



PHOTO: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

I have the courage to speak the truth

DIGHI

ZAHID AKBAR

Prarthana Fardin Dighi made headlines when she wrote about being a 'victim' of film 'syndicate' on her Facebook account. She claimed that Raihan Rafi initially excluded her from his upcoming film *Shurongo*, even after finalising talks with her.

She was supposed to star opposite Afran Nisho in this project, which was eventually signed by Tama Mirza. Dighi shared her grief, and further details about this matter with The Daily Star.

What was the purpose of your Facebook post, what did you mean by 'syndicates'?

I did not mention any director's name in my post. To tell you the truth, this has been happening to me for many years, a lot of filmmakers have done me wrong. Interestingly, Raihan Rafi was the one who reacted to this post on the media and gave statements mentioning my name. It is because he already knows what he did!

Did you sign the film 'Shurongo'?

I went to his production officetwice with my maternal uncle. We had several meetings as well. He told me to keep my dates booked for this project, and that he has some issues fix with the producer, only after that, we were

supposed to go for the shoot.

I did so accordingly, and I told my father about signing this project. If it was not verbally finalised, I wouldn't have shared it with anyone. After giving schedule to any director, being dropped from the project is annoying. I called the director numerous times, which resulted in unanswered calls. I have all the proof with me. He did not officially sign me for the project, but gave me word, which has no value!

Were you in the talks to work in any other project by Raihan Rafi?

Yes, he talked to me about one of his web films, but for some unknown reason, I was dropped from that project as well. There are a lot of artistes who face the same, but never speak about it. I have the courage to speak out the truth.

See, I have a background in this industry. My parents were well known, and respected in the fraternity. Before I made my debut as heroine, I achieved three National Film Awards as a child artiste. So, why would I use his name to get media attention?

Were you the one, who approached him for a role?

I can show evidence that he approached me first, and called me at his office for meeting.

There are speculations that Raihan Rafi dropped you because of your Tiktok appearance.

This is an absolutely ridiculous excuse. He himself appears on Tiktok videos with the actresses he works with, and most of the actresses who have worked with him are also regular on the platform.



AR Rahman releases new, powerful version of 'Infinite Love'

When AR Rahman released song *Infinite Love* in 2012, he had no clue it would become a movement. The song *Infinite Love*, which fuses hip-hop, funk, and Indian classical music, brought happiness, gratitude, and tranquility to people all over the world.

AR Rahman has recreated the soaring hymn for a new world and a new generation on this historic occasion as the song nears its ten-year anniversary.

"I would like to thank the people of the world for their encouragement & love, particularly the artist community for showing the world that they don't care about race or nationality, and all they care for is the person you are and the gift you carry as an artist," said AR Rahman.

Magician Jewel Aich receives 'Bir Muktijoddha Sommanona'



Renowned magician Jewel Aich was honoured with the 'Bir Muktijoddha Sommanona' on Saturday. Jewel Aich announced the news on his Facebook account along with a picture.

"Uttara Club has awarded me the honour of 'Bir Muktijoddha Sommanona'. I am really happy to get this award," read the post.

A freedom fighter, a magic maestro, and a flute virtuoso – Jewel Aich has done it all. He is also working as an advocate for UNICEF to establish the rights of children in the country.

Jewel Aich fought in Sector 9 during the Liberation War, under the leadership of the Sector Commander Major Jalil.

NEWS

The VC a law unto himself?

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of the Islamic Arabic University has tarnished the image of the university to such a level that it is not possible to maintain smooth academic and administrative activities by retaining him as vice chancellor.

"So, Prof Ahsan Ullah should be immediately removed from the post..."

Though the Islamic Arabic University Act 2013 does not give the VC the authority to appoint anyone temporarily, Ahsan Ullah appointed one Jakir Hossain as the university's assistant registrar on a temporary basis in February 2015.

Then in January 2019, he gave Jakir permanent appointment to the post after issuing a recruitment advertisement of his own accord.

He had done all this without the approval of the university syndicate, which, according to the law, is responsible for appointing officers and employees and determining their duties, terms and other conditions of services.

Moreover, Jakir Hossain did not have the required work experience for the position and had a third division in his educational degrees.

"The appointment is void ab initio, and so it is recommended that Jakir Hossain be relieved from the post," the report read.

The VC had also illegally appointed one Abu Hanifa to the post of deputy registrar.

According to the probe report, the photocopy of the recommendation of the selection board for appointment seemed to have been tampered with and there were no main copies of the documents.

It added Hanifa served as acting registrar several times and, according to the testimony of a former registrar, Ahsan Ullah used to keep all confidential and important official documents with him.

"Therefore, the responsibility of said tampering also falls on Hanifa. So, it is recommended that such a dishonest person, who was illegally appointed, be immediately removed from the university."

On the other hand, the probe report also said appointments of Fahad Ahmad Momtazi as assistant registrar and Ziaur Rahman as assistant director of Planning and Development, as well as the recruitment of section officers, assistant programmers and others, through a revised recruitment circular issued on May 24, 2018, and the 10th syndicate meeting of December 12, 2018, were illegal.

It reasoned that there was a breach of law as it appears that the photocopy of the recommendation of the selection board for appointment was tampered with; the minimum prescribed qualification was not approved by the syndicate; some aspirants who were on the merit list were left out during the recruitment

process; and aspirants from lower down the merit list were appointed.

The probe report added that 58 aspirants were appointed section officers against the 41 positions mentioned in the recruitment advertisement.

Twenty-nine office assistants cum-computer operators were appointed against the 16 advertised positions, while four assistant programmers were recruited against two advertised positions, and two audit officers were appointed against a single position.

Meanwhile, 31 office assistants were appointed against the 24 advertised positions.

The probe committee also recommended the cancellation of temporary appointments of teachers as the positions were not approved by the UGC. The report, however, did not mention the number of teachers.

A member of the probe committee said that at least five teachers were appointed, although the university has no academic departments.

The probe report made a special recommendation for further investigation by a special force of the government regarding all the allegations that range from financial irregularities to his involvement with Jamaat-e-Islami politics.

Contacted, Ahsan Ullah said he had not seen the UGC report and will not make any comments.

"I just want to say that all my work is done as per the university rules."

One dead, several injured in strikes on Russian region

AFP, Moscow

Strikes on the Russian region of Belgorod that borders Ukraine killed one person and injured five others yesterday, the regional governor said, two days after attacks by Moscow battered Ukraine's energy grid.

In the regional capital Belgorod, "there are four wounded (with injuries) of moderate severity", governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said on social media.

One of those injured is a man whose back was cut by shrapnel and another is a woman who suffered facial injuries, according to Gladkov.

One killed in AL

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Sub-Inspector Mahidul Islam of Hatibandha Police Station yesterday said police were investigating a complaint filed in this regard.

Contacted, Nural Amin, general secretary of Sindurna Union AL, said none of his supporters were involved in the incident.

(Our correspondents from Narsingdi and Lalmonirhat contributed to the report.)

440 people sued

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as a part of the upgradation. They also set fire to an excavator, two motorbikes, and the site office of the firm.

"They attacked us while we were visiting the spot with surveyors to detect our command area," said Ekramul.

According to WDB, Buri Teesta Irrigation Project comprises of 91-metre concrete barrage and 1,217.61 acres of land reserved for a water reservoir at Pocharhat village, with 30-kilometre canal network to irrigate 5.5 thousand acres of farming land in Dimla and Jaldhaka upazilas as commissioned in 1963.

"The upgradation programme of this project will cost Tk 120 crores. The project has been inoperative since 2012 till last year after the High Court stayed it following a writ petition filed by the 'local influentials', said Abdul Hannan Prodhan, sub-divisional engineer of WDB's Nilphamari division.

"Locally influential people occupied the lands of the waterless reservoirs while the project was inoperative. They built infrastructures and also used the land for farming and are now claiming ownership."

Krishna Kamol Chandra Sarker, executive engineer of WDB in

Nilphamari, said, "Once upgraded, the project will be more effective as it would prove to be beneficial for 6,000 farmers in the barrage's downstream areas who have filed a petition to the office, asking for uninterrupted water supply during the Boro cultivation. We have assured them of this."

The safety of the officials has been ensured, said Executive Magistrate Reazuddin Ahmed.

The attackers, however, claimed the land acquisition, from ancestors about 55 years ago, was not done properly.

Visiting the area, this correspondent came to know that the people of five villages located near the Buri Teesta barrage has formed a committee to put forward their demands.

Swapan Mia Badol, the secretary of the committee, said locals own most of the reservoir's land as the then government had acquired them without making payments. Now WDB keeps filing false cases, just like it did on December 12 accusing 30 people, who are now in jail.

"The project is defective, and launching a new one is unscientific."

Police are conducting raids to arrest the accused, said Laichur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Dimla Police Station.

US reiterates its concerns

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missing BNP leader Sajedul Islam Sumon to meet with the families of victims of enforced disappearance.

Such families have a platform called Mayer Daak, where Sumon's mother is a key organiser.

As the prescheduled meeting was going on, members of Mayer Kanna took positions in front of the house and demanded justice for their relatives who were victims of court martial during the regime of late president Ziaur Rahman, founder of BNP, in 1977.

The meeting was interrupted by protestors, who attempted to

enter the building where Haas was located. Due to security concerns, Haas ended the meeting earlier than scheduled. As he was exiting the venue, the other protestors surrounded the ambassador's vehicle.

Haas immediately called on Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen at the foreign ministry to share his concerns over the incident.

Also yesterday, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said there had been no lack of security when Haas went to Shaheenbagh.

Police personnel rushed to the spot immediately, he told reporters

at the secretariat.

This comes after Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen earlier said the situation that Haas faced could not be seen as a "security threat".

Meanwhile, the US embassy spokesperson yesterday said the embassy had not received any prior communication from Mayer Kanna over the last several years.

"Human rights are at the centre of US foreign policy. Therefore, the US embassy takes seriously all allegations of human rights violations and regularly meets with a wide variety of human rights organisations," the spokesperson added.

Tickets to go on sale after PM's trip

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preparations ahead of the official launch.

"We are satisfied with the preparation," he told The Daily Star last night.

He added that the decision about selling the cards after the PM's departure will be finalised after consultation with the SSF.

Those who would buy the single-use card from the station will have to leave it after the journey, he said. The cards will be sold at a vending machine and from a booth.

There could be used for 10 years. Commuters will have to register and pay Tk 400 for these cards. Out of Tk 400, Tk 200 will be used as deposit money and Tk 200 can be used for travelling, he said, adding that a passenger can refill the card with up to Tk 10,000.

The commuter will get back the deposited money by returning the card, Siddique said.

For now, people will have to buy the cards with cash, he said, adding that the authorities are working with different companies providing mobile financial services so that passengers could buy the cards through mobile transaction.

From December 29, the metro will be operated two hours in the morning and two hours in the evening for the first few days, he added.

The time will increase gradually, he added.

Meanwhile, ABM Amin Ullah Nuri, secretary of road transport and highways division, yesterday visited Uttara North Station area to see where the inauguration plaque can be put and a programme can be held, officials said.

Metro authorities also apprised their preparation to Tofazzel Hossain Miah, principal secretary to the PM.

For now, the 11.73km section of the metro rail from Uttara to Agargaon would be opened. The remaining 8km from Agargaon to Motijheel will be in operation by December next year.

The other 1km from Motijheel to Kamalapur would be inaugurated by June 2025.

The original cost of the project was Tk 21,985 crore, but it rose to Tk 33,472 crore after revision.

The escalation was mainly due to acquiring new lands to change the stations' design and building the extended part from Motijheel to Kamalapur.

Most of the funds will come from Japan in soft loans.