

## FROM THE RAMP TO THE SCREEN Shela is all set for challenges

SHABABA IQBAL

**Shirin Akter Shela is best known as the winner of Miss Universe Bangladesh 2019. Sporting a red jamdani shari with a model hood of Bangladeshi rickshaws and ornaments that emulated Bengali letters, she won hearts with her national costume at the beauty pageant's final competition in the USA. She is the first person from a Muslim-majority country in South Asia to compete for the title of Miss Universe.**

Shela keeps her roots close to her heart. In February this year, she collaborated with fashion designer Tasmit Aliyat Army and a few artists to adorn the tea stalls of TSC with bright and beautiful rickshaw paint.

She made her acting debut earlier this month with Nuhash Humayun's "Pett Kata Shaw", on Chorki.

The series is a modern anthology of supernatural stories based on Bengali folklore. The stories contain psychological and paranormal elements that explore the human condition.

"Ei Building E Meye Nishedh", the first episode of the show, featuring Shela and Shohel Mondol in the primary roles, was released on April 7.

Shela plays a *petni* (female ghost) in the episode, which follows Hasan (Mondol), a young man who discovers that he has a mysterious guest, while cooking fish one night.

He realises that a *petni* has entered his house, and he has to feed the fish to her quickly, if he does not wish to be her feast.

Shela brilliantly portrays every complex facet of the fish-eating *petni*'s personality. Fierce and terrifying, she understands right from the off what makes the twisted and tortured soul such a monumental presence, and backs up her compelling performance with an intimidating and eerie physicality.

From undergoing weight loss and heavy makeup to shaving off her eyebrows, Shela prepared for the role thoroughly.

"It was exciting because Nuhash *bhai* wanted me to break out of my glamorous image. Viewers got to see me in a surprising and different avatar, that too, in my acting debut," she explains. "I lost weight because I portrayed a starving *petni*, who is enticed by the smell of fish. While preparing

for the show, we realised that the makeup for covering my eyebrows was not satisfactory. I figured there is no point in taking up this role if I cannot give it my hundred percent. So, I shaved off my eyebrows. I had a great time working with Nuhash *bhai*."

For Shela, "Pett Kata Shaw" was special because it reminded her of ghost stories she heard from her grandparents, as a child. "My grandparents are no more. I miss them very much. I worked on this show in memory of them," she shares.

Moreover, she was drawn to the script because she believes in paranormal activities.

It is rare for a newcomer to burst so confidently into acting, but Shela makes it look easy.

"I hope to choose strong roles in stories with social messages. I want to play women whom viewers can connect with," she concludes.



Shirin Akter Shela is best known as the winner of Miss Universe Bangladesh 2019.

PHOTO: COURTESY



PHOTO: ELEGANT MAKEOVER AND FASHION, COURTESY OF SHIRIN AKTER SHELA



## Renowned personalities to receive BACHSAS Awards on April 25

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The Bangladesh Chalachitra Sangbadik Samity (BACHSAS) Awards will be held on April 25, 2022, at the Diplomatic Engineering Institution auditorium. Twelve personalities will be awarded at the ceremony for their contribution to the arts.

Renowned actor Alamgir, filmmaker Chhatku Ahmed, and cinematographer Abdul Latif Bachchu will be awarded at the ceremony. Eminent actor and Member of Parliament Asaduzzaman Noor will also be honoured at the event, alongside thespians Ramendu Majumdar and Ataur Rahman.

Moreover, renowned singers Runa Laila and Syed Abdul Hadi will be awarded, alongside music director and lyricist Gazi Mazharul Anwar. Other awardees include journalist and researcher Rafiquzzaman, filmmaker and journalist Shahidul Huq Khan and film researcher and journalist Anupam Hayat.

Minister for Liberation War Affairs of Bangladesh A K M Mozammel Haque will grace the ceremony as the chief guest, while State Minister for Shipping Khalid Mahmud Chowdhury will be the special guest. BACHSAS President Falguni Hamid will preside over the event.

Besides the award-giving ceremony, an iftar mehfil will be organised on the day.

## NEWS

### Govt may discontinue

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He also said that there was no recommendation for PECE in the new curriculum.

Alamgir Mohammed Monsurul Alam, director general of the Directorate of Primary Education, said the country's primary education was not exam-centric.

"Children study to achieve the learning ability

in line with the curriculum. There are some learning losses as they could not attend in-person classes for two years," he said.

"We have taken maximum measures to fill the learning gap. We do not want to give students the tension of the exam anymore," he added.

Zakir said that the recruitment test and

appointment process of government primary school teachers is being carried out with transparency and impartiality following the recruitment rules.

All the work including roll number of the candidates, seating arrangement, the printing of question papers, evaluation of answer sheets, and preparation

of results is being done automatically through the software.

"There is no scope for any kind of illegal interference".

He requested all to hand over someone to the nearest police station or inform the police station or intelligence agency if anyone was lured with a job in exchange for money.

### Combine harvesters saving grace for some

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Dharmapasha, said, "Almost all the haors are inundated and using combine harvesters have become difficult. It takes a long time to reap paddy if there is a lot of water."

According to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre of Bangladesh Water Development Board, the flood situation may remain the same in Sunamganj, worsen in Netrakona and improve in Sylhet in next few days.

Over the last few days, around 500 hectares of Boro in Habiganj's Lakhai

and another 100 hectares in Sunamganj's Madhyannagar went under water.

In yesterday's press release, the DAE said paddy on around 41 percent haor farmland was harvested in the seven districts.

Boro has been cultivated in 4.52 lakh hectares in haors of the districts.

According to the DAE, after the first flash flood on March 30, around 9,700 hectares of Boro were submerged, which is 1 percent of the total crops in haor areas.

Farmers and rights activists, however, did not

agree with the figure and claimed that the loss could be more.

Salehin Chowdhury, joint secretary of Haor Bachao Andolon's central unit, said, "The government offices are lying about the loss of Boro. They are also lying about the dykes' condition, which is actually very poor."

On Wednesday, State Minister for Water Resources Zaheed Farooque visited several levees in Sunamganj's Tahirpur and Dharmapasha upazilas.

Talking to journalists regarding anomalies and corruption in dyke

construction, he said there are 727 project implementation committees (PICs) in Sunamganj. Only three dykes constructed by three PICs broke at the same number of points. Some others were at risk and they could protect them from breaching, he said.

"The committee formed to probe anomalies will submit its report within a couple of days, and actions will be taken against those involved, like we did after 2017 flash floods," he said.

[Our correspondent in Moulvibazar contributed to this report.]

### Danish crown

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to the Rohingya and their host community and see soil erosion control and environmental restoration activities implemented by the Danish Refugee Council.

From Cox's Bazar, she will fly to Satkhira, where she will interact with climate-vulnerable community members, see a multipurpose cyclone shelter and the Sundarbans, a World Centre site that works as a shield from the cyclones that are a frequent phenomenon in Bangladesh.

Denmark is providing humanitarian assistance

to the Rohingya and their host community and see soil erosion control and environmental restoration activities implemented by the Danish Refugee Council.

Her visit will focus on climate change and how cooperation can increase in the sector.

"Denmark is a world leader in renewable energy and maritime carbon solutions and we are eager to work together on these solutions," Faiyaz said, adding that the Scandinavian nation has green solutions to industrial pollution.

### The World Bank warns

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worsening food insecurity crisis.

He welcomed moves by India to sell food from its stockpiles and said similar steps by advanced economies would be helpful in adding to available supplies.

He said he expected the current food security crisis to last at least months and perhaps into next year.

He discouraged countries from subsidising production or capping prices.

The World Bank chief also warned of a knock on "crisis within a crisis" arising from the inability of developing countries

to service their large pandemic debts, amid rising food and energy prices.

"This is a very real prospect. It's happening for some countries, we don't know how far it'll go. As many as 60% of the poorest countries right now are either in debt distress or at high risk of being in debt distress," he said.

"We have to be worried about a debt crisis, the best thing to do is to start early to act early on finding ways to reduce the debt burden for countries that are on have unsustainable debt, the longer you put it off, the worse it is," he added.

### Another dead in 'shootout' with Rab

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him and several unidentified miscreants, since two Rab officials were injured, even though the only murder victim was Kawser himself.

According to the first information report filed by police, the incident occurred around 1:35am at night.

"A critically injured Kawser was rushed to Manikganj Sadar Hospital, where he was declared dead by doctors at 5:30am," claimed the FIR.

The hospital is approximately 40 minutes away from Singair upazila.

Furthermore, two of the witnesses named in the FIR said that they both saw

a dead body lying on the road.

"I was home eating sehri. Our house is 300 yards away from the spot. Rab officials came to our house and requested us to go and help them. I did not know what was going on, but I went anyway," said Md Rifat Mahmud, 20.

"Once there, I saw a dead body lying on the street. I was asked to sign a document... I could not refuse but I did not witness any gunfight," said Rifat, who is named as a witness in the case.

Md Saiful Islam, 37, did not see the gunfight either.

"I am a CNG driver. I was on duty with the police that night. I was called to

the spot and asked to sign a document saying that I saw a dead body."

Rab spokesperson Khandaker added that incidents of robbery are common on the regional highway and criminals fire at private vehicles to stop them. When the drivers stop their vehicles out of fear, they get looted.

Rab claimed to have recovered two firearms and some sharp weapons from the spot.

On the other hand, locals could not say anything about the incident of gunfight with the RAB.

Sufia Akhter, a resident of Dasherhati Alamara area, said, "I heard a few

gunshots at night. On the way to Charigram market in the morning, I heard a body was lying there. I don't know more than that.

Razu Ahmed, the only son of Kawser and a second year HSC student, said his father visited them after seven months. "No matter what, nobody wants such death of their dear ones. My mother broke down heavily as it's hard to accept such a demise."

Badrul Alam, medical officer of CMH, said the body was found with six shots on both sides of chest and five bullets exited the body, while the other was found inside. The autopsy done at around 4:00pm.

### Police sue 2 BNP leaders

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were named accused in the case. Another 800 to 1,000 unidentified Dhaka College students and New Market traders and workers were also accused.

Makbul, the main accused, said instead of filing the case against the real culprits, police filed a politically motivated case against leaders of the BNP and its affiliated organisations. He also alleged that police framed him to harass him.

He said another accused in the case is BNP leader Amir Hossain Alamgir, who has a shop in the capital's Gulistan area. Makbul said one of the shops he owns in New Market is run by his brother, and the other by his cousin.

"I have not even gone to New Market area in the last four months," he added.

The deadly clash ensued after a worker of one his shops called some Dhaka College students to

"punish" the employee of the other shop following a brawl between the two employees.

In the case statement, Inspector Yamin mentioned that Makbul, Amir Hossain Alamgir, Mizan, Tipu, Jahangir Hossain Patwary, Hasan Jahangir Mithu, Harun Hawlader, Shah Alam Shontu, Shahidul Islam Shahid, Japani Faruq, Mizan Bepary, Asif instigated the skirmishes.

Rahmat, Sumon, Jashim, Bilal, Harun, Toha, Monir, Bachchu, Julhas, Mithu, Mintu and Babul and 200 to 300 unidentified traders and workers armed with sticks, rods and hockey sticks threw brickbats at Dhaka College students who took position at the college main gate after vandalising New Market.

In return, 500 to 600 unidentified students also pelted bricks chips towards them, reads the case statement.

The same day, a sub-inspector of the New Market Police Station filed another case with the station against 150 to 200 unidentified people under the Explosive Substances Act.

SHOPS REOPEN  
Shops in the area reopened yesterday following an hours-long meeting among representatives of traders, and Dhaka College students and teachers.

At the meeting students placed 10 demands, said Fuad Hasan, a leader of the Dhaka College unit of the Bangladesh Chhatra League.

The demands include punishment of the instigators and attackers, bearing treatment cost of injured students by traders and law enforcers, compensation to the family of Nahid withdrawn of DMP deputy commissioner, additional deputy commissioners

and officer-in-charge of New Market Police Station, code of conduct for shop employees, clearing sidewalks, stop of illegal car parking and extortion, formation of a monitoring cell to stop harassment and sexual abuse of shoppers and cancelling lease of Chandrima Super Market and New Super Market and returning the land to Dhaka College.

President of Bangladesh Shop Owners Association Helal Uddin, who led the traders at the meeting held at Science Laboratory, said the meeting was successful.

He said a core committee will be formed comprising representatives of teachers, students and traders who will resolve any complaints. Admitting harassment of shoppers by some employees, Helal said there will be complaint boxes for aggrieved persons.

He also said identity cards will be issued to all shop workers.