other Stationery(Code No-3255105) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
2.	1281491	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of office equipment (code-4112310) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
3.	1281527	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of Sanitation Materials (Code No-3252108) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
4.	1281535	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of Other Machinery and equipment (code-4112316) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
5.	1281558	Procurement of packaged Purchase of Furniture (Code No-4112314) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
6.	1281897	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of Computer Items (Code No-3255101) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
7.	1281928	Procurement of Packaged Cleaning Products (Code No-3211102) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
8.	1282018	Procurement of Packaged Cultural equipment's Products (Code No-4112317) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
9.	1282035	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of Vehicle raw materials and spare parts (Code-3256105) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
10.	1282134	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of Vehicle repair work (Code-3258101) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
11.	1282234	Procurement of Packaged Purchase of Vehicle Rental (Code no-3211107) for the financial Year 2026-2027 at Railway Police HQ, Dhaka.	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00
12.	1281551	Supply of 01(One) Service Personnel of Cleaner (Categorie-5) for Railway Police HQ, Dhaka on a Completely Temporary Basis through Outsourcing Method (FY 2026-2027).	NCT, OTM	24-May-2026 10:00:00	15-Jun-2026 12:00:00

This is an online tender where only e-tender will be accepted through national E-GP portal. No hard copy will be accepted. The fees for downloading the e-tender documents from the national e-GP portal have to be deposited through any registered branch of enlisted banks. Further information and guidelines are available on the national e-GP system portal and e-GP helpdesk (helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd).



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GD-1217