



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

MAMO'S 17-year odyssey

SHARMIN JOYA

What defines a true artiste? Be it dedication, inner beauty and cravings for the knowledge of art, Zakia Bari Mamo has it all. The actress completed 17 years in the industry, recently.

Mamo's *Ora 7 Jon* hit theatres on March 3, where she donned the role of a brave freedom fighter Aparna Sen, which, according to her, brought a different dimension to her career. "The role itself pulled me towards the film. Doctor Aparna is fearless, brave and rebellious—her nature is to serve humanity—which she does till the end."

Mamo further opened up, feeling instigated to keep this role under her belt, "We don't often get to see such characters on-screen, representing our Liberation War," shared the

actress, who grew up listening to the memoirs of her freedom fighter grandfather.

She took home the National Film Award for her debut performance on the silver screen, (*Daruchini Dwip*) right after winning the

crown of Lux Superstar in 2006.

"Acting gives me peace of mind, it is a form of meditation for me," she says.

The *Chuye Dile Mon* actress shared that newer mediums like OTT are putting some much needed spotlight on women and their stories. "Women-centric plots are being appreciated, and emerging filmmakers are telling some interesting and important stories, which were long overdue — which is why I enjoyed exploring my roles in projects like *Contract*, *Mohanagar*, and *Refugee*."

In her personal life, Mamo possesses a strong persona and loves to explore the beauty of life. She and director Shihab Shaheen had tied the knot, which unfortunately did not work out. The two parted ways during the pandemic in 2021. "The pandemic has taught us some of the hardest lessons of our lives, I am sure all of us can relate to this. Thus, I have taught myself one thing, the bigger the obstacles in front of me, the stronger I am."

How is the actress, despite her obstacles, doing? She says, "We are all alone at the end of the day, sharing a life with someone is definitely a great thing, but we tend to limit ourselves to certain things, which create complications." The actress further says that life is beautiful when it is indulged in loving and spending time with family, friends, enjoying nature, and most importantly, valuing oneself. "Love should be free from all bindings."

"The Mamo you knew in the past years was driven by emotion; she was dependent on others. I am now more resilient, calm, and self-dependent," asserts Mamo.

As she continues her journey of breaking her own limitations, on and off-screen, Zakia Bari Mamo finds the earnest joy diving into the world of acting. "Acting is a form of art that helps bring out all the human psyches, by playing them in different stories. We all go through pain, joy, and confusion in our lives, and as an actor I have learnt that being true to yourself is the best thing you can do for yourself."

Mamo will be seen in Chorki web series *Mercules*, soon.



Festival celebrates the best of Bangladesh's 50-year film history

The Federation of Film Societies of Bangladesh (FFSB) will be celebrating its golden jubilee, along with sixty years of the film society movement in Bangladesh, by organising a year-long event.

A part of the year-long celebrations will be a festival featuring stories, documentaries and short-films made in the five decades after the independence of Bangladesh.

The film festival will be organised from October 18 to 28 at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's Jatiya Chitrashala auditorium. The 30 selected films from the three categories will be honoured by being named the best films in Bangladesh's 50-year film history.

Mim dons new look for web-series



Gorgeous actress Bidya Sinha Mim donned a new look for the Hoichoi web-series, *Mission HuntDown*.

The usually glamorous actress kept her look minimal and opted for a bare faced natural look. The actress will be playing the role of 'Nira' in Sunny Sarwar's web-series, *Mission Hunt Down*.

Earlier on, Hoichoi released the first look of FS Nayeem, as additional SP Mahid. In the picture, Nayeem was seen holding a pistol, while looking intensely at the camera.

NEWS

21 Biman officials

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connection with the case filed by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

On February 6, the ACC lodged the case against 23 people, including Ishrat Ahmed, former flight (operation) of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, for causing financial loss to the national flag carrier.

According to the case statement, the accused colluded and misused their power to benefit themselves first and then benefit others and embezzled money through fraud by leasing and then returning two aircraft from Egypt Air, causing a loss of Tk 1,161 crore to Biman.

Rowangchhari

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soldiers were shot by the Kuki-Chin National Army (KNA) in the remote hilly area of Rowangchhari in the district.

After the incident, nine people, including the top leader of Jamaat-ul-Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya, were arrested.

ChatGPT gets more

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inside of a refrigerator, GPT-4 will not only correctly identify what is there, but also concoct what can be prepared with those ingredients.

OpenAI said it was working with a partner company, Be My Eyes, to prepare the next advance.

Much of the new model's firepower is now available to the general public via ChatGPT Plus, OpenAI's paid subscription plan and on a AI-powered version of Microsoft's Bing search engine that is currently being tested.

OpenAI is backed by Microsoft, which earlier this year said it would finance the research company to the tune of billions of dollars.

The Windows-maker then swiftly integrated the tech into its Bing search engine, Edge browser and other products.

Microsoft's aggressive adoption of ChatGPT has sparked a race with Google which announced its own versions of the AI technology, with Amazon, Baidu and Meta also wading in, eager to avoid being left behind.

OpenAI said that the new version was far less likely to go off the rails than its earlier chatbot with widely reported interactions with ChatGPT or Bing's chatbot in which users were presented with lies, insults, or other so-called "hallucinations."

Polls in 5 cities

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election for a city corporation within 180 days of the corporation's five-year tenure.

The EC will have to hold Gazipur City Corporation polls between March 11 and September 10, Khulna City Corporation and Rajshahi City Corporation polls between April 13 and October 10, Barishal City Corporation polls between May 14 and November 13, and Sylhet City Corporation polls between May 6 and November 5.

Awami League leaders Talukder Abdul Khaleque was elected mayor of Khulna city on May 15, 2018, and Zahangir Alam of Gazipur city on June 26, 2018.

AL leaders AHM Khairuzzaman Liton and Serniabat Sadiq Abdullah and BNP leader Ariful Haque Chowdhury were elected mayors of Rajshahi, Barishal and Sylhet cities

respectively. All three elections were held on July 30, 2018.

Meanwhile, Jahangir said, the commission will finalise the decision regarding how many EVMs will be used in how many parliamentary seats depending on government financing for repairing 1.1 lakh EVMs.

The EC sought money from the finance ministry in late February to repair the machines.

The EC has bought 1.5 lakh EVMs in phases since 2018 at Tk 2.35 lakh each, almost 11 times the price available in India.

Now, around five years later, 40,000 of those machines are beyond repair while the rest 1.1 lakh can be fixed but that requires around Tk 1,260 crore, according to a proposal from Bangladesh Machine Tools Factory (BMTF) placed before the election commission in late February.

HC rejects 2 writs

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to HC to stay the operation of the gazette notification that declared Md Shahabuddin president-elect of the country.

Attorney General AM Amin Uddin and Additional Attorney General Mohammad Mehedi Hassan Chowdhury appeared for the state while petitioners MA Aziz Khan and Abdul Momin Chowdhury themselves moved the petitions.

MA Aziz Khan said in the petition that under Section 9 of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act-2004, Md Shahabuddin cannot be appointed president of the republic as he is a retired commissioner of ACC and the post of the president is an office of profit.

Chief Election Commissioner Kazi Habibul Awal in a media briefing on February 13 said Md Shahabuddin was "elected" president of the republic, not "appointed", but this is not correct, according to the petitioner.

The meanings of "elected" and "appointed" are the same, the lawyer said, adding that had the Election Commission scrutinised the nomination paper of the presidential candidate properly, Shahabuddin would not have been elected.

Abdul Momin Chowdhury said

in the petition that the members of parliament are supposed to elect the president, but the CEC has declared Md Shahabuddin as president of the country exceeding his jurisdiction.

Md Shahabuddin, a retired judge and former ACC commissioner, was declared president-elect of Bangladesh on February 13.

Incumbent President Abdul Hamid's tenure will expire on April 24 and he cannot become president again as he was elected for two terms.

According to Article 123 of the constitution, the presidential election must be held 60 to 90 days before the expiry of each five-year term.

KSA could invest

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The oil-rich rivals, who are on opposing sides in conflicts across the Middle East, severed relations in 2016 after Saudi's execution of a Shia cleric triggered violent protests.

Iran has been under renewed US sanctions since then president Donald Trump abandoned a landmark nuclear agreement between Tehran and major powers in 2018. Saudi Arabia, a longtime US ally, has said it supports the sanctions, which target key areas, including oil.

Murder accused now a jeweller in Dubai

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Arav now lives in Dubai, and the UAE authorities issued him a resident permit on October 31, 2021, which would expire on October 30 next year.

Rabiul's name came in the spotlight in recent weeks in the buildup to yesterday's inauguration of Arav Jewellers in Dubai's Gold Souk at 7:00pm (local time).

THE MURDER

On July 7, 2018, Inspector Mamun went to a house in Banani following an invitation by one Rahmatullah to attend a birthday party.

A police probe later found that Mamun was actually trapped. He was taken inside the flat where some criminals tried to take compromising shots of him.

When Mamun revealed his identity, the criminals tied him up, covered his mouth with scotch tape and beat him up mercilessly. At one stage, the inspector died.

The nine other accused in the

murder case are Rabiul's wife Suraiya Akhter Keya, Rahmat Ullah, Swapan Sarkar, Didar Pathan, Mizan Sheikh, Atiq Hassan, Sarwar Hossain, Meherunnisa alias Swarna and Faria Binte Maisa.

Majaharul Alam Panna, chairman of Kotalipara's Hiron union, said he is aware that Rabiul is accused in three cases, including that of the cop murder.

Police went to Ashutia village several times to look for Rabiul.

Majaharul also said that when he went to Saudi Arabia two and a half months back to perform Umrah, Rabiul called him and met him in Riyadh.

"Rabiul told me that he lives in Dubai where he has a jeweller's shop. I didn't believe it as they don't have any notable properties at the village," the UP chairman told The Daily Star.

MAN HIRED TO SURRENDER

Abu Yusuf surrendered to a Dhaka

court on October 20, 2020, using the identity and address of Rabiul and was sent to jail in the murder case.

The man agreed to do this in exchange for monthly compensation to be paid to his family by Rabiul.

At one stage, Rabiul stopped providing the compensation, prompting Abu Yusuf to file a prayer with the court through his lawyer, stating that he was actually Abu Yusuf, and not the charge-sheeted accused Rabiul.

The lawyer also told the court that his client committed a crime possibly due to the allure of money or after being threatened.

The court then asked the DB to investigate the matter and submit a report.

After investigation, the DB found that Abu Yusuf is the son of Md Nuruzzaman and Halima Begum of Ainpur under Kachua Police Station in Chandpur.

Slash airfare to Tk 1.5 lakh

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6.83 lakh as the hajj package this year.

During yesterday's hearing, the attorney general said announcement of the hajj package is a government policy decision and that's why the court cannot issue any rule on the matter.

The judges at that time said as public interest is involved in this matter, there is no bar to hold hearing on this issue.

The court later adjourned the hearing.

Meanwhile, on behalf of the religious affairs ministry, a report was submitted to the High Court bench on the hajj package.

The ministry in the report said the hajj package costs have gone up this year due to an increase in the exchange rate of US dollar and rise in airfare, house rent and moallem (guide) fees.

JS BODY

At the parliamentary standing committee meeting at the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, the committee members said due to high rate of Biman fire, the cost of hajj package

has gone up significantly.

The parliamentary watchdog even said the government should give subsidy to reduce the cost, if necessary.

Syed Nazibul Bashar Maizbhandari, a member of the committee, said people are not happy with the government due to high cost of hajj package.

"The next national election is not far away. The government will be in trouble if the cost is not reduced," he told The Daily Star after the meeting.

The committee has asked Biman Managing Director and CEO Shafiul Azim, who was present at the meeting, to cut the airfare by around Tk 50,000 and fix it at Tk 1.5 lakh.

The cost of hajj package under the government and private hajj management is about Tk 7 lakh. But the actual cost will exceed Tk 8 lakh to Tk 8.5 lakh after the inclusion of sacrificial animal, food and other miscellaneous costs.

Compared to last year, the cost of the package under the government and the private hajj management has increased by about Tk 1.61 lakh this year.

Dual carriageway

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connected with Bangladesh via Tamabil border.

"Once the Sylhet-Charkhai-Sheola corridor is developed, the regional connectivity with entire Sylhet division will be completed," a RHD engineer, having knowledge about the project, told this correspondent.

He said the improved roads would help bring in investments and flourish industries.

Of the Tk 4,257 crore cost, the World Bank is supposed to provide Tk 2,886.82 crore while the government will finance Tk 1,370.25 crore.

In June last year, the WB approved \$1.03 billion of financing to help improve regional trade in Bangladesh and Nepal by reducing trade and transport costs and transit time along the regional corridors.

"While the trade between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal grew six times from 2015 to 2019, the unexploited potential for regional trade is estimated at 93 percent for Bangladesh," said a WB's press release, quoting Mercy Tembon, then WB country director for Bangladesh and Bhutan, as saying on June 28, 2022, the day the loan was approved.