

# From loss to a new beginning

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Shortly after his return to Bangladesh from a year and a half in the US, Anisur Rahman Milon's two feature films were consecutively released—*1971 Shei Shob Din* and *MR-9: Do or Die*.

During his stay in the US, the actor was occupied with shooting for three American films. Milon managed to drop by The Daily Star—where in a candid *adda*—he shared insights into his life, career, and more.

**Some of your projects were delayed due to your stay in the US. How did you manage everything upon your return?**

I remained in constant contact with the directors, carefully planning the schedules to ensure a smooth transition upon my return. I have already wrapped up shooting for Eftakhar Chowdhury's *Mukti*, and have more projects in progress. Meanwhile, I have worked on three films in the US—*MR-9*, *Boneyard*, and *Flash it*.

**Just days after your return, two of your featurette films hit theatres. What's the response been like?**

It's been fantastic! These two films belong to different genres. *1971 Shei Shob Din* is a patriotic film, while *MR-9: Do or Die* is an action thriller and a groundbreaking collaboration with Hollywood. The response has been quite positive.

**You achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first Bangladeshi artiste to join the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) in Hollywood. We want to know the story behind this accomplishment.**

While working on *MR-9*, the director of the project, Asif Akbar, informed me that I needed to become a SAG member for payment processing. Initially, it requires US citizenship, and documentation of working on a Hollywood project. So, I followed the lengthy process and finally secured the membership. The significance lies in the guild's role in safeguarding artists' rights and ensuring timely payments.

**You have won hearts as a romantic actor on television, while finding acceptance as an antagonist on the silver screen. What types of roles do you personally prefer?**

Honestly, I enjoy roles filled with energy and intensity. In my view, onscreen characters should be full of action! Having said that, I don't want to limit myself to any specific role. I aim to maintain my versatility as an actor.

**In September last year, your wife, Polce Ahmed, lost her battle with cancer. Now, you are both mother and father to your ten-year-old son...**

The void left by her cannot be filled, and it was a tremendous ordeal for both me and my son. Taking care of my son on my own in the US has made it challenging to manage my work commitments. However, he is my top priority, and I will plan everything accordingly.

**How do you envision your future in the industry?**

My son is on vacation, making this the perfect time for me to return to the industry. I will schedule my future visits and shoot accordingly. I have plans to visit Bangladesh twice a year. At the moment, I have two projects lined up, including Arafat Jewel's film, and Pritam Sarkar's *Jochhona Korechhe Ari*. I am particularly excited about my directorial project, *Red Box*. Eminent screenplay writer Masum Reza is currently working on the script and we will start the production process.



## Jaya's first look in Srijit's 'Dawshom Awbotaar' unveiled



After a five-year hiatus, Jaya Ahsan is collaborating once again with Indian filmmaker Srijit Mukherji for the movie *Dawshom Awbotaar*.

The announcement of this star-studded film was made a couple of months ago and the shooting has already been completed. Yesterday, the film's makers shared the first look of the four pivotal stars on their social media accounts—Jaya Ahsan, Prosenjit Chatterjee, Jisshu Sengupta, and Anirban Bhattacharya.

In the unveiled first glimpse, Jaya's intense look sparked curiosity amongst the audience about her character in the movie.

## 'Jawan' releases at Bangladeshi theatres



Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Jawan* has finally released in Bangladesh. The film received clearance from the Censor Board yesterday at 12 pm and premiered in theatres at 6.30 pm on the same day. This marks the first time a Hindi movie has made its global debut in Bangladesh.

The film was premiered at all the outlets of STAR Cineplex, along with Blockbuster Cinema and several single screens.

After the announcement of clearance, fans flocked to theatres to grab their seat at the premiere show.

# NEWS

## 9 projects done in 30yrs, still one in four illiterate

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Rasheda K Choudhury, executive director of Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), said the authorities concerned are trying to cut illiteracy only through implementing projects, but they should adopt a holistic approach.

With NGOs implementing most of the projects, questions have arisen over their selection, and several

and literacy projects. The country's focus had always been on formal education, with adult literacy getting less priority, he added.

BNFE Director Nuruzzaman Sharif said many students still remain out of school and primary school dropouts are quite high. And that's why so many people are still illiterate.

Asked about lack of planning and coordination among the authorities concerned, Nuruzzaman said there might be some deficiencies.

He said that they are devising a five-year programme titled Non-Formal Education Development Programme aiming to cut illiteracy

Project name	Targeted beneficiaries	People benefitted
Integrated Non-Formal Education Project	16.68 lakh	24.69 lakh
Non-formal edn (NFE) projects NFE project-1	29.61 lakh	29.61 lakh
NFE project-2	59 lakh	36.18 lakh
NFE project-3	3.51 lakh	3.51 lakh
NFE project-4	2.28 crore	92.25 lakh
Post-literacy, continuing edn for human dev (PLCEHD) PLCEHD project 1	13.56 lakh	9.73 lakh
PLCEHD project 2	12 lakh	11.40 lakh
Basic edn for hard-to-reach urban working children project	1.66 lakh	1.46 lakh
Basic Literacy Project	45 lakh	44.60 lakh

media outlets have run reports on irregularities in the selection process, she added.

Rasheda also criticised lack of monitoring of the projects.

Projects taken up over the years never targeted all the illiterate population, said KM Enamul Hoque, advocacy adviser of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in the Asia South Pacific.

He said literacy can be attained in two ways – formal education

significantly.

Primary and Mass Education Secretary Farid Ahmed claimed that there is no lacking in planning.

"I can't make any comments about the allegations of corruption and irregularities in the projects without knowing about the matter fully," he told this correspondent.

The secretary said the government is no more interested in implementing projects through NGOs.

## Summit's Aziz Khan 41st richest man

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Awami League government has so far paid Tk 1.04 lakh crore to 82 independent power producers (IPP) and 32 rental power plants as capacity charge and rental payments, Nasrul Hamid, the state minister for power, energy and mineral resources, told the parliament on Tuesday.

Summit, which established Bangladesh's first private sector power plant in 1997, received the highest share of the capacity payments in that time for its eight power plants: Tk 12,130 crore, as per the documents placed in the parliament by Hamid.

Today, it is the largest IPP in the country, with 12 power plants in operation and shares in at least two more.

Summit Power's holding company Summit Power International (SPI) is incorporated in Singapore. His eldest daughter, Ayesha Aziz Khan, is the managing director and chief executive officer of SPI, while Khan is its chairman.

In 2019, Khan sold a 22 percent stake in SPI to Japan's JERA for \$330 million, which valued the company at \$1.5 billion.

From power generation, Summit branched into energy trading, port operations, fibre optics and real estate, becoming one of the biggest conglomerates in Bangladesh.

In 2022, Khan and his wife, Anjuman Aziz Khan, were invited to join Unicef's International Council in Copenhagen in honour of their generous contribution to children in Bangladesh by way of Anjuman and Aziz Charitable Trust. They are the first council members to join from Bangladesh.

Eduardo Saverin, a co-founder of Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook), was named the richest man in Singapore with a net worth of \$16 billion. The Brazilian native, who has been a resident of the city state for over a decade, is the biggest gainer this year with an increase of \$6.4 billion in net wealth.

Forbes's list has been compiled using shareholding and financial information obtained from families and individuals, stock exchanges, analysts and other sources.

## Special train completes test run via Padma Bridge

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the Bhanga-Dhaka rail route through the Padma bridge on October 10, according to Sujan.

Commercial operation of trains will begin within a few days of the inauguration, he told journalists after getting off the special train in Faridpur.

"A long cherished dream of the people of this area has come true today," he added.

A 172-km railway line from Dhaka to Jashore via Padma bridge is being constructed under the Padma bridge rail link project. But the entire route is yet to be constructed, according to railway officials.

About 80 percent of the Dhaka to Mawa rail route, 96.5 percent of the Mawa to Bhanga rail route and about 78 percent of the Bhanga to Jashore rail route have been completed, Sujan told The Daily Star.

## A young life taken over alleged theft

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Tikkapara in Mohammadpur, and two of his friends were passing by an under-construction building around 2:00am. Suddenly some construction workers started chasing them down, accusing them of stealing iron rods from the site.

While the two friends managed to escape, the workers got hold of Akash. They tied him to a chair and beat him with heavy objects until he fell unconscious.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Akash's brother-in-law Jewel Mollah said, "When he was gone for too long, we began searching for him. We looked for him all night but couldn't find him."

Around 5:30am, Dipa got a call from an unknown person, who told her that Akash was at a construction site.

"As she [Dipa] rushed there, she found Akash tied to a chair... beaten to a pulp. She rescued him and took

him home. But within hours, he passed away... She is no more in a state to talk," Jewel said.

On information, police recovered Akash's body from his Tikkapara home around 10:00am and sent it to Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital for autopsy.

Morgue sources said his body bore injury marks, confirming that he was severely beaten with heavy objects. Dipa, a garment worker, filed a murder case with Mohammadpur Police Station against unnamed people yesterday evening.

Shell shocked and devastated, she demanded a thorough investigation and punishment to all those involved in the murder of her nephew.

Mahfuzul Haque, officer-in-charge of Mohammadpur Police Station, said, "We are quite certain the construction workers [of the building] were responsible. We are conducting drives to arrest them."

## 10 injured falling off CU shuttle train

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to Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

CU student Arnab Bhattacharya said he heard the sound of something falling from the rear of a carriage. He was told what had happened when the train reached Fatehabad Station.

Arnab then went back and saw that many were injured.

CU Assistant Proctor Nazemul Alam Murad, who was at the CMCH, said they were moving the injured students to a private hospital from the CMCH for better treatment.

Nurul Alam, inspector (investigation) of Hathazari Police Station, said following the incident on the train around 9:15pm, students demonstrated at Zero Point on the university campus and locked the main gate around 11:00pm.

Sources said the students vandalised about two dozen buses and 15 cars and minibuses used for the transportation of university teachers and staffers.

CU Proctor Nurul Azim Shikdar could not be reached over phone for comments last night.

## Armenia PM says Azerbaijan preparing 'military provocation'

AFP, Yerevan

Armenia yesterday accused Azerbaijan of preparing a military provocation against its forces by concentrating troops along the arch-foes' shared border and near the breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh region.

The ex-Soviet republics have been locked in a decades-long conflict over the mostly Armenian-populated region of Nagorno-Karabakh inside Azerbaijan.

Tensions between Baku and Yerevan have escalated sharply in recent months, as both sides accuse the other of cross-border attacks.

"The military-political situation in our region has seriously worsened," Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan told his cabinet meeting in Yerevan.