

My father insisted that I sign 'Joy Banglar Dhoni'

SUNERAH BINTE KAMAL

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Sunerah Binte Kamal won the National Film Award for her debut film "No Dorai", and did not have to look back after that. The young talent has also been a prominent face as a model.

Her recent feature as a lead in Nuhash Humayun's "Moshari" has earned accolades internationally, including winning the Jury Choice award at the Bucheon International Film Festival in South Korea.

The project also bagged the Best Horror film award at the Oscar-qualifying 'Hollyshorts Film Festival', and it was also among the top 8 films in the entire competition.

In conversation with The Daily Star, she shared her experience of working on "Moshari", upcoming projects and more.

You received the prestigious National Film Award for your debut film. Did you feel that your responsibility as an artiste was elevated then?

For any film artiste, awards are inspiring. Such recognitions increase the sense of responsibility to work harder, and I do feel that my responsibility as an artiste has also been raised.

Recently, you have signed on for a government-granted film, based on the Liberation War. Could you tell us more about the project?

I am working on "Joy Banglar Dhoni",

directed by KM Khurshid. I will be sharing the screen with Nirab Hossain, in this project. We are planning to begin the shooting of the film soon. I will be portraying Tara in both her youth and her old age.

The project became important to me, when my father insisted that I take the project. Also, the plot and the role I will be portraying are very interesting.

How tough do you think it will be for you to pull off both roles in a single project?

It will be challenging for sure. However, I will try to understand the tone and time of the characters and I believe this will make it easier to play the character on the screen.

Did you always want to become an actress?

I took dance tutorials since my childhood. This is when the dream of becoming an actress started to grow. I always want to take up roles that are different from one another. I am very selective about the films I take up.

Your film "Moshari" has been garnering a lot of appreciation, being screened at international festivals and bagging awards. How do you feel about it?

It is an extremely proud moment for the entire team. I am glad to be a part of this project. I hope the film touches the hearts of the audience – and anyone can watch it now, free of cost, on Vimeo!



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Aamir Khan's 'Laal Singh Chaddha': Box office failure, OTT conqueror

Aamir Khan's "Laal Singh Chaddha" might have tanked at the box office, but the movie found a new lease of life upon its quiet release on Netflix. The movie has racked up outstanding viewership and has become the number 1 film on Netflix in India. The movie reached the number 2 spot in non-English films on Netflix worldwide, with over 6.6 million hours of views.

The film has made it to the top 10 list in 13 countries across the world, including Mauritius, Bangladesh, Singapore, Oman, Sri Lanka, Bahrain, Malaysia, and UAE.

The top-performing Indian film on Netflix remains SS Rajamouli's "RRR", which won the top 10 list 15 times globally.



'Phire Aye', a story of three journalists, to release on December 2

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Director Amit Dasgupta, better known as K2, is gearing up for his upcoming Bengali film "Phire Aye", which tells the tale of three journalists.

Produced by Payel Majumdar, the film has announced that it will be released on December 2 of this year.

The film features an ensemble cast of Biswajit Chakraborty, Anamika Saha, Bodhisatta Majumdar, Soma Chatterjee, Rish Biswas, Biplob, and many others.

The story follows three journalists who get caught up in the world of politics and scandals in the search for the truth.

Speaking about the crime-thriller, director K2 shared, "The movie deals with the story of an indomitable journalist who thinks reporting is not just her profession, but her duty to serve the nation."



NEWS

Zilla parishads

FROM PAGE 12

told reporters at his office yesterday.

The EC in August announced the election schedule of 61 district councils, except the three hill districts of Chattogram. But the polls will be held in 57 zilla parishads.

After the announcement, the court stopped elections to Chapainawabganj and Noakhali district councils. No elections will be held in Bhola and Feni district councils as all chairman and member candidates were elected uncontested.

EC Joint Secretary SM Asaduzzaman said 26 chairman candidates, 65 member hopefuls and 18 aspirants for member reserved for women in 57 district councils were also elected uncontested.

Ninety-two contenders are vying for the chairman posts in elections to the remaining 31 district councils, and 1,485 member hopefuls and 603 aspirants for member reserved for women in 57 district councils.

Seven policemen will be deployed for each polling centre, and Rab will act as a force ready to strike.

Alongside policemen, members of Border Guard Bangladesh have been deployed in 19 districts as reserve force to maintain law and order.

The EC has also instructed the authorities to ensure that voters cannot enter the voting booths with mobile phones and cannot take photos while casting votes.

Meanwhile, the EC also urged the authorities concerned to ensure uninterrupted power supply so that it can get CCTV footage properly.

The EC is going to monitor the polls through CCTV cameras five days after they started the Gaibandha-5 by-polls amid allegations of irregularities.

On CCTV monitors at the EC office in the capital, officials saw illegal presence of individuals in polling booths and voters being forced to cast their votes for a certain candidate.

This is the second time the Zilla Parishad polls are going to be held. The first-ever such elections took place in December 28, 2016.

AL-backed candidates became chairmen in 46 districts and 21 of them were elected unopposed. AL leaders running as independents won in 11.

'NOT FEELING ANY PRESSURE'

CEC Kazi Habibur Awal also said the EC was not feeling any pressure following the halt of Gaibandha-5 by-polls.

"We're doing our job," he said when asked about the commission being criticised by the AL after it halted the by-polls, monitoring the situation through CCTV cameras.

The CEC said using CCTV camera has a good side as elections can be monitored via the camera from the office.

"We don't take any side. We want voters to cast votes. That is why we are using CCTV camera," he said.

Replying to the query on how the EC will monitor the parliamentary polls through CCTV cameras when elections will be held at 300 constituencies on a single day, Election Commissioner Md Alamgir said, "There will be 4 lakh polling booths in around 40,000 polling stations. Our technical team has said it will be possible to monitor the polls via CCTV cameras."

Aspiration

FROM PAGE 12

on ensuring child education and health.

The poor people of the country, especially women from poor families, have accepted ideas of development that they can afford such as taking oral saline and vaccinating their children. "These are the big drivers of the development," he added.

Tawfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, prime minister's energy affairs adviser, and Mahir A Rahman, a research associate at the BIDS, jointly presented a paper titled "Aspirational Momentum: The Development Story of Bangladesh" at the event.

Tawfiq said social development has been more than economic development in the country. When Bangladesh became independent, per capita income was half that of Pakistan. "Within 50 years, we have left Pakistan behind and now we have 30 percent more per capita income than Pakistan."

Mashiur Rahman, PM's economic affairs adviser, and Binayak Sen, director general of the BIDS, also spoke.

14-day remand

FROM PAGE 12

authorities to produce all 24 accused before the court on that day.

In the prayers, the IOs said all the accused were involved in attacking Chhatra League men and the remand was necessary to find vital clues about the incident.

On October 11, another Dhaka court rejected the bail petitions submitted by the accused, who said they were attacked by Chhatra League men on the Dhaka University campus on October 7.

The victims, who were supposed to file cases against the actual attackers, were instead sued, arrested, and sent to jail, the lawyer of the accused said.

Nazim Uddin, organising secretary of BCL, and its activist Aminur Rahman filed the two attempt-to-murder cases with Shabbagh Police Station accusing 25 named and 140-150 unnamed people.

On October 7, the day of the attack, police detained 24 of the accused from Dhaka Medical College Hospital and other nearby areas in connection with the incident.

Among the detainees were several who were receiving treatment for their injuries from the attack.

19th-century

FROM PAGE 12

they definitely can be worn," Stevenson told CNN.

"There's a couple of soft spots on the jeans that could use a bit of reinforcement but otherwise they're super-duper solid jeans."

"I could easily imagine Johnny Depp or Jason Momoa wearing them," he said.

While iconic of the American West, the jeans also bear witness to a dark episode in the country's history. An inside pocket is printed with the phrase "The only kind made by White Labor." The Wall Street Journal cited a Levi's spokesperson who explained that the company used this slogan after the introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, which barred Chinese laborers from entering the US.

The WSJ reported that Levi's dropped both this policy and the slogan in the 1890s. The act was repealed in 1943.

What does Stevenson plan to do with the jeans now?

No more work for Chinese firm responsible

FROM PAGE 12

A probe committee, led by Neelima Akhter, additional secretary of the road transport and highways division, held the Chinese contractor China Gezhouba Group Co Ltd responsible for negligence that led to the accident.

While the committee did not recommend any punitive action, the road transport and highways division secretary on September 4 said that the Roads and Highways Department – implementing authority of the project – will take action in line with the probe findings.

The project's work resumed around last month – one month after

the accident.

The BRT Line-3 is a Tk 4,268.38 crore project to build a 20.50km dedicated road for bus services from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport to Gazipur.

It was originally supposed to be completed at a cost of Tk 2,037.85 crore by December 2016.

The deadline was later extended to June this year, but the project made 78 percent progress by then. Another deadline was then set for December this year.

However, project officials sought yet another one-year extension, the proposal of which is not pending with the planning commission.

Dhaka looks to secure \$5.5b

FROM PAGE 1

Policy Credit (DPC) and \$750 million from the global lender's Green, Resilient Inclusive Development (GRID) fund – as budget support.

He said the advantage of a budget support fund is that it's easier to get. "That's why we preferred this fund."

About the country's balance of payments (BoP), the governor said the pressure on the current account balance eased over the last three months, as the remittance and export earnings combined were equal to the import bills during the period.

According to Investopedia, the current account balance is part of a country's financial inflow and outflow record. It's part of the BoP, the statement of all transactions made between one country and another.

Rouf said the pressure on the current account balance would ease further once the payments of the outstanding LCs (letters of credit) are made.

"I think the strain on the foreign currency reserves would not be there after November-December, provided that the economy doesn't suffer any further global shock," he said.

Bangladesh's forex reserve came under severe strain since the start of the Russia-Ukraine war in February, as the import bill galloped due to price hike of commodities, especially food, fuel and fertiliser, in the international market.

As of October 12, the reserve stood at \$36.33 billion compared to \$41.82

billion on June 30 this year. It was \$46.13 billion on October 12 last year, according to BB data.

At a press conference in Washington DC on Friday, Anne-Marie Gulde-Wolf, deputy director of the Asia and Pacific Department of the IMF, said they would send a team to Bangladesh next week to discuss the country's loan request.

"We also have seen the taka depreciate by about 20 percent. The reserves have gone down," she said, adding that the reserves were still at a comfortable level but had been on a downward trend.

"So, with this, we are pleased that the authorities have been proactive in engaging with the IMF in discussing an economic programme that will contain measures to stabilise the economy and to avoid a further downturn in the economy," she noted.

Seeking anonymity, a finance ministry official told The Daily Star yesterday that an IMF delegation will arrive in Dhaka on October 26.

2 engineers

FROM PAGE 2

On October 6, PGCB formed a seven-member committee to identify the reasons behind the national grid failure on October 4 that caused a four to eight hours blackout across more than half of the country.

The Daily Star contacted both of the suspended officials, but they declined to comment saying they were yet to know about it officially.

The roads transport and bridges minister further said the project started before he took office and its current disarrayed state is a result of flawed planning.

He has instructed the project officials to wrap up the works at any cost, and so are now expecting the project to be completed by next March-April.

Quader also reiterated that the Bangabandhu Tunnel in Chattogram and the first phase of the metro rail will be inaugurated later this year.

He added that his ministry has also sent a project summary of opening 100 bridges across the country in a single day to the prime minister.

Xi Jinping hails

FROM PAGE 12

won an overwhelming victory and has been comprehensively consolidated," he said.

In a speech that mostly focused on domestic issues, Xi also told the delegates that China would "actively participate in global governance on climate change".

Xi also reiterated that China opposed a "Cold War mentality" in international diplomacy, but made no mention of frayed relations with the United States.

Xi also did not reference the Ukraine war.

There were no policy announcements in the address, which was largely a review of the current state of play, and analysts said Xi wanted to project stability.

Should everything go to plan for Xi, the 69-year-old will be endorsed as the party's general secretary after the week-long meeting ends, cementing his position as China's most powerful leader since Mao Zedong.

Xi and the party's other top brass are likely to be unveiled on October 23, the day after the Congress closes.

If picked as party leader for another five-year term as expected, he is almost certain to be elected president at the annual meeting of China's National People's Congress in March.

In the highly choreographed, mostly closed-door conclave this week, the delegates will pick members of the party's roughly 200-member Central Committee, which in turn selects the 25-person Politburo and its all-powerful Standing Committee – the country's highest leadership body.