



ILIAS KANCHAN

A hero, both in real-life and on-screen



National Film Award-winning actress, Nusrat Imrose Tisha has been absent from the silver screen for quite a while now, as she has been busy taking care of her baby daughter, Ilham Nusrat Farooki. The *Third Person Singular Number* actress confirmed her return to the film scene with a post on her official Facebook account.

Her post read, "I have missed being in front of the camera for days, weeks and even months. Ilham is slowly growing up. Now, when I leave for work, she can stay with her father. That's why I am returning to work once again slowly with a few advertisements."

‘Nasek Nasek’ famed Animes Roy sings for film

Nasek Nasek famed singer, Animes Roy recently lent his voice to the soundtrack of the film *Noya Manush*—which is being directed by Sohel Rana Boyati. The song is titled *Shonar Mon* and it has been written by Sujan Hajong and composed by Emon Chowdhury. Talking about the experience of singing on a film for the first time, Animes Roy shared how he was grateful to have the opportunity to sing on Emon Chowdhury's composition. Based on AMM Hasanuzzaman's story, *Bedonar Baluchor*, with Masum Reza writing the screenplay, *Noya Manush* features Rawnak Hasan, Mousumi Hamid, Ashish Khandokar, Jhuna Chowdhury and Nilufer Wahid, among others.



PHOTOS: SHAHREAR KABIR HEEMEL



welfare of people is everything for me," said the actor. Meanwhile, there are talks about the actor receiving the Lifetime Achievement award for his contribution to films. Both, Dolly Zahur and Ilias Kanchan will be jointly receiving the prestigious recognition. When asked about whether he has any regrets, he said, "Nope, I am still alive, I am still working for everyone, and for my film industry. I want to continue working honestly and with love for my fans. I am really grateful have earned so much appreciation and love for my acting."

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU
Ilias Kanchan—the inimitable silver screen persona, charmed his way into the hearts of audiences with his stellar performance in *Beder Meye Josna*. The National Award-Winning actor and President of Bangladesh Film Artistes' Association, is popular for working tirelessly for the 'Nirapad Sharak Chai' movement. Recently, the winners of the National Film Award were announced, and Ilias Kanchan is said to be receiving the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' for his contributions to the film industry. In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, the actor talks about his passion for acting, future plans and more. Unlike many actors from the 60's, Ilias Kanchan doesn't believe in slowing down, he is an artiste driven by passion and he has given one of the most successful movies of Dhallywood with his iconic film *Beder Meye Josna*. "This movie has given me immense fame and

stardom. *Beder Meye Josna* is a phenomenal hit which is very much loved by all sets of movie lovers," said Ilias. Ilias Kanchan debuted on the silver screen with Subhash Dutta's film *Basundhara*. He has achieved massive stardom as a romantic hero. Audiences still remember his melancholic performance in *Bheja Chokh*, where he charmed fans with his romantic personae. He has worked in more than 300 films, and he won the National Award for his superb performance in Alamgir Kabir's film *Parinecta* in 1986. In the following year, he received critical acclaim for his performance in Kazi Hayat's movie *Dayi Ke*. On the other hand, his 'Nirapad Sharak Chai' movement has created social awareness in the country, touching millions of lives. He has worked religiously to ensure safety for pedestrians on the street. His contribution has led to 'National Road Safety Day' in our country. "This organisation has given me a lot. I want to ensure safer roads for everyone. The

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Make Nagad lone option

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According to the manual in force, parents or legal guardians will submit the number of an account of a mobile banking service along with other necessary documents to the class teacher during the admission or at the beginning of the academic year. The parents can choose between Nagad, bKash, Rocket, SureCash, T-Cash and Upay. The DPE proposal, if approved, will curtail the officials' and the parents' liberty to choose the service of their liking. Students in orphanages and remote areas are given stipends through the upazila nirbahi officer or district primary education officer. The money is sent to their mobile banking accounts. Contacted, DPE Director General Shah Rezwana Hayat said, "It is easier to monitor one single service provider. Their [Nagad's] performance is good." Asked whether such a move may give preferential treatment to Nagad, he said, "We made the proposal because Nagad has links to the Bangladesh Post Office." Since its inception in March 2019,

Nagad has been operating with a temporary approval from Bangladesh Bank. Abu Saeed Khan, senior policy fellow at LIRNEasia, a think-tank on information and communication technology, said Nagad was using the post office to gain profits. "Public funds must not be used for making private profit. A private company is making profits by using a government organisation. The directorate has no right to curb the freedom of choice of [the stipend] recipients. Even the pensioners get money to the accounts of their preferred banks," he said, adding that pensioners earlier received the money only through the state-owned Sonali Bank. He also opined that the DPE's move is a violation of competition law. Farid Ahmed, secretary of the primary and mass education ministry, said he was yet to go through the DPE letter. "We'll analyse their request and seek the Finance Division's suggestions. We will make a decision after that," he added.

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secretary. January 15 is not a red line, it can get approval on January 18, 20, or even tomorrow." Asked if the Planning Commission will downsize the allocation, he evaded a direct answer and said, "Usually, a project is discussed at meetings of the project evaluation committee, and then the proposal is sent to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council. We'll give the approval after all the discussions." He added that governments across the world spend money according to proper calculation. Meanwhile, Switzerland Ambassador in Dhaka Nathalie Chuard told reporters that there is a strong partnership between Bangladesh and Switzerland. "I also think that the partnership for the years to come is very promising and we are on the right track." She said that Switzerland has very strong programmes here in Bangladesh in terms of economic development, rule of law, governance, and protection of human rights. "I really hope for Bangladesh to have free and fair elections in the year to come."

US to closely watch polls in Bangladesh

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Major General (retired) Tarique Ahmed Siddique, participated in a roundtable with Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies and also met civil society leaders to discuss human rights, governance, and security in Bangladesh. The visit underscored the US's continued commitment to strengthening Bangladesh-US bilateral relationship, said the US embassy in Dhaka yesterday. Kara C McDonald, US deputy assistant secretary for democracy, human rights and labour, is likely to visit Bangladesh next month. More visits from the US are also likely in the coming months. There is a general question as to why so many US officials are visiting Bangladesh. The curiosity is more as there were some strains in Dhaka-Washington ties following the sanctions on Rapid Action Battalion and seven of its current and former officials in December 2021. Also, Bangladesh was not invited to US President Joe Biden's democracy summit that month. Last month, US Ambassador in Dhaka Peter Haas raised security concerns after members of Mayer Kanna, a platform of relatives of some victims of court-martial during the rule of late president Ziaur Rahman, allegedly interrupted his meeting with the victims of enforced disappearances at the capital's Shaheenbagh home of missing BNP leader Sajedul Islam Sumon. Asked about the matters, former foreign secretary Touhid Hossain said it is quite normal that the western countries, especially the US, will speak about election, democracy and

human rights. "As this is an election year in Bangladesh, the words 'democracy' and 'election' will be pronounced more than normal," he said. This is more so because the last two national elections were questionable, and the US does not want a similar type of election this time too, he added. Bangladesh Enterprise Institute President M Humayun Kabir said the US officials during their visits to Bangladesh usually don't make direct statements on human rights and democracy. "But if you look at the State Department spokesperson ... he clearly said they will be closely watching the elections and if the government's words on fair polls matched the reality," said Humayun, also a former ambassador. Foreign policy analysts said the US has a greater vision of drawing Bangladesh on its side as the global polarisation between the West and China-Russia bloc sharpened following the Russia-Ukraine war. "If you look at South Asia, Bangladesh, after India, is the only country having robust economic growth and maintaining balanced foreign policy with regard to China and Russia," a western diplomat said. Though India is a US ally, it continues to buy energy from Russia defying US sanctions, which irked the US. The US wants to strengthen partnership with other regional countries like Bangladesh, he said. Humayun Kabir said the US-Bangladesh economic relationship is very vibrant with US imports from Bangladesh, people-to-people contact and remittance from the

US. Bangladesh is a highly potential market for the US, he added. America, Humayun said, also wants to strengthen partnership with Bangladesh for its vision of a secure and free Indo-Pacific so that no particular country can establish dominance in the sea. Asked if the US is pushing for defence purchase, the former diplomat said Washington is already providing support in maritime security and there is nothing wrong if Dhaka buys equipment for enhancing its capacity, not for any confrontation. Getting involved in any military competition is also not the policy of Bangladesh, he said. It will be fine as long as Bangladesh doesn't do anything that would pose a security threat to the US. So, there is need for nuanced approach to diplomacy, Humayun said. Touhid Hossain said foreign countries, especially the western nations, will continue to speak out about democracy and human rights as long as scopes are created for them. If those issues are addressed internally, foreigners will not have much to say. Prof Imtiaz Ahmed of Dhaka University thinks that trade is a major element in the US-Bangladesh relations. Bangladesh has maintained regime stability, if not political stability, for more than the last one decade and the trade ties with the US improved a lot, he said. "US officials coming to Bangladesh means they are eager to deepen engagement. We need to realise our potentials and make the best use of it, instead of focusing on negative aspects," said the international relations professor.

‘Challenging’

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Airport yesterday. He held a meeting with the Chinese minister at the airport. Qin Gang, 56, became the foreign minister on December 30 last year. Asked whether Bangladesh and the US discussed the election issue during US official Laubacher's visit, Momen said the next national election would be held after one year, and over the last 14 years, elections were held in a free and fair manner. "Our country is democratic." He said the overall election environment can be improved through joint efforts domestically with the participation of people and all parties. Momen said it would be unfortunate if any violence occurs during elections. "And it cannot be stopped by recommendations from the outside. We have to do this." The foreign minister said the government wants to ensure a free, fair and acceptable election and that is why there is an independent Election Commission. Momen said considering the remarkable development over the last 14 years under the leadership of Prime

Minister Sheikh Hasina, people would re-elect the Awami League for their better future. "We believe in people. People will vote for the Awami League if there is a fair election. The Awami League is a democratic party. We never came to power through the backdoor," said the foreign minister, adding that, "Our intention is good. We have a good track record." He urged China to increase imports from Bangladesh and boost economic cooperation. While Bangladesh's exports to China are worth just \$800 million, the country imports goods worth \$13 billion from China, he said. The trade between the two countries has become one-sided, Momen told his Chinese counterpart. Briefing reporters about the meeting, Momen also said, China announced duty-free access to 98 percent of Bangladeshi products, but it has not yet published gazettes. "So, businessmen in Bangladesh are unable to take this advantage. If the gazettes are implemented, it would be good."

During his meeting with Qin Gang at the VIP lounge of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Momen said, "We believe in the one-China principle. We maintain a balanced foreign policy. This is our principle. We will extend our support time to time." He also thanked the Chinese government for its support to Bangladesh during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mob torches

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The angry people vandalised at least 20 vehicles and torched six others, including that of Anabil Paribahan. Abdullah Al Arefin, the deputy assistant director of Gazipur Fire Service, said during the incident, passengers got down from transport. It was not immediately known if any of the passengers were hurt. Meanwhile, Ashraf Hossain, emergency department doctor at Tairunnessa Memorial Medical College and Hospital, said the conditions of the two injured were critical. They were transferred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Report on my 14 houses

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property in Bangladesh. My wife got a share of her fathers' wealth." "I have never lived on haram [illegal] money. All my income is permissible [halal]," he added. Taqsem was supposed to hold a press briefing at the Wasa head office yesterday at 10:00am. But when this correspondent along with other journalists went there, Wasa officials said none would be allowed to join the briefing without prior

appointments. Many journalists were not allowed to cover the briefing. Later, Mustafa Tarek, Wasa's public relations officer, told journalists that the Wasa MD talked to journalists who had appointments. "But he [Wasa MD] will talk to other media outlets shortly." Meanwhile, Dhaka Union of Journalists yesterday condemned Wasa MD for not allowing some journalists to cover the press briefing.

Record-breaking

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tonnes of annual carbon emissions. CSSC added that the new turbine would have "far-reaching significance" for China's energy transition to renewable sources, with the aim of reaching its '30/60' target of hitting peak emissions by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060. Renewable energy saw a record-breaking year in 2022, as global electricity generation from renewables overtook coal for the first time.