

ENTERTAINMENT'S RISING STARS

Abdullah Al Sentu's ASCENT IN SHOWBIZ



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

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AKHLAKUR RAHMAN

From *Bunker Boy* to the *Punorjonmo* series, Abdullah Al Sentu has made his mark in the entertainment industry. Primarily playing supporting characters, every role he portrayed has seamlessly left a mark in the audience's hearts.

Sentu had been affiliated with the world of acting since he was in grade five, having both directed and acted on stage with Chandraboti Theatre. After honing his skills, he travelled to Dhaka in 2016, opting to work in short films. He was still in practice, acting in theatre plays, when he got the chance to appear in *Bunker Boy*, in one of the episodes of the anthology series *Jaago Bahey*.

In a candid chat with The Daily Star, Sentu shared his journey from being an ordinary boy to an actor.

You started your journey with 'Bunker Boy', tell us a bit about how the road has been so far.

I was fascinated with acting since a young age. In fact, from my theatre days I already knew I couldn't live without acting. Since then, I have worked in many short films and documentary films.

Then I got to work on *Bunker Boy*, which counts as my official debut in showbiz. In fact, I feel that this project is what gave me my identity in the spotlight.

Your characters in 'Shuklopokkho', 'Punorjonmo' and 'Myself Allen Swapan' really charmed the audience. How did you land your roles in these projects?

Initially, Vicky bhai couldn't find a suitable actor for Kamal in *Shuklopokkho*. He knew me from *Bunker Boy* and then specifically contacted me for the role. That's how I first met him.



For me, *Shuklopokkho* is the project that gave me fame and paved the way for my next role. As for *Myself Allen Swapan*, they contacted me to audition for the role. And, later that night, I was selected.

I was also a part of *Karagar* which earned me quite a bit of praise and love from the

audience.

So far, all your characters have been antagonistic in nature, do you like portraying such roles?

No, it's not like that. For me, these are characters that intrigued me—characters which I knew I can portray on a deeper level. I do not judge them in a negative or positive light, rather by their depth and layers. Every one of these characters from Kamal to Jadu, has earned me the love from fans.

How was your experience working with other artistes of the industry?

During my projects, I managed to build friendships with my co-artistes. Everyone has taught and supported me a lot. I view myself as a student of the craft, and their advice has helped me improve my craft. For instance, while shooting "Ami Ki Tumi", Vicky bhai constantly helped me stay in my character and better embody its essence.

He would mimic my dialogues and even sing songs from the project. Due to constantly practicing my character with him like this, I was able to get a better grasp of my role.

What are your future plans?

I am already in the talks for some more projects. However, I can't disclose the project titles yet. I do have another crime-thriller web film coming up this year, titled *Omega*, which I hope the audiences will like as well.

Khurshid Alam honoured with Feroza Begum Memorial Gold Medal 2023

ANTARA RAISA

Yesterday, eminent singer Khurshid Alam was honoured with the prestigious Feroza Begum Memorial Gold Medal 2023. The grand ceremony took place at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, in University of Dhaka.

The event, presided over by DU Treasurer, Professor Mamtaz Uddin Ahmed, commenced with a warm welcome speech delivered by M Anis Ud Dowla, chairman of AGI Group and the donor of the trust fund.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Dhaka, Md Akhtaruzzaman, graced the occasion as the chief guest. He handed the gold medal and a remuneration of BDT 1 lakh to Khurshid Alam.

Overwhelmed with emotion, Khurshid Alam expressed his sentiments upon receiving the



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

honour, stating, "She was a legend with whom we dreamed to share a stage with, now I am receiving the award in her name. It's such a great honour for me."

The award ceremony serves as a tribute to the late great Feroza Begum, who is considered the 'Nightingale' of Bangladeshi music.

Amidst the celebrations, Komol Dutt, an outstanding student from the DU's music department, received a gold medal and a flower bouquet for achieving the highest CGPA in BA Honours.

Many legendary singers, including Sabina Yasmin, Rezwana Choudhury Bannya, Runa Laila, Farida Parveen, Ferdousi Rahman, and Syed Abdul Hadi, were previously bestowed with the Feroza Begum Memorial Gold Medal in previous years.

COUNTRYWIDE



Local residents suffer immensely due to delay in construction of this bridge over the Louhajang river in Tangail Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

People suffer for delay in bridge work

MIRZA SHAKIL

Thousands of people in Tangail Sadar upazila have been facing immense sufferings due to delay in construction of a bridge on Louhajang river.

Since the bridge was not constructed in stipulated time, about one lakh people living in different unions under Sadar, Kalihati and Basail upazilas have been compelled to move several kilometres more to go to their destinations.

On January 13, 2020, Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) gave worker orders to two local construction firms (joint venture) to build the 296.360 metre-long bridge at a cost of Tk 28.10 crore.

The work was scheduled to be completed by June 12, 2022.

But, after constructing the pillars of the bridge, the construction firm stopped the work in January last year, citing increasing prices of construction materials, locals alleged.

Sub Assistant Engineer at Tangail LGED Torab Ali, also the supervising officer, said only 45 percent of the bridge construction work have been completed so far.

"On the other hand, villagers filed several cases, demanding money of the

land acquisition, Torab said.

They have already received notices from the court in this regard, he added.

As a result, thousands of villagers are being deprived of getting easy communication facilities.

Villagers said they are still crossing the river in small boats, risking their lives.

Gharinda Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Tofayel Ahmed said the important bridge will connect part of Sadar and Kalihati upazila with neighbouring Basail upazila.

They have urged the authorities concerned on several occasions to complete the bridge construction work as early as possible, considering woes of thousands of locals, he added.

Contacted, Tangail LGED Executive Engineer Rafiqul Islam said they have already cancelled the work order of the construction firm.

Moreover, construction work of the bridge will remain suspended until the cases, filed by the villagers, are settled, he added.

They have sent an estimated cost for the remaining incomplete work to the higher authorities so that they can start the work as soon the pending cases are resolved, the engineer said.

Three-wheelers Govt won't allow sit-ins, blockades

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League MP Abu Zahid had raised the topic of banning locally made nosimon and korimon and battery-run easy bikes.

He called for the active participation of the deputy commissioners and police department to stop the plying of such accident-prone vehicles on highways.

In response, Obaidul Quader, the road transport and bridges minister, said: "We must refrain from taking such steps before the elections. Public representatives also do not want nosimon and korimon."

Quader expressed hope that necessary measures will be taken in this regard after getting everyone's cooperation and if the party comes to power again.

Several times before, the JS body had recommended banning those vehicles from the highway.

Three-wheelers, including those illegal and locally made, and motorcycles were involved in 59.49 percent of road deaths in 2022, according to Road Safety Foundation.

Bikes contributed to 37.78 percent of the deaths and three-wheelers 21.71 percent, its data shows.

There are 30-40 lakhs of three-wheelers and motorcycles, according to sector insiders.

Rowshan Ara Mannan, chairman of the JS body and Jatiya Party MP, presided over the meeting.

RSO activist

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him dead. "Legal proceedings in this connection are underway," Harun said.

The deceased's relatives said Solim didn't pay Arsa men the Tk 40,000 they had demanded from him as extortion money. They had threatened serious consequences if he didn't pay.

This year so far, at least 60 Rohingya men were killed in the camps, according to police and local leaders.

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If the BNP holds peaceful programmes, we will go slow. But if the BNP wants an unwanted situation to resist the election, it will be dealt with an iron fist."

He said AL will hold programmes like discussions, rallies, publicising of the government's achievements, mass contact, and run election campaigns regularly until the election.

According to party sources, AL in August will hold discussions and rallies

in which it will describe the BNP-led four-party government's misuse.

In September, it will focus fully on campaigning.

Ruling party leaders think BNP's Saturday's programme is nothing but the party returning to the arson attacks it carried out in 2013-14.

"Like in the past, all terrorist activities and anarchies by BNP will be dealt with an iron fist," AL Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif told

AL's Mohiuddin wins Ctg-10 by-election

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the same school, said only seven percent votes were cast out of 2,252 until 3:00pm.

At Chattogram Polytechnic Institute in Nasirabad, only 374 voters out of 2,874 cast their votes until 3:00pm, said Sumon Shikdar, presiding officer of the centre.

Ekramul Haque, presiding officer of Tigerpass-Ambagan Bangladesh Railway High School centre, said only the agent of the ruling AL nominee was present.

Presiding Officer Farooq Hossain of USEP Ambagan Technical School Centre said an agent of Jatiya Party candidate reported for duty in the morning, but left 10 minutes later.

Contacted, Deepak Kumar Palit, the

Trinamool BNP candidate, told this newspaper that he assigned agents to all centres. "I have to find out why they were not present at the centres."

JP contender said he too sent agents to all centres. When asked why they were not there, he said, "I am looking into it."

'ATTACK' ON CANDIDATE Independent Arman boycotted the election around 3:00pm, alleging that he was beaten up by activists of AL and Swachhshasebak League at two polling stations.

Later, he was sent home under police protection.

Arman told The Daily Star that some Swachhshasebak League activists, led by its Chattogram city unit President Debashish Nath Debu, attacked him and tore his shirt at Pranhari

The Daily Star.

He said BNP on Saturday hinted that it was taking the same path it took in 2013 and 2014. "But they will not be allowed to do it again," he said.

Sheikh Bazlur Rahman, president of Dhaka city unit (north) AL, told this paper that his unit will hold several programmes until the election.

In a recent programme, DMP Commissioner Khandaker Golam Faruq said they may be compelled

to impose a ban on political programmes if those result in public sufferings.

Asked about imposing any restrictions on the political programmes during weekdays, Faruq told The Daily Star yesterday, "We are discussing how to handle the programmes."

Harun Or Rashid, additional commissioner (detective branch) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said they would increase deployment and intelligence surveillance to avert any unwanted situation.

Government Primary School centre in Halishahar Faillatoli Bazar area around 11:30am. Later, he came under attack by AL activists at Dr Fazlul Hadera Degree College centre, he said.

Arman said, "After the incidents, I informed Chattogram Regional Election Officer Md Hasanuzzaman, but didn't get any help."

Debashish said, "I don't understand why he [Arman] is bringing such false allegations against me. I don't even know him."

Asked whether he went to that centre, Debashish said, "We heard that a computer of the centre was out of order and we went there to know what had happened. But no untoward incidents took place there."

Chattogram Regional Election Officer

Hasanuzzaman, who was the returning officer of the by-election, said he was not aware of any such incidents. "Nobody told me about this in person or over the phone. I would have taken action if I had been informed."

Mostafizur Rahman, officer-in-charge of Pahartali Police Station, said the candidate was sent home under police protection, adding that no untoward incidents took place at the centres.

Asked about the reason for sending the candidate home, the OC said, "He was scared, so we sent him home under police protection."

The Chattogram-10 (Double Mooring, Pahartoli and Halishahar) fell vacant after AL lawmaker and former minister Afsarul Ameen died on June 2.

Girls attacked for playing football

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to run and find shelter, but I was beaten severely.

"I screamed for help... My hands were tied. They asked how dare I play football and told me to leave the village. They said I should not wear shorts [a part of a footballer's uniform]."

Mangali added, "After around two hours, the academy members rescued me and brought me to the

upazila health complex.

"No matter what, I won't give up football. Even though I was threatened, I will keep playing."

Mangali's mother Suchitra said, "After I heard about the incident, I went to the spot—about four km away from home. I am in a fix! I told my daughter to give up football but she just won't. She vowed to keep playing."

Debashish Kumar Mandal, teacher of Tentultala Government Primary School and coach of Super Queen Football Academy, said,

"Many of these players, including Sadia, trained with me since primary school. There are many locals who don't want the girls to play football because of social taboos. It's important that this mindset and perspective are changed."

Mizanur Rahman, the upazila health and family planning officer, said Mangali suffered a head wound in the attack but is not in danger.

Doctors at the complex said she needs to be in hospital for a few more days.

Meanwhile, Shawkat Kabir, officer-in-charge of Khulna Batiaghata Police Station, said a general diary had been filed in this regard.