



Pori Moni in and as ‘Maa’

Film’s theatrical release today

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Leaving behind her glamorous persona, actress Pori Moni has stepped into the role of a mother for the first time in her career for the film, *Maa*, which will be released today in theaters. The film recently premiered at the ongoing Cannes Film Festival, in the Marché du Film segment.

The sudden transition of portraying a mother in a pivotal stage of her career has definitely sparked curiosity among her fans. Pori Moni reflects on the initial shock and shares her joy that it coincided with her real-life pregnancy during the filming process.

“Everyone was shocked when I told them I was going to portray the role of a mother. At that time, I happened to be pregnant. Now, I am spending the best time of my life with Rajya. The journey was challenging, but fulfilling at the same time,” said Pori Moni.

Set in the background of our Liberation War, Pori Moni portrays Beena, a woman who has a six-month-old baby. The story of the film revolves around the little baby. The actress believes that the audience will be captivated by the film’s essence and resonate with its powerful themes.

“I was so enthralled by the name and the



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

story of the film, that I agreed to do Aranya Anawer’s project instantly. Some people were surprised by my decision to play such a challenging role, but I think an artiste is capable of portraying any character, even a mother,” shared the actress.

Since the birth of Rajya, Pori Moni has taken a hiatus from acting, dedicating herself to the joyous task of motherhood. When asked about

her return to the screen, she responds with honesty and consideration.

“I am working on mentally preparing myself for a comeback. Recently, I took some time off to visit my hometown and Kolkata. As Rajya is still a baby, he requires my undivided attention. However, acting is a full-time job. I can’t focus in front of the camera if I constantly think about my son. Therefore, I feel it is necessary to give myself ample time before returning to work. Rajya needs his mother for a little longer,” Pori Moni reveals.

Reflecting on her recent visit to her hometown in Pirojpur, Pori Moni fondly recalls the simpler times filled with nostalgic emotions.

“I remember how on rainy days; water would seep through the tin roof of my school due to holes. Now, as time has passed, they have a proper school building. Yet, I still somehow yearn for those pristine droplets of water on my face, as if to inundate me with endless nostalgia,” said Pori Moni.

“It’s a matter of great joy that my film was premiered at such a prestigious festival. I hope this paves the way for Bangladeshi cinema to achieve even greater global recognition in the future,” responded the actress, when asked about *Maa’s* stint at the Cannes Film Festival’s Marché du Film segment.

Maa, for Pori Moni, is more than just another project, as both the shooting and release happily coincides with her real-life, ecstatic and joyful motherhood.



Salman’s ‘Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan’ releasing in Bangladesh

After the release of Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Pathaan* in Bangladesh, the Salman Khan starrer, *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan* will also be released in the country soon. The importer of the film has submitted an application to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, to bring the film to Bangladesh. Sources from the company importing the film, confirmed the matter with The Daily Star.

Coke Studio Bangla pays tribute to Jashimuddin and Abbasuddin



Coke Studio Bangla released their latest song, a captivating rendition of “Nodir Kul”, performed by Ripon Kumar Sarkar (Boga) yesterday.

Through this song, the digital-first platform pays tribute to our ‘Polli Kobi’ Jashimuddin, and legendary singer Abbasuddin Ahmed. “Nodir Kul” is a modern rendition of the timeless classic.

At its core, “Nodir Kul” is a heartfelt tribute to the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh, showcasing the essence of traditional folk music while infusing it with a contemporary flair. Boga, who was featured in last season’s “Chiltey Roud”, lent his captivating voice to give “Nodir Kul” a fresh new outlook.

NEWS

‘It’ll help us hold free

FROM PAGE 1
visa policy were discussed in the pre-scheduled meeting.

According to the new visa policy announced on Wednesday, the US will impose visa restrictions on individuals and their immediate family members if they are responsible for, or complicit in, undermining the democratic election process in Bangladesh.

Similar visa policies were also announced earlier by the US for Nigeria and Somalia.

Momen said, “I asked him [envoy] if such policy is tested. He said it is a new policy which has not been tested yet.

“I asked if such policy worked for democracy. He said he cannot say this at this moment.”

The foreign minister said the Awami League always fought for democracy and the peoples’ rights. No government in Bangladesh would have been able to continue if elections were not acceptable, he added.

“So, we always want free and fair elections. We have held several

thousand elections since 2009 and those were fair. We don’t want any violence...we are committed to free and fair elections.”

Momen said the authorities prepared a biometric voter list, introduced transparent ballot boxes, and formed an independent Election Commission.

Apart from the EC, all other election stakeholders, including political parties, voters, the government, civil society and other organisations, need to have a commitment to free and fair elections, he said.

The minister said the US wants to promote democracy and Bangladesh also wants it.

He said the government is not feeling uneasy about the new visa policy.

Speaking separately to reporters, Haas said his country’s new policy was a show of support to anyone who have called for free and fair elections in Bangladesh.

“This is something we have done in support of the Bangladeshi people,

and the Bangladeshi government, the prime minister herself, and everyone here in Bangladesh who have called for free and fair elections.

“So, the recent announcement was merely our way of helping to support the democratic electoral process,” the envoy said.

Meanwhile, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Shahriar Alam yesterday said Bangladesh expects that the new US visa policy would not be implemented arbitrarily.

Asked how the government was looking at the visa policy, Shahriar told reporters at the foreign ministry, “It is not something for us to be happy or unhappy about. We are looking at it with a good spirit because they are saying that they announced the policy considering the prime minister’s commitment to free and fair elections.

“As a friendly state, we are considering it positively. Our engagement over the last year or two has increased manifold. Our businesses are growing.”

Rajshahi BNP leader arrested, remanded

FROM PAGE 1
According to police, Chand went into hiding and was constantly on the move to evade arrest.

On information, a joint team of Rajshahi range and metropolitan police set up the checkpoint in Bheripara and arrested Chand as he was fleeing in a private car.

AL’s Baneswar union unit General Secretary Abul Kalam Azad sued Chand, also a member of BNP’s central committee, under the Anti-Terrorism Act at Puthia police station on Monday.

In his case, Azad alleged that Chand threatened the PM while addressing a public rally held at Shibpirhat School field in Puthia upazila on Friday.

During his speech, Chand said the BNP has no other demand except to ensure that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina goes to her grave, Azad claimed in the case.

Chand will be shown arrested first in the case filed with Puthia Police Station, said Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Rajshahi Range Police Abdul Baten during the same press conference at RMP headquarters.

Admin, police

FROM PAGE 1
at the upazila level with the upazila nirbahi officer as convener and a seven-member committee at the district level with the deputy commissioner as convener will prepare draft lists of polling centres.

The committees will also have education officers, police officials and others.

The upazila election officer will be the member secretary of the upazila committees while the district election officer will be the member secretary

of the district committees.

The upazila committees will send their draft list to the district committees that will visit the possible polling centres and give its opinion.

“The returning officer will finalise the polling centres,” said Alamgir.

According to the guideline, a polling centre will be for about 3,000 voters. In the last two general elections, there was a centre for about 2,500 voters.

The guideline added that the

distance between two polling centres should not be more than 3km, and those should be set up considering the voters’ convenience.

Polling centres cannot be set up in establishments owned by anyone with political affiliations. Priority should be given to setting up centres in government establishments. Besides educational institutions, the centres can be in community centres, cyclone shelters, and other office buildings of government, semi-government and autonomous organisations.

DSA goes against int’l rights treaty

FROM PAGE 12
anything in website or any electronic format which hurts religious sentiment or values, with an intention to hurt or provoke the religious values or sentiments, then such an act of the person shall be an offence.

The OHCHR said this section also appears to lack the precision required by article 19 (3). In addition, OHCHR notes the nature of the sentence is harsher than it is for a similar offence under the Penal Code.

The Penal Code indicates a punishment of two years and/or a fine while the DSA has provisions for five to 10 years with a fine.

The law minister said section 21 ensures protection of the dignity of the Liberation War, the spirit of the Liberation War, the Father of the Nation, the national anthem or the national flag. “People have feelings about these things. Leering that, anti-liberation forces try to create anarchic situation. That’s why the government will not repeal this section,” he said.

On section 28, Anisul said there have been attempts to create an unstable situation by hurting religious sentiments through posts on social media. As a result, the government believes that this section cannot be abolished in any way.

He said the government was reviewing the law to stop misuse of the two sections.

AMENDMENT
The OHCHR proposed amendment of sections 8, 25, 27, 29, 31, 32, 43 and 53.

The OHCHR is concerned about the blocking and removal power, given to the authorities under section 8, of any data-information published or propagated in digital media that threaten digital security, hampers the solidarity, financial activities, security, defence, religious values or public discipline in the country or information that incites racial hostility and hatred.

The power is extremely broad and given to the executive body BTRC. And taken-down orders do not require the content to be unlawful or criminal, thus it unduly restricts freedom of expression and access to information, it said.

Sections 29 criminalises “defamatory information”, and section 25, criminalises “offensive, false or threatening data-

information”. Both are considered civil liability issues in other countries, it said, adding that the DSA also has provision for harsher punishment in comparison to the Penal Code.

The OHCHR said defamation should be decriminalised as it discourages the media from publishing critical information.

It said that section 27 (d) criminalises a broad range of acts of accessing or interfering with computers and computer networks and data-information without establishing any clear link to the elements commonly understood to define “terrorism”.

The section carries the potential for arbitrary application and misuse of the term “terrorism”. It is recommended that in defining terrorism, the definition directed by the Special Rapporteur of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms is used.

Moreover, the possibility of data-information to be used against friendly relations does not constitute a sufficient basis for the criminalisation of accessing such information, it said.

Section 31 relates to an offence of “deteriorating law and order, etc” for the publication of material that “creates enmity, hatred or hostility among different classes or communities of the society, or destroys communal harmony, or creates unrest or disorder, or deteriorates or advances to deteriorate the law and order situation.”

The OHCHR notes the vague and broad nature of the language and the harsh nature of the sentence.

Section 32 refers to “breaching secrecy of the government” for the commission or assisting the commission of an offence under the Official Secrets Act.

The OHCHR is concerned that the broad scope of this section, coupled with the harsh penalty of a maximum jail term of 14 years and/or a fine, could have a negative impact on investigative journalism.

Its note said section 43 allows warrantless searches, seizures and arrests by police officers and they are afforded “unfettered discretion”.

Section 53 refers to offences that are cognisable and nonbailable.

“This means that the default approach is to keep the accused

persons in pre-trial detention. It is reported that 80 percent of detainees in Bangladesh are in pre-trial detention,” the OHCHR said.

Under international human rights law, pre-trial detention shall be the exception rather than the rule.

On the amendment request for the eight sections, Anisul said the government is reviewing those. He, however, did not say when the reviewing will end.

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury said the DSA is curbing the freedom of the media and it should be scrapped immediately. “This law is being misused and journalists are being arrested.”

Supreme Court lawyer Jyotirmoy Barua said, “... We are not calling for an amendment. Rather, our demand is repealing the law. Because the DSA is contrary to the constitution and fundamental rights.”

A law is made to meet the needs of citizens. “If the citizens themselves say that there is no need for this law ... it is an oppressive law.... Then how can someone impose such a law? People are the owner of the state,” he said.

EC scraps bids

FROM PAGE 12
who support the candidate.

From the list, information of some voters is verified randomly and in case of inconsistencies, the nomination gets cancelled.

Md Shahjahan Miah and Mushtaq Ahmed Rouf Mostafa did not submit statement of their assets and a copy of the latest income tax return.

Returning Officer Md Faysal Kadir said candidates whose nominations were cancelled can appeal within the next three days.

Meanwhile, nominations of Awami League candidate Md Anwaruzzaman Chowdhury, Jatiya Party candidate Nazrul Islam Babul, Islami Andolan Bangladesh candidate Mahmudul Hasan, Zaker Party candidate Md Zahirul Alam, independents Mohammad Abdul Hanif and Md Salah Uddin Rimon were declared valid.

The date of submission of nomination papers ended on Tuesday.

June 1 is the last day for the withdrawal of nomination papers.