



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

TWO FILMS IN TWO COUNTRIES

Mithila’s silver screen debut

“I am very proud of the team and our director for deciding to donate the revenue from the film’s first week to the flood victims in Sylhet and Sunamganj. It is our responsibility as artistes.”

SHARMIN JOYA

Celebrated actress Rafiath Rashid Mithila recently made her silver screen debut in two countries on the same day. Anonno Mamun directorial “Omanush” in Bangladesh, co-starring with Nirab Hossain and Sauvik Kundu’s “Ay Khuku Ay” in India, sharing the screen with Prosenjit Chatterjee.

Mithila is currently travelling to Tanzania for professional purposes, and missed the first showing of her projects. She shared her expectation, response and experience from working on the films with *The Daily Star*.

“I am excited as two of my projects have been released simultaneously, in two countries,” said the actress. “However, I would have been happier if I could watch the premiere with my team.”

Mithila’s web project “Montu Pilot” has also recently released in Hoichoi, and the production is receiving a good response from audiences.

The actress shared that she will be

returning by the end of this month. Upon asking which film she wishes to watch first, Mithila responded, “It will depend on which country I land in first,” she said.

While working on both films, Mithila garnered unique experiences from both the roles. “In ‘Omanush’ I played the role of a girl from the urban elite class, who was brought up in the USA and I spoke Bangla in an English accent,” she says. “On the other hand, in ‘Ay Khuku Ay’, even though I have only a little screen time, I had to train myself on the mannerisms of a small town, lower middle-class mother.”

According to Mithila, “Omanush” is a commercial film, intended for the mass audience, but its storyline makes the film unique from other commercial projects. “The entire film was shot inside a jungle, and it was quite challenging to adapt to shooting in that type of location,” said Mithila. She also shared that she also liked Nirab’s role and makeover for the film.

A lot of films have been releasing lately, mostly after the pandemic, and the artiste is hopeful about the film industry. “I think our film industry is being revived, as in a post-pandemic world there are a lot more films being released, which is a positive sign,” she added.

“We have many talented directors and artistes who are working in both OTT and on the big screen.”

Mithila is currently awaiting a few upcoming releases. She shared that the first lot of Gias Uddin Selim’s directorial “Kajol Rekha” has already been shot, they are currently waiting for the film to be completed. “I have also signed up for a role in a children’s film, funded by the government, around the same time. Titled ‘Nitishastro’, the movie is slated to be released in July. “Maya”, another project, will be releasing soon in Kolkata, and “Jole Jole Tara” currently awaits to be released in Bangladesh.

Chris Hemsworth’s latest ‘Thor’ movie may be his last Marvel outing

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Hollywood star Chris Hemsworth portrayed the lovable God of Thunder ‘Thor’ for over 11 years in eight films. However, the actor feels it’s about time he leaves the Marvel Cinematic Universe for good.

During an interview with Wired, the actor was asked what will be his last Marvel movie. In his reply, he hinted that “Thor: Love and Thunder” might be his last movie.

“Well the last I shot was Thor: Love and Thunder and it might be my last Marvel movie, I don’t know. It was a wild and fun and wacky experience, as all Taika Waititi movies are,” said Hemsworth to the international platform.

Hemsworth debuted in the world of the Marvel Cinematic Universe with his superhit movie “Thor” in 2011.



During a disaster, saving animals is also the state’s responsibility: Jaya Ahsan



Jaya Ahsan is simultaneously lighting up Dhallywood and Tollywood with her acting chops, with successful movies on both sides of the border.

The star is voicing out for both people and animals who are the victims of the recent floods in Sylhet and Sunamganj. In a Facebook post yesterday, she wrote, “According to the Disaster Management Act 2012, it is the state’s responsibility to help animals, as well as people, during a natural disaster.”

Jaya, who usually never opens up about negative comments by netizens, said in an interview to the Times of India: “I want to tell these people, if you have the courage, come face-to-face and say them to me. Why are you polluting social media?”

NEWS

Flood shelters

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A positivity rate below five percent for two weeks at a stretch reflects the virus transmission was under control, according to the World Health Organisation.

The country witnessed the third wave of Covid-19 in January-March this year. After that, the positivity rate came below one percent. Since June 2, the transmission has steadily been rising.

With the latest count, the total number of confirmed cases rose to 19,56,327. With no Covid-related deaths reported yesterday, the number of fatalities remained unchanged at 29,131.

Floods coming

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Meanwhile, Sirajganj district administration yesterday discussed necessary steps to provide relief materials to the flood-affected people, said Md Akteruzzaman, district relief and rehabilitation officer.

At least 10 villages in Tangail’s Kalihati were inundated after an embankment of the WDB collapsed in Basail area.

The villages include Analiabari, Nordohi, Bhawal, Deopur, Bilchaiya, Bhabla and Deolabari, said Salla union parishad Chairman Abdul Alim.

Low-lying and char areas in the district got submerged as the water level of the Jamuna river kept rising, reports our correspondent from Tangail.

Ataul Gani, deputy commissioner in Tangail, said they have already made all necessary preparations to tackle the flood situation.

Not all in press council on board

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the journalists in a new kind of quagmire using freshly enacted laws. We are responsible journalists and we practise objective journalism.”

Iqbal Sobhan, editor of The Daily Observer and the prime minister’s former information adviser, said, “This committee has not discussed the amendment. However, earlier committees have had discussions in this

regard. At the moment, the Council is basically a toothless tiger. They can only rebuke someone once their wrongdoing is proven.

“This law will put a stop to malicious journalism. I firmly believe that if someone does something wrong, they should definitely be fined. Those who practice objective journalism will not be affected.

“Before penalising someone, each and every

aspect will be thoroughly examined. The penalty amount will be determined based on the gravity of the crime. Ten lakh is just the maximum. In certain cases, the fine will be much less.”

Utpal Kumar Sarker, executive committee member of the Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalist, said, “The amendment of this law was not in committee meeting agenda. This law cannot exist. We are against it and

we do not support it in any way.

“One cannot penalise journalists Tk 10 lakh. However, if a journalist is at fault, there should be a provision for imposing a punishment.”

Mustafiz Shafi, editor of Protidin Bangladesh, told The Daily Star, “I do not know about this issue. I was included in the current committee as a member, but I have not been invited to any meetings so far.”

Nat’l highways

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Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader will take the final decision in this regard, they said.

Road crashes and deaths during the Eid rush saw a sharp rise this year compared to last year mainly due to an increase in motorbike accidents, two road safety organisations said.

Bangladesh Jatri Kalyan Samity says at least 416 people were killed in 372 road accidents in 15 days from April 26 this year.

Of them, 145 people were killed in 164 accidents involving motorbikes, meaning motorcycles were involved in 44.08 percent of the crashes and 34.85 percent of the deaths, it said.

Road Safety Foundation portrayed a similar picture.

The absence of adequate public transport, a hike in bus fares, and traffic congestion are pushing people to buy two-wheelers, which is considered as a risky mode of transport, experts said.

However, the number of registered bikes and issued licences are 36.50 lakh and 23.50 lakh in May this year, according to Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA).

In this given situation, the Road Transport and Highways Division formed a

five-member committee led by its joint secretary Anisur Rahman.

As per the report, 38 people were killed and 92 injured in 27 accidents between May 2 and May 7.

They found several reasons behind the accidents including reckless and careless driving; illegal and risky overtaking; carrying extra passengers on bikes without wearing helmets, and violating traffic rules; operations of illegal and slow vehicles on highways.

They also gave recommendations including banning bikes on national highways. The country has some 4000km of national highway. Only 125km of it has service lane.

It is also recommended for banning human haulers, three-wheelers like Nasimon and Kamimon and easy bikes on the national highways.

However, the government imposed bans on such vehicles on 22 national highways in 2015.

In this situation, the number of deaths involving bike accidents has risen sharply, which was evident during the Eid rush.

Other recommendations include taking action against reckless driving and illegal overtaking; installing traffic signs and marking risky points.

Contacted, probe committee chief Anisur Rahman said the bike is meant for a short trip, not for long travel by highways.

“We gave the recommendations as bike accidents are on the rise and claiming many young lives,” he said yesterday.

Road Transport and Highways Division yesterday held a meeting to prepare for the Eid-ul-Azha journey and reduce road accidents with its secretary ABM Amin Ullah Nuri at the chair in the capital’s BRTA headquarters.

The meeting discussed the probe report and recommendations given by the committee on road crashes, Yousub Ali Mollah, an additional secretary of the division said.

“Banning bikes on highways at least two-three days before Eid was discussed and the final decision would be taken in consultation with the road transport and bridges minister,” he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Unity needed to see off hard times

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pandemic, the two countries have worked closer than ever before.

At the meeting, Momen said that in view of the growing mutual dependency of their economies, the two countries need collective efforts to recover from the economic devastations caused by the pandemic and disruption of supply chain due to the Ukraine war.

Bangladesh, he said, has made a strong recovery from the pandemic but the volatility of markets following the Ukraine conflict is a cause for concern.

“We need collective,

collaborative efforts to sustain our economic growth and maintain peace, security and stability in the region.”

In the last 12 years, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Bangladesh government has taken “bold steps towards strengthening our relations with India in depth and dimensions,” Momen said.

Jaishankar said India looked forward to working with Bangladesh to take bilateral ties to new domains -- Artificial Intelligence, cyber security, start-ups and Fintech.

He said the two countries also need to work

together on management and conservation of the 54 common rivers and their shared responsibility towards the environment, especially the Sundarbans.

India, he pointed out, is both the largest producer and consumer of energy in the region and would be very happy to work with Bangladesh to structure a progressive partnership in the areas of production, transmission and electricity trade.

Jaishankar said, “Our ties today reflect the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. We are truly at a shonali adhyaya [golden

chapter].”

The Indian minister said better management of India-Bangladesh long border is also a key priority.

“Our border guarding forces is committed to combating trans-border crimes. We must continue to work together to make sure that the border remains crime-free.”

During his visit to New Delhi, Momen will call on Indian Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu tomorrow and other dignitaries of the government of India.

It was agreed that the next round of the India-Bangladesh JCC will be held in Bangladesh next year.

JP against EVM use in nat’l polls

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Atikul Islam, member of Bangladesh Muslim League standing committee, said many termed the EVM a trusted machine for election manipulation.

Bangladesh Congress Secretary General Earul Islam proposed having paper slips in the EVM system so that a voter can understand which symbol he voted for.

Nationalist Democratic Movement Joint Secretary

General Mominul Alam said the commission should introduce voter-verifiable paper audit trail (VVPAT) system with the EVM machine through which a voter would be able to get feedback after getting a printed slip.

The EC yesterday started its three phases of views-exchange programme with political parties to gain their trust over EVMs.

Three out of 13 parties invited for the programme

did not attend.

The EC sources said Gono Forum, Krishak Sramik Janata League and Bangladesh Jatiya Party skipped the event.

Gono Forum is a major component of opposition alliance Jatiya Oikya Front that also includes the BNP. Krishak Sramik Janata League was also a member of the alliance, but it left the alliance in July 2019.

Bangladesh Jatiya Party is also a member BNP-led

20 party alliance.

At the beginning of yesterday’s views exchange programme, Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal said the EC was yet to make the final decision regarding the use of EVMs in elections.

Talking to reporters after the event, he said some responded positively over the use of EVMs, while some said it would not be wise to use it in elections.

Windies thump Tigers

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remaining 35 runs to win. And probably to assert their dominance appropriately, Campbell, who remained unbeaten on 58 off 67 deliveries, brought up the winning runs with a massive six over long off from a Najmul Hossain Shanto delivery.

Before that, Campbell also brought up his second Test fifty with a boundary

in the same over.

The Tigers, however, could pat themselves on the back for avoiding an innings defeat after suffering batting meltdowns in both their innings. The Tigers were staring at a more humiliating outcome after they had lost four wickets in the morning session of Day 3 and were left reeling at 109 for six at one stage

of the game, still trailing West Indies’ first innings total by 53 runs.

However, a 123-run seventh-wicket stand between skipper Shakib Al Hasan and Nurul Hasan Sohan helped the Tigers post at least a low target before pacer Khaled Ahmed sparked life into the game for Bangladesh with three quick wickets late on Day 3.