

SABILA back in town

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Bangladeshi actress and model Sabila Nur debuted in the entertainment industry with the 2014 tele-fiction "U-Turn." Ever since then, the young actress has been rising in popularity among the youth of the country. Today, she is a prominent face in the industry.

The talented actress talked with The Daily Star recently.

How did you get into showbiz?

Growing up, my mother always wanted me to participate in extracurriculars. She got me admitted into a dance academy when I was quite young. I had no intention to get into the show business—this is something that happened quite naturally.

I started modelling around 2010, under the direction of Adnan Al Rajeev. Modelling is all I did for the next few years. Rajeev introduced me to the filmmaker Redoan Rony, and I acted—for the first time—in his play, "U-Turn." I haven't stopped acting since.

What has this career in acting given you?

It is the only reason I am adored by so many. It has allowed me to invest my life in the arts. I can call myself an artist. People enjoy my work, they know me because of it. My job has granted me all of these and more.

What kind of story and character do you look for?

Stories that will challenge me as an actress, and characters that will allow me to be versatile—these are the qualities I look for. I want to work with roles that prioritise complex, real women. In fact, I was fortunate enough to act in multiple women-centric plays just last Eid ul-

Azha. "Ami Rokya Bolchi", "Nigessho Protibedon" and "May I Come In", they were all well received.

Tell us something about your experience acting with Apurba.

I have acted in many projects co-starring Apurba bhai. He is an amazing colleague, and a remarkable human being. He has supported me throughout my journey as an actress. His guidance has been indispensable for my career.

You were out of the country for two months. How did you spend your time abroad?

I was in America on a family trip to visit my sister. We toured many states, and watched "Poran" and "Hawa" in the theatres abroad, it was a surreal experience.

What are your thoughts on acting in web films and cinema?

I want to act in both mediums soon. I already have experiences working for Ashfaque Nipun's web film, "Koshoneer". Cinemas such as "Poran", "Hawa", and more recently, "Beauty Circus" and "Operation Sundarban" reveal how our entertainment industry is in resurgence. I believe I'll need to prepare myself well if I want to venture into these territories.



After two back-to-back flops, Ayushmann reduces fees to 15 crores

After delivering two back-to-back flops "Anek" and "Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui", Ayushmann Khurrana has decided to make a producer-friendly decision by reducing his fee from Rs 25 crore to Rs 15 crore as signing fee.

According to Bollywood Hungama, Ayushmann had maintained his signing fee at Rs 25 crore so far. However, he has restructured it by demanding Rs 15 crore as a signing fee and the remaining Rs 10 crore dependent on his film's profit share. In this manner, Ayushmann might make even more if his film becomes a smash blockbuster, benefiting both him and the producers.

On the work front, Ayushmann has "Doctor G", "An Action Hero" and "Dream Girl 2" in the pipeline.



September Dhaka – Rising musicians to serenade Liberation War Museum today



PHOTO: COURTESY

Karkhana, an organisation of the young musicians, has arranged musical event September Dhaka, which will be held at the Liberation War musician today. This is their third initiative, as the first and second events were held in September and December in 2021.

"This year's September Dhaka is all about the city of magic, Dhaka. For someone, it's a city of love and for someone, it's a necropolis where they have lost everything. This city is the witness of their every little precious thing. That's why we wanted to tribute this city through our event," said the organisers.

Nazm Anwar, Masha Islam, Hatirpool Sessions, Firoze Jong and Chitropot, among others, will be performing in this year's event, which will start at 4 pm.

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Fish fossils offer

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disproved the long-held theory that modern animals with bony skeletons (osteichthyans) evolved from a shark-like creature with a frame made of cartilage.

The newly discovered creature, dubbed Fanjingshania, predates this ancient fish fossil by about 15 million years, the study said.

"This is the oldest jawed fish with known anatomy," lead researcher Zhu Min said.

"The new data allowed us to... gain much needed information about the evolutionary steps leading to the origin of important vertebrate adaptations such as jaws, sensory systems, and paired appendages (limbs)."

Russia set to annex

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After days of speculation over exactly how Russia would mark the annexation, Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov confirmed some details of the ceremony yesterday.

Agreements "on the accession of new territories into the Russian Federation" will be signed "with all four territories that held referendums and made corresponding requests to the Russian side," Peskov said.

Putin would deliver a major speech on the subject, he added.

A big concert will be held today on Moscow's Red Square, where giant video screens have already been set up, with billboards proclaiming "Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson - Russia!"

With tens of thousands of Russian men fleeing abroad to escape Putin's military call-up, Finland shut one of the few remaining routes to Europe, saying it would no longer let Russians enter by land with EU tourist visas.

Meanwhile, the United States has unveiled another \$1.1 billion weapons package for Ukraine that includes 18 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launchers, accompanying munitions, various types of counter drone systems and radar systems. The announcement brings the US security aid to \$16.2 billion.

PM to visit Japan

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counterpart Fumio Kishida to visit Bangladesh during that time.

"We want the Japanese prime minister's visit to take place, but it has not been confirmed yet," the foreign ministry official said.

Cooperation with UN led

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rights organisations Odhikar, stating that representatives of some NGOs searching for victims of enforced disappearances and advocating for accountability were also allegedly affected.

It went on to say that Odhikar and its staffers continue to be under surveillance, which reportedly intensified after December 10, 2021.

"As of April 2022, Odhikar's bank accounts remain frozen and their application to the NGO Affairs Bureau for the renewal of its registration is pending (its registration was scrapped in June 2022). During the reporting period [May 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022], Odhikar has continued to engage with the UN bodies and mechanisms, including by submitting information, statements, and communications to Special Procedures, in particular to

the WGEID," said the report.

The report noted that when the body communicated about Odhikar to the government, they "reiterated their [Odhikar's] bias against the authorities and clarified that the administrative and legal action against the organisations was due to the corruption findings of an investigation."

"The government informed about its decision not to approve Odhikar's application for renewal of registration, for its failure to comply with applicable legislation, the lack of response to the objections in audit reports concerning projects funded with foreign donations and due to irregularities related to fee payments and VAT," the report said about the government's response.

The report also noted that the government is still carrying on a legal case against the organisation.

HC judge accused

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candidate" in the upcoming by-election to Gaibandha-5 (Saghata-Fulchhari) constituency.

The honourable judge (Khurshid) was seen delivering a speech at the meeting, and the AL candidate addressed the judge as his local guardian, mentioning that it was a political meeting, they said in the letter.

The SCBA leaders further said Justice Khurshid breached the code of conduct set by the Appellate Division in its 2017 judgement and tarnished the Supreme Court's image by attending the meeting.

They also expressed deep concern over this.

The Daily Star contacted Farjana Rabbi Bubli, the wife of Justice Khurshid, as the judge is not supposed to talk to the media.

Farjana, also general secretary of Fulchhari upazila AL in Gaibandha, said the meeting in question was organised at her village home in Fulchhari after Zohr prayers on September 15 for two reasons.

The first one was to explain to her family members, relatives and well-wishers in Fulchhari and Saghata the reasons behind her decision not to contest the by-election slated for October 12 as an independent candidate.

And the second one was to offer

prayers for late deputy speaker of Jatiya Sangsad Fazle Rabbi Miah, she said.

"My husband [Justice Khurshid] joined the said meeting just before the start of the monajat [prayers] led by a local moulati. After the monajat, AL-nominated candidate Mahmudul Hasan Ripan joined the gathering and out of courtesy, my husband handed over the microphone to Ripan who delivered a speech..." Farjana said.

Farjana also said she had sought nomination from the AL for contesting the by-election but Ripan succeeded in getting it. And out of courtesy, Ripan visited her village home.

Contacted, SCBA President Md Momtaz Uddin Fakir said he heard about the pro-BNP lawyers' letter to the chief justice.

"They submitted the letter without consultation and permission of the SCBA executive committee. They cannot do it. The pro-BNP lawyers have done it for political gains," he said.

Momtaz further said the pro-BNP lawyers cannot use SCBA pads without the executive committee's approval.

"I will enquire into the matter and take necessary steps," added Momtaz, who was elected SCBA president from the pro-Awami League panel.

Sanctions to stay until Rab is accountable

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He discussed the national elections, human rights, labour rights, Rohingya crisis and Russia-Ukraine war, among other issues.

Haas said as Bangladesh moves closer to graduating from LDC status by 2026, its relationship with the US is also getting a new dimension. The US, therefore, is seeking improvements in judiciary, human rights, good governance and democracy, he added.

The US last year slapped the sanctions on the Rab and its officials and also did not invite Bangladesh to its Democracy Summit. Bangladesh has been trying in various ways to have the sanctions withdrawn.

Haas said the sanctions aren't intended to punish anyone, but to change the behaviour of the force. He said his country was looking for accountability for the past incidents so that they don't recur.

"We noticed a remarkable decline in reported abuses being conducted by Rab since we imposed the sanctions last year...it is a very good signal that the number has decreased, and some people say dramatically."

Asked about enforced disappearances, he said they want an independent mechanism for credible investigations.

The ambassador also said the US wants to see free, fair, inclusive and international standard elections in Bangladesh and the government, the Election Commission, political parties, civil society, and the media have roles to play.

The international community will be watching the elections very keenly, he said, adding that the US does not favour any particular political party.

Talking about the recent political violence, the envoy said a fair election is not possible wherever there is violence.

Enquired about the allegations of election rigging in 2014 and 2018, Haas said, "We tend to focus on today, what is going forward, less about what happened in the past."

He said hundreds of lawsuits were filed following the 2020 US presidential election and those were settled.

The diplomat said Bangladesh has made notable progress in terms of workplace safety in the export-oriented industries since the Rana Plaza accident in 2013, but the US still has concerns.

The US wants freedom of trade unions without facing intimidation, and it is holding continuous conversations with the Bangladesh government, he said.

Haas said governance, labour rights, and investment environment are some of the major factors that can draw more US companies to invest in Bangladesh, which now exports products worth over \$8 billion to the US.

Asked if the US would include Bangladesh in its recently launched Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF), the envoy said it is a strategy that has a set of principles -- afree, open, resilient, prosperous and secure interconnected region. There is nothing in it about becoming a

member, he added.

Asked if the US has any issue with Bangladesh being a signatory to the China-led Belt and Road Initiative, he said it doesn't. "I don't see any immediate contradiction there ... it is entirely Bangladesh's decision whether it wants to be part of the BRI or any other organisation."

Talking about the price hike of energy and food commodities, the envoy said Russia's invasion of Ukraine has sparked the supply chain crisis, causing a lot of problems. The US or the European Union did not impose sanctions on Russia's oil, gas, fertiliser or agricultural products, he said.

Russia needs to end the war to end the other problems, the diplomat said.

About the Rohingya crisis, Haas said the US has already sanctioned the Myanmar junta leaders, but there is a need for the international community to make an integrated effort.

He said his country was working with the UN Refugee Agency for settling some Rohingyas in the US from this region, including Bangladesh.

The ambassador said the US supports Bangladesh for Rohingya repatriation but it is unlikely to happen anytime soon given the conflicts in Myanmar.

CGS Chairman Manjur A Chowdhury, Executive Director Zillur Rahman and FES Resident Representative Felix Kolbitz also spoke at the event.

Political leaders, academics, former diplomats and journalists were present.

Not abducted, she went into hiding

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was in Faridpur's Saidpur. She had also said she had a son studying at Dhaka University and a daughter who died a month after birth.

"But there is no truth to any of this," the SP also said.

"She even took up a job at Moni Begum's restaurant in Bandarban," the PBI official added.

PBI Inspector Abdul Mannan, also the investigation officer of the case, said the information given by Rahima is misleading.

Upon visiting Quddus's house on September 27, he said, "I went to Boalmari to verify Rahima Begum's statement. What she said in court is different from what she said while

staying there."

Mannan will also visit Bandarban in order to verify the information given by Rahima.

"Belal Howlader, Rahima's second husband, is a suspect who may be able to give us important information."

He added that even Rahima's daughter suspected Belal's involvement in the incident.

Asked, Moriom said, "I think my mother wasn't able to give true statements in court regarding her abduction ... She may have become frustrated with her life at home and left."

Moriom added, "We request the court to give her another chance to give a statement if this one is proved false."

On August 27, Rahima went missing from her house at Maheshwarpasha in Daulatpur upazila of Khulna, alleged Moriom and her siblings.

Rahima's other daughter, Adoori Akhter, filed a case with Daulatpur Police Station in this regard on August 28.

During the investigation, police and Rab arrested six people till September 12. On September 24, police found Rahima in Faridpur.

When she was produced before the court the next day, she gave a statement claiming to have been abducted, after which the court released her in the custody of one of her daughters.