



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

# Jaya's Tollywood stronghold

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jaya Ahsan, one of the biggest names on the silver screen in Bangladesh, is now making a mark in the Kolkata film industry. Besides Bangladeshi fans, she has won the hearts of millions with a number of hit Tollywood movies.

The actress recently returned to Dhaka after shooting for a Tollywood film "Ami Joy Chatterjee Bolchi", directed by Monoj Michigan. She stars opposite Abir in the project.

Meanwhile, last week Jaya was on hand to receive the Tele-Cine Award in Kolkata, as the Best Supporting Actress for her 2015 film "Rajkahani". Alongside her, Bangladeshi singer Shahriar Rafat and director Masud Pothik were also honoured at the awards.

About her work in "Ami Joy Chatterjee Bolchi", Jaya told The Daily Star she was immediately drawn to the story, and it was an easy decision to work in it.

Meanwhile, back in Bangladesh, Jaya recently began shooting for "Peyarer Subash", directed by Nurul Alam Atique - who directed Jaya's big screen debut "Duub Satar". Filming for "Peyarer Subash" is now underway in Sirajganj.

# "BAFA gave me the best days of my life"

... Laila Hasan

ZAIMA ZAHRA

**What was BAFA like as an organisation?**

**Laila Hasan:** BAFA was an institution by itself. Affiliation of various artistes was seen as trainers- Sree Ajit Sanyal (Bulbul Chowdhury's student), Bhaktimai Das, Atiqul Islam, Ustad Khadem Hossain Khan, Ustad Mir Kashem Khan, Bedaruddin Ahmed. The organisation was run by note worthies like Dr. Anisuzzaman, Anwara Bahar Chowdhury, Syed Mohammad Ali, Syed Ahmed Ali, Selina Bahar Chowdhury. BAFA was a relatively large organisation. Located near the river Buriganga, it had a perfect ambience for artistes. We were dreamers back then and joining the Academy was our little step to turn our dreams into reality.

**Share your training and working experience with BAFA?**

**Laila Hasan:** I got the opportunity to work in and outside the country at the very start of my career. From 1960-



1965 along with the troupe I visited countries like Pakistan, Middle East, Russia and China. I had the enviable opportunity to work in "Nakshi Kathar

Maath", "Chandalika", "Prokritir Lila" and a lot more. I worked as a choreographer, for the first time, in "Chitrangada". The first dance-drama directed by me was "Shyama".

**Are you still associated with BAFA?**

**Laila Hasan:** My last affiliation with BAFA was back in 1966 for "Chitrangada" and a charity event at Chittagong. Later in 2010 they honoured me with a lifetime achievement award. Now they invite me as an external examiner and guest at some of their events.

**Any special memories of BAFA?**

**Laila Hasan:** I remember going abroad for the first time to represent BAFA. That was for my first opportunity to travel by plane. When I recall all those exciting and happy days, I realise that my precious memories of BAFA will always remain alive. BAFA gave me the best days of my life, helping me to grow as a successful artiste.

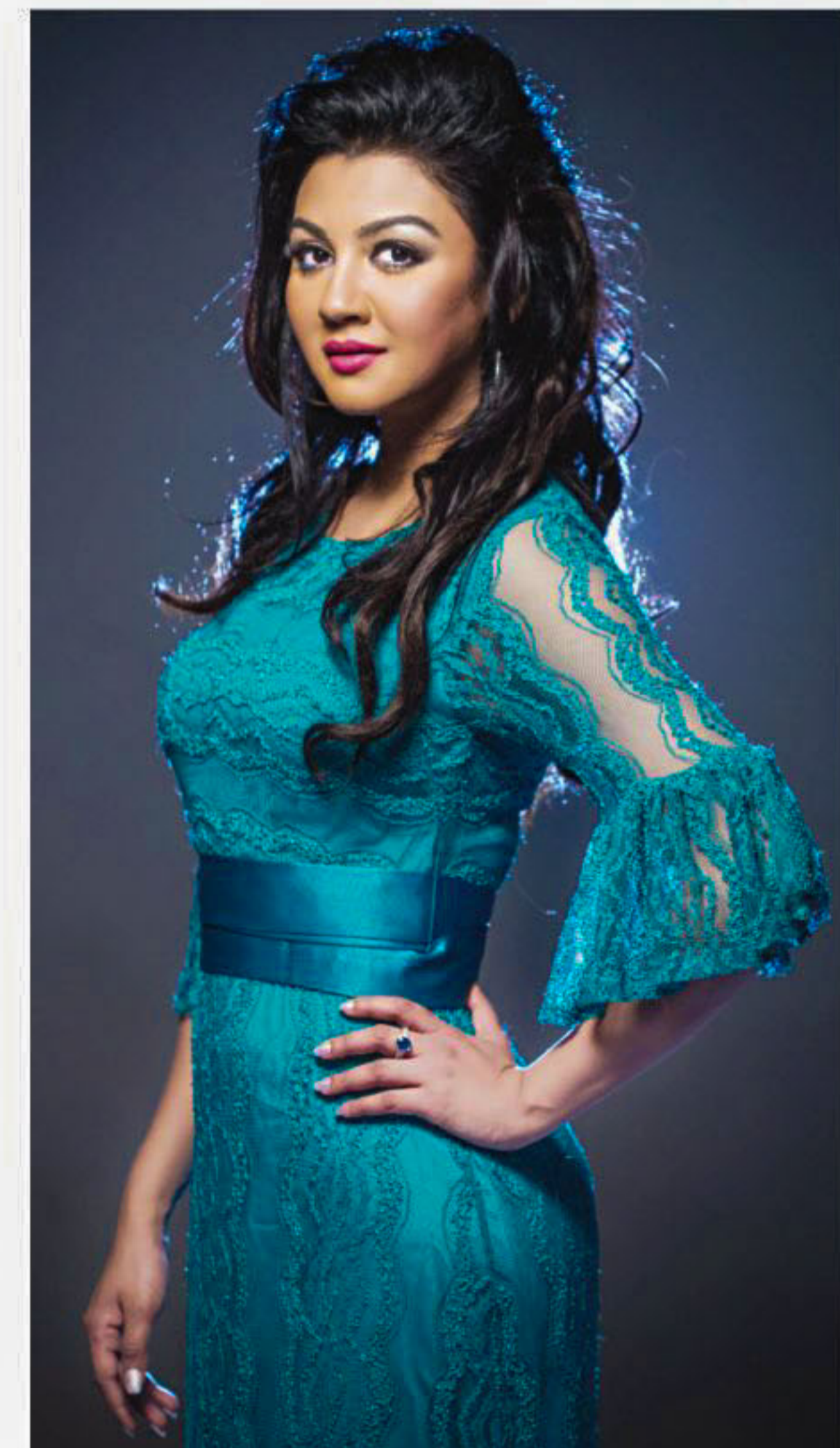


PHOTO: STAR

May 17 marked the 62nd death anniversary of prominent Nrityaguru Bulbul Chowdhury, a pioneer of modern dance in Bangladesh. A beacon of inspiration to artistic talents, Chowdhury unfortunately passed away at the young age of 35. His wife Begum Afroza, however, kept his memory alive through Bulbul Academy of Fine Arts (BAFA) which she founded in 1955 to groom a fresh crop of talented artistes. Many contemporary artistes around us have at one stage or another passed through the portals of the Academy. One of them, noted dancer-choreographer-actress Laila Hasan began her journey at BAFA. Laila talked to The Daily Star about what BAFA means to her:

## NEWS bytes



**WINSLET**  
in talks for  
"Mountain Between Us"

Kate Winslet is in negotiations to star opposite Idris Elba in the romantic drama "The Mountain Between Us."

Hany Abu-Assad is directing the film for Fox 2000, while Peter Chernin and Jenno Topping are producing through Fox-based Chernin Entertainment.

The movie is based on Charles Martin's 2010 bestselling novel about a surgeon and woman who fall in love after being stranded following a plane crash. They must figure out how to escape the mountain wilderness, where the temperature drops to the teens at night, while suffering broken ribs and a leg fracture.

Elba has been attached to "The Mountain Between Us" since February.

Winslet has received seven Academy Award nominations, most recently for "Steve Jobs", and won the Oscar in 2009 for "The Reader". She starred in "Triple 9" and will appear with Will Smith in New Line's drama "Collateral Beauty" next.

Source: Variety

## Bollywood unsettled by the Hollywood heat

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Hollywood films are doing better business than Bollywood movies in the first half of this year.

A major example is Disney project "The Jungle Book" which created history of sorts at the Indian box office. The live action adaptation of the book by the same name, hit the screens on April 8, a week before its US premiere to avoid a box office clash with Shah Rukh Khan's "Fan".

"Fan" had a very good opening, the highest this year, at nearly Rs 19 crore, clocking a whopping Rs 52.35 crore at the weekend. As against this, "The Jungle Book" opened at Rs 10 crores and registered a Rs 40 crore weekend.

However, later the box office scenario for both the films changed completely. "Fan" struggled to reach even Rs 90 crores while "The Jungle Book" raced past the Rs 100 crore mark.

By the end of its run, "Fan" made nearly Rs 85 crores while "The Jungle Book" shattered all previous records held by any Hollywood film released in India, earning nearly Rs 183 crores.

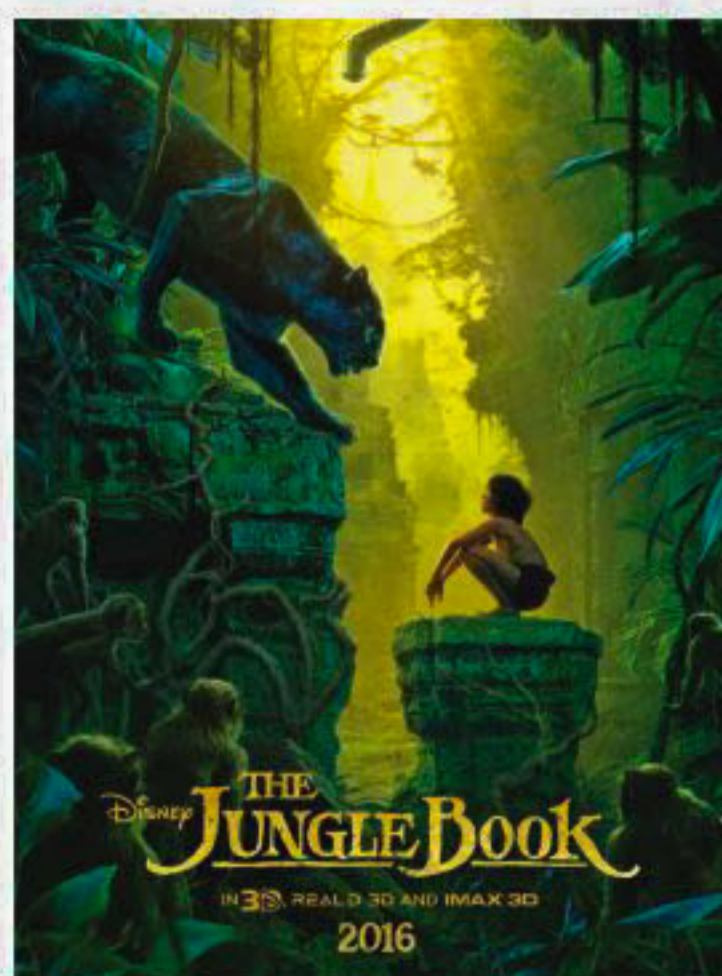
This is the highest earning film of the year so far, beating Akshay Kumar's "Airlift" which is the biggest Bollywood hit with Rs 127 crore. The margin between Bollywood's highest grosser of the year and "The Jungle Book", is nearly Rs 60 crores.

"The Jungle Book" is not the only Hollywood film which scored better at the domestic box office. The superhero film "Deadpool", released alongside Katrina Kaif-Aditya Roy Kapur starrer "Fitoor" on February 12 fared better.

The Tim Miller-directed Ryan Reynolds-starrer collected approximately Rs 29 crores at box office while "Fitoor", helmed by "Kai Po Che" director Abhishek Kapoor, managed nearly Rs 19 crore.

One of the most awaited superhero movies of the year, "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" managed to put up a total of Rs 36 crore in one week. The Zack Snyder-directed film clashed with John Abraham' "Rocky Handsome" which sank without a trace.

Another instance of Hollywood



films doing much better business than Bollywood movies can be seen in the collections of "Captain America: Civil War" which clocked Rs 27 crore in the first weekend.

The film, which starred Chris Evans, Robert Downey Jr, and Scarlett Johansson among others,

registered a total collection of approximately Rs 59 crore, which is more than Priyanka Chopra's "Jai Gangaajal", Emraan Hashmi's "Azhar" and Amitabh Bachchan-starrer "Wazir".

Hollywood product "X-Men: Apocalypse" clashed with Aishwarya Rai Bachchan-starrer "Sarbjit" and had a better opening week than the latter. The superhero film clocked Rs 26 crore in its first week while the Omung Kumar-directed movie made nearly Rs 22 crore.

May 27 saw the release of three Bollywood films, "Phobia", "Veerappan" and "Waiting" and one Hollywood project, "The Angry Birds Movie". Here too the winner is Hollywood.

The animated action-adventure comedy earned Rs 9.4 crore in the opening weekend, more than the combined weekend collection of the three Bollywood films.

The animated film "Kung Fu Panda 3" also clocked impressive collections despite facing competition from "Ki & Ka". The animated film raked in Rs 32 crore at the box office, which was just nearly Rs 20 crore shy of Kareena Kapoor Khan's "Ki & Ka" which made Rs 51 crores.

One clear message emanating from the analysis of the films' box office performance in the first six months of this is that morning does not always show the day. A bumper box office collection in the first week of the movie's release may fizzle out and turn out to be overall dampener. What matters is sustaining the viewership for a number of weeks to emerge the winner.

There are other Hollywood big-wigs releasing this year including "Conjuring 2: The Enfield Poltergeist", "Suicide Squad", "Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them" and "Dr. Strange" among others. Will they also hit upcoming Bollywood movies?

## Shusmita Anis' homage to Feroza Begum



A CORRESPONDENT

Shusmita Anis, accomplished singer and niece of the legendary Feroza Begum, launched a music video album in Dhaka and Kolkata recently. The Nazrul singer said her new album was dedicated to her beloved aunt and mentor.

Before she left for Kolkata, Shusmita handed the album to eminent Nazrul exponent Sudhin Das. She was invited by the government of West Bengal to participate in the 117th birth anniversary celebrations of Kazi Nazrul Islam. Her nine-day stay was marked by performances in leading music institutions and television channels. She also performed at the prestigious Rabindra Sadan.

Shusmita made a brief stopover in Churulia during her visit, where Nazrul was born.

Her DVD launch was held at Kolkata Press Club, in presence of Kalyani Kazi, Kazi Nazrul Islam's daughter-in-law. Other prominent members included the head of Nazrul Tirtha and Shomiron Bagchi.

The DVD will be available in the Bangladesh market in a few days.