

# Multi-talented Sarah Alam makes her mark in showbiz

**Getting her start in the industry as a radio jockey, Sarah Alam has made her mark in all mediums of the showbiz industry—working in modelling, drama, film, advertisements, and OTT. Recently, her portrayal of Srabonti, in the web-series “Bodh”, received a positive response from the audience, causing her to become even more dedicated to her acting career.**



ANTARA RAISA

In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, she shared her feelings about her career in showbiz, her future plans and much more.

**What was the most challenging part of playing Srabonti in “Bodh”?**

Portraying the psychological aspect of Srabonti was definitely the most challenging part. She was agitated and restless, due to crises she was facing in her personal life, along with the conflict with her father. Additionally, continuously maintaining the agitation and edginess in her character was hard for me, as I am personally a very calm and peaceful person in real life.

**What made you choose this project to make your web-series debut?**

I chose this script because, on some level, I could relate to the character of Srabonti. I felt that we have the same belief system, which helped me take ownership over this character. Another thing was that, the project’s storyline centres around a social issue we should talk about more often.

**How was the experience of working with Afzal Hossain?**

Working with him is always fun and exciting. He always tells wonderful stories and you can learn a lot from him. Initially, I was nervous about working with him, but it got easier with time. In real life, he is such a humble person. The most exciting part was the stories that he

would share with us, off-screen.

**You first film, “Bengali Beauty”, was released in 2018. After that, we haven’t seen you in films. So, what are your future plans in terms of film?**

Now that I’m planning on becoming fully dedicated to my acting career, I want to try out a variety of characters. So, I will definitely work in films, if I get a suitable script that excites me. Nowadays, audiences are more content-oriented, rather than genre-centred. That is why I want to focus solely on stories.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

**You have worked in film, advertisements, and web-series. Which medium do you find the most challenging?**

I feel the most challenging medium is film. In films, an actor has to always be focused and dedicated to his role. As it portrays a story in

around two to three hours, the detail in films is much more than any other medium. However, I think every medium is challenging in its own right. The main challenge is finding the right balance between actors, directors, and crew members.

**Could you tell us about your upcoming ventures?**

Just recently, I finished a web-series called “Internship”, for Chorki. Although I have very little screen-time in the project, my character is vital to the climax of the series. Apart from this, I am currently working as a host for various corporate events.

## Riaz blessed with baby boy



After a long time, popular actor Riaz Ahamed has been blessed with a baby boy. On Saturday night, he and his wife, Tina, welcomed their newborn son into the world. The couple have named the baby Ariz Siddiqui.

Earlier on May 30, 2015, Riaz became a father for the first time, when his daughter, Amira Siddiqui was born.

On Saturday night, Riaz took to his verified Facebook profile to share the good news with the world, “By the grace of the Almighty, here is the new member of our family, Ariz Siddiqui. I request you all to keep him in your prayers.”

## Rubaiyat Hossain receives grant of 50,000 Euros for upcoming film

Recently, internationally acclaimed filmmaker, Rubaiyat Hossain received a grant from the 37th Berlin World Cinema Fund. The independent filmmaker won 50,000 Euros (BDT 53 lakhs) for her upcoming production “The Difficult Bride”.

The news was confirmed by the director to The Daily Star.

“The budget of my film is 1 million Euros. This was the first grant we applied to for this project, and received a large sum of 50,000 Euros. We will also be applying for grants in France, Sweden, Denmark, and Bangladesh, as well. We are hoping to start shooting for the film from September of next year,” said Rubaiyat Hossain.

The Berlin World Cinema Fund received submissions of a total of 176 films from 51 countries, from which only 11 were selected by the judges.



# NEWS

## DB looking into new theories

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as investigators were yet to identify the killer(s) or find the motive.

After tracking his location and analysing CCTV footage, DB said Fardin got into a human hauler from the city’s Jatrabari at 2:15am on November 5.

At 2:25am, he got off the vehicle a short distance from the Demra end of the Sultana Kamal Bridge and began to walk in that direction.

Ten minutes later, his phone was switched off.

A large amount of mobile data was spent for about 20 minutes until the phone was turned off, and investigators believe he was listening to music at the time, according to a DB lead investigator who requested anonymity.

Fardin’s phone was recovered with his body from the Shitalakkhya in Narayanganj’s Siddhirganj on November 7.

His father Kazi Nuruddin previously told this newspaper that he thought his son appeared to be

forced to walk in the CCTV footage that investigators had taken from Jatrabari.

Detectives already interrogated the human haulier driver and his assistant who told them that Fardin willingly got in and got off the vehicle, the official said.

Earlier, Rab claimed that they had enough information to suspect that Fardin was killed at Chonpara slum by alleged drug dealer Rayhan Mahmud and his gang.

However, Rab did not say why the victim went to Chonpara.

Amatullah Bushra, a third-year student at a private university, remains the only person arrested in the case filed by Fardin’s father as the prime suspect.

Bushra is now behind bars although DB said they did not find her involvement in the killing.

Fardin, a third-year civil engineering student at Buet, was with Bushra until he dropped her off at Rampura at 9:45pm on November 4.

## SC clears way

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M Kamal represented Shahidul while Attorney General AM Amin Uddin represented the state during the hearing.

The HC on December 14 last year rejected the writ petition filed by Shahidul, an internationally acclaimed photographer, saying the petition was not acceptable for criminal case proceedings.

On March 3, 2019, Shahidul filed the writ petition challenging the legality of the investigation into the case, in which he was imprisoned for 107 days.

On August 5, 2018, Shahidul, founder of Drik Gallery and Pathshala South Asian Media Institute, was picked up from his Dhanmondi home during a widespread demonstration for safe roads.

Police lodged the case against him under section 57 of the ICT act, which was abolished later on through formulation of the Digital Security Act, 2018, and produced him before a Dhaka court the following day.

On November 15, 2018, HC granted Shahidul bail.

## No transport strike

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The BNP sought permission from police to hold its rally in Nayapaltan. But the DMP later said the venue should be outside the city centre, recommending the International Trade Fair ground at Purbachal or Bishwa Jitama ground in Tongi as the possible venues.

But Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal on Saturday said the BNP was given permission to hold the rally at Suhrawardy Udyan which is suitable for mass gatherings.

BNP leaders, however, said this was a ploy to prevent their activists from joining the rally, pointing out that Suhrawardy Udyan is on the Dhaka University campus where Chhatra League men are always present.

They said they would hold the rally at Nayapaltan even if the government doesn’t give them permission.

Chhatra League’s council was earlier scheduled for December 8 and 9. But AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday announced that the council would begin on December 6 so that the BNP could hold its rally on December 10.

Hasina’s directives were issued hours after Quader made the announcement. Quader also said that the government would not obstruct the rally.

## Online harassment of women increases

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impact on their lives including psychological trauma, depression and anxiety.

This also includes the loss of confidence in being active or expressing opinions on social media (42.79 percent).

Such incidents also left them traumatised and impacted their self-confidence.

Only 14.91 percent of the women submitted formal complaints against online violence and more than 85 percent of the sufferers remained silent.

Among the complainants, 44.12 percent filed complaints through the social media reporting option, 20.59 percent through the Facebook page of Police Cyber Support for Women PCSW, 11.76 percent through the National Emergency Service (999), 11.76 percent through the nearest police station, 5.88 percent through Cyber Crime Investigation Division, Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime and Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Most of the women thought the

existing complaining mechanisms do not work. As a result, they did not show interest in submitting (28.87 percent) their complaint.

As much as 64.71 percent of respondents said they did not find any redressal or action against their submitted complaints, while 75.77 percent of the women reported they want to complain anonymously through online platforms as they are afraid of social stigma, victim blaming and losing privacy.

Of the survey respondents, 61.84 percent live in Dhaka division, 13.65 percent in Chittagong, 5.85 percent in Khulna, 5.01 percent in Rangpur and 5.01 percent in Rajshahi.

“I found young girls committed suicide in Bangladesh in the last two years due to online harassment. Adolescents are aware of the digital security act, but they don’t know how to access support,” said Sadat Rahman, winner of the International Children’s Peace Prize and founder and president of Cyber Teens Foundation.

Law enforcement agencies and

other relevant stakeholders need to make the support system more readily available and approachable, he added.

Women especially teenagers and girls below 18 years are mostly falling into the trap of online violence, said Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh.

“If everyone works together, as this year’s global theme signifies, violence against women can be reduced to a great extent,” she said.

Technical assistance is required in addition to strengthening the legal process to resolve online violence, said DU associate law professor Taslima Yasmin.

Social media analyst and consultant Faizul Karim and anthropologist and researcher Dilshad Siddiquea presented the findings of the study at a discussion titled ‘Stop Online Violence Against Women: Challenges and Way Forward’ organised by ActionAid Bangladesh as a part of 16 Days of Activism to End Violence Against Women campaign.

## ‘Key coordinator’ surrenders

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Mohammadpur Police Station, after his involvement was found with the attempted murder of publisher Ahmedur Rashid Tutul, according to CTTC officials.

Earlier on November 20, the two militants -- Moinul Hasan Shamim alias Samir alias Sifat alias Imran, and Abu Siddiqi Soheli alias Sakib alias Sajid alias Shahab – were snatched from police custody and whisked away when they were returning to jail after a hearing in a Dhaka court.

Both the convicts are still on the run.

The CTTC, who has been investigating the case, earlier arrested another “key planner” of the snatching – Mehedi Hasan Omi alias Rafi behind – who is now on a seven-day remand.

Besides these two, 10 other members of the outfit are also on a 10-day remand each in the case.

Ansar Al Islam has taken

responsibility for the snatching of the convicted militants in their protected Dawahilallah forum, according to investigators.

Asked, DC Nazmul said they have heard about the outfit’s claim and are now verifying it.

Meanwhile, another police official has been suspended for negligence after the two deathrow convicts were snatched away from custody.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Jasim Uddin, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police’s prosecution division, said constable Nur-e-Azad was suspended on Saturday, right after he rejoined following medical treatment, as he was found to be negligent in discharging duties.

Although he was supposed to wait near the lift for the other policemen, Nur-e-Azad chose to take four militants out of court premises and escort them to the prison cell by himself, the DC said.

Further action would depend on whether the probe body, in its report, mentions any security lapse in the incident, he added.

Unidentified criminals sprayed chemicals in Nur’s face and made off with the two convicts.

Nur had to be treated for injuries to his nose and eyes at the capital’s National Institute of Ophthalmology.

Earlier, the DMP suspended Court Inspector Matiur Rahman; Sub-inspector Nahidur Rahman Bhuiyan, also in charge of the prison cell of the CMM Court; Assistant Sub-inspector Mohiuddin, and constables Sharif Hasan and Abdus Sattar.

AKM Hafiz Akter, additional commissioner of the DMP, also the chief of a five-member panel investigating security loopholes, told The Daily Star yesterday that there was negligence in duty.

“We will be able to specify it all after the end of investigation.”