

Crossing borders, WINNING HEARTS

Jaya Ahsan's success knows no bounds

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Equally popular in both Bengals, Jaya Ahsan, has been making a mark in the Tollywood industry for the past 10 years. Kolkata has become her second home as she garnered awards, respect, and the love of the Kolkata people through her artistic endeavours.

On Friday, her latest film, *Ardhangini* directed by Kaushik Ganguly, released in Kolkata. She is currently there, promoting her film.

In a candid conversation with The Daily Star, Jaya Ahsan shared her thoughts on the film and her experiences in the Tollywood industry.

How did you feel watching the first show of "Ardhangini"?

It is always difficult to talk about one's own films. Nonetheless, I am very pleased with *Ardhangini*. The feedback and appreciation from everyone have been overwhelming. Hearing such positive responses feels great as an artiste. That's what one strives for, and I'm grateful for it.

What has your time been like, in Kolkata?

I have been incredibly busy here. Friday was the premiere of *Ardhangini*, and I have been involved in promoting the movie for the past few days. On Saturday, I visited the theatres and observed the audience's reaction closely. Witnessing their lovely expressions for a new movie is something I always look forward to.

Can you tell us more about "Ardhangini"?

It is a deeply sensitive and emotional movie. It features a strong storyline that I believe will resonate with audiences. Kaushik Ganguly, the director, has poured his heart into making this film. I am genuinely optimistic about its response.

After a decade of acting in Tollywood movies and receiving numerous accolades, where are you at?

It feels wonderful, and undoubtedly brings happiness. Over the past ten years, I may not have appeared in numerous films, but I have had the privilege of working on a few exceptional movies that have earned the love and respect of the audience. I extend my gratitude and love to all the directors, producers, audiences, and cinema halls that have contributed to my journey.

As a Bangladeshi artiste, you hold a unique position in the Tollywood film industry. Have you ever felt that artistes should be free from boundaries?

Artistes should never be confined by boundaries. Their art should transcend borders. Artistes can aspire to work anywhere, crossing geographical limits. While I hold a Bangladeshi passport and my heart belongs to Bangladesh, when I am performing, I am simply an artiste. Of course, I love my country, and it holds a special place in my heart.

Could you share your experience of acting with

Churni Ganguly?

She is a remarkable artiste, and I am grateful to be given the opportunity to collaborate with such talented individuals throughout my career.

Is there anything you regret or find challenging in your work?

The one regret that always lingers is the limited accessibility of my movies for the audience in Bangladesh. Especially during the release of new movies, this feeling intensifies. It is an ongoing challenge that I hope will be addressed soon.



PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK



Shishir-Rafa collaborate again after 3 years

Shishir Ahmed has released the music video of *Achi Kinba Nei* featuring Raef Al Hasan Rafa on vocals, three years after their initial collaboration in the song *Nijeke Harabar Bhoy*.

This song was created at a moment when the musicians behind it, were going through a similar emotional phase that the song narrates.

Nijeke Harabar Bhoy has been mixed by Shishir Ahmed and mastered by him and Ekram Wasi. Earlier in March this year, Shishir Ahmed departed from Aurthohin after 20-years with the band.



Jubin, King or Darshan: who is coming to Dhaka?

After Anuv Jain's concert, music lovers are waiting in anticipation to dance to peppy tracks and popular Bollywood Hindi songs.

Yesterday, Pencil Box and Fiemus International Communication Limited announced a lineup with popular Bollywood singers and asked fans to guess who is coming next to Dhaka.

They shared a poster of Jubin Nautiyal, King and Darshan Raval and asked fans to comment with a crown, heart and starry eyed emoji to vote for King, Jubin and Darshan, respectively.

NEWS

Pry schools

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According to the morning bulletin of the Bangladesh Meteorological Department yesterday, a severe heatwave is sweeping over the districts of Rajshahi, Naogaon, Nilphamari and Dinajpur.

Meanwhile, a mild to moderate heatwave is sweeping over Dhaka, Mymensingh, Khulna and Barishal divisions and the rest parts of Rangpur and Rajshahi divisions and the districts of Moulvibazar, Chandpur and Noakhali.

It may continue for next five to six days, it read.

The country's highest temperature was recorded in Rajshahi at 41 degrees Celsius while in Dhaka it was

37.1 degrees Celsius.

With frequent load shedding, the suffering of people has immensely increased.

According to the BMD, when the daily maximum temperature goes past 36 degrees Celsius over a large area it is called a heatwave. Heatwave is classified into three categories based on temperature -- mild, moderate, and severe.

A mild heatwave is when the temperature is between 36 and 37.9 degrees Celsius, moderate between 38 degrees and 39.9 degrees Celsius, and a severe heatwave happens when the temperature is 40 degrees Celsius and above.

People in pain

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taken measures to import hydropower.

It is not only Bangladesh, but developed countries are also struggling to deal with the fallout from the Ukraine-Russia war, sanctions, inflation, and fuel crisis.

"There is a shortage of fuel in various countries including those in Europe and America. There is load shedding ... The price of everything, including food, has gone up. Many people are losing their jobs even in developed countries," she said.

The PM said food shortages, inflation, operating and transportation costs, and electricity shortages have made life unbearable for people across the world.

She said that she apprehends that the present volatile situation in the

world might deteriorate.

"No one can say how long this abnormal situation in the world will continue," she said.

"We also need to increase food production. No one can say how long this unusual situation in the world will continue ... We are doing everything to ensure food security."

"We are trying our best to address the situation," she added.

Remembering Afsarul Amin, Hasina said he played a role in every struggle. He was a devoted soul. His honesty and devotion towards the party is incomparable.

"He also achieved great success as a minister."

After discussion by treasury and opposition bench MPs, parliament later unanimously adopted the condolence motion.

PM to decide

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of corruption cases.

Replying to a question, he said the government will bring necessary amendments to the Digital Security Act in September in order to avoid its misuse.

In reply to another query about the amendment of the Representation of the People Order, Anisul said cancelling the whole election of a constituency for irregularities in one or few polling centres was unconstitutional.

Earlier in the day, the law minister

told the function that the nature and purview of corruption are extending in line with the change of time and development of technology.

The government has announced a zero-tolerance principle against corruption and has been implementing the policy, he said.

Bangladesh has become a role model of development in the world by removing the bad reputation of "champion in corruption" because of Hasina's farsighted and courageous steps.

Fakhrul talks

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overall electoral system of Bangladesh and the current human rights situation, he said.

The BNP leader said like other countries, Japan might have concerns about Bangladesh's next election, human rights situation, rule of law, press freedom, and people's security.

"So, they want to understand what is happening in Bangladesh, what is going to happen in the future, and where Bangladesh is headed," he said.

Khasru said the Japanese envoy talked about his country's investment in Bangladesh -- both in the private and public sectors.

He said they informed Iwama Kiminori about the country's overall situation.

The BNP leader said many countries are concerned about the investment atmosphere and the future of Bangladesh.

"The situation we are going through now has created apprehension among countries. So, they are trying to understand how Bangladesh will be in the future and how the election will be."

Asked whether Japan will play any role in ensuring a peaceful and fair election in Bangladesh, the BNP leader said the democratic countries have already expressed their goodwill regarding the elections in Bangladesh. "Japan is no different. Everyone wants a free, fair, and acceptable election in Bangladesh."

Azmat appointed

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mega plans for the city development. It also approves structural designs to make the fast-growing city a planned, liveable and environment-friendly urban area.

Azmat is now working to reorganise Gazipur district and city units of the AL after he lost the mayoral polls.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on May 28 asked Azmat about the reasons why he lost. She also wanted to know the number of votes he got in the neighbourhoods of certain party leaders and MPs. Azmat then presented the prime minister with voting data, according to sources.

Hasina told Azmat to visit each ward of the city and talk to local leaders to reorganise the party, the sources added.

Turning plastic perils into a prize

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RIC facilitated this innovation with the support from Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation's Sustainable Enterprise Project.

"Then I created a mould and started making plastic tiles. I did not face any problem collecting raw materials as I have been preparing moulds for plastic products since 2012," he said.

The plastic tiles would be lighter and cost much less than earthen or ceramic ones, he added.

He has so far made over 1,000 tiles on an experimental basis, and those would be on display at a fair starting today at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center on the occasion of World Environment Day.

According to a World Bank report, Bangladesh saw a sharp increase in both plastic use and pollution. The country's annual per capita plastic consumption in urban areas rose to 9kg in 2020 from 3.0 kg in 2005 -- a threefold increase in just 15 years.

It said that of the 9,77,000 tonnes of plastic consumed in Bangladesh in 2020, only 31 percent were recycled.

The most mismanaged plastic waste were single use like shopping bags, packing material, and wrappers.

The National Action Plan for Sustainable Plastic Management sets a target of recycling 50 percent of plastics by 2025, phasing out 90 percent of single-use plastic by 2026, and reducing plastic waste generation by 30 percent by 2030.

After Nazir's plastic tiles were made, some were tested at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology laboratory to assess the quality.

Abdus Salam Akanda, professor of mechanical engineering at Buet, said the first impression was good, but there was room for improvement.

"But one thing we must keep in mind is that plastic tiles cannot be a substitute for ceramic tiles as both have their advantages and disadvantages. Plastic tiles have better durability than ceramic or earthen tiles," he said, adding that use of plastic tiles would obviously help reduce plastic pollution.

The use of plastic tiles is nothing new as some countries have already

started using this as a way of mitigating plastic pollution.

India, Egypt, Kenya, and some other countries have already started using this commercially as the tiles are more durable, lighter, and easier to transport and install than ceramic or clay tiles. They are also thought to be safer during rainfall.

Nafizur Rahman, principal research officer at the House Building Research Institute, said he had high hopes for plastic tiles as those are made from plastic waste, and usually such products have much more longevity than ceramic or earthen tiles.

"We have seen the product. Now we are planning to test these tiles in our lab," he said, adding that once it passed it would be a great way to deal with plastic pollution.

Nazir Hossain said each tile weighed 280-300 grams and was 11 inches by 7.5 inches in dimension.

One piece of the tile could be sold at Tk 42-45, he said.

"The biggest benefit of the tile is that it can either be cemented or interlocked with other tiles."

Contempt of court petition filed

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asking him to explain why he should not be punished for his "flagrant, disregard and willful contempt of the office of the chief justice and highest judiciary".

The lawyer, in the petition, also urged the SC to bring Taposh before it in person and impose a fine on him for his comments.

Citing the petition, Advocate Badal told The Daily Star that Taposh made those indecent, disrespectful and malicious comments about the

judiciary while he was delivering a speech at a function organised by Bangabandhu Awami Ainjibi Parishad at the SCBA auditorium on May 21 on the occasion of its sixth founding anniversary.

On May 23, Bangla daily Manab Zamin published a report containing his statements under the headline "Ekjon Chief Justice keo Namiye Diyechhilam (We had even removed a chief justice)."

"I wish I could resign and come

back here [at the SCBA]. I know where to use the hammer. We had even removed a chief justice," the report quoted Taposh as saying.

"The civil society members, who want to preach to us, ... we will bundle them in a sack and throw them into the dark water of the Buriganga", the report quoted him as saying.

The Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division may hold a hearing on the contempt of court petition soon, lawyer Shah Ahmed Badal said.

6 congressmen's letter

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the [Hindu] population declined." Since Bangladesh became independent, over the last five decades, the Hindu population declined by around 10 percent. Most of it happened when the country was ruled by the BNP and Jamaat, he said.

Nirmal Rozario, president of Bangladesh Christian Association, rejected the claim as well.

"It is an outright lie. Rather, the reality is that since the return of Awami League, our community has been living in harmony -- with assistance from the prime minister. The government's development schemes connect the minorities as well," he said.

Eminent researcher and freedom fighter Ajoy Das Gupta, said, "A number of BNP leaders, including Rumeen Farhana, went vocal on

social media, justifying the letter."

"The BNP and Jamaat hold a sordid record of attacking minorities," he added.

Calling such assertions "biased, a travesty of justice, and highly motivated," the minority community leaders also asked why the US congressmen did not bother to mention the "BNP-Jamaat sponsored hate campaign against minorities".