Celebrating HUMAYUN AHMED and his incomparable talent



PHOTO: STAR

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Humayun Ahmed was more than a celebrated novelist, playwright and filmmaker. He was a storyteller who created characters, dialogues and fictional worlds that gradually became part of Bangladesh's collective imagination.

From novels such as ***Nondito Noroke*** and ***Shonkhonil Karagar*** to television dramas that brought the country to a standstill, his creative journey left an extraordinary mark on Bangladeshi literature and entertainment. As a filmmaker, he also directed acclaimed works, including ***Aguner Poroshmoni***, drawing inspiration from the country's Liberation War.

On his birth anniversary today, his remarkable body of work offers a reminder of a legacy that continues to resonate with generations of readers and audiences.

A literary journey that began with 'Nondito Noroke'

Humayun Ahmed introduced himself to readers with his debut novel, ***Nondito Noroke***, published by Khan Brothers in April 1972, on the occasion of Pahela Baishakh. Centring on the lives of a lower-middle-class family, the novel struck an immediate chord with readers. His second novel, ***Shonkhonil Karagar***, published in 1973, further established his place in the literary world.

Over five decades later, both books continue to enjoy immense popularity, reflecting the enduring appeal of his storytelling. His literary creations also gave readers iconic characters such as Himu, Misir Ali and Shuvro, each with a distinct personality and worldview.

When television became a national obsession

Humayun Ahmed's influence extended far beyond literature. His television dramas introduced a new dimension to storytelling, combining everyday experiences, humour, social realities and unforgettable characters.

Kothao Keu Nei remains one of his most iconic creations. The character of Baker *Bhai*, played by Asaduzzaman Noor, became so popular that audiences refused to accept his tragic fate. When Baker *Bhai* was sentenced to death, people took to the streets in protest, demanding that he be spared. During its broadcast, streets would often become deserted as audiences gathered around their television sets.

His other celebrated productions included ***Bohubrihi***, ***Ayomoy***, ***Ei Shob Din Ratri***, ***Nokkhotrer Raat*** and ***Aaj Robibar***.

Characters that outlived their stories

One of Humayun Ahmed's greatest strengths was his ability to create characters that audiences continued to identify with long after a drama ended.

Asaduzzaman Noor became synonymous with Baker *Bhai*, while Bipasha Hayat's portrayal of Lobongo in ***Ayomoy*** remains memorable. Sara Zaker's Elachi Begum was equally well received.

Similarly, Faruque Ahmed's Moti in ***Aaj Robibar***, Aly Zaker's *Borochacha* in the same drama and Farid *Mama* in ***Bohubrihi***, and Dolly Zahur's Nilu in ***Ei Shob Din Ratri*** became audience favourites. Mahfuz Ahmed also gained recognition through his portrayal of Moti in ***Kothao Keu Nei***. Abul Hayat, meanwhile, frequently brought his memorable stern and short-tempered characters to life in the writer's productions.

A filmmaker with a distinct vision

Humayun Ahmed's creative brilliance also found expression in cinema. His film ***Aguner Poroshmoni***, based on the Liberation War, received widespread critical acclaim and won numerous National Film Awards. Featuring Bipasha Hayat as Ratri, Asaduzzaman Noor as freedom fighter Badiul Alam and Abul Hayat as Matin Sahib, the film moved audiences with its deeply human portrayal of wartime experiences.

He went on to direct films such as ***Shyamol Chhaya***, ***Dui Duari***, ***Srabon Megher Din***, ***Amar Ache Jol***, ***Noy Nombor Bipod Shongket*** and ***Chandrokotha***. His final directorial venture, ***Ghetuputra Komola***, further demonstrated his distinctive approach to filmmaking.

A recipient of the Bangla Academy Award and the Independence Award, Humayun Ahmed left behind a body of work that continues to attract new generations of readers and viewers. His stories made people laugh, cry, question society and, above all, fall in love with fictional characters as though they were real.

Perhaps that is what makes him truly exceptional. Long after his passing, his characters continue to live among us, and his stories remain an inseparable part of Bangladesh's cultural memory.

Siam Ahmed and Nazifa Tushi to star in Shankha Dasgupta's new film

Shankha Dasgupta's ***Abar Dekha Hole*** is set for release this Eid ul Fitr, bringing Siam Ahmed and Nazifa Tushi together on screen for the first time.

The family drama also stars Chanchal Chowdhury, Deepa Khandakar, Azizul Hakim, Bijori Barkatullah and Rezwan Pervez.

Dasgupta said the story explores middle-class life, family relationships and everyday conflicts, balancing emotion with humour. It follows a journey of self-discovery, revisiting the past and reconnecting with lost moments.

Written by Md Saifullah Riad, the film is produced by Filmy Features and presented by Singer and Beko. Chorki joins as co-producer and digital partner, in association with MIB Studios.

It marks Dasgupta's second feature made for theatrical release, following ***Priyo Maloti***. His previous work includes ***Cha Gorom***.







EVENTS

'Bangladesh Natya Utsab 2026'

Marking four decades of stagecraft, Bangladesh Theatre gathers 12 leading troupes for a nine-day theatrical showcase. From historical dramas to contemporary adaptations, audiences can experience vibrant stage productions across two auditoriums, complemented by daily open-air music, dance, and recitation celebrating Dhaka's enduring dramatic heritage.

Date: Friday – Saturday | November 13 – 21
Time: 4:00pm (open-air performances), 6:30 pm (stage plays)
Venue: Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



NEWS

Govt eyes Tk 300cr plant to cut animal vaccine imports

FROM PAGE 12

vaccines, while demand for two more has emerged, taking the total requirement to 19, according to DLS documents.

Recent DLS data show that Bangladesh has around 46.5 crore livestock and poultry.

Md Shahzaman Khan, director general of the DLS, told The Daily Star that the government had taken the initiative to establish a modern animal vaccine plant in line with its election manifesto, which pledges to reduce dependence on imported vaccines through increased domestic production and public-private partnerships.

He pointed to the wide gap between national demand and local production of several vaccines.

Bangladesh's annual demand for foot-and-mouth disease vaccine is around 3.5 crore doses, against domestic production of just 20 lakh–26 lakh doses.

The gap is also significant for other vaccines: annual demand for Ranikhet disease vaccine is 24.36 crore doses, compared with local production of 8.7 crore; duck plague vaccine, 8.4 crore against 3.54 crore; fowl cholera vaccine, 22.4 crore against 1.6 crore; and anthrax vaccine, 1 crore against 80 lakh doses, Shahzaman said.

State Minister for Fisheries and Livestock Sultan Salauddin Tuku at a recent event said building domestic capacity for livestock vaccine production was crucial to achieving self-reliance.

Investment in research, innovation and trained scientists would help Bangladesh reduce import costs, respond more quickly to disease outbreaks, protect farmers' incomes and strengthen long-term food security, he said.

However, Prof Hafiza Khatun, head of the animal science department at Bangladesh Agricultural University, said that while the initiative was positive, greater priority should also be given to improving farm management, raising farmers' awareness and addressing the effects of climate change.

Proper management and biosecurity measures are essential to preventing disease outbreaks and improving productivity, she said.

Government investment should also focus more on direct support for farmers, nutritional supplements and other critical areas of livestock development, she added.

Democrat Colom wins Mississippi Senate seat

FROM PAGE 12

The Mississippi Senate race was one of the final races to be called after the elections. The contest was so tight that Colom at times led the vote count by only a few dozen votes.

The latest media-tabulated results showed him ahead by more than 4,500 votes, or 0.5 percentage point.

Colom, a 43-year-old district attorney, became the first Democrat to win a Mississippi Senate seat since John Stennis in 1982. He harnessed frustration over the cost of living with a breakout campaign ad in which voters ridiculed Hyde-Smith's suggestion that consumers could choose other "proteins" instead of paying rising beef prices.

Hyde-Smith, 67, who was appointed to the Senate in 2018 and won a special election later that year, had consistently led opinion polls in a state that Trump won by nearly 23 points in 2024. Trump campaigned in Mississippi for Hyde-Smith near the end of the race.

"While this is not the outcome we worked for or hoped for, I respect the decision of Mississippi voters. I want to congratulate Scott Colom and wish him well," Hyde-Smith said in a video posted on social media.

In the midterms, Republicans lost control of both chambers, leaving Trump facing a Democratic-controlled Congress for the first time in either of his two terms and presenting the opposition party with a chance to block highly partisan legislation and investigate Trump's administration.

The Mississippi victory gives the Democrats a 55-44 advantage in the 100-member Senate, with the winner in one Senate race from last week's election – in Alaska – yet to be determined. The Democrats have also gained 41 seats in the House of Representatives so far, holding an advantage of 254 to 168 with 13 races yet to be called.

In addition, Democrats won several high-profile federal and statewide races in states long dominated by Republicans, including Texas.

Mississippi's white voters, deep in the once-segregated South, turned the state solidly Republican with the political realignment that followed the civil rights movement of the 1960s. Many of the movement's defining battles took place in Mississippi, where Black people faced discrimination in voting, employment, education and public accommodations.

Nvidia CEO Huang steps down in big blow to AI boom

FROM PAGE 12

affair with a Chinese businesswoman who US authorities suspect of spying for Beijing.

Nvidia's board met on Wednesday to consider his ouster, a person familiar with the matter said, after reports earlier in the day that Huang also had an extramarital affair with a senior company executive who reported to him.

Huang's exit plunges the $4 trillion company into uncertainty and threatens to disrupt an AI ecosystem that he helped bankroll by pouring Nvidia's swelling cash pile back into cloud providers, suppliers and the industry's biggest labs.

"The risk is not that Nvidia suddenly loses its technology roadmap ... that roadmap is largely visible for the next several years. The risk is execution. Jensen has been the chief conductor of an extraordinarily complex system," said Michael Feldman, portfolio manager at ClearBridge Investments.

"In a world with real bottlenecks, that coordination is a competitive advantage in itself."

Investor sentiment toward AI stocks has already been shaky as soaring cash burn and rising debt at traditionally cash-rich tech giants fuel doubts over whether the AI boom will pay off.

The departure could also have far-reaching consequences for US chip export policy, given Huang's push to preserve access to the Chinese market and his close ties with US President Donald Trump.

Trump said on Sunday that Huang had "done an amazing job for our country" and that the Nvidia chief had told him he had no idea the Chinese woman he had an affair with was a spy.

Man gets death for killing judge's son

FROM PAGE 12

The judge, Abdur Rahman, then serving as a metropolitan sessions judge in Rajshahi, was at court during the attack.

Police took the victims to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared Tawsif dead. His mother was admitted with serious injuries.

Police later detained Limon.

The following day, Abdur Rahman filed a murder case against Limon with Rajpara Police Station.

During the trial, 29 witnesses, including Tawsif's parents, testified, said Public Prosecutor Ali Ashraf Masum.

Limon, son of HM Solaiman Hossain, hails from Modonerpara village in Gaibandha's Fulchhari upazila.

His father is the organisational secretary of the upazila BNP and a former union parishad member.

Limon joined the army after completing his higher secondary education at Gaibandha Government College but left the service in 2018. He later became involved in various businesses.

BNP leader shot dead inside Khulna shop

FROM PAGE 12

formed to reorganise the BNP's TSB Union unit. He was also involved in the sand business.

Mizanur Rahman Milton, convener of the media cell of Khulna Metropolitan BNP, confirmed his political affiliation.

According to a Khulna District Police press release, two helmet-clad men parked their motorcycle beside the shop. One of them entered the shop and shot Zakir in the head.

The assailants then fled on the motorcycle.

Locals took Zakir to Rupsha Upazila Health Complex, where he died while undergoing treatment.

Khulna Superintendent of Police Sarker Omar Faroque said efforts were underway to identify and arrest those involved in the killing and determine the motive behind it.

China, US discuss raising denuclearisation at Russia trilateral

AFP, *Washington*

Top Chinese and US diplomats raised the possibility that Presidents Xi Jinping and Donald Trump could discuss denuclearization during a potential trilateral leaders' meeting with Russia next week, according to the US State Department.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi spoke by phone ahead of the November 18-19 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conference in the Chinese tech hub of Shenzhen, both countries said.

Presidents Donald Trump, Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin could also hold a trilateral meeting on APEC's sidelines, after US, Chinese and Russian officials each said their countries were in discussions about such talks.

During their call, Rubio and Wang "agreed on the importance of meaningful leader-level conversations to advance goals such as peace and denuclearization, including at any potential trilateral leaders meeting with Russia," the US State Department said Wednesday on social media.

The call came at China's request, it added.

Trump has said he would like to discuss denuclearization with Xi and Putin, although Beijing has not confirmed nuclear arms control would feature on a trilateral agenda.

Washington earlier said it wanted China to be part of a nuclear arms control deal after a bilateral treaty with Moscow expired in February.

At the time Beijing declined to join disarmament negotiations, saying its nuclear capabilities were of a different scale to those of Russia and the US.

Wang told Rubio during their call that China was "willing to strengthen communication and cooperation with the US," according to a Chinese foreign ministry statement.

The two countries reached an agreement to calm trade tensions during last year's APEC summit in South Korea after they had exchanged tariff escalations earlier in 2025.

Beijing stands ready to "properly handle differences and sensitive issues" with Washington, Wang said, adding that "stability" in US-China ties had been "hard won."

Perform or step

FROM PAGE 12

Reminding them that both the prime minister's father and mother had served as heads of state and government, he said that politicians, in certain cases, do not present an accurate picture due to local feuds or internal grouping.

In such matters, the prime minister relies on the bureaucracy to provide the true picture, he said.

The trust reposed by the prime minister must be honoured through the proper discharge of their duties, Sattar said.

Political leaders hold the impression that the bureaucracy is failing to demonstrate efficiency and is not cooperating as required to implement government policies.

"Politicians do not believe we are working with dedication. I do not know who this applies to, but if it is true, it is better to step down from the responsibility. And if it is false, shatter that perception through the performance of your respective ministries," said one of the secretaries.

Another secretary reminded his colleagues that the head of government had entrusted them with state responsibilities in good faith and that they must work accordingly to implement the government's election manifesto.

"It is very easy to measure who is working and who is falling short," the official said, stressing that there is no scope to show inefficiency while heading a ministry or division.

If inefficiency is shown, outsiders will seize the opportunity to take over the responsibilities, and officials must therefore work with caution.

Another official said Ghani sought to energise attendees, alternating between soft and firm tones.

Sources said Ghani cautioned officials so that he would not have to show his tough side, adding that anyone who considered him weak would be mistaken.

Special emphasis was placed on the swift implementation of development projects during the meeting.

The slow pace of certain ministries, including the health ministry, was discussed, while others, including the education ministry, were noted to be performing well.

Regarding project execution, another secretary advised his counterparts to hold regular meetings with project directors, stressing the need to examine whether directors were incompetent or deliberately delaying implementation.

Ghani also urged that necessary documents for meetings of the cabinet and various cabinet committees be sent to the Cabinet Division at least two to three days in advance.

In many instances, papers on crucial procurement proposals are being placed directly at cabinet committee meetings, hampering the preparations required for decision-making.