



PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM SANJIDA PREETI'S FACEBOOK PAGE

Girl from theatre set to CONQUER SHOWBIZ

I feel 'Mridha Bonam Mridha' was under-promoted, and being one of the first productions to release theatrically after the pandemic's initial restrictions, it could not reach the audience that we had hoped for. - Sanjida Preeti

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Starting her journey with theatre, Sanjida Preeti moved from one medium to another, earning praises for her realistic screen presence and down-to-earth role choices. After the success of her recent releases, including critically acclaimed OTT productions like "Taqdeer", Preeti is looking forward to exploring the digital platforms while trying out in films.

We caught up with the actress in a candid chat to know more about her journey and upcoming releases.

You have recently garnered acclaim for your OTT ventures. From the theatre to the small screen and then to the online streaming platforms, do you find the transition jarring?

The acting process is not very different when we change screens. When I stepped into television, things were pretty similar to what we come across in OTT projects these days. A lot of experimental projects would be produced and the same exposure is now available on OTT and other online platforms now.

Nevertheless, the stage is very different, especially when we talk about preparing for roles. For theatrical productions, we would have to rehearse for months before we set foot on the stage for a presentation. We also have to work on our voice range and do a lot of research as it's a single take opportunity.

You decided to pursue music academically, but later switched to acting. What enticed you to make this decision?

As common in the 90's, my parents had sent me to learn music, since I expressed that I was interested in learning some sort of art. With time, I started getting programmes from BTV which featured singing, dance and acting.

As soon as I passed my HSC exams, I joined Prachyanat, and loved the experience. It is then that I realised how much I enjoyed this art form, and pursued it while maintaining my formal education.

Despite being a business graduate, I never pursued corporate jobs. Rather, I explored

my chances in acting, trying to earn from something I love.

You recently debuted on the silver screen with "Mridha Bonam Mridha". How was your experience with the project?

I was obviously excited about it, since it was my first film. The character was challenging, and I was very nervous too.

I feel the film was under-promoted, and being one of the first productions to release theatrically after the pandemic's initial restrictions, it could not reach the audience that we had hoped for.

However, I did get positive feedback for my performance in the film, and that strengthened my urge to take up more realistic and practical characters for my future endeavours.

What other projects are you looking forward to?

I will be seen in Hridi Haq's directorial, "1971 Shei Shob Din". I have also been busy with Eid productions, and am in talks for a few OTT projects.

Speaking of projects that I want to do, the Champa, Diti and Shabnaz starrer action film "Ajker Hungama" was to be my favourite film when I was little, and I really crave to star in a similar project in the future!

Situation in Ukraine 'devastating', says Priyanka

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Taking a stand against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas called Russia's actions "terrifying".

Priyanka took to her Instagram handle, and shared a video with a long post.

"The situation unfolding in Ukraine is terrifying. Innocent people living in fear for their lives and the lives of their loved ones, while trying to navigate the uncertainty of the immediate future," she wrote.

"It's difficult to comprehend how in the modern world this could escalate to such a catastrophic point, but this is a consequential moment that will reverberate around the world. There are innocent lives living in this war zone. They are just like you and me. Here is more info at the link in my bio about how to assist the people of Ukraine."



Partha and Bappa Mazumder to appear together in "HOYE JAO TUMI"

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Noted musicians and brothers Partha Majumder and Bappa Mazumder will appear in a music video together for the first time. They have collaborated for the song "Hoye Jao Tumi", composed by Partha, and voiced by Bappa.

Partha Majumder wrote on social media about this collaboration, posting the pictures of the production.

Under the banner of Dhooli music, the lyrics for the track is written by Atiur Rahman, while Yamin Elan directed the music video of the romantic song.



COUNTRYWIDE

BURIMARI LAND PORT

Workers at high risk of coronavirus infection

They demand Covid-19 booster dose immediately

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Around 2600 workers engaged in loading and unloading goods are at a considerable risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus at Burimari Land Port in Patgram upazila of Lalmonirhat as they are to work along with foreign workers amidst the latest Covid-19 spike.

The workers demanded that the booster dose of the Covid vaccine be administered to them on a priority basis.

The local department said they will administer the vaccine among the workers after getting a go-ahead from the higher authorities.

Safar Uddin, president of Burimari Land Port Load-Unload Labourers' Union, said labourers at the Burimari land port have to unload goods from trucks coming from India and Bhutan. Transport workers who come with foreign vehicles often come in contact with local workers.

Due to this, the local labourers working at the port are at risk of contracting Covid-19 virus.

"Every labourer has been administered two doses of the covid vaccine. No labourers have received booster doses yet," he said, adding that "I appeal to the authority to administer booster dose to the labourers on a priority basis. The health department has not taken any action so far".

Anarul Islam, a labourer at the port, said in order to unload goods from foreign vehicles on the land port, they often have to work along with foreign transport workers. They have to work taking risk of Covid-19 infection.

"We would feel safe if we received the booster dose of covid vaccine," he said.

Moniruzzaman Monir, general secretary of Lalmonirhat District Unit of Sangjukta Sramik Federation,

said the health department has been urged to administer booster doses of covid vaccine to labourers in Burimari Land Port on a priority basis but no steps have been taken in this regard.

He demanded that the health department take immediate steps to administer booster dose to local labourers.

Bangladesh Land Port Authority's Assistant Director at Burimari land port Ruhul Amin said it is urgent to administer booster doses of covid vaccine to loading and unloading labourers working at the port on a priority basis. He has informed the health department about this, he said.

Dr Maqbul Hossain of the special medical team at Burimari Land Port said he has already informed the higher authorities about the matter.

If they get direction, booster doses of covid vaccine will be administered to the labourers working in the port soon, he added.

Schoolgirl gang-raped at knifepoint

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the hospital with the help of local representatives."

Local Union Parishad member Ibrahim Mollah said all of the accused live in Kalmibunia village, where the victim also lives.

"We all brought the girl to the hospital. We demand severe punishment to the rapists."

Manjurul Islam, emergency doctor of the hospital, said initial tests showed signs of rape.

Tulsi Rani Biswas, a senior nurse of the gynaecology department, said the victim had bite marks on her body and had fallen seriously ill due to the torture. "We are giving her the necessary

treatment."

Police said they have launched a drive to arrest the other accused and are investigating whether anyone else was involved in the incident.

Admission seekers worried over syllabus

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were held under the curtailed syllabuses of the HSC exams.

Last year, a total of 13.07 lakh students passed the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and its equivalent exams, according to results published on February 13. Of them 1,89,169 secured

GPA 5.

In Bangladesh, students usually prefer public universities and medical colleges to other higher education institutions. There are around 60,000 seats in 45 public universities and 4,350 in 47 public medical colleges.

The Dhaka University

authorities said they have not decided on which syllabus the entrance test will be held.

DU Vice Chancellor Prof Akhtaruzzaman said teachers involved in overseeing admission tests will decide on the syllabus and question patterns.

"They would give

consideration to the shortened HSC exam syllabus on which the exams were held [last year]," he hoped.

Professor Abdus Salam of Rajshahi University said the admission committee will make the decision regarding the entrance test syllabus.

First Ekushey Compilation

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10 students.

At around 1:15 pm, Oli Ahad told me, "Students are throwing stones at the police near the gate in front of the medical college hostel. Go there and shoot them from throwing stones." He added, "We have news, the police might even shoot today."

I went there at half past one. When I reached the gate, I saw the boys throwing stones and as far as I can remember, the shots were fired fifteen minutes after my arrival. Barkat might be at the first barrack. The bullet pierced

the bamboo fence and hit him.

Me, Amir Ali and another student returned to Madhur Canteen and, from there, went to the Capital Press opposite the jail. I wrote a leaflet sitting there. Its headline was 'Shot on the orders of Minister Mofizuddin'. The press helped us a lot that day.

About 4:30 pm, we returned to the university. We published around two or three thousand leaflets. The leaflets were distributed in Chawkbazar, Nazirabazar and other places. Students distributed those leaflets.

Of those who were martyred on February 21, I knew only Barkat personally. It was heard that some bodies were missing. Some people were identified, some could not be identified. We could identify Salam, Barkat and Rafiq. But there were rumours that 50-60 people had died. There were various student organisations at that time. No organisation disagreed on the question of Bangla language. Tensions were high.

The tide of language movement was very strong from 1952 to the 1954 elections. I published

a compilation on the language movement in March 1953. Twenty-one days later, the Muslim League government banned the compilation. [Abridged]

Hasan Hafizur Rahman actively took part in the language movement in 1952. In 1953, the first compilation work on the Language Movement, Ekushey February, was published under his editorship.

Source: Ekusher Potobhumi, Ekusher Sriti, Edited by Matiur Rahman Translated by Shamsuddoza Sajen

Local youths behind it: Rab

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On Friday, a team of Rab-8, with the help of Rab Headquarters, raided different areas of Gopalganj and arrested them.

The arrestees -- Rakib Mia alias Emon, 22; Piash Fakir, 26; Pradip Biswas, 24; Nahid Rayhan, 24; Helal, 24; and Turjo Mohonto, 26 -- have no political affiliation, according to Rab.

"They admitted that they were involved in the heinous rape," Moin said.

Meanwhile, the students and teachers of BSMRSTU continued their demonstrations for the third day yesterday, demanding justice for their fellow student.

"We have learnt that Rab arrested six youths. One of our four demands has been partially fulfilled. We will continue the movement until the remaining demands are fulfilled," said Naeem Islam, a student of the university.

Their four-point demands include ensuring security to the students residing inside the campus and its adjacent areas.

"We want a campus where our teachers and students would be safe," said AQM Mahbub, vice-chancellor of BSMRSTU, demanding exemplary punishment for the heinous crime.

In another development, at least 43 female students have left their mess on security concerns from the

Chargata area under Sadar upazila and took shelter in the university hall around 10:30 pm on Friday.

The university, which opened in 2011, has about 4,000 female students.

Of them, only 1,200 get campus accommodation, with the rest putting up at different messes near the university area or in Gopalganj town.

[Our Correspondent in Gopalganj contributed to this report]

Govt extends special first-dose campaign

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death was not caused by the vaccine.

In addition to the regular campaign, running at 1,005 centres, the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) launched the special drive across the country to fulfil the target of bringing 70 percent of the country's population under vaccine coverage.

It could not be known how many jabs were administered till yesterday evening.

As of Friday, around 92 percent of the targeted population received their first jabs, according to DGHS data.

During yesterday's online briefing, the health minister said, "No county has been able to vaccinate one crore people in a day ... Bangladesh is the 10th among all the countries in terms of bringing the highest number of people

under vaccine coverage."

Visiting eight vaccine centres in Dhaka city's different areas, The Daily Star saw people, mostly rickshaw pullers, day labourers, and students, standing in long queues.

"I could not register earlier as I have no documents. I am standing in this line for two hours [for the vaccine] as I have heard no one will get the first dose after today," said

Abu Taher, 35, a rickshaw-puller, near the Dhaka Medical College vaccine centre, before the special drive was extended.

Our correspondents in different districts reported similar situations.

Meanwhile, at least 10 people were injured in a stampede after police tried to tackle a rush of vaccine recipients near the Health Management Vaccination centre in Savar on the outskirts of the capital.