

I am not just busy with the association, I have plenty of work: Nipun

Two-time National Film Award-winning actress Nipun's film "Birotto" released in 34 theaters across the country Friday. Nipun played the role of sex worker Lutfa in the film, directed by Saidul Islam Rana.

ZAHID AKBAR

This is Nipun's first film to be released after the election of the Bangladesh Film Artistes Association. The actress talked about her role in the film, the shooting experience, and the film artistes association.

You had to stay in a brothel to be in character, as far as I know.

During the shooting, he had to stay in a hotel at Rajbari for 5 consecutive days. I came across many different experiences for these 5 days. I have seen the lives of women there very closely. Some of the things I saw, no one will even believe that this sort of thing happens.

Tell me something about the character you played?

I played the role of a sex worker named Lutfa in the film. She is a girl who dreams of living, even after losing everything in life. There is a silent protest in the character. I believe the performance of this character will help many helpless oppressed girls to return to normal life. It will give them hope and inspire them to live anew.

Can "Birotto" have the same impact on the audience as "Poran" and "Hawa"?

I believe that "Birotto" will give a new wind to the sail of Bengali cinema. This is a different story, which the audience will love once they come to witness for themselves.

Many say that you are only busy with the artistes' association.

I've heard statements like this, but it has no value. Committee members are also busy with work -- Simon's 'Live' was released a few days ago. Now, Emon and my film "Birotto" is being released, Riaz bhai starrer 'Operation Sundarban' and Ferdous bhai's 'Beauty Circus' are being released a few days later as well. We're not just busy with the association, we have plenty of work as well.



Keanu Reeves to return with 'Constantine' sequel



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Popular actor Keanu Reeves will be seen in the sequel of supernatural film "Constantine". The original movie was released in 2005 and the sequel will be directed by Francis Lawrence.

"Constantine" follows the life of supernatural exorcist, John Constantine, who communicates with half angels and half demons. He is on the verge of dying but he tries to save his soul by stopping demons from entering earth.

Ananta Jalil to make film on Bangladeshi expatriates



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Ananta Jalil and Barsha watched the first day of "Din The Day" along with the Bangladeshi expatriate in Malaysia yesterday.

The first screening was held at TGV KLCC in Kuala Lumpur, and the authorities had to increase the number of shows to a total of 8 screens due to high demand. As the film was opened during weekends, the cinema hall authorities had a hard time managing the crowd as thousands of Bangladeshi expatriates stormed the cinema hall.

Barsha and Ananta arranged a special conference where they declared that they are going to make a film on Bangladeshi expatriates. However, they didn't reveal any details or release date of the film.

The couple will also be attending the screening at MMC City Square in Johor Bahru on September 18 at 5:20 pm.

NEWS

12 and older won't get

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Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of those who received their second jabs, only 36 percent have received a booster dose.

Talking about administering the Covid-19 vaccine among children aged 5-11 years, Maleque said 10 lakh children have received Covid-19 jabs and some 2.15 lakh children are yet to be jabbed.

A total of 22,638,737 children

across the country will be brought under the vaccination campaign, said Secretary Anwar at the event.

Earlier last month, the health directorate jabbed children under this age group in all city corporation areas.

"Many countries have not started vaccinating children yet but we have. We sought approval from the World Health Organization earlier and immediately after getting approval we've started a vaccination campaign," said the secretary.

The government inoculated all schoolchildren, aged 12-17 years, through a separate campaign earlier this year.

141 Covid-19 cases

The DGHS yesterday reported 141 fresh cases of Covid-19 across the country. The positivity rate was 9.66 percent against 1,460 tests.

No Covid-19 patient died in the meantime. With the latest count, the total number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 rose to 2,017,087.

APBn man stabbed

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deputy inspector general of APBn.

On information, an APBn team rushed to the spot and rescued Shahidul.

The victim was initially taken to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital and later moved to Dhaka for better treatment.

A Rohingya refugee has been arrested in this connection, said Harun.

Comedian Rony

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trachea is slightly burnt, it cannot be said that they are out of danger because they are burn patients," said Samanta.

Rony along with his two friends live in a flat in Mirpur DOHS area where they run advertising agency Back Benchers Communications.

His friend Soheli Ahmed said that Rony even in this situation was cracking jokes when his well-wishers gathered to see him in front of the ICU on Friday night.

Meanwhile, a four-member committee, headed by Abu Torab Shamsur Rahman, deputy commissioner (crime north) of GMP, was formed yesterday to investigate the explosion.

The probe body was asked to submit the report in three working days.

Five people, including Rony, were injured in the explosion during Gazipur Metropolitan Police's fourth founding anniversary programme at the district's police lines on Friday.

Three others injured in this incident are Mosharraf Hossain, Imran Hossain and Rubel Hossain.

Before the start of the event, guests were ushered to the inaugural stage. Several balloons were given to the chief guest. Despite repeated attempts, the balloons did not fly. Later, the guests inaugurated the programme by releasing pigeons and moved towards the main stage.

The balloons were then taken behind the inaugural stage. After a while, an explosion was heard, witnesses said.

All the balloons burst behind the inaugural stage. Five people sitting next to it were burnt.

They were rescued and admitted to Gazipur Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital.

Rony and Zillur were referred to Dhaka.

Dhaka should take it to UN

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the UN secretary general and security council, and the foreign diplomats here with documented evidence of Myanmar's violations of land and airspace.

"If even a brickbat lands on the Bangladesh side [of the border], it is a violation of international rules. Myanmar has to shoulder the responsibility," said Major Gen (retired) Abdur Rashid, executive director at the Institute of Conflict, Law and Development Studies.

Conflicts between the Myanmar military and Arakan Army have flared up in Northern Rakhine and Chin states in early August, with the Myanmar military firing mortar shells from fighter jets and sometimes flying helicopters over the Bangladesh-Myanmar borders.

Since mid-August, the foreign ministry has summoned Myanmar Ambassador to Bangladesh, Aung Kyaw Moe, three times and handed a protest note as shells landed in the Bangladesh side of the border.

Moe explained that the landing of the mortar shells was not intentional and was a result of the conflicts inside Myanmar.

Meanwhile, 18-year-old Iqbal Bari was killed and five others were injured on Friday night as a shell fired from Myanmar exploded at a Rohingya camp on no-man's land near Bandarban's Tumbru bazar.

About 4,000 Rohingyas, who fled the 2017 military crackdown in Myanmar, live there.

"What happened on Friday night is an escalation of [Myanmar's internal] conflict. Whatever the reasons may be, this is not acceptable," Rashid said.

Repeated influxes of Rohingyas into Bangladesh since the 1980s and Myanmar's violations of air and land space have kept relations between the two countries in a tense state.

The biggest influx took place in 2017 when about 7.5 lakh Rohingyas from Myanmar took shelter in Bangladesh. Foreign ministry officials said Myanmar violated both land and airspace five times that year and the year after.

In 2008, a Myanmar navy ship entered the disputed territory of the Bay of Bengal, causing a standoff, which was resolved through diplomatic negotiations.

Analysts say Bangladesh has been facing enormous economic, security and diplomatic challenges for sheltering about 1.2 million Rohingyas.

Despite repeated efforts, the repatriation could not take place, with the situation in Rakhine state not being conducive enough.

Bangladesh has been dealing with Myanmar bilaterally to resolve the Rohingya crisis, but analysts say that has not been effective.

One cannot ignore the idea of a conspiracy to draw Bangladesh into the war with Myanmar, and its repeated land and airspace violation is a provocation, they added.

Prof Intiaz Ahmed, of Dhaka University's international relations department, said Myanmar may think that if there is a conflict on Bangladesh-Myanmar border, the Rohingya repatriation may be delayed and forgotten.

"But we should stay calm. Engaging our military will be to Myanmar's benefit," he said.

Abdur Rashid, however, said military deterrence and diplomacy can go together.

"If Myanmar does not understand the language of peaceful diplomacy, Bangladesh should use the language that Myanmar understands."

Both Intiaz and Rashid think Bangladesh should take the issue to the multilateral forums, engage the regional powers, including China, India, Japan and the Asean, apart from maintaining strong bilateral negotiations with Myanmar.

Intiaz said the Myanmar military is now weak because of its conflicts with pro-democracy civilians and various insurgent groups. Internationally too, the military is under pressure for it killed some 2,000 civilians since it took control of power through a coup in February last year.

Former foreign secretary Shahidul Haque said conflicts in the Rakhine and Chin states means instability in the whole region.

"There is no alternative to effective diplomacy," said Haque, now Bangabandhu chair at the University of Delhi.

He too suggested the immediate briefing of the situation to foreign diplomats in Dhaka, along with the UN secretary general and security council.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said Bangladesh wants a peaceful solution to any crisis with Myanmar. If it does not work, Dhaka will take it to the UN.

Talking to reporters after an event in the capital's Dhaka Ahsania Mission, he said Dhaka repeatedly warned Naypyidaw, but it did not pay heed.

Panicked, locals scramble to safety

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"We are on high alert after the Friday night's incident. We have asked the Border Guard Bangladesh to step up vigilance and security," said Yasmin.

The district administration is making announcements through loudspeakers to make the locals aware of safe movement.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Salma Ferdous, Naikhongchhari upazila nirbahi officer, said they have asked the residents of bordering areas not to move with their cattle or for farming until the situation becomes normal.

"We have asked them not to venture outside without a necessity. We are hopeful that normalcy would return soon," she said.

But the locals would still go out to earn their living, putting their lives at risk.

Nurul Basar, 58, a farmer from Paschimkul area of Ghumdhum, said he grows rice on a land in a bordering area.

"For the last two weeks, I have not been able to visit my land due to the

firing. What would I eat with my family if I cannot grow paddy? I must go out," Basar told this newspaper.

Yesterday, 164 SSC examinees of Ghumdhum High School centre took their exam at Kutupalong High School centre in Ukhiya of Cox's Bazar.

Mukarrama, one of the examinees from Paschimkul area of Ghumdhum, said, "We are sitting the exams amid tensions as we are living in fear for our lives."

Hamid ul Hoque, headmaster of South Ghumdhum Government Primary School, said attendance of students has become thin because of the current situation.

The Myanmar military has been reportedly carrying out air and ground assaults on the Arakan Army along Bangladesh-Myanmar border for the last few weeks.

Frequent clashes between the military and Arakan Army are taking place. Some artillery and mortar shells have landed in Bangladeshi territories, triggering diplomatic

protests by Bangladesh.

Queried, Lt Col Faizur Rahman, director (operations) of BGB, told The Daily Star, "We are on high alert to protect and secure our border. We have asked the locals to move safely."

The BGB was very careful so no Myanmar citizens could enter Bangladesh.

According to locals, gunshots stopped at the border after Fazr prayers around 5:00am yesterday, but sounds of explosions were heard in the border area five times -- two around 11:00am, two around 1:00pm and one around 2:00pm.

Dil Mohammed, chairman of the Rohingya camp management committee at Konarpara, said a Myanmar fighter jet was seen hovering over the border area after Friday night's mortar shell explosion.

"Myanmar is doing this intentionally just to foil the repatriation of Rohingyas," he alleged.

Our Bandarban correspondent also contributed to this report.

India welcomes

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Critics have warned the creatures may struggle to adapt to the Indian habitat.

A significant number of leopards are present in the park, and conservation scientist Ravi Chellam said that cubs could fall prey to feral dogs and other carnivores.

Under the government's current action plan, "the prospects for a viable, wild and free-ranging population of cheetahs getting established in India is bleak," he told AFP.

But organisers are unfazed.

"Cheetahs are very adaptable and (I'm) assuming that they will adapt well into this environment," said Dr Laurie Marker, founder of the Namibia-based charity Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), which has been central to the project logistics.

"I don't have a lot of worries," she told AFP.

India was once home to the Asiatic cheetah but it was declared extinct there by 1952.

The critically endangered subspecies, which once roamed

across the Middle East, Central Asia and India, are now only found, in very small numbers, in Iran.

Efforts to reintroduce the animals to India gathered pace in 2020 when the Supreme Court ruled that African cheetahs, a different subspecies, could be settled in India at a "carefully chosen location" on an experimental basis.

They are a donation from the government of Namibia, one of a tiny handful of countries in Africa where the magnificent creature survives in the wild.