

NEWS bytes

Daisy Ridley returns in "Star Wars" short

It's not a whole new movie, but it's certainly good enough to help hold Star Wars fans over as they wait for "Last Jedi" to come out in December. On Monday, Disney posted the first in a series of animated shorts that are part of the "Star Wars: Forces of Destiny" campaign.

For the first time since she played the character in "The Force Awakens", Daisy Ridley returns as Rey in the episode "Sands of Jakku".

Lupita Nyong'o, who plays Maz Kanata, is also a part of the



nearly three-minute short that helps fill in the details of what happened just after Rey met BB-8.

The "Star Wars: Forces of Destiny" campaign focuses on the beloved saga's heroines through short stories set within the existing films.

It was previously announced that Felicity Jones would reprise her role of Jyn Erso for the animated series.

Source: Collider

"Theatre is who I am..."

Shajjad Rajib on his 16-year journey with Dhaka Theatre

NAZIBA BASHER

Shajjad Rajib, a seasoned theatre actor who has also ventured into television, began his career on the stage at an early age. He has been part of prominent theatre troupe Dhaka Theatre for the better part of two decades, and in a conversation with The Daily Star, spoke about his journey and aspirations. Excerpts:

"When I was preparing for my Honour's examinations, I saw an ad on a newspaper by theatre group Somoy Sangskritik Goshti. I was there for about a year but the group slacked off and I still hadn't learned a lot about real theatre."

"I saw a flier on the notice board of Charukola (Faculty of Fine Arts, Dhaka University) that said Dhaka Theatre was hiring. From that noticing of the flier till now, Dhaka Theatre has been my entire life."

"I remember clearly -- I was watching a rehearsal of 'Prachya'. Involuntarily, I began crying. And the only thought that struck my mind then was 'This is theatre. This is what I have been looking for. I wanted to act, and this was it. I had finally found it.'"

One of Shajjad's first shows was a street play called "Mrittu Shongbad", where he played a substitute character. His next role came in the much-acclaimed production, "Muntasir". Kamal Bayazid, who used play the titular role, was the first person to appreciate Shajjad's work in words. "All he did was pat on my back and say, 'Good job Rajib.' That boost meant the world to me."

After that, Shajjad worked in Selim Al-Deen's "Nimoojion". By the time the play developed from a script on to be projected on stage, the senior-most actors had become momentarily inactive. "Us juniors, and some immediate seniors worked on the play. It was during that production that I realised that once you live the character, you don't have to act. It

comes naturally," Shajjad recalls.

After "Nimoojion", he did Selim Al-Deen's "Dhaboman", under Shimul Yusuff's direction. "Dhaboman" is about the relationship between an animal and human. "Through that play, I learned how pure and unconditional a relationship can be," Shajjad says.

"Theatre has changed my views, my beliefs, and made me a better person. I used to finish all my day's work as fast as

great people like Nasiruddin Yousuff, Suborna Mustafa, Humayun Faridee, Pijush Bandyopadhyay, Shimul Yusuff, Afzal Hossain created their identity reminds me every day that I am blessed."

Currently, Shajjad is working in two television serials, "Chhanyachhara", directed by Rajibul Islam Rajib on Banglavisian, and "Baro Ghore Ek Uthan" of the same director, set to air on ATN Bangla. There are also some one-



PHOTO: STAR

possible, just to be able to attend rehearsals. It has disciplined me, helped me prioritise, and affected my lifestyle in every way. From my head to toe, inside and out, theatre is who I am."

While working with productions like "Tempest", "The Outsider", and the most recent "Our Country's Good", Shajjad had become a slightly inactive member. "I ventured out into television acting, but it's not that I am completely inactive. But those 10 years that I regularly attended rehearsals were the golden years. Working in the place where the

hour drama fictions that he has worked in, and is regularly working as a voice actor for the upcoming Duronto Television.

Shajjad believes that if theatre would support him financially, he would not venture out in anything else at all. "People have started paying for shows now, but that doesn't apply for every theatre troupe. Maybe it's not a big amount, but it has begun. Maybe in the next 10 years, a full-fledged career in theatre can become a reality. Theatre has overcome so much. We can overcome this too."



Chittagong pays tribute to Hemanta Mukhopadhyay

Mesmerising musical evening held

PRANABESH CHAKRABORTY, Chittagong

Music enthusiasts of the port city enjoyed an enchanting musical evening that featured songs of legendary singer Hemanta Mukhopadhyay at Theatre Institute Chittagong (TIC) auditorium on Tuesday.

To pay tribute to the legendary singer, Assistant High Commission of India, Chittagong and Indira Gandhi Cultural Centre, Dhaka jointly organised the programme.

Close associate of Hemanta Mukhopadhyay, artiste Soumyen Adhikari presented a number of popular songs of Hemanta at the programme.

Earlier, Ustad captain Azizul Islam and Indian Assistant High Commissioner to Chittagong Somnath Halder inaugurated the event.

June 16 was the 97th birth anniversary of Hemanta, one of the most iconic singers of Bangla music. Marking the occasion, the programme was organised to pay tribute to the singer and to strengthen cultural relations between the two countries.

Ustad Azizul Islam said Soumyen had got opportunity to come in touch with Hemanta. "We are also fortunate to have the chance to enjoy the songs of Hemanta in Soumyen's voice", he added.

The programme started with rendering several Rabindra Sangeet and songs of Hemanta by artiste Soma Chowdhury.

Later, Soumyen took the stage and rendered several songs of Hemanta. Interspersed between performances, the famed singer also shared stories behind the songs. His conversation and the performance glued the music aficionados to their seats over one and half an hour.

He first rendered a Tagore song, "Badolo Dinero Prothomo Kadom Phul". Next he rendered "Ami Dur Hote Tomare" and "Ei Rat Tomar Amar".

Later, he successively presented "Ei Meghla", "Tapur Tupur Bristi Jhore", "Olir O Kotha Shune", "Ogo Kajla Nayana", "Aj Dujanar Duti Poth" "Poth Harabo Bole Ebar" and "Kotodin Pore Ele". All the renditions were deeply appreciated by the audience.

Shantanu, Dipankar and Shahnewaj accompanied him on tabla, keyboard and guitar respectively.

Rtv celebrates 10 million Facebook Likes



High-ups of the channel along with cultural personalities at the event.

Rtv recently reached a new milestone on social media, having a following of more than 10 million on their Facebook page. The channel hosted a programme on July 3 to celebrate the achievement at BSEC Building in the capital where they thanked their fans and well-wishers, says a press release.

Managing Director of Rtv Humayun Kabir Bablu and CEO Syed Ashiq Rahman delivered the welcome address at the programme. The event was attended by dignitaries including members of the parliament Prof. Habibe Millat Munna, Abul Kalam Md. Ahsanul Haque Chowdhury, Nurjahan Begum Mukta, prominent technologist Mustafa Jabbar, Nazrul Islam Khan, actors Ramendu Majumdar, Ataur Rahman, Azizul Hakim, Chanchal Chowdhury, singers Moutushi, Partha Barua, and Qantara Khan from Suchinta Foundation. The guests lauded the channel for their accomplishment.

The popular private TV channel launched their Facebook page in 2009, and was verified by Facebook in 2014.

Iggy Azalea confirms Azealia Banks will be on her next album

It turns out that an Iggy Azalea and Azealia Banks collaboration is actually happening. A little over a week ago, the longtime foes publicly squashed their beef on social media. Iggy shared a post in which she expressed her empathy and insisted there was no hate: "As a 27 year old adult woman just know: I wish you well from one human to another and joke collaboration or not as adults we should move past trivial beef with strangers."

The post came just a few days after Azealia posted what appeared to be a wishful-to-do list. It included getting signed by Jay Z, dropping the "Fantasea 2" mixtape, and "releasing this Iggy collab." People were unsure if Azealia was joking, or if they two artists actually had worked on music together.

On Monday afternoon, Iggy confirmed that she and the Harlem rapper have a song on the way. And it will appear on Iggy's upcoming album, "Digital Distortion".

"Public Service Announcement, Azealia is going to be on DD. We are collaborating," Azalea wrote on Snapchat. "Burn your wigs now or preserve them in your freezer for release day." Shortly after revealing the surprising news, Iggy addressed the critics on Twitter, explaining the reasoning behind the decision. "I dont expect you guys to understand why i would collaborate with someone who has publicly said they hope i die. This has been something extremely negative for so long, if there is a way to make it positive and also be creative together, im here for it," she said in a series of tweets.

"Digital Distortion" is expected to drop later this year, following several push-backs. During an interview with Zane Lowe back in March, the 27-year-old Australian talked about the album's delay, and said she had to scrap the first version because it was too negative.

Source: Complex



TV WATCH

"Palki" and "Aparajita" reach 500th episode

A CORRESPONDENT

The two longest running drama serials on Deepto TV have reached the special milestone of airing their 500th episode. "Aparajita" is aired Sunday through Thursday at 6:30pm, followed by "Palki" at 7pm. The popular plays highlight the common theme of women's struggles in society, and how they eventually overcome all odds.



"Palki" outlines the struggle of an ordinary girl who does everything in her power to preserve her family. Various obstacles crop up, which Palki fearlessly overcomes, no matter what the risks. Today's 500th episode will feature a new twist in Palki's tale.

"Aparajita" is a play based on a novel by Ashapurna Devi. The story revolves around Mandira, who overcomes many adversaries to let strength and justice prevail.

Cultural programme in Bogra marking Eid

MAMUN-UR-RASHID, Bogra

An cultural programme titled 'Eid Milon Mela' was held on Thursday evening in Bogra, with song renditions and dance performances. The theme of the event, held at the town's Shaheed Titu Millenayatan, was "Dhormo Jar Jar, Utshab Shobar" (To each his own religion, festival is for everyone").

The new Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Bogra, Mohammad Nur-e-Alam Siddiki was present at the event. Convener of the event committee, Sairul Islam presided over the programme.

The speakers at the event said that such an event is arranged annually to build a bridge among different communities of the district and propagate equality, secularism and fraternity.



Local artistes perform a vibrant dance.

PHOTO: STAR