

Elina Shammi from schoolteacher to silver-screen darling

SHARMIN JOYA

Elina Shammi used to be a schoolteacher, until she was inspired by one of her colleagues, Timir Nandi, to begin her journey as an anchor. In 2011, she hosted "Durpath", a programme on Desh TV.

"There was no looking back after that, I continued as an anchor, interviewing over six thousand artistes, and later on began my journey as an actress," said the actress who made her first appearance on the silver screen in 2014, in Shah Alam Kiron's "71er Maa Jononi".

Elina went on to impress the audience not only through her projects on the big screen, but with her presence on television. Recently, she has been busy working on projects for streaming platforms as well. Her performance in the Raihan Rafi directorial web film "Janowar" was a turning point in her career.

"I always look for story-based projects. From that point of view, I rarely discriminate between the variety of mediums as long as the story is good," said the artiste who has also been a screenplay writer since her college days, writing around 20 fiction projects that were aired.

"The first tele-fiction that I wrote was 'Aw Er Golpo'. Since I am currently occupied with projects for the big screen, I am trying to be a bit more selective when taking on television projects."

The multi-talented artiste has portrayed the role of Begum Khaleda Zia, in the much-anticipated biopic on the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. "Mujib: Making of a Nation" is directed by Shyam Benegal.

She shared that she is proud to be part of a project, which will have a place in history. "I was blown away upon seeing the transformation that the team put me

through, to make me resemble Begum Khaleda Zia. All of the actors on set also resembled the real-life persons they are portraying".

Elina also talked about the controversy surrounding the release of the film's trailer. "Although people are talking a lot about this, especially since the film has a budget of 100 crores, I would say that presenting Bangabandhu on screen is not easy. The budget was not enough to execute such a project, but the director put in his best efforts to ensure the film would do justice," said the actress. "We should not jump to conclusions without first watching the entire film."

At present, the actress has around

"The first tele-fiction that I wrote was 'Aw Er Golpo'. Since I am currently occupied with projects for the big screen, I am trying to be a bit more selective when taking on television projects."

seven projects in the pipeline, all of which will be released soon. She stated that she has finished working on most of these projects, including: Mushfiqur Rahman Gulzar's "Tungi Parar Dushshahoshi Khoka"; Shyam Benegal's "Mujib: Making of a Nation"; Anonno Mamun's "Radio"; Tanvir Hassan's "Modhobito", and Shihab Shaheen directorial web film "Syndicate" among others.

Elina is quite busy with upcoming Eid projects as well. "I have recently worked on 'Shahshika 2', which will be released during Eid, also I am working on a television serial 'Jhorer Pakhi' telecasted on Rtv," added the actress.



PHOTO: COURTESY

'Bhager Manush' at Shilpakala today

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The critically-acclaimed theatre play, "Bhager Manush" produced by Somoy Theatre Troupe will be staged today at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

The play has been scripted by Mannan Heera, based on the short story "Toba Tek Singh", which was written by Urdu writer Saadat Hasan Manto. The story is set during the time of the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, and focuses on the sufferings of the people who live near the border.

The play follows the tale of Tek Singh, a mental patient who is strongly opposed to the partition. Through the use of satire, the play also showcases that a partition doesn't only change a country's geographical borders, but that it also divides a country's customs, culture, and heritage.



Sabila Nur to star in 'Rangila Fanush 2'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Shihab Shaheen is all set to bring "Rangila Fanush 2" this Eid-ul-Azha, starring Sabila Nur and Tawfiq Mahbub. The original "Rangila Fanush" starred Sabila and Apurba and received more than 10 million views on YouTube.

"Rangila Fanush 2" will be a women-centric Eid drama just like the original. It has elements of comedy with a touch of uniqueness within it. Audiences will surely love it," said Sabila Nur. Shihab Shaheen is also super excited about his latest drama.

"This will be a comedy drama similar to the original. I made this drama to entertain audiences during Eid. The drama incorporates the dreams of the marginalised people in society and their efforts to fulfil these dreams," said the director.

"Rangila Fanush 2" will air on the CMV YouTube Channel on Eid.



PHOTO: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEREL

NEWS

With no courage to return

FROM PAGE 1

government (in September 2008) promising that he won't be involved in politics anymore, she said.

In this context, Hasina said she was prevented from returning home during the then caretaker government, but she came back (on May 7, 2007) defying obstructions and took her return as a challenge.

Noting that she had been sued in a murder case and an arrest warrant had been issued against her, the premier said she announced that she would return home, appear before the court and face the case.

How can an election be participatory when AL's rival the BNP is facing a crisis of proper leadership, she said.

Referring to the 2018 national election, Hasina said BNP leaders changed their candidate in a constituency several times due to nomination trade.

She said Enam Ahmed Chowdhury and Morshed Khan told her that Tarique sought money for party tickets, but they refused.

The PM questioned how the BNP could attract voters and how the people could vote for the party when it was "leaderless".

Criticising BNP acting chairman Tarique, the premier said he has proved that his parents Ziaur Rahman and Khaleda Zia were involved in the August 1975 carnage conspiracy by supporting the slogan "pachattorer hatiar" (arms of 75).

Lambasting BNP founder Zia for rewarding the killers of August 15 carnage with lucrative jobs in Bangladesh missions abroad, Hasina said he got killed and no one even found his body.

"Yes, Ershad had brought a box [to Dhaka]. But what was in that box? Later, Ershad himself

said Zia's body was not in that box. But the box was buried in Sangsad Bhaban area [Chandrima Udyan]," she said, adding that even Khaleda and her son can't say that they had seen Zia's body.

She said BNP leaders now place floral wreaths there, but Khaleda's spouse is not there. "The truth will be revealed one day."

Taking a swipe at the BNP leaders for criticising the government over the Padma Bridge issue, the PM said the World Bank stopped its funding for Siddirganj power plant and Dhaka-Mymensingh road during the tenure of Khaleda's government on corruption allegations.

She expressed wonder how BNP could raise questions about the Padma Bridge issue when its leaders are corrupt from top to bottom. "BNP in fact is a factory of lies," the PM alleged.

About the criticism of BNP leaders over the flood issue, Hasina said they failed to stand by the flood victims and could not provide even a fistful of food, but they are shedding crocodile tears staying in Dhaka.

The AL chief said her party leaders have been working hard to extend support to the flood victims even in very risky places.

The premier blasted the BNP leaders for demanding cancellation of the grand opening of the Padma Bridge citing floods.

Hasina said the AL has been working to change the fate of the people since its founding in 1949.

"Whatever the people of this country attained, all these came through the Awami League. Whenever the Awami League came to power, the fate of the people changed."

AL presidium members Matia Chowdhury, Jahangir Kabir Nanak,

Abdur Rahman, AHM Khairuzzaman Liton, and Mofazzal Hossain and Chowdhury Maya, among others, spoke on the occasion.

Earlier in the day, the PM paid homage to Bangabandhu on the occasion of the party's founding anniversary, reports BSS.

She placed a wreath at the portrait of the Father of the Nation at Bangabandhu Memorial Museum on the capital's Dhanmondi-32.

PM ADDRESSES JS
Speaking at the Jatiya Sangsad yesterday, the PM said no one would be able to restrict Bangladesh's advancement if it was run as per the plans drawn up by the AL.

Hasina was addressing the House during an unscheduled discussion on the ruling party's founding anniversary, reports our staff correspondent.

The leader of the House said the AL government has formulated the plans to turn Bangladesh into a developed country in future.

"The Awami League was born for a special reason," she said.

The AL president said the then Pakistani rulers put restrictions on language and oppressed Bangladeshis socioeconomically.

"Protesting this, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman organised the Language Movement, and founded Chhatra League. He had been with the Awami League from the very beginning."

She said the AL is the people's organisation and it always waged struggles for the country's oppressed and neglected people. "Many Awami League leaders and activists laid down their lives for this cause."

The premier said Padma Bridge has been built

with the country's own resources.

"Like this, Bangladesh will be moving forward. It will never be dependent on others and never beg. With its own dignity, Bangladesh will hold its head high in the world arena," she said.

AL MPs Amir Hossain Amu and Tofail Ahmed also spoke on the same issue.

Court returns

FROM PAGE 12

investigate the offences under sections 420, 467, 468, 471 and 477A of the Penal Code referred to in 'Kha' (a) of the Schedule of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 2004, if they relate to public assets or if they are committed during the discharge of official duties by government employees or bank employees or officials of financial institutions, the magistrate said in the order.

Shahab also brought allegations against Wasa Secretary Sharmin Haque Amir, former revenue inspector Mia Md Mizanur Rahman, Additional Chief Engineer Mohd Akhtaruzzaman, Revenue Inspector Zakir Hossain, DWSNTP Executive Engineer Badrul Alam, former deputy manager and branch manager of Janata Bank's Karwan Bazar Corporate Branch Shyamal Biswas, Deputy Secretary Sheikh Enayet Abdullah and Deputy Chief Accounts Officer Salekur Rahman.

Sahab, in the complaint, alleged that Taqsem and the eight withdrew Tk 132,04,17,460 from the cooperative's account with Janata Bank without any approval of the committee concerned.

The matter came to light following an audit in 2018-2020, he added.

ACC to decide on enquiry

FROM PAGE 2

Director Mohammad Ibrahim and Deputy Director Ahsanul Kabir Palash and send it to the director general (special investigation) to take necessary measures for enquiry," read the order.

Following the decision, therefore, the attached files are sent for taking measures after the enquiry of the allegation," it added.

However, ACC Secretary Mahbub Hossain denied it

at yesterday's briefing.

"The Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee has recently submitted a 2,215-page white paper to the ACC. An internal committee was formed by the ACC to prepare a summary of the white paper ... the committee is not given any responsibility to enquire into the financial transaction of religious leaders," said an ACC press release issued after the briefing.

"Moreover, no decision was made for carrying out enquiry," it said, adding that the statement would put an end to confusion in this regard.

Although Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan at the launching of the "white paper" termed it eye-opening, he later changed his stance.

On May 20, he said there was no legal basis for the commission and its report. "I don't know what

the Gono Commission has written in its report. Therefore, we cannot say anything about it," Asaduzzaman said.

Three days after his statement, religious leaders under the banner of Islamic Cultural Forum Bangladesh submitted a memorandum requesting the ACC to enquire into the wealth of the Ekattorer Ghatok Dalal Nirmul Committee and its members.

Padma Bridge handed over

FROM PAGE 1

Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader will deliver a speech. This will be followed by the screening of a documentary on the bridge and the singing of the theme song, before Hasina delivers her speech.

The PM will then inaugurate the bridge by unveiling the plaque there and will offer prayers. She will then travel across the bridge to the Zanjira end and unveil another plaque, before offering prayers.

The bridges division of the road transport and bridges ministry has taken all-out preparations to make the inauguration ceremony a success, while the ruling Awami League is organising the massive rally at the Zanjira end.

The Road Transport and Highways Division has decided not to collect tolls for 17 bridges and one ferry on the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway and the country's southwestern portion on the day of the inauguration to facilitate the ceremony.

The division yesterday issued a circular saying tolls would not be collected from 14 major bridges and one ferry in the country's

southwestern region on June 25.

The 14 bridges are: Khan Jahan Ali (Rupsha) Bridge, Daratana Bridge, Doarika-Shikarpur Bridge, Dapadapia Bridge, Gabkhan Bridge, Baleshwar Bridge, Patuakhali Bridge, Sheikh Russel Bridge, Sheikh Kamal Bridge, Sheikh Jamal Bridge, Payra (Lebukhali) Bridge, Mullahat Bridge, Ashmat Ali Khan Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge and Sheikh Lutfar Rahman Bridge.

The ferry to be free of toll is the Kalna Ferry.

On June 20, authorities announced that no toll would be collected from vehicles on three bridges on the Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway on June 25 to avoid traffic congestion at these points.

The three bridges are: Bangladesh-China Friendship Bridge (Buriganga Bridge-I) at Postagola, Dhaleshwari Bridge, and Haji Shariatullah Bridge (Ariakha Bridge) in Madaripur.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Police has issued directives centring the inauguration of the Padma Bridge for exit and

entrance routes towards Dhaka-Mawa-Bhanga Expressway.

Once in service, Padma Bridge will connect the capital with 21 southwestern districts by road and railway, providing relief to tens of thousands who often face hardships while travelling across the river, especially around major festivals.

The double-decker bridge -- a four-lane road on top and broad-gauge single rail track on the bottom -- is expected to boost the country's gross domestic product by 1.2 percent.

Although the project was approved in 2007, the physical work started only in November 2014. Project authorities were supposed to complete the work within four years but it was delayed due to complexities over design, the Covid-19 pandemic and some other reasons.

Dewan Mohammad Abdul Kader, executive engineer (main bridge) of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project, said, "I am very happy to be part of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's dream project."

Ukraine gets

FROM PAGE 12

The EU's green light "is a signal to Moscow that Ukraine, and also other countries from the former Soviet Union, cannot belong to the Russian spheres of influence," Ukraine's EU ambassador Chentsov Vsevolod told Reuters earlier yesterday.

"There are Ukrainian soldiers calling home from the front line and asking: what is happening with our candidate status? It's amazing how important it is for Ukrainian people."

BALKAN FRUSTRATION

While Ukraine and Moldova were expected to be welcomed into the EU's waiting room, Georgia was given "a European perspective" but told it must fulfil conditions before winning candidate status.

Reticence over EU enlargement has slowed progress towards membership for a group of Balkan countries -- Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia -- whose leaders met their EU counterparts in Brussels in the morning.