

Culture of Bangladesh_1

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CSE

DU

Culture

- The arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively.
- The ideas, customs, and social behavior of a particular people or society.

Components Religion, the art and craft, the humanities, philosophy, intellectual activity, literature, music, painting, drama, cinema, sports, cuisine, festivals, superstitions etc.

বাংলাদেশের সংস্কৃতি

The **Culture of Bangladesh** refers to the way of life of the people of Bangladesh.

It has evolved over the centuries and encompasses the cultural diversity of several social groups of Bangladesh.

The Bengal Renaissance of the 19th and early 20th centuries, noted Bengali writers, saints, authors, scientists, researchers, thinkers, music composers, painters, and film-makers have played a significant role in the development of Bengali culture.

The culture of Bangladesh is composite and over the centuries has assimilated influences of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity.

It is manifested in various forms, including music, dance, and drama; art and craft; folklore and folktale; languages and literature; philosophy and religion; festivals and celebrations; as well as in a distinct cuisine and culinary tradition.

Bangladeshi Music

- The **music of Bangladesh** comprises a long tradition of religious and secular song-writing over a period of almost a millennium.
- Bengali music spans a wide variety of styles.
- In Bangladesh music has served the purpose of documenting the lives of the people and was widely patronized by the rulers.
- The music and dance styles of Bangladesh may be divided into three categories: **classical, folk, and modern.**

Classical Music

- Bangladeshi classical music is based on modes called *ragas*.
- Traditional Bengali music tend to be based on various variations of Hindustani Classical Music.
- Jaydev's Gitagovindam, Padavali Kirtan, Mangal Giti, Shyamasangit, Tappa, Brahma Sangeet etc have been inspired by Ragas.
- The use of north Indian ragas in Bangla songs began in 18th century.
- Nawab of Lakhnau, Wajid Ali Shah played an important role in this trend.
- He patronized music, specially dhrupad, tappa, thumri and kheyal. And, thus made a lasting impact on Bangladeshi music.
- Rabindranath Tagore had a deep appreciation for north Indian ragas and very successfully introduced in his songs.

Folk songs

- Folk has come to occupy the lives of Bangladeshis almost more than any other genre of Bengali music.
- Among the luminaries of the different folk traditions are Lalon Fokir, Radharaman Dutta, Hason Raja, Khursheed Nurali (Sheerazi), Ramesh Shil, Kari Amir Uddin Ahmed, Abbas Uddin, Baul Abdul Karim.
- Folk songs are characterized by simple musical structure and words. Before the advent of radio, entertainment in the rural areas relied on a large extent on stage performances by folk singers.
- With the arrival of new communication technologies and digital media, many folk songs were modernized and incorporated into *modern songs*.

Folk Music

Folk music can be classified into several subgenres:

Baul: Almost exclusively performed by hermits, mainly inspired by Lalon

Fokir. Lalon geeti is best known of all folk songs and the most important subgenre of Baul songs, entirely attributed to spiritual writer and composer, Lalon Fokir of Kushtia. He is known to all in West Bengal too.

Baul Shah Abdul Karim (Baul Samrat) is also very popular.

Bhandari: devotional music from the South (mainly Chittagong).

Bhatiali: music of fishermen and boatman, almost always tied by a common *raga* (mode), sung solo.

Bhawaiya: song of bullock-cart drivers of the North (Rangpur).

Jhumur: traditional dance song form Bangladesh and West Bengal.

Folk Music

- [Hason Raja](#): devotional songs written by a music composer by the name of Hason Raja from Sylhet.
- [Jari](#): songs involving musical battle between two groups
- [Jatra](#) Pala: songs associated exclusively with plays (performed on-stage). Usually involves colourful presentations of historical themes.
- [Kavigan](#): poems sung with simple music usually presented on stage as a musical battle between poets.
- [Dhamail](#): a form of folk music and dance originated in Sylhet, Bangladesh. It is also practiced in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura in India.
- [Kirtan](#): devotional song depicting love to Hindu God Krishna and his lover, Radha.

Folk Music

- [Gombhira](#): song (originating in Chapai Nawabganj) performed with a particular distinctive rhythm and dance with two performers, always personifying a man and his grand father, discussing a topic to raise social awareness.
- [Pala Gaan](#): folk ballad also known as Pat.
- [Sari](#): sung especially by boatmen. It is often known as workmen's song as well.
- [Shyama Sangeet](#): a genre of Bengali devotional songs dedicated to the Hindu goddess Shyama or Kali.
- [Gazir Gaan](#): devotional songs dedicated to [Gazi Pir](#), who is part of Pach Pir tradition of folk practice and belief.

Religious Music

- A **hamd** ([Arabic](#): حمد), ("Praise" in English, is an Arabic word referring to the exclusive praise of God Alone
- **Na'at** ([Urdu](#): نعت) (refers to poetry in **praise** of the Islamic **prophet Muhammad**. The practice is popular in South Asia (Bangladesh, Pakistan and India), commonly in **Pashto, Bengali, Urdu or Punjabi** language.

Traditional Music: Pancho Kabir gaan

- **Dwijendralal Ray** (দ্বিজেন্দ্রলাল রায়; 19 July 1863 – 17 May 1913), also known as **D. L. Ray**, was a Bengali poet, playwright, and musician.
- He created a separate subgenre of Bengali music (500 songs).
- Two of his most famous compositions are *Dhana Dhanya Pushpa Bhara* and *Banga Amar Janani Amar*.
- He is regarded as one of the most important figures in early modern Bengali literature.

Pancho Kabi

- **Atul Prasad Sen** (**অতুল প্রসাদ সেন** ,20 October 1871 – 26 August 1934) was a noted Bengali composer, lyricist and singer, and also a successful **lawyer, philanthropist**, social worker, educationist and littérateur.
- Though he is principally remembered as a musician, lyricist and composer of Bengali songs, his fame as a **barrister**, his contributions to Nationalist Movements in India, and his social works all made him a leading figure in the history of pre-independence India and Indian Renaissance.

Pancho Kabi

- **Sen, Rajanikanta (1865-1910)** poet, lyricist and singer, was born in the village of Bhangabari in pabna.
- Rajanikanta was influenced by Rabindranath Tagore, but his songs have some unique characteristics as well.
- Most of them are inspired by his devotion to God. In addition, his patriotism forms another important theme of his songs.

Pancho Kabi

- ***Rabindra Sangeet*** , also known as **Tagore Songs**, are songs written and composed by Rabindranath Tagore (two thousand songs).
- They have distinctive characteristics in the music of Bengal, popular in India and Bangladesh.
- He is the first Nobel Laureate of India (1913)
- The national Anthems of Bangladesh and India are written by him.

Pancho Kabi

- **Nazrul Geeti or Nazrul Sangeet** (nearly 4,000 songs) are songs written and composed by Kazi Nazrul Islam.
- He is the national poet of Bangladesh and active revolutionary during the Indian Independence Movement.
- Nazrul Sangeet incorporate revolutionary notions as well as more spiritual, philosophical and romantic themes.

Patriotic songs

Most of the Bangladeshi patriotic songs were written during 1971 Independence War, to inspire the freedom fighters.

Special song:

“Amar Vaier Rokte Rangano” - written by Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury and composed by Altaf Mahmud during 1952 Language Movements.

Modern music and western influence

- Modernisation of Bengali music occurred at different times and, for the most part, independent of western influence. Most notable of these changes were:
 - **Film music**
- The film industry of Bangladesh supported music by according reverence to classical music while utilizing the western orchestration to support melodies.
- There are **many popular composers and singers in Bangladesh.**

Rock music

- Bangladeshi rock was introduced in 1972 by singer, songwriter, music composer Nasir Ahmed Apu of Spondan band, pioneer of Bengali pop/rock and re-invented Bengali folk music in Bangladesh.
- Spondan was founded in Dhaka in 1972. Spondan's " Emom Ekta Ma Deana ", " Sritiro Shai pote ajo " songs are all time hit.
- Uccharon was formed in 1973 and their first released album was " Ore Saleka, and High court er Majhare " vocal by Azam Khan in 1973.
- Subsequently other contributory bands are [Souls](#), [Miles](#), [Nagar Baul](#), [Warfaze](#), [RockStrata](#), [LRB](#) and [Ark](#).

Fusion

Fusion, traditional music with Western instrumentation to revitalize and re-popularize Bengali music. Joler Gaan and Lampost are one of the best popular Fusion bands in Bangladesh. A new growing genre of Bangladesh music is contemporary urban music.

Musical Instruments

Common instruments are:

Sitar

Violin

Flutes

Harmonium

Esraj (a traditional Bengali instrument)

Ektara ("one-string")

Dotara ("two-strings")

Khomok

Dhak

Dhol

Guitar

Tabla

Tanpura



Sitar
Developed in 7th century



Violin
Developed in 16th century



Flute

The pump organ, reed organ, or harmonium,





[Ektara](#) ("one-string")

[Dotara](#) ("two-strings")





Dhak
Dhol
Guitar





Khamak

Tabla





Esraj



Tanpura

Bangladeshi Dance

There are many forms of dance in Bangladesh, but the main style are classical and folk dance (also known as Bangladeshi regional dance).

Classical Dance

- **Classical Dance** in the South-Asian context refers primarily to *Kathak*, *Bharatnatyam*, *Kathakali*, *Odissi* and *Manipuri* dances.
- These are traditional dances and associated with particular styles received from different regional schools.
- For example, *Kathak* is associated with northern India, *Bharatnatyam* and *Kathakali* with southern India, and *Odissi* and *Manipuri* with eastern India.
- However, most dances are performed all over India and Bangladesh.
- Unlike other Indian provinces, Bengal had no particular dance styles of its own.



Bharatnatyam dance



Kathak dance



Manipuri dance



Odissi dance

Kathakali dance



Gaudiya Nritya (গৌড়ীয় নৃত্য)

- Gaudiya Nritya, is a Bengali dance tradition.
- It originates from **m Gauda**, also known as **Gaur**, in Bengal.
- It is not recognised as an Indian classical dance by the Sangeet Natak Akademi, but study of it is eligible for **scholarships from the Ministry of Culture of India.**



Folk Dance

- Folk dance differs from classical dance and is arguably more entertaining.
- Classical dances are more complex and need many practise sessions to master, whereas folk dances are more natural.
- They allow a level of freedom and expression through improvised and energetic dance moves.
- They are passed down from one generation to another and take a number of influences.
- Some incorporate martial arts while others are inspired by cultural myths and legends.

Folk Dance

- Singing is an essential part of these Bangladeshi dances and brings the community together.
- Each folk dance has unique and unmistakable characteristics, and are either performed as a group or by an individual.
- Dak, Dhali, Lathi, Khemta, Mask, Saotal, Puppet etc are popular dance forms.
- In addition to these traditional forms, there are modern folk dances which depict the Bangladeshi identity by portraying the lives of farmers and fishermen as well the role of ordinary people and freedom fighters during the liberation war.

Folk Dances



Puppet dance



Lathi dance

Chhokra, Ghatu : Bengali Folk Dances

- **Chhokra Dance:** The dance, which literally translates to ‘dances by young boys’, features youths playing the roles of women.
- Performances are usually held late at night because elements of the song and dance are quite crude.
- **Ghatu dance** form is similar to the *Chhokra* style as it features young men performing whilst dressed as young women.
- The *Ghatu* can be quite adult-themed, so it commonly takes place at night in front of older audiences and can go on for hours.
- *Ghatu* dance performances would take place in secluded areas away from populated areas. But, it is performed on modern stages in the districts of Kishoreganj and Netrokona.

Ghatu : Bengali Folk Dance



Festivals of Bangladesh

Islamic Festible

- **Eid ul-Fitr** - on the 1st day of Shawwal month of the lunar Islamic calendar.
- **Eid ul-Adha** - on the 10th day of Dhu al-Hijjah month of the Islamic calendar.
- **Chaand Raat** - on the 29th or 30th night of Ramadan month .
- **Ashura** - on the 10th day of Muharram in the Islamic calendar.
- **Eid-e-Meeladun Nabi** – Sunni Muslims observe the Prophet Muhammed's birthday on the 12th day of Rabi' al-awwal, while Shi'a Muslims mark it on the 17th .
- **Shab-e-Qadr**
- **Shab-e-Baraat**

Festivals of Bangladesh

Bishwa Ijtema

- The **Bishwa Ijtema** (Global Congregation) is an annual gathering of Muslims in Tongi, by the banks of the **River Turag**.
- It is now the largest Islamic congregation at 5 Million.
- It is one of the largest peaceful gatherings in the world.
- The Ijtema is a prayer meeting spread over three days, during which attending devotees perform daily prayers while listening to scholars reciting and explaining verses from the Quran.
- The Ijtema is non-political and therefore it draws people of all persuasion.
- It is attended by devotees from 150 countries.
- Speakers include Islamic scholars from various countries.

Festivals of Bangladesh

Hindu Festibles

- **Durga Puja** – In Ashwin and Kartik month
- **Krishna Janmashtami** - celebration of the birth of the Hindu deity Krishna
- **Dolyatra** : In Falgun month
- **Rathayatra**: the most popular being Dhamrai Rathayatra.
- **Kali Puja**
- **Saraswati Puja**
- **Lakhkhi puja**



Festivals of Bangladesh

Buddhist

- **Buddha Purnima** – Birth, enlightenment and death of Buddha, on **Baisakhi** purnima.
- **Madhu Purnima**: on the day of the full moon in the month of Bhadro
- **Kathin Chibar dan** - offering of woven robe made of cotton to monks and nuns. In November.

Christian

- **Baro Din or Christmas** – Birth of Jesus Christ, on 25 December.
- **Easter Sunday**: the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, in April

Festivals of Bangladesh

Patriotic and National Observances

- **Language Movement Day** (International Mother Language Day):
21st February
- **Genocide Remembrance Day**: 25th March
- **Independence Day**: 26th March
- **Armed Forces Day**: 21 November
- **Martyred Intellectuals Day**: 14th December
- **Victory Day** : 16th December

Cultural festivals



Folk

- **Nababarsha** - on the 1st day of the Bengali calendar, 1st Baishakh
- **Basanta Utsab** - Spring festival; 1st Falgun
- **Nabanno** - Winter and harvest festival; 1st day of Agrahayan
- **Barsha Mangal** - Monsoon festival; 1st Ashar

Pohela Baishakh

- During the Mughal rule, land taxes were collected from Bengali people according to the Islamic Hijri calendar.
- This calendar was a lunar calendar, and its new year did not coincide with the solar agricultural cycles.
- According to some sources, the festival was introduced in Bengal during the rule of Mughal Emperor Akbar to time the tax year to the harvest, and the Bangla year was therewith called *Bangabda*.
- Akbar asked the royal astronomer to create a new calendar by combining the lunar Islamic calendar and solar Hindu calendar already in use, and this was known as *Fasholi shan* (harvest calendar)

Pohela Baishakh

- The new year festival in eastern and northern states of India is linked to Hindu Vikrami calendar.
- This calendar is named after king [Vikramaditya](#) and starts in 57 BCE.
- In rural Bengali communities of India, the Bengali calendar is credited to "Bikromaditto", like many other parts of India and Nepal.



Baishakhi melas are organized
in the whole country

Special dish: panta ilish

Pohela Baishakh

- **Mangal Shobhajatra** (মঙ্গল শোভাযাত্রা) is a mass procession that takes place at dawn on pohela baishakh in Bangladesh. The procession is organised by the Faculty of Fine Arts of DU.
- The festival is considered an expression of the secular identity of the Bangladeshi people and as a way to promote unity.
- In 2016, the UNESCO declared this festivity organized by the Dhaka University as a cultural heritage of humanity.



Cultural festivals

Dhaka World Music Festival	
Dates	February
Location(s)	Dhaka
Years active	2011-present
Founded	2011

Music

- **Dhaka World** Music Festival
- **Bengal-ITC SRA** Classical Music Festival

The **Bengal-ITC SRA Classical Music Festival** is a major South Asian classical music festival held in Dhaka. It is one of the world's largest music festivals devoted to **South Asian classical music** and draws leading musicians from India and Bangladesh.

Cultural festivals

General

- **Rokeya Day** : 9th December
- **Rabindra Jayanti** : 25th Baishakh, (death: 22nd Sravan)
- **Nazrul Jayanti** : 11th Jaisto, (death: 29th August)

Others

- **Dhaka Art Summit**: held in Dhaka (April- February) and is organized by Samdani Art Foundation, a non- profit art infrastructure development organisation in 2011.
- The summit displays artworks such as paintings, photography, sculptures, installations, digital art, video art, etc.

Cultural festivals

- **Hay Festival Dhaka** : Dhaka **Lit Fest** (Dhaka Literary Festival or DLF) is an international literary festival held in Dhaka in December. Its sessions spread over three days are primarily in English and Bengali with speakers and contributors from all around the world.
- **Dhaka Fashion Week** : started from 2008
- **Dhaka International Film Festival** : (DIFF) is a biennial film festival held in Dhaka. Established in 1992
- **Chobi Mela International Photography Festival** : Chobi Mela is a biennial international festival of photography held in Dhaka. It is the largest festival of photography held in Asia. It generally takes place at the end of January.

Cultural festivals

Fairs

- **Ekushey Book Fair** - in Dhaka on the month of February at Bangla academy premise.
- **Dhaka International Trade Fair**: Organized at Sher-E-Bangla Nagar (upto 2021), Bangabandhu Bangladesh–China Friendship Exhibition Center, Purbachal (From 1 January 2022) during January 01 - 31. It will be jointy organized by Export Promotion Bureau and the Ministry of Commerce, GoB.
- **National Tree Fare** - Month-long National Tree Plantation Campaign and Tree Fair in Agargaon



Cultural festivals



Shakrain kite festival, Dhaka

Local events

- **Shakrain** - in Dhaka at the end of the Poush month. It is kite festival
- **Jatiya Pitha Utsab** – Organized by Shilpokala Academy in winter.
- **Joy Bangla Concert** - Annual concert to mark the 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu .
- **Poush mela**
- **Baishakhi mela**
- **Bishu mela**

Cultural festivals

Baisabi



- Baisabi is the main social festival of the indigenous people living in the hill districts of Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari.
- The tribes celebrate it with great pomp to bid farewell to the old year and greet the new year. It is a four-day festival covering three days of the outgoing year and one day of the incoming year.
- This festival is celebrated by the Chakma and Tanchyanga as "**Biju**", by Marmas as "**Shangrai**", Tripuras as "**Baisuk**" or "**Baisu**".

Theatre of Bangladesh

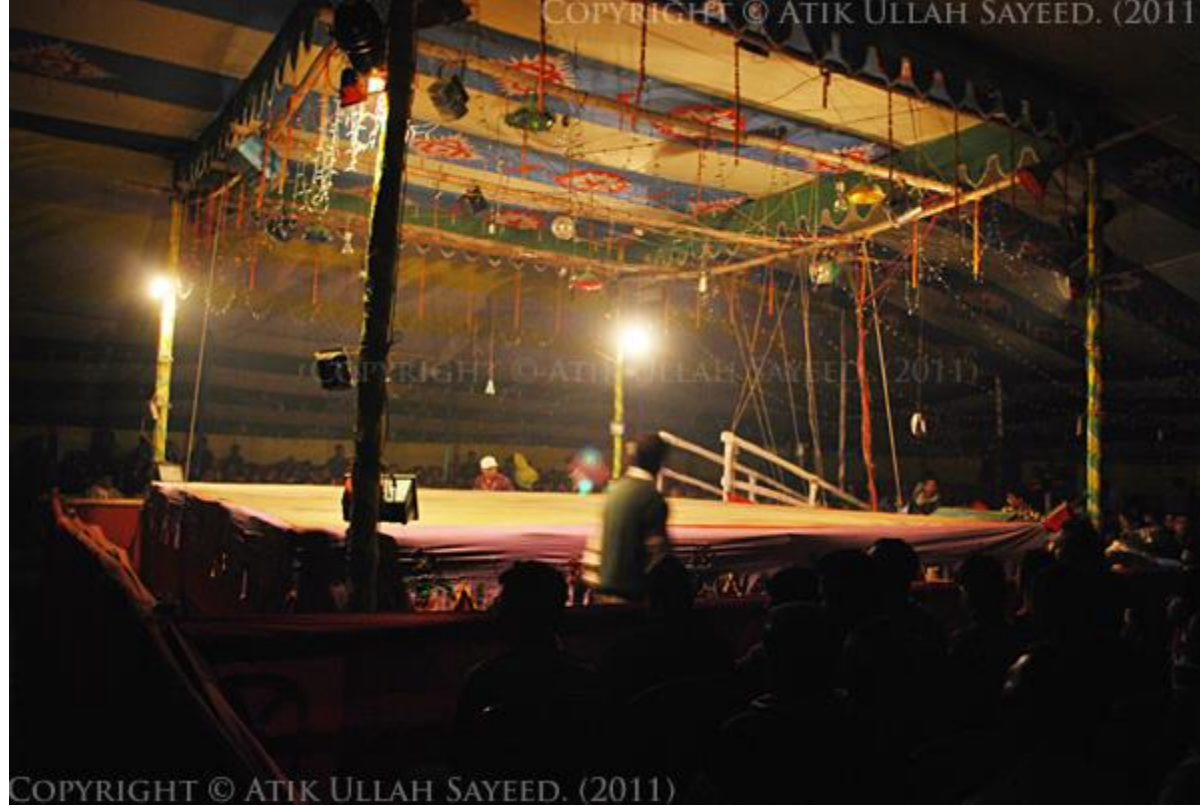
- Origin in the 4th century AD in the form of Sanskrit drama.
- The conquest of Bengal by the Gupta dynasty led the ingress of the northern Indian culture into the ancient Bangladeshi culture which eventually introduced the tradition of theatre in Bangladesh.
- At present, the influence of the Sanskrit theatre ,European theatre and the indigenous folk culture can also be seen.
- Bengali theatre began as private entertainment in the 19th century.
- In the pre-independence period, Bengali theatres played a pivotal role in manifesting dislike of the British Raj.
- After the independence of India in 1947, leftist movements in West Bengal used theatre as a tool for social awareness. This added some unique characteristics to the art form that still have strong effects.

Theatre of Bangladesh



The theatre movement has a long history. However, it gained much popularity in post-1971 Bangladesh. Today there are a number of drama groups and their efforts have been appreciated both at home and abroad.

Bailey Road in the capital widely known as Natakpara has been centre of our theatre practices as well as theatre performers. The Guide House and Mahila Samiti Auditorium are situated here.



Jatra

- There is another category of Bengali theatre called **Jatra**, which is run commercially in rural West Bengal and Bangladesh.
- The most prominent characteristics of Jatra are over-acting and extensive use of traditional musical instruments.

Cinema of Bangladesh

- The **cinema of Bangladesh** is the Bengali language film industry based in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- It has often been a significant film industry since the early 1970s and is frequently referred to as "Dhallywood".
- The dominant style of Bangladeshi cinema is melodramatic cinema, which developed from 1947 to 1990.
- Cinema was introduced in Bangladesh in 1898 by **Bradford Bioscope Company**, credited to have arranged the first film release in Bangladesh.
- Between 1913 and 1914, the first production company named **Picture House** was opened.

Cinema of Bangladesh

- A short silent film titled *Sukumari (The Good Girl)* was the first produced film in the region during 1928.
- The first full-length film *The Last Kiss*, was released in 1931.
- *Mukh o Mukhosh (The Face and the Mask)*, the first Bengali language Bangladeshi full-length feature film was produced in 1956.
- The 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and the first half of the 1990s were the golden years for Bangladeshi films as the industry produced many successful films.
- But during then many of the films were unofficial remake of Indian films.

Cinema of Bangladesh

Internationally acclaimed Bangladeshi films include,

- Zahir Raihan's *Stop Genocide* (1971);
- Ritwik Ghatak's *A river called Titas* (1973);
- Sheikh Niamat Ali and Moshiuddin Shaker's *Surjo Dighol Bari* (1979);
- Tareque Masud's *Song of Freedom* (1995), *Story of Freedom* (1999) and *The Clay Bird* (2002);
- Tanvir Mokammel's *Quiet Flows the River chitra* (1999), *Lalsalu* (2001) and *Lalon* (2004);
- *Kittonkhola* (2000), *Shankhonad* (2004), *Rupantor* (2008) by Abu Sayeed;
- Kamar Ahmed Saimon's *Are You Listening!* (2012);
- Humayun Ahmed's *Aguner Poroshmoni* (1994) , *Shyamol* chhaya 2004

Cinema of Bangladesh

- [Morshedul Islam](#)'s *Chaka* (1993), *Duratta* (2004) and [Amar Bondhu Rashed](#) (2011);
- Golam Rabbany Biplob's [On the Wings of Dreams](#) (2007);
- Giashuddin Selim's [Monpura](#) (2009);
- [Mostofa Sarwar Farooki](#)'s Bachelor [Third Person Singular Number](#) (2009), [Television](#) (2013);
- [Tauquir Ahmed](#)'s [Joyjatra](#) (2004) and [Oggyatonama](#) (2016);
- Nasiruddin Yusuf's *Guerrilla* (2011)
- Bijon Imtiaz's *Matir Projar Deshe-Kingdom of Clay Subjects* (2016),
- [Amitabh Reza Chowdhury](#)'s [Aynabaji](#) (2016),
- Mejbaur Rahman Sumon's *Haoa* etc.
- These films won highly international acclaims and they introduced Bangladeshi films to a wide international audiences.

Cinema of Bangladesh

- [Jibon Theke Neya](#) (1970) is considered as one of the greatest film of Bangladeshi cinema, which had a great influence on Bangladesh Liberation War.
- In the Pakistani era directors used Rabindra Sangeet hardly in the movies, because of the Pakistani government and the Pakistani censor board. But Zahir Raihan used the song Amar Sonar Bangla in *Jibon Theke Neya*, which later became the national anthem of Bangladesh.
- The late [Tareque Masud](#) is regarded as one of Bangladesh's outstanding directors due to his numerous productions on historical and social issues. Masud was honored by FIPRESCI at the Cannes Film Festival in 2002 for his film [The Clay Bird](#)

Cinema of Bangladesh

- ***Rehana Maryam Noor*** (রেহানা মরিয়ম নূর) is a 2021 Bangladeshi film. The film is directed by [Abdullah Mohammad Saad](#)
- In 2021, it was selected in the [Un Certain Regard](#) section at the [2021 Cannes Film Festival](#).
- It is the first Bangladeshi film to be featured in this category.
- It was selected as the Bangladeshi entry for the [Best International Feature Film](#) at the [94th Academy Awards](#).
- Rehana Maryam Noor bagged two awards at [Asia Pacific Screen Awards](#).
- **বেদের মেয়ে জোৎসনা**: The movie is reputed to be the highest grossing Bangladeshi film of all time.