

# I got more than what I asked for

APU BISWAS



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Dhallywood actress Apu Biswas is set to debut as a producer for her government-funded film *Laal Shari*, directed by Bandhan Biswas. The film centers around the lives of handloom weavers. *Laal Shari* is expected to release in theaters during the upcoming Eid. She is currently busy promoting the film.

In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, Apu shared her excitement for the release of her film and her recent ventures.

**Your film *Laal Shari* will be released during the upcoming Eid. How are you feeling?**

*Laal Shari* is the film of my dreams. I have poured my heart into this film. The film is very close to my heart. I hope the film will touch the hearts of the mass audience too.

**What is your expectation from the audience?**

My fans have always been by my side since the beginning of my career. They have showered me with unconditional love.

By this time, everybody already knows about the film. I hope the audience will come to watch it in theaters. I have high hopes for this film. I got more than what I asked for. It is a blessing.

**Can you tell us about the story of *Laal Shari*?**

*Laal Shari* is a story of the Bengali people. It represents our rich heritage and culture. It symbolises the beauty of Bengali women, and how each and every thread is crafted by the weavers depict a beautiful tale of love and emotion.

The director of this film has made the film with the utmost care and dedication. *Shari* is one of the main clothes worn by Bengali women in this country. On the other hand, red is a symbol of love. Overall, I feel the movie will touch the hearts of people of all ages.

**What's your plan right now?**

Right now, all my plans are centered on *Laal Shari*. I will spend my time from now on promoting the film. I urge everyone to stand by our film and our Bengali cinema. I want everyone's love and blessing for the film.

**What's your hope for Dhallywood?**

Last year, we saw the resurgence of Bengali cinema. Some of the films were very successful and gained popularity among the audience. I hope the positive trend in the Bangladeshi film industry continues.

PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

## Jyotika Jyoti appointed new director of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



Prominent film actress Jyotika Jyoti will soon be joining as the director of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

The news was confirmed to The Daily Star by the actress herself. According to the government contract, Jyotika will be the director of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy for the next two years.

She shared, "Yes, it's a big responsibility and everyone is congratulating me. I have never worked in a position like this before, and it's a completely new experience for me. But I want to do some good work here."

## HBO's 'The Last of Us' season finale draws in a series high

The season one finale of the apocalyptic, mushroom-infected zombie, video game adaptation, *The Last of Us* set another ratings record. Despite airing against the Oscars on Sunday night, HBO reported 8.2 million viewers for the season finale.

Viewership for *The Last of Us* has steadily increased throughout the season. The series has not only won over gamers with high expectations, but also critics and newcomers.

According to Nielsen and HBO data, the series premiere drew 4.7 million viewers in the US, making it HBO's second-largest debut, trailing only *House of the Dragon*.



# NEWS

## No exams

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assessment, and the remaining 40 percent through overall evaluation.

However, for other subjects, students' performance will solely be evaluated on continuous assessment.

Talking to The Daily Star, Prof Moshuazzaman explained that the continuous assessment would depend on regular schoolwork, such as assignment, group work, or projects, over the year.

On the other hand, there will be two exams for the overall evaluation. One is after six months and another at the end of the academic year, he said. "But in this case, we will not follow the two or three-hour long traditional exams system. These exams will be held giving priority to students' practical activities. The tests may continue for two or three days," he added.

Regarding the marking system, Prof Moshuazzaman clarified that there would be no traditional marking system. Instead, students will be classified into three categories based on their performance - elementary, intermediate and expert levels.

## Several hurt

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Khan has been summoned to court to answer accusations he did not declare gifts received during his time as prime minister, or the profit made from selling them.

The first attempt officers made to detain the onetime cricket superstar was thwarted because he was "reluctant to surrender", police said, without offering further details.

Khan has been pressuring the coalition government which replaced him, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, with popular rallies and daily addresses.

Last year he was shot in the leg at a demonstration, an assassination bid he blamed on Sharif.

As the political melodrama unfolds ahead of an election due no later than October, Pakistan is in the grip of a stark economic downturn, risking default if help cannot be secured from the International Monetary Fund.

The security situation is also deteriorating with a spate of deadly attacks on police headquarters, linked to the Pakistan Taliban.

## Form expert committee

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receiving the court order.

The court, in response to a writ petition, also ordered responsible officials to take necessary steps in repairing the faults identified by the committee in the structures and to submit progress reports in this regard in eight weeks.

At the same time, the HC issued a rule asking the respondents to explain in four weeks why their inaction to ensure the safety of citizens in the capital should not be declared illegal and why they should not be directed to ensure safety.

Secretaries of the ministries of housing and public works, ministry of local government, rural development and cooperatives and local government department; senior secretary of the ministry of energy and mineral resources; chairman of Rajuk chairman; MD of Dhaka Wasa; chief executive officers of Dhaka north and south city corporations; commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, and MD of Titas Gas Limited have been made respondents to the rule.

## Ex-employee of Money Plant among plotters

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money which was being taken to the cash machines of a bank.

Sohel and Akash mainly planned the robbery while another group collected mobile sim cards for communication, said Harun.

These two groups recruited notorious robbers from different districts and formed a team, he said, adding that one of them was accused in at least 27 cases.

The robbers were told that they would rob a stash of Tk 70 lakh of Hundi money and people from the administration will be with them, he said.

The robbers were not aware that they were making away with a bank's money.

Akash was the man who failed to get into the microbus used for the heist. He was seen running away in the dashcam footage of another car, the DB chief said.

Detectives said the robbers took

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahub and Justice Ahmed Sohel passed the orders and issued the rule following a writ petition filed by Human Rights and Peace for Bangladesh (HRPB) seeking necessary directives.

The rights organisation submitted the petition as a public interest litigation on March 12 following the explosion at Siddique Bazar in the capital's Gulistan area on March 7.

Senior Advocate Manzill Murshid appeared for the writ petitioner during the hearing.

## Outrage over

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He said saying such things against a judge is tantamount to contempt of court.

Senior lawyer Ameer Hossain said, "Such a speech from a lawmaker is not acceptable. A court is the last resort for a victim of injustice. It is condemnable that a lawmaker has publicly threatened a judge for registering a case."

## their share of the money and left Dhaka.

Akash went to Khulna and bought a microbus with Tk 29 lakh while several other robbers lent money to their relatives and friends, they said.

Officers will investigate whether anyone from Money Plant was involved, Harun said, adding that Akash may provide important clues.

"We will also investigate why the money was being transported without security or gunmen," he said. Saiful Islam, additional deputy commissioner (Mirpur), said the robbers arrived in Dhaka on March 8 and bought new clothes and shoes.

They threw away their mobile phones in water in the 300 Feet area before fleeing, he told The Daily Star.

The robbery took place in the morning of March 9 in the Turag area. The suspects made away with Tk 11.25 crore from a vehicle of the Money Plant Link Private Ltd.

## Mediterranean route

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irregular migration.

Masud Ali, executive director of Integrated Community and Industrial Development Initiative in Bangladesh (INCIDIN Bangladesh), an NGO, said most irregular Bangladeshis migrating to Europe are aged 30 on an average.

He said there was a growing trend of traffickers campaigning on virtual platforms. "This trend intensified massively in the last two years."

He said people have been made to believe it is an easy route.

Besides, many people might feel encouraged to take the risky journey due to their "social connection" with those who have already migrated to Italy through irregular routes, Masud observed.

He also said low conviction rate in trafficking cases could be linked to the rise in irregular migration.

A comprehensive global effort is required to address irregular migration since transnational crime like trafficking cannot be curbed by a single country alone, he added.

The IOM in a report in 2021 said migrants crossing the Mediterranean are often crammed into fragile boats without life jackets.

There is a high risk of shipwreck due to fragility of the boats and lack of equipment necessary for navigation, it added.

Besides, there are many reports of violence and serious abuses like detention of and exploitation against migrants, particularly by traffickers and militia groups, from the moment they set foot in Libya, according to the UN agency.

A report of infomigrants, net in 2021 said following their disembarkation in Italian shore, migrants are "identified" mostly in registration centres known as "hotspots" and interviewed by local police for further administrative procedures.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, migrants are obliged to observe a mandatory quarantine period.

At the end of quarantine, asylum seekers are directed to reception centres.

Those "ineligible to apply for protection and are found to have arrived in Italy for other reasons" are sent to detention centres, from where they must await deportation, the report added.

Shakirul Islam, chairperson of Ovivashi Karmi Unnayan Programme (Okup), said trafficking networks are very active in some parts of the country and irregular migration from those areas is more apparent.

A UN report, published last year with support from the Bangladesh government, said there was one conviction in trafficking cases in Bangladesh in 2020 and nine in 2019.

Of all trafficking cases filed in 2020, 89 percent were lodged in Dhaka, Khulna, Chattogram, and Sylhet divisions, it said.

Seheli Sabrin, spokesperson and director general (public diplomacy) of the foreign ministry, said the ministry was working to reduce irregular migration of Bangladeshis.

She said apart from addressing the issue bilaterally with Italy, the ministry has given priority to building awareness among the people, especially in trafficking-prone districts.

To this end, different UN and international agencies as well as relevant ministries are working with the foreign ministry, she told The Daily Star.

The Bangladesh mission in Rome said the rising trend of arrival of Bangladeshis through the Mediterranean route is a matter of grave concern for both Bangladesh and Italy.

Both the countries are committed to stamp out trafficking, and the mission is cooperating with Italy in respect of standard operating procedures (SoPs) under the EU mechanism, it said.

## Thailand searches for missing radioactive cylinder

AFP, Bangkok

Thai authorities are scrambling to find a cylinder containing dangerous radioactive material that went missing from a power station, officials said yesterday, warning of serious health risks from direct exposure.

Staff at the coal-fired plant in Prachinburi Province, east of Bangkok, noticed the steel tube, 30 centimetres (12 inches) long and 13 centimetres wide, was missing during routine checks on Friday.

## Scientists create

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Scientists looked to validate that old paper with new data collected outside of a lab, with a team of scientists watching as it happened live, and undertook a similar process for the new research.

The new material is described in a paper, 'Evidence of near ambient superconductivity in a N-doped lutetium hydride', published in Nature on Saturday.

## 17 Bangladeshis

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outside the Italian Search and Rescue area (SAR), and Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani said Rome was doing all it could to avoid shipwrecks.

**NO PATROL BOATS AVAILABLE**  
The vessel, travelling in the direction of Italy, capsized about 110 miles northwest of the Libyan port of Benghazi, according to the Mediterranean Saving Humans charity.

According to a phone conversation transcript shared by German charity Sea-Watch, a duty officer at the Libyan Joint Rescue Coordination Centre said that at the time there were no patrol boats that could be sent from Benghazi.

Rome requested merchant ships in the area to join the rescue efforts, the Italian coastguard said. But the migrant vessel capsized during an attempt to transfer the passengers to the FROLAND merchant ship on Sunday morning, it added.

Rome's ability to rescue migrants at sea has come under scrutiny following last month's shipwreck, and the issue is piling pressure on the rightwing government which took office last October promising to curb the influx of migrants.

Instead, arrivals have surged, with over 20,000 people reaching Italy by sea this year so far, more than triple the around 6,150 who arrived in the same period of 2022, official figures show.

Over 4,500 people reached Italy from March 9-11 alone.

The Italian government on Monday said Russian mercenary group Wagner, which has been accused of operating in several African countries including Libya, was to blame for the surge in crossing attempts as part of Moscow's strategy to retaliate against countries supporting Ukraine.