



Bangladeshi artistes are like family to me

RITUPARNA SENGUPTA

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Rituparna Sengupta is a celebrated figure both in the realm of Bollywood and Bengali cinema. Her films have brought her fame and adoration alike, from both sides of the border. Recently, the actress landed in the country to finish shooting her Indo-Bangladeshi project, *Sporsho*. The Daily Star caught up with the *Praktan* actress, to know how she is faring.

How has your experience in Dhaka been so far?

I am quite busy with *Sporsho* shoot, where I am cast opposite Nirab, under Anonno Mamun's direction. Bangladesh has always felt very close to me, and I love interacting with familiar faces here. I've already met a lot of people

You have been a part of the acting industry for a long while, how do you define the craft?

Acting is my love, my aspiration. Acting has brought me closer to thousands of people, given me their love and respect. Thus, I practice my craft with all my heart and love it.

You've shared companionship with some of the legendary figures of Dhallywood like Manna, Shabana and more. Ferdous is also a close friend of yours.

I miss Manna bhai a lot, whenever I visit. I still maintain a good relationship with his wife. Manna's contribution to this industry is immeasurable, he was an artistic man. His legacy is still reflected in the love that audiences retain for him to this day.

Moreover, I've starred in films from Shabana ma'am's production house, which were superhits.

I do miss her whenever I'm in Dhaka, however, she doesn't reside here anymore. Ferdous on the other hand is a great friend of mine, we've acted in a handful of films together too. I've already met him. I even have a deep connection with his family, who are all wonderful people.

I also miss a lot of other people who aren't around anymore, like Faridee bhai. I can't help it, us artistes are like a huge family.

Would you be interested in working further in Bangladeshi films?

My focus is always on good characters and portrayals. If I am asked to portray such roles, of course I would love to work more.



while shooting *Sporsho*, so I can say, the film will touch Dhaka dwellers' hearts.



Today marks the 75th birth anniversary of Akbar Hossain Pathan, known as the Mia Bhai of Bengali film industry. It is the first birthday of the actor after he left us for good. In remembrance of the actor, his daughter Fariha Pathan penned an emotional poem to remember him by.

Wings

Fariha Pathan

How do you hold down a bird
And expect it to fly
It just becomes weak
And within the heart it cries
How do you cage a bird
And expect it to fly
It loses the essence of life
And inside it becomes wretched and dry
Baba you give me my strength
But you are my weakness
I try to make you proud
Even though I fail sometimes
I am so fortunate to have a father like you
And when I die, I can say
My baba gave me wings
And allowed me to fly

Two luminaries to receive 'Selim Al Deen Padak'



Commemorating renowned playwright Selim Al Deen on his 74th birthday today, Dhaka Theatre will bestow the esteemed 'Selim Al Deen Padak' upon illustrious actor Pijush Bandyopadhyay and eminent theatre personality Syed Jamil Ahmed.

They will also organise a 4-day festival featuring floral wreath placement, commemorative discussion, an award-giving ceremony, and stage plays. Other cultural organisations will also pay their respects today.

COUNTRYWIDE

Damaged bridge poses risk

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhenidah

An old bridge over a canal at Goloknagar village in Shailakupa upazila has been lying in an awful state for long, posing serious threat to it users.

As a result, people of at least 20 villages have to suffer a lot to go to their destinations including the upazila headquarters.

During a recent visit to the area this correspondent saw different types of vehicles were crossing the broken bridge amid risk of accidents.

Local people alleged that the authorities concerned did not take any necessary measures since the side walls of the important bridge collapsed in 2013 and cracks started developing on its deck.

In the last couple of years, at least three people died and many others sustained injuries after falling from the vulnerable bridge while crossing it, villagers said.

Around 50,000 residents, including 300 to 400 students, of at least 20 villages use the year-old bridge to go their destinations every day.

Moreover, as there is no alternative,

local farmers have to carry their agricultural products to nearly Hatfazilpur Bazar through the bridge risking their lives.

Mohammad Shamsuddin of Goloknagar village, who sustained severe injuries after falling from the dilapidated bridge around five years ago, said seeing his physical inability villagers made a tea stall for him so that he can maintain his family.

Another villager Monirul Islam said local people have set up a makeshift wooden platform to ease the communication problem temporarily.

Tanvir Hossain, a Class IX student at Fazilpur Secondary School, said the bridge becomes extremely dangerous during the rainy season as many students often get wounded falling from the risky bridge.

Mentionable, Water Development Board (WDB) built the bridge over the GK Canal at Goloknagar village in 1957. Jhenidah WDB Executive Engineer Abu Raihan said they have submitted a proposal to the higher authorities to build a new bridge there.



A tractor crossing the risky bridge on GK Canal in Jhenidah's Shailakupa upazila.

It'll ensure better life for all

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This scheme aims at bringing the people aged above 18 under its coverage.

Hasina said the government has initially launched four pension schemes – Pragati, Surokkha, Samata and Prabashi – and two others will be introduced later.

She said people's love, confidence and trust in her and also in the Awami League is the driving force behind her working for the welfare of the country and its people.

She said Father of the Nation Bangabandhu

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had aimed to give the people a better life, for which he had dedicated his entire life.

"We have introduced the pension scheme in the month of mourning. After seeing our efforts to give the people a beautiful and improved life, the souls of Bangabandhu and Bangamata will get peace."

Hasina said the country's independence gifted by Bangabandhu will not be meaningful if every person doesn't get a better life.

She reiterated her pledge to work for Bangladesh's march towards a developed

and prosperous country and to build a hunger and poverty free "Sonar Bangla" as envisioned by the father of the nation.

The PM thanked all concerned, particularly former finance minister AMA Muhith and the incumbent finance minister, for working to introduce the universal pension scheme.

Hasina, also the AL president, said she wanted to open the pension scheme during the tenure of her government as she feared no other government would initiate such a programme.

"We wanted to introduce

the pension scheme staying in power and the election is approaching. It will be good if we stay in power. Otherwise, the scheme will not see the light."

The PM said she had lost everything with the assassination of her father, mother and brothers on August 15, 1975.

"I didn't have my father, mother, and brothers after returning home in 1981. But the countrymen stood beside me. So, I have been working to give every citizen of the country a decent life," she said.

Three districts --

Gopalganj, Bagerhat and Rangpur -- and the Consulate General of Bangladesh in Jeddah were connected to the event through videoconferencing. Hasina exchanged views with some local public representatives, government officials and beneficiaries.

Finance Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal and Bangladesh Bank Governor Abdur Rouf Talukder also spoke.

A video documentary on the universal pension scheme was screened on the occasion.

SC summons

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Islam, Justice Md Abu Zafor Siddique and Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim.

During the hearing, the SC bench said making bad comments about a sub judice matter is not decent.

The High Court has delivered a verdict on former prime minister Khaleda Zia and she filed an appeal challenging the HC judgement, which is pending with the apex court. It is not decent at all to make bad comments about the pending appeal, said the Appellate Division bench.

Jahangir recently made comments on a YouTube channel about Justice M Enayetur Rahim, a senior

judge of the Appellate Division, centring a judgement in a case against BNP chairperson Khaleda. After that, four lawyers -- Mohammad Harun-Or-Rashid, Mahfuzur Rahman Roman, Md Moniruzzaman Rana and Shafique Raihan Shawon -- submitted the petition.

The SC also directed Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission chairman to immediately remove the video containing Jahangir's comments.

Lawyer Shah Monjurul Hoque appeared for the petitioners while Attorney General AM Amin Uddin argued on behalf of the state during the hearing.

Shafik, Mahmudur

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or are arrested, said Additional Public Prosecutor Abdur Rahman Kajol.

The court also fined each of them Tk 5,000, failing to pay which will result in an additional one months in prison.

During the trial, the court recorded statements of Joy and 11 other prosecution witnesses.

After the case was filed on August 3, 2015, by the Detective Branch of police, Shafik Rehman and Mahmudur Rahman were arrested.

They later jumped bail. They are believed to be abroad.

The DB pressed charges against the accused on February 20, 2018, mentioning Shafik and Mahmudur as the masterminds.

Mamun aided and abetted the accused, the charge sheet added. Rizvi collected information on Joy from the FBI and gave it to the others.

According to the complaint, Mamun and several top leaders of the BNP and its allies met in the UK, the US and different

places in Bangladesh before September 2012 and plotted to abduct and kill Joy.

In March 2015, a US court convicted Rizvi of bribing an FBI special agent for information on a Bangladeshi political figure.

The US justice department did not name the politician.

In a Facebook post on March 9, 2015, Joy accused BNP leaders of conspiring to abduct and kill him.

Shafik, aged over 85, is also a British citizen. He worked for various media outlets.

Training for election officials

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polling centers across the country for the next general election.

The number of polling booths in all centres combined will be 2,61,668, he added.

The EC secretary further said the number of polling centres increased by 2,197 from the 2018 election, while that of booths increased by 54,349.

The commission will

accept objections to the draft polling centre list until August 31. If any, the objections will be resolved by September 11.

The final list will be announced on September 17 and the names of polling centres will be official declared by the returning officers.

As per a new guideline, there will be one polling centre for every 3,000 voters. The guideline says the

distance between two polling centres should not be more than 3km; they should not be in establishments owned by anyone with political affiliations; government establishments should be prioritised; and educational institutions, community centres, cyclone shelters, office buildings, and offices of semi-government and autonomous organisations can be used as polling centres, Jahangir said.