LIFE AND WORKS OF QAZI NAZRUL ISLAM 1899-1976:

Qazi Nazrul Islam is the National Poet of Bangladesh, was born on 24th May 1899, wednessday at Churulia a village in the Asansol Sub-division of the district of Bardhawan, West Bengal in India. His mother Zaheda Khatun and father Qazi Fakir Ahmad, the Imam (head of a mosque) and the custodian of the Hafiz Pahlwan's *Mazar* (a Muslim Shrine) in his village. His brothers Qazi Shahebjan and Qazi Ali Hussain and sister Umme Kulthum (three surviving out of seven sons and two daughters of Qazi Fakir Ahmad).

The forefathers of Qazi Nazrul Islam are said to have come to Churulia from Patna, capital of Bihar, an Indian Province adjacent to West Bengal as *Qazi* or the judges of the Muslim rule in India. Qazi Fakir Ahmad was indeed a poor man who was unable to provide an adequate upbringing for his children. Nazrul Islam lost his father in 1908, when he was only nine years old. His nickname was *'Dukhu Mian*', name that aptly reflects the hardships and miser of his early years.

In 1909 he completed his lower primary education in a *Maktab* (lower Islamic School). His father's premature death forced him at the age of ten, he discontinued school education to earn for his family and to take up teaching at *Maktab* and become a *Muazzin* (who calls for prayer) in a mosque and a custodian of the village shrine etc.

In 1911 his life took a new turn, like all the other great poets and music-makers, Nazrul Islam showed symptom of keen poetic and musical talent, at the instance of Qazi Bazle Karim, to compose songs. Bazle karim who was Nazrul Islam's uncle wrote songs in Bengali and Urdu and sot them to tunes, he was an eminent singer-cum-song writer – cum – composer. Young Nazrul Islam followed him with attention and soon knew how to compose a complete song. Bazle Karim was associated with a local folk-musical group called *leto*, (*leto* is a stage performance based on a song-narrative or a poetic debate on a particular subject by two poets before a ready audience). Nazrul Islam took interest in this sort of musical exercise and joined a *leto* group.

Another reputed leto poet of Churulia area Sheikh Chakor Goda was also fascinated with Nazrul Islam musical and poetic talent and thoroughly encouraged him in writing songs for leto troups. He started writing *Leto* songs with keen earnestness and soon become reputed as a *leto* poet. Various *leto* troupes from various adjoining areas began to come to him collect songs for their respective parties. Nazrul Islam obliged them and wrote songs on demand set them to tunes and taught them to singing bonds. Gradually he acquired an excellent power of impromptu composition on topics of dissimilar subject matter. This how the career of one of the great poets of Bengali made an humble beginning with folk musical groups.

Upon the death of Qazi Bagle Karim, Nazrul Islam took over as the leading poet of a *leto* troupe named after a village called Nimsha. For about two years Nazrul Islam continued with success to work with *leto* troupes, he also wrote about ten *leto* scripts and also composed a good number of songs and song narratives for his own group as well as other ones. He prepared two *leto* scripts one out of Madhushudan Datta's (1824-1873) epic 'Meghnad Badha' (The Murder of Meghnad) and another out of a farcical play by him. Most of Nazrul Islam's writing of *leto* period have been lost. He earned some money for his profession.

In 1911, he went to a school called Nabin-Chandra Institute and studied in class VI, but because he again discontinued his education for poverty. Next year he worked in bakery shop then in the household of a railway guard. In off-time he would usually sing and play on a flute which created in many an impression about his talen. During 1912-13, Qazi Rafizullah a police sub-inspector arranged free education for Nazrul Islam at Darirampur High School, Mymenshingh in Bangladesh now. It may be mentioned that Qazi Rafizullah was first introduced to Nazrul Islam by his younger brother Qazi Abul Hussain who was Nazrul Islam's classmate in Asansol High School. Here too he did not stay long period, he returned to churulia after completing class-vii, that was the year 1914.

In 1915, Nazrul Islam got admitted into searsol Raj High School, Raniganj, Bardhawan in class – viii. Qazi Manjoor Hussain a distant relative helped making

the arrangements for free schooling and accommodation. Nazrul Islam paid utmost attention to studies and did exceeding well in the school examinations until the pre-test matriculation examination. Here he met satish Chandra Kanjilal (a teacher of the school with some mastery over classical music). Who actively encouraged him to continue to develop musical talent. While reading in this school Nazrul Islam came very close to revolutionary secret organizations and highly inspired with their concept of armed struggle against the British Colonial Government. Nibaran Chandra Ghatak (a teacher of Searsol Raj High School was an active member of a revolutionary secret society), these societies organized a movement in India against the British Occupation. Nibaran Chandra Ghatak observed Nazrul Islam's spirit and drew him closer to himself and inculcated in him very warm patriotic feeling. This revolutionary teacher had greatly moulded Nazrul Islam's mind and the idea of armed struggle against the British Raj had gone a long way in shaping future course of his life.

In 1917 Nazrul Islam left his studies before the pre-test matriculation examination, with his friend Shailajananda Mukhopadhaya (a classmate, later a famous novelist). Both went to Calcutta to accept the calling of a soldier. Nazrul Islam succeeded, but Shailajananda did not. Nazrul Islam joined the 49th Bengalee Regiment and rose to the rank of Havildar, (a British Indian Commissioned officer).

He went to Nawshera and Karachi with his Paltan, but did not participate in direct warfare.

It was then that Nazrul Islam learned a great deal of Persian language and literature and music with the help of religious teacher from Panjab attached with the regiment. He had also some prior learning of Persian and Arabic, but greatly attracted with the persian mystical love songs known as Ghazals. He had also began to translate the Rubaiyats of Hafiz (a great Persian poet) of course he finished much later.

Qazi Nazrul Islam heared the socialist Revolution of Russia and felt inspired with idea of the victory of toiling masses and establishment of a society free from age-old trend of exploitation. Later he wrote encouraging songs and poems urging for a social revolution in his own country on the basics of equality, of end to exploitation and victory of working people for which he is considered as being the first poet of socialist inspiration in Bengal.

While staying in Karachi, Nazrul Islam was acquinted with marching music, which he later applied to some of his own songs of heroic sentiment. The musical experience in Karachi had definite influences in shaping Nazrul Islam's musical genius.

Nazrul Islam's first publication in 1919, a short story entitles *'Boundeler Atmokahini'* (An Autobiography of a Vagabond) in *Saogat,* (a literary journal published from Calcutta, edited by Mohammad Nasir Uddin). Nazrul Islam sent

some of his writings to this journal for publication in touch with the editer through letters. His first narrative poem *'Mukti'* (liberation) also came out in *'Bongiyo Musalman Sahitya Patrika'* (Bengal Muslim Literary Magazine) in the same year another two short stories namely *'Hena'* and *'Bayther Dan'* (offerings out of pain) came out. The translation of *Rubaiyat* of Hafiz also published in *'Prabasi'* (a well known literary monthly magazine in Bengali). The translation was submitted to Prabasi by Pabitra Gangopadhaya (a Bengali writer of respectable reputation). It also laid the foundation of lasting friendship between Nazrul Islam and Pabitra Gangopadhaya. In this Nazrul Islam had earned a reputation as a writer before he came to Calcutta from Karachi on demobilization of his regiment.

In 1920, for a week when he paid a visit to Calcutta and Churulia, he met Comrade Muzaffar Ahmad for the first time and urged him to take to literature upon his return to civilion life style. Nazrul Islam belonged was actually demobilized in March, 1920 and he made no delay in coming back to Calcutta with the hope of an opportunity to settle there. He was first staying with Shailajananda Mukhopadhaya and then with Muzaffar Ahmad, who infused in him the doctrine of equality man in respect of his rights and duties as a born-free human being. He took the profession of a journalist, was appointed a joint-editor with Muzaffar Ahmad of Daily *Navayog* (New Era) founded by Sher-e=Bangla A.K. Fazlul Haq.

As for his literary, *Muslim Bharat* (the Muslim India) became Nazrul Islam's principal forum where the office of the Bengal Muslim Literary Association and he lived with Muzaffar Ahmad, Ali Akbar Khan and others. Nazrul Islam's literary ventures proved very successful and his writings irrespective of literary categories were received by Bengali readers with high enthusiasm. The very first issue of the Muslim Bharat started with Nazrul Islam's first novel *'Bandhanhara'* (free from bonds). His many poems and songs were published in literary journal like *Saogat* (the gift), *Upasana* (Worship), *Bijali* (lightening) etc. These writings were as follows: *Qurbani, Moharram, Shat-il-Arab, Marami etc* in 1920.

In 1921, Nazrul Islam went to Daulatpur of Komilla along with his friend and admiration Ali Akbar Khan, he stayed at Mr. Khan's home about two months. There he fell in love with Nargis Asar Khanam. Ali Akbar's niece. The marriage was arranged, the date was finalized as middle June, 1921. Some of the biographers of Nazrul Islam have doubted whether at all the marriage was solemnized. It appears from various sources including some letters of Nazrul Islam, that the wedding between Nazrul Islam and Nargis Asar Khanam might have been solemnized, but unfortunately their marriage relation did not last long due to disagreement between Nazrul Islam and Nargis family. He left Nargis and Daulatpur in the very night of the day of marriage. Ali Akbar Khan is known to have requested Nazrul Islam in Calcutta to regain the lost grounds. But by then things had gone too far to re-open

the account. The incident shocked Nargis Asar Khanam very greatly and for long years she refused wedlock and tried to re-establish her relation with Nazrul Islam by letter-writings. Nazrul Islam showed reluctance to replay except only once in 1937, he composed a song which communicates his sad and sweety memory about Nargis. He better advises to forget him once for all.

The song read as follows :

> "Why remember him
>
> Whom you could not give the garland of your love?
>
> Forget me, forget me once for all
>
> I sing out of my sorrow
>
> Why do you come to stand before me?
>
> Do not invite me like an apparition
>
> Into the darkness of night."

Divorce confirmed in 1937, Nargis Asar Khanam was later on married to poet Azizul Hakim. Who was an ardent admirer of Qazi Nazrul Islam. After the marriage she settled peacefully, the long drawn episode had thus come to an end.

In October 1921, Nazrul Islam visits Shantinikatan with Mohammad Shahidullah and meets Rabindranath Tagore for the first time. He wrote the famous poem, rather a brief verse drama, 'Kamal Pasha'. The same year he wrote his most celebrated poem *'Bidruhi'* or the Rebel, in the month of December. With the

publication of this poem Qazi Nazrul Islam was given the glory of becoming the Rebel poet of Bengal. He is the only *'Bidruhi Kobi'* or the Rebel poet of Bengali language. That was an age of rebellion people were rebelling for the end of political subjugation and the rebellious thoughts were also being crystallized in organized efforts to found the Communist Party in India with high dreams of putting an end to the exploitation of working people. In this year the first great song of the national movement was published called *'Bhanger Gan'* or the song of the Destruction. The song may be rendered into English as follows:

"Break down the iron gate of prison
And break down into pieces
The blood-bathed
Stone-alter of the goddess of fetters."

In 1922, Nazrul Islam published the first story book was *'Byathar Dan'* (offerings of pain), a collection of six short stories. The first story refers to the Russian revolution and the Red Army. The second story has written in the background of the first world war. Some other stories discuss the background of war may have created the notion that Qazi Nazrul Islam fought in battlefields outside India. Then he became editor of *'Dhumketu'* (Comet), published his poetry book *'Ognibeena'* (The Burning Lute).

The Burning Lute includes 'The Rebel' is one, this volume presents three sectors of Nazrul Islam's inspiration. The first sector is stands for his love of freedom, the next place he declares his identity with the spirit of founding a society free from exploitation and hail the Russian revolution as symbol of victory of the world wide working people and their place he dwelt on the themes of Islamic or Muslim Association. The first essays '*Yugabani'* which were immediately proscribed and warrant for arrest was issued against Nazrul Islam on change of sedition.

In February 1922, Nazrul Islam was once again received with affection at the home Indra Kumar Sengupta, where he stayed for about four months. There Nazrul Islam developed an intimacy with Pramila, Daughter of Giribala Devi. This intimacy later matured into marriage. The same year November 23, Nazrul Islam was arrested in Komilla.

The demand of complete independence of India raised by Qazi Nazrul Islam in the 13th October, 1922 of the issue of the Comet was very significant, because it was a matter of great courage to place such a political demand by issuing a press statement as 1922. It was only in 1922 that Indian National Congress tabled the resolution of Complete Independence in its Lahore Session, the resolution was moved by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. From this it appears how uncompromising Qazi Nazrul Islam was far the question of independence was concerned. It was quiet

natural, therefore, that the British imperialists forces and their native henchmen would not like paper 'The Comet'. Every issue of the paper put forth a challenge for them. So the Government could not allow an easy sailing for the Bi-weekly, Nazrul Islam wrote many long poem like *'Anandamayir Agamane'* (on the coming of the goddess of joy), Shyamasangeet etc.

On January 16, 1923 Nazrul Islam delivered his *'Rajbandir Jabanbandi'* (Deposition of a political leader) in the court of the Chief Presidency Magistrate in Calcutta. It was thoroughly inspiring and well composed having no parallel in the history of Bengali Literature. He was sentenced to be one year imprisonment of hard labour, the whole nation protested against this verdict. Poet Rabindranath Tagore dedicated his play *'Basanto'* (Spring) to Nazrul Islam. He himself went on hunger strike inside the jail during April-May, for 40 days. Tagore sent a telegram 'Give up hunger strike, our literature claims you' so he gave it up at the request of the leading literary and political personalities of his time. The same year Nazrul Islam was released from jail in December.

When Nazrul Islam in the jail, he wrote many songs and poems, like the second book of verse *'Dolan Champa'* or the yellow flower and the second edition of the, Burning Lute' was published. The yellow flower is a collection of twenty poems. If the Burning Lute is predominantly a collection of poems of rebellious spirit, then the Yellow Flower is chiefly a collection of poems of love. Rebellion and love are the

two aspect of youthfulness spirit. He stood for youthfulness in Bengal in those days. In rebellion and in love expressed himself in his characteristics way.

Early 1924, Nazrul Islam married Pramila (Ashalata Sengupta) the daughter of Giribala Debi in Komilla, then they settled in Hoogley. Their first son Azad Kamal (also named Krishna Mohammad) was born, but the son did not survive.

The book of poems *'Bisher Banshi'* or the Poison Flute was published. It was a collection of poems and songs; songs were greater than poems. Another book was published in the same year was *'Bhangar Gian'* (the song of the Destruction). Some of Nazrul Islam reputed songs of patriotic sentiment were included in this collection, but soon these two books were proscribed by the British Government.

'Rikter Bedan' (the Sorrows of the Destitute) a book of stories by Nazrul Islam was published January 1925. It is a collection of eight stories, some of the stories strike the author's autobiographical notes being written in the background of his joining the army and staying in some places of North Western India. This year was more political than the poetical works. In this year he met M.K. Gandhi and Deshabandu Chittaranjan Das and other political leaders. He wrote and read out a poem and also sang the songs on the spinning wheel *'Charka'* and announced he pamphlet of 'The Labour Swaraj Party' of the Indian National Congress. *'Langal'* (the Plough) was the party magazine in it he published his *'Samyabadi'*(the Equality) poems. This is a pretty long poems divided into under six sub-headings.

Another books of poems and songs was published which is '*Chittanama'* (on Chittaranjan). It includes five poems and songs written in memory of Deshabandu Chittaranjan Das. *'Chhayanot'* (a Classical Melody), it includes fifty pomes and songs. It is predominantly a collection of poems on love and nature. It also includes some songs of patriotic and heroic sentiments.

In 1926, Nazrul Islam second son Arindam Khalid (Bulbul) was born, he composed the famous song *'Kandari Hunshiar* (Be Ware My Captain) making the inaujuration of Krishnanagar Congress, and the first Ghazal is Bengali *'Bulbuli Tui Ful Shakhate Disne Aji Dol'* (O Nightingale, don't swing on the flower ladden branches today). The family also moved from Calcutta to Krishnanagar. In Krishnanagar Nazrul Islam was ill and weak. Yet he continued to keep connection with socio-political gatherings, organized in various parts of Bengal. He could not personally go to many places, but his friends his massages to those gatherings and read them out on his behalf.

Nazrul Islam was a member of the executive committee of the newly formed 'The peasants and workers party'. The two days All Bengal Peasants Congress being over, Nazrul Islam was off to Madaripur, now a district in Bangladesh to attend the 'All Bengal and Assam Provincial Fishermen's Conference'. It was to be held for two days on March 11-12, 1926, yet he was ill and weak but could not avoid his socio-political engagements for which he had to pass through exertion due to

travelling. He entitled (The fisherman's song'. It inspires the fishermen to organize against the instruments of exploitation. He also another song was composed for the workers that (The Song of the Workers'. This also carried a fervent appeal to the working people to unite and fight against the forces of exploitations. This envisages a victory for the working class.

During the year 1927, Nazrul Islam faced tremendous financial crisis, since he was being continually deprived by his publisher who made huge money by selling his books. This time Nazrul Islam emerged as the best seller among Bengali speaking people and amalzingly enough, he still remains his position among the poets. However, he attended the annual conference of *Muslim Shahitya Somaj* (Muslim Literary Society) in Dhaka. His friends of Saogat around and tried to help him financially considering his acute poverty and growing illness. He agreed to work with *Saogat* on a salaried basis.

One essay, two poems and one novel were published by Nazrul Islam in 1927. *'Rudra Mangal'* (The Violent Good) was the collection of essays. The poetical collections were '*Phani Mansha'* (The Cactus) and *'Sindhu Hindol'* (the Undulation on the Sea). The Novel was entitled *'Bandhan Hara'* (Without Bondage). Like *'Durdiner Yatri'* (The Traveler through Calamity). *'Rudra Mangal'* included six out of the eight essays from the editorials Nazrul Islam wrote for the Bi-weekly 'The

Comet'. Two essays were published in Ganabani (The People's voice). The weekly organs of the Workers and Peasants Party edited by Muzaffar Ahmad.

In 1928, two separate editions of *'Sanchita'* (Selected poems) were published. His friends and associates tried to make a trust fund. This year his mother died. Nazrul Islam honoured at Rangpur, Rajshahi and other parts of Bangladesh. He wrote songs and song two inaugural songs for *'Nikhil Bharat Krishak Sramik Dol* (All India Farmers and Workers Party) and All India Socialist Youth Congress, Presided over by Pandit Jawaherlal Nehru, in Calcutta. In this year Bulbul or Nightingale volume was published. The Nightingale volume contain 49 songs in all, it is the first reputed collection of Nazrul Islam's songs. *'Jinjir'*or The Chains is a collection of poems which was published in this year, it is a collection 16 poems. The Chain includes mostly the poems written on themes of Islamic heritage. His reputed poems like *'Khaled'* (a great Muslim Hero) and *'Umar Faroq'* (Caliph II Umar the great) included in this volume.

In 1929, Nazrul Islam was honoured by several organizations at Chittagang during his January visit to attend the inaugural session of *Muslim Shikha Somiti* (Muslim Education Association. He also honoured by Bogra Akhelpur Youngmen's Society. In this year he was accorded a Grand National Civic Reception at Calcutta Albert Hall under the chairmanship of Acharya Prafulla Chandra Roy. He was declared 'The Poet of the Bengali Nation' by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the chief guest.

Nazrul Islam's son Qazi Sabyasachi was born in this year and Aniruddha the next year. In 1929 at least three collections of Nazrul Islam's poems and songs were published. They were *'Chakrabak'* or The Flamingo, *'Chokher Chatak'* or the thirsty for sight and *'Sandhya'* or the evening.

In 1930, saw the publication of six books of Nazrul Islam. They were *'Pralay Shikha'* or The Doomsday Flame, *'Mrityu Kshudha'* or the Death of Hunger, *'Rubaiyat-i-Hafiz'* or the poems of Hafiz, *Nazrul Geetika* or collected Nazrul Islam song and *'Jhilimili'* or the window shutters and *'Chandrabindu'* or the Last Bengali Alphabet.

Apparently it looked quite happy that many books were published in a year, but 1930 was a tragic year for him and it marked a turning point in his life. His son Bulbul, who had earlier shown an extraordinary musical talent, died of small pox. It disturbed him to violently, he did never from the mental shock conceded.

However, this year is significant for some other reasons as well. He entered into various roles that include music composer, music director, actor in play, radio programmer and above all a regular artist with Gramophone Company, although his association with this company had started at least a couple of years back. Nazrul Islam gained profusely from this company that gave him money, fame and immense popularity. Fully devoted to music, this time he developed close association with a host of noted musicians like Ustad Jamiruddin Khan, Qadir Bukhs, Dabir Khan,

Manju Shahib, Mastan Gama, Pandit Janandra Prashad Goswami, Pandit Suresh Chakravarty and others. Special mention must be made of Dilip Kumar Roy who played a key role in shaping the musical career of Nazrul Islam.

In spite of all these, Nazrul Islam was profusely working with the Gramophone Company. He was gradually withdrawing himself from all the other activities and giving exclusive attention to writing lyrics, tuning and training. He was so long known for his patriotic songs and 'Ghazals', but as he joined the Gramophone Company, Nazrul Islam began to compose songs in an astonishingly massive scale in diversified genres.

In the year 1931, five Nazrul Islam's books came off the press. They were *'Kuhelika'* or the Mystery, *'Nazrul Swaralipi'* or The Notation of Nazrul Islam songs. *'Chandrabinu'* or the Nasal Mark, *'Shuilimala'* or the Wreath of Shuili and *'Aleya'* or the Mirage. *'Kuhelika'* or the Mystery is a novel, it was written in the background of the armed struggle of the secret revolutionary organizations aiming at the end to the British Occupation of India. By the middle of the 1931, Nazrul Islam went to Darjeeling where he met Rabindranath Tagore. Jahanara Choudhury, editor of the magazine called *'Barshabani'* or the message of the year was with him. Both Rabindranath and Nazrul Islam wrote for Jahanara's journal. Specially Nazrul Islam wrote a series of poems eulogizing the lady.

In 1932, Nazrul Islam went to Raojan in Chittagang to join a literary conference there. Abul Fazal, Kamaluddin Khan, Habibullah Bahar and Mahbubul Alam had also gone there to attend the conference. Apart from delivering a speech, Nazrul Islam sang some of his songs and recited some of his poems. In this year he visited at various parts of Bengal and presided over several conferences like *'Sirajganj Bangiya Muslim Tarun Sommelon'* (The Bengal Muslim Youth Conference).

Three collections of songs by Nazrul Islam were published in 1932. They were *'Surasaki'* or the Serving Maid of Melodies, *'Banageeti'* or the Woodland-Songs, and 'Zulfikar' or the Sword of Ali. The Serving Maid of Melodies is a collection of 98 songs written mostly for the Gramophone Company. The Woodland Songs includes 71 songs. The Sword of Ali is a collection of Islamic Songs, includes 27 songs all. Nazrul Islam was paying almost fulltime attention to composition of songs. This is evident from the fact that all his three books which were published in 1932.

'Gul Bagicha' or the Flower Garden and *'Kavaya Ampara'* the verse translation of The Quran were published in 1934. The Flower Garden is a collection of 87 songs. *'Geeti Shatadal'* or one Hundred Songs, *'Sur Mukur'* or the Mirror of Melodies (Notations). *'Ganer Mala'* or the Wreath of Songs were all published in

the year 1933. *'Nirjhar'* or the Spring, a collection of poems was published in the year 1939. Since then the most of Nazrul Islam books were published after 1942.

In 1938 a family disaster occurred and the lower part of Pramila's body got paralysed. Nazrul Islam again fell in utter financial crisis. The crisis re-emerging compounded by Pramila's medical expenses. He resorts to mortgaging the royalties of his Gramophone records and literary workes for a mere sum of 4000 rupees. This was exactly the state of affair with Nazrul Islam. The death of the Bulbul shattered the strength of his mind. The illness of Pramila aggravated it. He could not just bear all the strains. Illness was gradually and silently exhausting him mentally and physically. He was losing his balance of mind, it was a matter of great misfortune for Nazrul Islam that he could neither have been given any medical aid nor he could have been relieved of the worries and enxieties related to his miserable financial conditions.

Nazrul Islam spoke in the second days session of the Calcutta Muslim Students Conference on December 23, 1940. There he also urged the Muslim Young men of Bengal to have faith in Allah and work with dedication for the upliftment of the poor and the downtrodden.

Nazrul Islam came to Dhaka in 1940, to take part in a musical programme organized, in connection with the observance of the first founding anniversary of Dhaka Radio Station. A musical sketch composed by him was broadcast under the

direction. The sketch was titled *'Purbali'* or Of the East. Chitta Ray and Shaila Devi took part in singing, Ramen Kushari did the narration. *Navayug* was republished in this year, with Nazrul Islam as its Chief Editor. He continued to work in the daily till August 1942 when suddenly he fell seriously ill and incapacitated. He began his literary career with Navayug and it came to an unfortunate close while he was working in the same.

In 1941, the Bengal Literary Society started its annual conference under his chairmanship. He delivered the final address of his life on April, while presiding over the Silver Jubilee celebration of the *'Bangiyo Muslim Samity'*. The speech is known as *'Jadi Ar Banshi Na Baje'* (if the flute play no more). On May 25th Nazrul Islam's birthday celebrated in Calcutta presided over by the poet Jatindra Mohan Bagchi. On August 7th Rabindranath Tagore passed away and Nazrul Islam wrote a poem *'Rabihara'* (Rabi is no more). He had also composed a song at the death of Tagore, he himself sang the song with Gramophone record. 'Salute to the Setting Sun' is the title of a poem. Although Nazrul Islam was doing his routine work as the Chief Editor of the New Era and as a composer and was looking fit outwardly, he was not in fact all right any way. Diseases were silently creeping over him corroding his vitality. He ran high blood pressure and his speaking was occasionally disturbed.

On July 10, 1942, Nazrul Islam lost his power of speech at a time when he was conducting a children's programme in All India Radio Center. He was

hospitalized within a week, later he was admitted to Lumbini Park Mental Hospital, Calcutta, on October 7 and remained there for six months. The physicians has earlier detected symptoms of mental insanity in him. In 1943. *Nazrul Niramaya Samity* (Nazrul Healing Committee) was formed. But did not improve by any effort. After two years 'Jagottarini Gold Medal' was awarded to Nazrul Islam by the Calcutta University in 1945.

Nazrul Islam stayed back in Calcutta despite the fact that India won its freedom in 1947 and the Eastern part of Bengal (The Muslim dominated Zone) joined the – then Pakistan as one of its provinces. In 1952, The Bengal Muslim Literary Association was converted into the Nazrul Library. Under the initiative of this library the eminent litterateurs of Calcutta, formed Nazrul Medical Aid Association in the month of June, 1952 to arrange the proper treatment of Nazrul Islam. The initiative was taken by Atul Gupta, Tarashankar Bandapadhya, Qazi Abdul Wadud, Sufi Zulfiqar Haidar and others. Qazi Abdul Wadud was made the Association's Secretary. On July, 1952 both Nazrul Islam and his wife Pramila was sent Ranchi Mental Hospital by the Association for treatment there for four months, but with no improvements. Afterword the Association sent first to London and then to Vienna in 1953, that gave no improvement too. Return to Calcutta on December 15. Sicne then Nazrul Islam had been living in Calcutta only physically.

In 1960, one of the most coveted for Nazrul Islam, since he was decorated with Padmabhushan, the highest literary award conferred by the Government of India. Nazrul Islam's wife Pramila died on 30th June, 1962 at the age 54 in Calcutta. She was buried in Churulia, according to her wish. Nazrul Islam's mother in-low Giribala Devi was missing since 1946.

On the emergence of Bangladesh as a sovereign state through a bloody stuggle against the occupation forces of Pakistan, a tremendous enthusiasm was created here to bring Nazrul Islam, whose writings and musical compositions were the great sources for independence, from Calcutta to Dhaka. Bangabandu Sheikh Muzibur Rahman (the father of the nation in Bangladesh) took personal initiatives about Nazrul Islam, on a request by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in this regard, the Government of India agreed to send the poet to Dhaka. Nazrul Islam brought to Dhaka on 24th May, 1972. He was taken to a house earlier allotted for him on Road 28, Dhanmondi Residential Area, which was later known as Kabi Bhaban, now converted into Nazrul Museum, under the guidance of the Nazrul Institute, the official organization established by the Government of Bangladesh to study and conduct research on the life and works and related issues of the poet.

A reputed Nazrul Islam song 'Chal Chal Chal' or Forward, Forward, Forward, had already been made the martial song of Bangladesh. The Prime Minister declared

a grant of take one thousand per month for the poet. He was accorded the state honour. The national flag of Bangladesh was kept hoisted over his residence. The seventy third birth anniversary of the poet was observed in Bangladesh in his presence. A medical board comprising Dr. Nazrul Islam, Dr. Yusuf Ali, Dr. Nazimuddin Choudhury and Dr. Ali Shraf was formed in Dhaka to look into the mater Nazrul Islam's medical care.

In recognition of Nazrul Islam's contribution to literature and music of Bengal, the University of Dhaka conferred on him the honourary degree of D. Lit at a special convocation held on 9th December, 1974. In this he was made a Guest of Honour in the International Conference of writers held in Bangla Academy.

Nazrul Islam looked well in his new Dhanmondi residence. There was a marked improvement of his health, but in early July 1975 he fell ill and on 22nd July of the same year was shifted to Dhaka's institute of Post Graduate Medicine and Research for better medical care. In January 1976 the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh conferred the citizenship of Bangladesh on Nazrul Islam. He also awarded the 'Eakushey Padak (Gold Medal) by the Government of Bangladesh. In the month of August 1976, at 10-00 in the morning the rebel poet breathed his last in the institute of Post Graduate Medicine and Research Dhaka. As desired in one of his most popular Islamic song, *'Mosjider Pashe Amar Kabor Dio*

Bhai' (Barry me beside a mosque), he was finally placed in eternal rest with full state of honour beside Dhaka University Mosque.

"State mourning for two days was observed in Bangladesh National flag had flown half most throughout the period of mourning. August 30, 1976 was declared a national holiday in Bangladesh. Both the house of Indian Parliament mourned the death of Qazi Nazrul Islam and minute's silence was observed there."