

My parents believed that I deserved the National Award: Kona

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Prominent singer Dilshad Nahar Kona is a widely recognised voice in Bangladesh for her melodious songs. She won her first National Film Award for "Tui Ki Amar Hobi Re" from "Bishwoshundori", and has a packed schedule with live shows and concerts.

In a chat with the Daily Star, the "Reshmi Churi" singer talked about winning the National Award, and more.

What was your reaction on winning your first National Award?

My parents believed that I deserved the National Award. When I finally held it in my hands, my father and sister couldn't hold back their happy tears.

I couldn't have come this far without the love and support of my fans and well-wishers.

Audiences love every song of "Bishwoshundori" and I am really happy that they have made "Tui Ki Amar Hobi Re" popular. This song means a lot to me.

Do you think this award has increased your responsibility as an artiste?

I have done some wonderful playback songs for films, and I have worked with a lot of good people.

That being said, I am quite selective about film songs, as I want to stand out amongst the crowd. After winning the National Award, my responsibility to make good music has increased tremendously.

Are you busy with stage shows?

My schedule is packed with stage shows right now. I am doing shows in Dhaka, Gazipur, and Sirajganj.

During the surge in Covid-19 cases, everything became stagnant and we couldn't do live shows. There is a sheer thrill in performing on stage in front of an audience, as you get to see their immediate reactions.

What is next for you, in terms of your career in music?

I have been with music for years and I want to keep on singing for a long time. Music is my love and passion. It feels great to be loved by the audience so much. I want to move forward with such love and admiration in my career.



PHOTO: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

'Shimu: Made in Bangladesh' to release in Japan

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Rubaiyat Hossain's acclaimed film, "Shimu: Made in Bangladesh", hit local theatres on March 11. Now, it is set to release in Japan on April 16.



The director announced the news via her Facebook account, sharing that the movie will be released in 15 theatres across Japan, including in cities like Tokyo, Hokkaido, and Okinawa.

Pandora is the Japanese distributor of "Shimu: Made in Bangladesh", while the Japanese subtitles for the film were done by students of Osaka Women's University.

Scorpions to perform for Bangladesh at Madison Square Garden

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Scorpions is set to perform at Madison Square Garden in New York City, just over 50 years after George Harrison organised a two-show Concert for Bangladesh at the same venue.

The Golden Jubilee Bangladesh Concert celebrating 50 years of Bangladesh's independence will be held at Madison Square Garden on Friday, May 6, reads the official Facebook page of Scorpions.



Renowned Bangladeshi band Chirkutt is expected to be a special guest.

The show will aid the United Nations Development Programme in launching a global cyber security awareness campaign, according to The Music Universe report.

The event is being organised by the ICT Division with the help of the Bangladesh Hi-Tech

Park Authority, the UNDP, the US Embassy in Bangladesh, along with local sponsors.

The goal of the concert is to attract a global audience and celebrate Bangladesh's golden anniversary through a live, one-night-only musical performance.

COUNTRYWIDE

Pond in arable land worries farmers

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Lalmonirhat

Over 100 farmers in Aditmari upazila are ringing an alarm as a local influential is digging a pond on around 22 bighas of land without prior approval of the authorities, which they think might make their cropland waterlogged.

Farmers of Kismat Khutamara village in Saptibari union of Aditmari in Lalmonirhat said due to the digging of the pond in the middle of cropland, the area will be waterlogged hampering the cultivation of crops in the adjacent lands.

According to villagers, a local man named Majidul Islam has been digging the pond on his 22 bighas of land since last February. The soil extracted

from the pond is going to a local brick kiln. The soil is being transported by a few trucks from morning till evening every day. Consequently, the village road has become battered. Four culverts of the road have already been broken.

Due to this pond, waterlogging will be created on more than three hundred bighas of land, the farmers claimed.

Local farmer Salamat Ali, 55, said "Majidul Islam is digging the pond on his land without consulting any of us. We can't even protest him because he is influential."

Another farmer, Mozammel Haque, 56, said that it will not be possible to grow crops on their land once the pond is dug.

"Waterlogging will be created in the land and the crops will be

ruined," he said.

Local farmer Jafur Ali, 57, alleged that Majidul Islam was planning to buy their lands cheaply by digging the pond amid farmland.

Contacted, Majidul Islam said that he has been digging the pond on his own land. So there is no need to take any permission.

"I want to make a profit by farming fish so I am digging the pond," he said.

However, Majidul denied the allegation that he was planning to buy other people's land at a cheaper rate.

Aditmari Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) G R Sarwar said no one can dig a pond on arable land.

He will visit the spot and take necessary action soon, said the UNO.



A local influential man in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila has been digging a large pond on arable land making the whole area prone to waterlogging.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Ward councillor

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to the spot to remove the students from the highway.

"Appropriate actions will be taken after an investigation once the school authorities file an official complaint."

Asked, Asha defended himself saying he had talked to the headmaster about keeping the construction materials in the school. "He is now going in the opposite direction."

Put an end

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former adviser to the caretaker government, called for improving the ease of doing business and reducing the cost of doing business for a conducive trade and investment ecosystem in the country.

Planning Minister MA Mannan, who was the chief guest at the event, acknowledged the bureaucratic red tapes.

"Authoritarian, this is the word [that] the government officials love. There are numerous problems that can be resolved in an instant," he said, while calling for a shift away from the bureaucratic culture.

The government should back the automobile industry as it has in the case of the garment industry over the last three to four decades, said Taskeen Ahmed, managing director of Ifad Group.

"If we want export diversification as the government always insists, we have to focus on light engineering and information technology. We need a clear or at least a semi long-term road map for the automobile industry," he said.

FBCCI President Md Jashim Uddin urged the NBR to consult with the private sector before changing any rule.

Dhaka turned into a slum

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and air pollution.

"There is no guarantee for the Dhaka city commuters that they will be able to reach their destinations by noon even if they start in the morning," the lawmaker said.

Citing a report of

Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, he said traffic congestion in Dhaka city is causing 2.5 percent loss of gross domestic product per annum, amounting to Tk 87,000 crore.

He said there is no coordination in

development work. One organisation constructs a road and in a few days another digs it.

The lawmaker demanded appropriate steps, including decentralisation of the administration, to resolve the situation.

3 stooges colluding

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appeared a slip of tongue, he named the United States as the country behind the origin of a "message".

"America has -- oh, not America but a foreign country I can't name. I mean from a foreign country, we received a message," he said.

"They knew beforehand that a no-trust move was coming. The no-trust motion was not even submitted [at the time]. It means that they (the opposition) was connected with these people abroad. ... They say they will forgive Pakistan if Imran Khan loses in no-trust move, but if the move fails, Pakistan will have to go through a difficult time," Khan added.

Local media have reported the message was in a briefing letter from Pakistan's ambassador to Washington recording a senior US official during their meeting in early March.

Khan, a former international cricket star who in 1992 captained Pakistan to their only World Cup win, insisted he would never resign.

"I fight till the very last ball. I never quit whatever the result may be," he said.

Earlier, the Deputy Speaker of the parliament, who is from Khan's ruling Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, suspended the proceedings of debate on the no-confidence motion when legislators declined to first address other items on

the agenda.

Pakistan parliament is now expected to vote on whether to remove Khan as prime minister on Sunday at 11.30 am.

"The prime minister is as good as gone," the influential English-language Dawn newspaper said in an editorial on the front page of its website yesterday. Khan's ouster could mean another round of instability in a country in which the military has a long record of intervening in politics.

The PTI-led coalition effectively lost its majority in the 342-member National Assembly Wednesday when the MQM-P, a key partner, said its seven lawmakers would vote with the opposition alliance. More than a dozen PTI lawmakers have also indicated they will cross the floor.

Some local media reported that the joint opposition had cobbled together 196 lawmakers, including the rebels, by Wednesday evening, well above the 172 needed to vote out the former cricket star.

Khan has ordered all PTI legislators to not attend the assembly on the day of the vote to mitigate any chance of dissidents secretly supporting the motion to remove him. Absenteeism would not hurt Khan's cause because he does not need to win, he just needs to ensure that the opposition cannot get the 172 votes they need.

In the past, parties

have resorted to physically preventing lawmakers from voting against key legislation by blocking access to the national assembly, leading to cat-and-mouse chases and even accusations of kidnapping.

The previous two attempts to oust a Pakistani PM through no-confidence had failed.

Khan was elected after promising to sweep away decades of entrenched corruption and cronyism, but has struggled to maintain support with inflation skyrocketing, a feeble rupee and crippling debt.

Some analysts say Khan has also lost the crucial support of the military -- claims both sides deny -- and Pakistan's army is key to political power.

Yesterday, National Security Committee (NSC), Pakistan's highest forum for coordination on security issues, decided to issue a "strong demarche" to a country, that it did not name, over a "threat letter" -- purportedly showing evidence of a foreign conspiracy to oust the PTI-led government -- terming it "blatant interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan".

That came a day after the US State Department said on Wednesday that no US government agency or official had sent a letter to Pakistan on the current political situation in the country.