

I lost weight for the film, only to gain it back again:

SABILA NUR

Most notably, she will be playing a young Sheikh Rehana in eminent filmmaker Shyam Benegal's biopic of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a joint production of Bangladesh and India.

SHABABA IQBAL

Celebrated actress Sabila Nur is set to star in several Valentine's Day tele-fictions this year, teaming up with Afran Nisho and Apurba, among others. In particular, her pairing with Apurba is a hit with viewers.

Upon asking what makes the two of them click on screen, Sabila gives a rather earnest answer. "Audiences really liked us in the tele-fiction, 'Rajkumar'. It had an interesting story, focusing on an actor and a costume designer. Our comedy tele-fiction, 'Exchange', was also well-received. People still ask me to say dialogues from it!" laughs the actress.

"Whenever I work with Apurba bhai, there are no inhibitions. He is really cooperative. There is an ease and comfort between us, which is why I think people like our chemistry so much."

She will also be featured in "Hot Patties", one of the films in Shafayat Mansoor Rana's Valentine's Day short film series, "Ke Kokhon Kibhabe", alongside Salman Muqtadir. "Shafayat Mansoor Rana is one of my favourite directors. 'Hot Patties' has a unique premise - The script is very contemporary and witty. It is not entirely a love story," shares Sabila.

Besides Valentine's Day specials, she will be starring in an International Mother Language Day periodical drama, directed by Abu Hayat, with Khairul Basar. She is also in talks for a number of web projects.

Most notably, she will be playing a young Sheikh Rehana in eminent filmmaker Shyam Benegal's biopic of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a joint production of Bangladesh and India. "I was determined to get Sheikh Rehana's body language and mannerisms right. I studied many archival clips and photographs of her to prepare for the role," she explains.

Sabila went through a tremendous physical transformation for the film. "I lost weight for the film, only to gain it back again. It was one of the most psychologically engaging experiences of my career," she concludes.

PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL



Sarika ties the knot

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Prominent television actress and model, Sarika tied the knot with textile engineer, B Ahmed Rahi, on the first week of February.

The news was confirmed by the actress herself, to The Daily Star.

"We got married on February 2 in the presence of both the families. We wanted to keep it private so we didn't announce it earlier.

I am planning on coming back to work on February 12 till then please do keep us in your prayers so that we can live a happy and hearty life together," said the actress.



'Concert for Pawmum' on Saturday

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

A special charity concert "Concert for Pawmum 2.0" will take place at The Marketplace, located in Birulia.

The concert will feature popular lineups - Joler Gaan, Karnival, Ronopa, Aynus Moholla, Sandhi, Firoze Jong and BokroRekha. The tickets are priced 500 BDT each and interested concertgoers can contact - 01727323025 for tickets.

"Concert for Pawmum" will donate all its profits to construct Pawmum Tharkla School in Bandaraban. The funds will ensure better education and better prospective for the Murong community children so that they can empower themselves in future.



COUNTRYWIDE

Student's future flourishes with his roses in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

A student in Harinakundo upazila of Jhenidah has seen the face of success cultivating flowers, especially rose and tuberose (rajanigandha).

Mehedi Hasan Shishir, 28, the son of Saifur Rahman of Ramchandrapur village in the upazila, is a second year honours student at the Department of Political Science at Government Lalon Shah College.

According to the sources at the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) in Jhenidah, around 199 hectares of land have been brought under flower cultivation in the four upazilas of the district, which was 170 in the previous season.

Shishir is the only flower grower in Harinakundo upazila.

While talking to this correspondent, Shishir said his father was not solvent and he could not bear the expenses of his study. After passing the HSC exam in 2012, he could not pursue higher education due to poverty.

He then made up his mind to cultivate flowers as he had a profound love for flowers from his boyhood.

He cultivated rose on five decimals of land in 2015 on a trial basis and sold the flowers at Tk 50,000.

This year, around 199 hectares of land have been brought under flower cultivation in Jhenidah's four upazilas and Shishir is the only flower grower in Harinakundo upazila.

Later, he cultivated rose on 10 decimals in 2016 and earned Tk 80,000. Now, he cultivates flowers on one bigha (one bigha is equivalent to 46 decimals) where there are 1200 rose plants, 500 chandramallika, 1000 marigolds and 20,000 tuberose plants.

In 2018, his annual sale stood at Tk two lakh excluding the cost. In 2019, he could not sell any flowers due to the pandemic and

subsequent lockdown situation.

In 2021, he sold flowers worth Tk one lakh thirty thousand. This year, he has started the sale of Tk 30,000 to Tk 35,000 per month. The flower plants will last around 10 to 12 years.

He is expecting a good business on Valentine's Day to be celebrated on February 14.

He said that he will be able to sell per piece of rose at Tk 30 to Tk 40 and tuberose at Tk 25 to Tk 30 per stick.

He added that he will cultivate flowers on 10 bighas of land in the next year as it is very profitable. Especially, roses are in great demand all year round.

Seeing the success of Shishir, many other students in the village have started cultivating flowers.

Two undergraduate students - Rashed Hossain and Shimul Hossain - of the village have also started flower cultivation.

Deputy Director Asgar Ali of Jhenidah DAE said rose cultivation is very profitable. Its demand remains high all year round as it is used on different occasions.



Mehedi Hasan Shishir is seen plucking rose from his plot in Harinakundo upazila of Jhenidah.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

Jet fuel price hiked again

FROM PAGE 12

randomly, violating the articles 34 and 22 (Kha) of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC) Act," he added.

The imprudent decision of increasing the jet fuel price at a time when the sector is suffering from the pandemic will have a serious impact on the private airlines, said ATM Nazrul Islam, an aviation expert.

The local airline industry will lose competitiveness in the global market as the foreign airlines get jet fuel at a lower price.

"It's really an ominous

sign for our airline sector," he said, citing the grounding of Aviana Airways and GMG Airlines as a case in point.

The two airlines were forced to cease operations due to the huge losses caused by the high jet fuel price at that time, said Islam, who worked in different airlines including GMG and United Airways.

"Under the present circumstances, our survival will be at stake," said Kamrul Islam, general manager of public relations at US-Bangla Airlines.

If the aviation industry does not sustain, the

tourism and hospitality sectors will also suffer, he added.

Asked about the price hike, BPC Chairman ABM Azad said the local price of jet fuel corresponded to those in the international market.

"Jet fuel still costs less in our country than in Kolkata," he said, adding that BPC does not make much profit through selling jet fuel.

When told of the private airlines' concern, he said: "It's normal that they will protest the price hike as they are the consumers."

Breaking Section 144

FROM PAGE 12

Next morning, I went to the Awami League office on Nawabpur Road and saw that there was a commotion about whether Section 144 should be violated or not.

When I came back to the Arts Building, I saw that the meeting had started. Gaziul Haque was trying to conduct the meeting by raising his hands. Shamsul Huq spoke out against violating Section 144. At that time, Abdul Matin gave a very convincing plan that if all students violate Section 144 at once, police could use batons. So, small

groups of 10 would go ahead to break the curfew. Gaziul Haque announced the plan as a decision of the meeting.

Students were gathering near the Proctor's gate, but there was no sign of getting out on the street. There was a sense of chaos all around; no one seemed to be listening. I saw that our previous day's plan was almost ruined. Suddenly I thought, what if some of us go outside the gate and violate Section 144? Mohammad Sultan was writing down the names of those who came forward

to violate Section 144. I said to him, "You see my Pankhirajata [bicycle], I am going." I went ahead chanting the slogan "Rashtrabhasha Bangla Chai" (We want Bangla as the state language). It was quarter past one.

Muhammad Habibur Rahman led the first batch of students who violated Section 144 on February 21, 1952.

Source: Ekusher Songkolon 80: Shriticaroon. Bangla Academy, 1980. Translated by Shamsuddoza Sajen

What will happen

FROM PAGE 1

Manu Bala Shil, mother of the five deceased, kept asking people what would happen to her grandchildren who lost their fathers.

Siblings Hira Shil and Raktim Shil, who were injured in the crash on Cox's Bazar-Chattoogram highway on Monday morning, were undergoing

treatment at Malumghat Memorial Christian Hospital and Max Hospital.

"They were given 20 bags of blood," said Hasanul Islam Ador, chairman of Dulahazara Union Parishad, quoting family members.

After the filing of the case with Chakaria Police Station, Plaban became

emotionally unstable and was taken to Chattogram for treatment, the chairman added.

JP Dewan, Chakaria upazila nirbahi officer, said they gave Tk 25,000 to each of the victims' families on behalf of the Cox's Bazar district administration as assistance.

Last polls

FROM PAGE 12

as candidates there have already won unopposed, said EC officials.

"We are prepared for holding the last election under this Election Commission," said EC Joint Secretary SM Asaduzzaman.

The Nurul Huda-led commission, which is going to complete its five-year tenure on February 14, earned the bad name for failing to check alleged ballot stuffing the night before the 2018 parliamentary polls.

It also faced a huge criticism over the 100 percent vote cast in over 200 polling stations in that election.

Besides, a record number of candidates got elected unopposed in local government elections marred by widespread irregularities like ballot stuffing and capturing of booths. Clashes over Union Parishad polls held in phases led at least 102 people dead, according to media reports.

The EC has so far announced unofficial results of 4,027 Union Parishad polls in seven phases. The AL chairman nominees came out successful in 2,172 unions and independents in 1,778.

According to the EC, elections to the chairman posts of 369 were not required as candidates were elected unopposed and of them, 368 were AL nominees.

Blinken invites

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh's Washington mission in a message while Blinken himself expressed his willingness for the in-person meeting during a phone call in December last year.

"At that time he [Blinken] said he would like to meet me in person in Washington DC in spring of this year," Momen said.