

People in Bangladesh have deep appreciation for their cultural heritage: Hridi Huq

With her highly-anticipated directorial debut, ‘1971 Shei Shob Din’, set to hit the screens on August 18, the Daily Star delved into the inspiration, challenges, and vision that have shaped her journey as a filmmaker.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

The daughter of the eminent actor, academic, and playwright Enamul Haque, and theater personality Lucky Enam, Hridi Huq is carving her own path as a director, in the world of cinema.

With her highly-anticipated directorial debut, *1971 Shei Shob Din*, set to hit the screens on August 18, The Daily Star delved into the inspiration, challenges, and vision that have shaped her journey as a filmmaker.

Can you tell us about the underlying message of ‘1971 Shei Shob Din’?

We take the audience back to 1971, where they can experience the taste of earning freedom. You see, the yearning and strive for freedom is a basic human tendency. It’s not just a story of just one timeline; it’s a story of moving forward. Overall, the movie portrays the spirit of our Liberation War.

It must have been challenging to choose such a significant story for your first movie.

Indeed, it was quite challenging. Great work often comes from choosing difficult subjects. *1971 Shei Shob Din* is based on a story by my father, Enamul Haque. Our theatre troupe had previously adapted this story for a drama, and I wrote the screenplay, expanding it with additional characters.



PHOTOS: STAR AND COLLECTED

Bringing the year 1971 to the screen must have required meticulous attention to detail. How did you manage to capture that era?

Capturing the essence of 1971 was crucial. The environment and the way people spoke back then were different. We had to ensure that everything, including the costumes, makeup, and overall setting, reflected that era accurately. For instance, there is a scene with more than a thousand people, and to execute such a grand scene, a lot of effort and planning were required. But I

believe it was necessary to create an authentic and immersive cinematic experience.

‘1971 Shei Shob Din’ is a government granted film. Can you tell us more about that?

We consider the grant as an honour because cinema is a significant art form that requires considerable resources. Our production company, Ticket, has been a great support, and despite facing challenges, we have come together to bring this movie to life. Unfortunately, I lost my father, Enamul Haque, during the making of the film, but his inspiration and spirit continue to guide us.

The song ‘Jachchho Kothay’ has been praised by the audience. Did you feel gratified?

Jachchho Kothay has received tremendous praise since its release. Kamruzzaman Ronnie

and Ishrat Annie have lent their voices to the song, and I wrote the lyrics. Debojyoty Mishra from Kolkata composed the music with a lot of heart. The song has resonated well with the audience, and I have received a lot of positive feedback, which is truly heartening. Additionally, an Urdu song from the movie has also gathered a lot of appreciation.

With such dedication and hard work, what are your expectations from the audience regarding the movie?

We are very optimistic about the audience, especially the young people of our country. When they encounter a compelling story, they get excited, and the general audience appreciates good movies as well. People in Bangladesh have a deep appreciation for their cultural heritage, and we believe they will connect with *1971 Shei Shob Din* on a profound level.



Sabila dons another challenging role as fish vendor

For the first time, Sabila will be appearing in the role of a vendor for her upcoming project, *Motshokonna*. Surrounding the premise of a woman’s struggle with life and revenge, the drama required Sabila to act out her character in a real-life fish market.

Furthermore, Sabila apparently had to shoot among the general public and the crowd of the fish market, having even sold some fishes to market-goers.

Motshokonna has been written by Doyal Saha, directed by Aalok Hasan. Also starring in the drama are Fazlur Rahman Babu, Disha and many more.

Sushmita Sen confirms project based on her life

Sushmita Sen’s upcoming project *Taali* will soon release on the JioCinema app. During its promotion, the actor unveiled an interesting detail that it will be based on her life.

“I’ve approved two other projects, as well as a third which will not feature me but will be based on my life. So, keep an eye out for that. I’m not going to say anything else. I definitely shouldn’t have said that, but I’m so pleased about it that I couldn’t help myself. You’ll realise that it’s not a biopic,” revealed the actor.

Sushmita Sen will be playing transgender activist Shreegauri Sawant in the Ravi Jadhav directorial web-series *Taali*.



NEWS

I won’t return home

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Besides, Nava and Turan, another child – Mahim Sheikh, 4, remained missing. He is the son of Rubel Sheikh, a resident of Sirajdikhan upazila’s Khidirpur village.

Of the deceased, six are members of the same family.

They are Happy Akhtar, 28, her sons Sakibul, 8, and Sajibul, 4, sister Poppy Akhtar, 26, and their relatives Farihan, 10, and five-month-old Humaira. The other deceased is Mokseda, 40. They are all from Khidirpur village.

Happy’s husband Jahangir, 40, miraculously survived the tragic accident but was found to be completely inconsolable after losing so many family members.

On a visit to Khidirpur last morning, this correspondent noticed that a sense of sorrow had descended upon the village.

“Where have my sons gone? How will I go on with my days without them? I have lost everything. I cannot live anymore,” cried Jahangir.

“We’ve become speechless after the shocking accident. This is the worst thing to have ever happened to us,” said Jahangir’s brother Uzzal.

Happy’s cousin Arshad Akash, who is a police inspector, demanded that the government strictly monitor the operation of water vessels, as he

said the picnic trawler capsized after being hit by the cargo vessel.

The accident took place at around 8:30pm, prompting locals to start a rescue operation immediately.

Later, members of the fire service rushed to the spot and conducted rescue operations until 2:00am yesterday.

The rescue operations were halted for five hours due to inclement weather.

At around 7:00am, the rescue operation resumed, with the Navy and Coast Guard joining.

So far, 34 people have been rescued, said Aslam Khan, district superintendent of police.

A case was filed with Louhajang Police Station yesterday, accusing four named and some unnamed crew members of the cargo vessel that hit the picnic trawler.

The police seized the cargo vessel, but its crew members fled the scene.

“We are trying to arrest the accused persons,” said Khandaker Imam Hossain, officer-in-charge (OC) of the police station.

Police have detained the cargo vessel’s cook for interrogation.

Meanwhile, the district administration has formed a five-member probe body headed by Additional District Magistrate Sharmin Ara to investigate the accident, said Abu Zafar Ripon, deputy commissioner of Munshiganj.

Agargaon-Motijheel

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three out of seven stations – Farmgate, Secretariat (Jatiya Press Club), and Motijheel – at the beginning.

The section saw 96.10 percent progress till July, and the authorities set a target to complete performance test, system integrity test, trial run and blank operations by October 15, according to monthly progress report.

“We have sought time from the prime minister to open this section any day after October 15,” MAN Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd (DMTCL), the implementing agency of the project, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said they sent a letter via the Road Transport and Highways Division last week.

Once opened, around 5 lakh people will be able to use the line daily and it would take only 38 minutes from Uttara to Motijheel, while it takes over

two hours in other modes.

THIRD METRO LINE

Physical work of MRT Line-5 (northern route) started on July 16 with the beginning of land development of its depot at Hemayetpur, said MAN Siddique.

On May 23, DMTCL hired a joint venture firm of TOA Corporation of Japan and Spectra Group of Bangladesh for the work at the cost of Tk 1,189 crore. They are mobilising their equipment and manpower and doing preparatory work, he said.

He added that they expected the prime minister would inaugurate the physical work of the Tk 41,239 crore project next month.

The project to build 20km rail line from Savar’s Hemayetpur to Bhatara via Gabtoli, Mirpur, and Gulshan would be implemented with Japanese loan and its deadline is 2028. The rail line with 14 stations will have underground and elevated sections.

Hardliners back

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Most of those leaders have already been freed from jail.

Amid pressure from various quarters, Hefazat was forced to scrap its committee and announce a new one in June 2021, dropping most of its hardline leaders who have strong stances against the government.

The party insiders said leaders like Mamunul, Azizul, Junayed Al Habib, Abdur Rob Yusufi, Ahmed Abdul Kader, Khalid Saifullah and Mufti Harun Izhari were dropped from the central committee due to government pressure.

Hefazat first hogged the headlines in 2009 after protesting a draft of a national women’s development policy that provided equal inheritance rights to women.

After a year, Hefazat-e-Islam was formally launched in 2010 as an organisation based in Chattogram, under the leadership of the late Shah Ahmad Shafi.

Things, however, escalated after the 2013 mayhem at Shapla Chattar, after which Shafi and the then AL government got closer.

Asked, Hefazat Joint Secretary General Mohiuddin Rabbani told The Daily Star, “The inclusion of those leaders was made to reorganise, strengthen the party and bring pace to our movement and materialise our longstanding 13-point demand, along with some fresh ones, including the release of our arrested leaders.”

The 13-point demand includes reinstating the phrase “Absolute trust and faith in the Almighty Allah” in the constitution as one of the fundamental principles of the state policy, and passing a law to ensure capital punishment for maligning Allah, Islam and the Prophet and for smear campaigns against Muslims.

Abul Kasem Kasemi, a former Hefazat leader of Dhaka city unit, said that due to the government’s pressure, those leaders were not included in the new committee and thus, a division was created among the leaders.

“Hefazat will become stronger by bringing those leaders back,” Kasemi, also senior nayeb-e-ameer of Khelafat Andolon, told this correspondent.

As the current government’s tenure is near its end, Hefazat has apparently taken the step to strengthen the organisation and put pressure on the government to realise its demands, party insiders said.

Hefazat amir Muhibullah Babunagari presided over Saturday’s meeting, where a 12-member sub-committee, led by Sajedur Rahman, was also formed.

Poet, freedom fighter Mohammad Rafiq

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Rafiq rose to prominence by infusing poetic fervour into the student movement in the 1960s, the Liberation War, and the anti-dictator movement in the 1980s.

On October 23, 1943, he was born to Samchuddin Ahmad and Reshatun Nahar in Baitpur village under Bemrata union of Bagerhat Sadar upazila. Rafiq, the eldest of eight children, spent his childhood in Bagerhat.

During the Liberation War, he took up arms and fought for Bangladesh’s independence. He also worked at

Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra.

After independence, he started his career as a college teacher before joining Jahangirnagar University. The poet retired in 2009.

Mohammad Rafiq was recognised with the Ekushey Padak in 2010 for his outstanding contributions to literature.

His other recognitions and awards include the Bangla Academy Award, Prothom Alo Best Book of the Year Award, and Gemcon Literary Award.

Rafiq’s first book of poetry, “Boishakhi Purnima”, was published in 1970.

His other notable works include “Dhulor Songsare Ei Mati”, “Kirtinasha”, “Kopila”, “Swadeshi Nishwas Tumimoy”, “Matsyagandha”, “Bishkhali Sondhya”, “Kalapani”, and “Troyee”.

One of his poems, “Khola Kobita”, against military ruler HM Ershad, drew a huge response.

Documents

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to be involved in the scam. We will publish the details of the probe report tomorrow (Monday),” said Prof Dr Sharfuddin Ahmed.

As per documents, Suzon Roy, 42, received the kidney from his sibling Susen Roy, 31, on July 17.

However, it was later revealed that the donor’s real name is Sumit Hawlader and he is not the recipient’s brother.

Organ donations beyond family members are strictly prohibited by the country’s law.

As such, the BSMMU authority formed a probe committee two days later on July 19 to investigate the matter.

The committee recorded the statements of the kidney donor, the recipient, their family members, the legal officer of the BSMMU, and the head of the transplant surgery team on July 20 and 23.

They also scrutinised the documents submitted by the donor and the recipient.

“The donor and the recipient have admitted that they falsified the papers. The law enforcers can now investigate how they did it,” said Prof Habibur Rahman Dulal, proctor of BSMMU, who led the transplant surgery team.

Sources said that Suzon reached Sumit with the help of an organ trafficking ring.

Suzon, who was a migrant worker in Greece, told Sumit that he could also be taken to Greece if he donated one of his kidneys to him.

Helper crushed

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Hossain, driver of another bus of Paristhan Paribahan.

Jisan was first taken to a nearby hospital and then moved to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead around 12:30pm.

The body was sent to the hospital’s morgue for autopsy.

No respite from high inflation

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who saw their nominal wage rate decline in July.

The wage rate grew 5.22 percent in Dhaka in July, in contrast to 5.95 percent the previous month. Similarly, the wage rate grew 5.96 percent in Chattogram, down from 7.22 percent in June.

In Dhaka’s services sector, the wage growth was 2.8 percent, which was 5.4 percent in June. Over at the port city, the wage growth in services sector was 6.37 percent in July, down from 9.55 percent in June.

“The rate of nominal wage growth is behind inflation. The real wages have continued to decline – and these are low-skilled workers,” Hussain said.

The government has targeted to keep inflation within 6 percent this fiscal year, meaning considerable work is needed to rein in the price level, which averaged upwards of 8 percent last fiscal year.

“We have talked about containing inflation but we have not walked the talk. Why is overall inflation so elevated month after month? That means inflation is deeply entrenched. We cannot say it is because of global factors as global inflation has declined,” Hussain said.

Then the high inflation is due to domestic factors.

“If we look at the monetary policy, we went the other way. The lending rate was left untouched. Besides, the monetary financing of the budget

deficit has been the highest in recent history.”

Monetary financing of budget deficit entails directly injecting money into the economy.

In fiscal policy, there have been no inflation-reducing measures, Hussain said.

“If we look at fiscal policy, we raised the indirect taxes, which has a direct impact on prices.”

The planned budget deficit for this fiscal year is Tk 2.6 lakh crore.

“If that is implemented it will further inflame inflation. Going forward, this deficit will not help if implemented.”

On the supply side, the fuel prices and the electricity tariffs were hiked. “Their knock on effect continues.”

Then there is the problem in market management for certain commodities.

“Some suppliers have market power and there are allegations that they manipulate the market.”

The authorities – which are the commerce ministry and the Bangladesh Competition Commission – are not taking the matter seriously, according to Hussain.

“We did not make any improvements towards making the market competitive. We have not done anything to ensure that the price movements in the international market are transmitted to the local market. We are walking the other way. So how will inflation come down?”