

'The announcement came to me as a pleasant surprise'

Aparna Ghose on winning her second National Award

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Starting her journey with theatre, celebrated film and television actress Aparna Ghose went on to collaborate with acclaimed directors like Mostofa Sarwar Farooki and Gazi Rakayet.

After winning her first National Film Award for "Mrittika Maya", Aparna bagged her second one for her brilliant performance in the Fakhrul Arefeen Khan directorial "Gondi", where she shared the screen with Sabyasachi Chakrabarty and Suborna Mustafa.

After spending months in Japan, Aparna is back in Bangladesh, and is looking forward to new projects. We caught up with the actress to find out about her upcoming Eid ventures, and more.

You have won the National Film Award for the second time. How do you feel?

The National Award is the ultimate recognition for any film artiste. I was in complete shock when I won it for the first time.

This time, although the announcement came to me as a pleasant surprise, I was able to enjoy my achievement more fully.

I am grateful to my production team and my co-actors from "Gondi". They were amazing and very down-to-earth. I look forward to more such experiences in the future.

How did you venture out into acting?

Hailing from Chattogram, my passion for acting dates back to my college days. My father led the theatre troupe Nandikar. He empowered my interest towards the stage.

I acted in plays when I was in college, and after I ventured out to the screen, there was no looking back.

Although you are seen on television quite frequently, you are selective when it comes to films. What is your vision regarding your silver screen projects?

I believe a film can make an actor eternal. I love working on the silver screen, but I rarely come

across scripts that are based on genres that I prefer.

Films should be a reflection of realism. Despite having a keen interest in films, I seldom have the opportunity to be a part of ones that are exciting to me.

You were in Japan for quite a while. Did you enjoy your stay there?

It was an unforgettable experience. My husband lives in Japan and I was visiting him for three months. We went to many beautiful locations. My husband loves mountains and trekking, and we often went out to enjoy misty mornings in the mountain winds.

During my visit, I fell in love with Japanese cuisine and the country's natural beauty. The chilly weather was hard to deal with at times. If the weather was nicer, we would have travelled more.

When are you planning to start shooting for your Eid projects?

I plan to start shooting very soon. I have just returned home, and I am being approached with scripts.

I wish to gift noteworthy performances to my fans this Eid-UI-Fitr.



PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK



Shironamhin in Paris

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Popular band Shironamhin is set to rock the stage at the maison de' receptions (pavilion royal) in Paris. The band is set to fly to Paris on March 29 after completing their Chattogram tour from March 26 to 28.

The Embassy of Bangladesh in Paris, arranged the special concert to mark the golden jubilee of Bangladesh's independence. The event will be attended by Bangladeshi diplomats and delegates from France, who will get to witness the unity of two different cultures.

"It's an honour to be invited to such prestigious event. This will be our first European tour so we are very excited," said Shironamhin's frontman, Ziaur Rahman.

Beyonce, Billie Eilish among musical performers at Oscars

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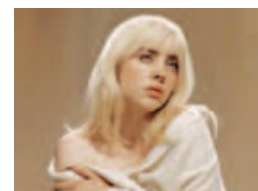
Music superstars Beyonce and Billie Eilish will perform their Oscar-nominated songs live at this year's Academy Awards ceremony on March 27, as per reports.

Beyonce will sing "Be Alive," a song she co-wrote for the movie "King Richard", about the father of tennis legends Venus and Serena Williams.

Billie Eilish and her brother Finneas O'Connell will team up for their James Bond theme song, "No Time to Die."

Country music star Reba McEntire will sing "Somehow You Do," a song written by Diane Warren for the movie, "Four Good Days." "Dos Oruguitas" from the animated musical "Encanto" will be performed by Sebastian Yatra.

The fifth nominee, "Down To Joy" from the movie "Belfast," will not be performed during the telecast.



NEWS

Dawn shadowed by dark forces

FROM PAGE 1
priest of the temple, and forced him to recite "Kalima", an Islamic declaration of faith, in front of those present there.

"Are you a Hindu or Muslim?" the soldiers asked Paramananda. "As he replied that he was the priest of the temple, the army compelled him to recite Kalima," recalled Shankar Lal Ghosh, a witness who was around 17 at that time.

"The Pakistan army then brutally killed him by bayonetting in the stomach. To reconfirm his death, they also fired bullets," he told this newspaper.

People started running frantically for life.

Women broke their shakha, conch shell bangles, and wiped clean their sindoor, vermilion dots put along the part of their hairline. They didn't want to be recognised as Hindus.

Some even began to shout "Pakistan Zindabad". Some tried to hide inside the temple and the ashram, but the soldiers traced them out.

Dilip Das, another witness, said women and children were forced to line up while men were in a separate queue. "They [Pakistanis] opened fire on the lines. Then they set fire to the temple and the ashram."

Dilip, who was then about 12, lost his father and two sisters on that night. It was sheer luck that he along with his mother managed to flee the temple to the High Court premises through a pocket gate.

Shankar, who was one of those standing in a line, also considers himself lucky. "A bullet somehow missed my head... I

fainted," he recounted the nightmare.

"I did not know how much time went by when I regained consciousness. As I opened my eyes, I found myself under some motionless bodies. I realised I was shot at the wrist joint of my right hand," said Shankar, showing the scars of the bullet.

He fled in the dawn after the barbaric Pakistan forces finished their atrocities.

During the army operation, Beli Rani crossed the wall of the temple cuddling her two-year-old daughter, and took shelter at an incomplete building on the High Court premises.

She, however, lost her husband, Shaurya Das, and two other relatives.

"As the day broke, I went back to find out what happened to them. But it was all over," said Beli, now in her late 60s.

Family members of the martyrs set up a public enquiry commission headed by Justice KM Sobhan in 2000 to prepare a list of martyrs and know the extent of the brutality unleashed by the Pakistan forces at the temple.

The commission report said the Pakistan forces upon arrival started to throw some kind of explosives, and according to some witnesses, they fired cannons, blowing away the backside of the temple.

The commission found names of 50 martyrs, though its preliminary report said according to deposition of witnesses, at least 85 to 100 were killed by marauding Pakistani forces.

Outside the main gate

of the temple, built about 300 years ago, an epitaph is erected with the names of the 61 martyrs of the massacre.

A letter to Senator William B Saxbe presented on April 29, 1971, contains a description of the massacre in Ramna area. Senator Saxbe presented it in his speech in the US Senate on April 29, 1971, according to "Bangladesh Documents" by University Press Limited. It was first published by the Ministry of External Affairs of India in 1971-72.

Rohde wrote: "On the 29th [March] we stood at Ramna Kali Bari, an ancient Hindu village of about 250 people at the centre of Dacca Ramna Race Course, and witnessed the stacks of machine-gunned, burning remains of men, women and children butchered ... I photographed the scene hours later."

According to the book, Gordon Allott during his speech in the US Senate on July 14, 1971 said even during the most violent Hindu-Muslim riots of partition, the Ramna village was able to avoid participation in communal strife.

"On March 29, a pile of approximately 70 to 100 bodies charred and machine-gunned, was on visible display in Kali Bari. The entire village was burned to the ground," he added.

Bipul Roy, general secretary of a committee that rallying for recognition of martyrs of the temple massacre, said, "The massacre at Ramna Kali Mandir and Ma Anandamoyee Ashram

hardly gets attention in the discussion on the genocide centring on the Liberation War."

Bipul, who lost his grandfather and elder brother in the massacre, said none of those killed in the temple massacre was recognised as "martyrs of the Liberation War" by the state.

They have held different programmes and press conferences seeking this recognition, but to no avail.

"We sought Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's appointment to place our demand before her in 2019, but we are yet to get it. We request the prime minister to meet our demand," he said.

Liberation War researcher Muntassir Mamoon opined that those who lost lives in the Ramna massacre should get recognition as the martyrs of the Liberation War.

"At least the names on the plaque [of the temple] should be given recognition," said Muntassir, one of the members of the Public Inquiry Commission.

Contacted, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Haque said there are two types of martyrs of Liberation War -- one is Gono Shaheed (unarmed victims of mass killings) and another is those who embraced martyrdom in battlefield -- and the latter were recognised through gazette notifications.

"The government is considering preparing a list of the Gono Shaheed. If we prepare the list, we will definitely include the names of people who lost their lives in Ramna Kali Mandir," he said.

Law enforcers won't have to comply

FROM PAGE 1
No definitions are provided in the draft explaining the context or when such an exception can be used.

This means, any person, being prosecuted under any law, no matter how minor the charges may be, will not have the right to data protection, according to critics.

Collecting personal data for any purpose other than these will require the consent of the individual in question, according to the draft bill.

Similarly, citizens will need to be notified before processing their data for any purpose -- but no such notification will be necessary for the prevention or detection of any crime, for the purpose of investigations,

Santal farmer kills

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locals, the two cousins drank the pesticide near a deep tube-well of Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) at Ishwaripur village of the same union around 5:30pm.

Hours later, Shakhawat Hossain, the deep tube-well operator, hired Bappi Mardi, a rickshaw van puller of Nimghutu village, to take Abhinath and Robi home, police and locals said.

Bappi Mardi, however, told this correspondent that he took Abhinath to his home with Shakhawat, but not Robi.

"I saw Shakhawat walking through crop fields toward the road with Abhinath leaning over his shoulder," Bappi Mardi told this correspondent.

From Abhinath and Shakhawat's conversation on the back of his rickshaw van, Bappi learnt that the farmers had pesticides with them when they went to visit the deep tube-well as they needed water for their

or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

In addition, all citizens have a "right to be forgotten" or a right to have their data erased and destroyed, after use, to ensure that nobody holds such personal data for an indefinite period.

But this is not necessary for personal data that will be used for "public interest" or for compliance with legal obligations. Neither of these terms is defined in the draft.

Other than these grounds for exemptions, the draft also contains a provision that will allow the government to publish gazettes sparing certain actors from having to follow any provision of the law.

"The Data Protection

Office can take any step or exercise any power over a data controller, data processor or representatives of them to provide necessary data for the purpose of this act," said Md Saimum Reza Talukder, an advocate who specialises in law, privacy and digital technologies.

A data controller is defined as the person responsible for collecting or processing (or supervising the processing) of personal data.

The draft also says that the DG and the staff of the data protection office cannot be prosecuted for misuses of the law, if the violations were done in "good faith".

"Section 66 provides broad immunity to the DG and the staff of the Data

Protection Office from criminal and civil liability if they do something in good faith. Such provisions are against the spirit of Article 27 of our constitution which gives all citizens equality before the law," said Talukder.

"It can be said that all of these might create scopes to abuse this act by government officials if checks and balances are not maintained during the review process and oversight by the civil society," he added.

Dhaka, Moscow
FROM PAGE 1
Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant, a mega project of the government, is being funded by Russia.

"We can assure that the project will be completed as per schedule."

When asked about the rising prices of wheat and gas in the global market, of which Russia is a major supplier, Mantytskyi said his country will fulfil its contractual obligations.

For instance, despite sanctions from the West, Russia is continuing to supply gas to Europe, he said, adding that India recently announced a plan to buy more Russian oil to ensure energy security.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, many Western companies have abandoned the market. The Russian envoy says it has created an export opportunity for Bangladesh, particularly for garment, pharmaceutical products and agricultural produce.

"We will take forward our economic relations with Bangladesh and overcome all challenges," he said, while thanking Bangladesh for abstaining from voting on the Russia resolution in the UN General Assembly despite external pressure.

OC Kamrul Islam said Shakhawat told police that some 160 farmers took water from the tube-well and cultivated Boro paddy on some 265 bighas.

He had to maintain a queue of farmers as the deep tube-well had lost its capacity to extract sufficient water, Shakhawat told police.

"All farmers suffer the same water crisis," the OC said.

Rafiqul Hasan, assistant engineer of BMDA Godagari zone said there should be no crisis of irrigation water under the deep tube-well's coverage at this time.

"Water crisis occurs in mid-summer," he said, adding that he had received no complaint of deep tube-well operators depriving people of indigenous communities.

When this correspondent tried to contact Shakhawat

for an interview, he said he was in the hospital and could not be reached.

Shakhawat's wife, Arefin Ara, said she was in the hospital and could not be reached.