

# Mehazabien steadfast after HAT-TRICK AWARDS

SHARMIN JOYA



The ‘Sabrina’ famed actress emphasised the fact that it is a positive sign that OTT arena is focusing on women-centric plots, however, silver screens need to take the attempt as well. “Audiences play a great role here, if they want to see quality work, they have to support when one of such kind is made.”

“Receiving any award is a token of appreciation from both audience and critics,” shared an excited Mehazabien Chowdhury, who recently took home three awards in just 24 hours.

She was recognised as the Best Actress in Meril Prothom Alo Awards, Channel i Digital Media Awards and Babisa Award (Bangladesh Binodon Shangbadik Shomity)—all for her stellar performance as Rokeya in Vicky Zahed’s *Punorjonmo* series.

“Rokeya is one of the most challenging and popular characters I have donned,” she said. “In the last three years, wherever I went, be it in or outside the country, people kept asking me about the next instalment,” quipped the actress, who added that she has never experienced this much hype for any other project.

Yet, Mehazabien’s personal favourite character is Tithi from *Chirokal Aaj*, which will always remain her personal favourite. “Tithi was the most difficult character I have played in my career,” asserted the actress.

Each individual artiste practices differently to prepare for their role. How does Mehazabien prepare? In response, the *Redrum* actress said, “For me, rehearsal is very important to get comfortable with the characters I am sharing the screen with, she shared. “Watching other people’s work personally helps me develop my acting skills. Also, travelling to different places, meeting new people and experiencing different cultures also leaves an impact. Thus, for me, travelling is also a way of learning.”

The television industry is going through a tough time as leading actors, such as Afran Nisho, Apurba and Mehazabien, have been busy with OTT and big screen projects. There are concerns about who will fill the void. “We have to be patient -- those who have moved to another medium should appreciate it, as it is for the betterment for our industry,” said Mehazabien. “Also, these names did not become popular overnight, they had to wait for over decades to reach this place. Let’s not rush, there are lot of potential faces who will take lead soon.”

The *Sabrina* famed actress emphasised the fact that it is a positive sign that OTT arena is focusing on women-centric plots, however, silver screens need to take the attempt as well. “Audiences play a great role here, if they want to see quality work, they have to support when one of such kind is made.”

Mehazabien also highlighted that gender discrimination is not only limited to the screens. “We are aware about male artistes getting more remuneration than women. If we look into international industries, I can mention examples where a male artiste left the project because his female co-actor was not being paid the equal wage. Thus, from the audience to producers, directors, and artistes-- all are associated with one another.”

Is that the reason why Mehazabien Chowdhury is yet to take on films? To that, she replied, “If people remember me through my roles, that will be enough for me. The medium is not that important, I am open to working in any medium as long as I get such role which I cannot say no to. If I need to wait, I don’t mind waiting for another ten years,” she concluded.



PHOTOS: COLLECTED



## ‘Sholay’ actor Birbal, who worked in over 500 films, no more

Veteran actor Satinder Kumar Khosla, who was famously known as Birbal, passed away on Tuesday evening. According to Indian media, he breathed his last at a hospital in Mumbai. He was in his eighties at the time of his demise.

Jugnu, a close friend of Satinder, confirmed his passing to an agency.

Satinder is most renowned for his comedic roles. His unique appearance, characterised by a bald head and a thick mustache, made him easily recognisable. He collaborated in various films with Manoj Kumar, including *Upkar*, *Roti Kapda Aur Makaana*, and *Kranti*.

## Pori Moni starrer ‘Maa’ to screen in UK



Aranyo Anawer’s *Maa* will be screened at the Relaks Radio Auditorium in London on September 16 and 17.

Previously, the film was showcased at 76th Cannes Film Festival, under the festival’s ‘marché du film’ (film market) category at the Palais de Festivals of Cannes theatre.

Yesterday, Aranyo Anawer announced the news at the Sommilito Sahitya O Sangskritik Parishad at The Art Pavilion in London.

Pori Moni starrer *Maa* was released in cinema halls on May 16. The film revolves around a woman called, Beena, who survived the Liberation War, while taking care of her six-month-old baby.

# NEWS

## JS passes it amid strong protests

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Mukabbir said with this law, someone can be easily harassed.

“I can easily imagine how much this law is a threat to journalists,” he said, adding that this law is one of the most effective tools to suppress dissent, criticism, and free thought.

He said over the last four and a half years, the DSA has only been used for suppressing free thought and criticism of the government or the ruling party. And the journalists suffered the most. Their freedom of expression has been severely curtailed. This act empowers the police to enter homes and search and arrest people without warrants.

JP MP Fakhrul Imam said some amendments have been made, but journalists said that they are not satisfied. Freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and freedom of the press are ensured by the constitution. Any law against freedom of speech would be unconstitutional.

JP lawmaker Pir Fazlur Rahman said the DSA was controversial. But this new law too will stand in the way of free journalism and expression.

“Section 42 of this act provides the power [to law enforcers] to arrest without warrant. The act required special protection for journalists. There was scope to get the Press Council involved,” he added.

JP MP Shameem Haider Patwari said the constitution ensures freedom of thought, the press, and speech. Therefore, such a law is unconstitutional.

The new law kept the definition of

the offences the same as in the DSA. This law will lead to the media self-censoring more.

JP lawmaker Hafiz Uddin Ahmad said many have objected to section 42. All illegal sections including this one need to be removed.

Mujibul Haque, another lawmaker of the party, said journalists take up the pen for the country. There was an opportunity to involve the Press Council.

State Minister for ICT Zunaid Ahmed said freedom of thought and freedom of expression are recognised by the constitution, but they are not unrestricted. The freedom does not allow violation of the rights of others.

He said the DSA was enacted in 2018 as it was required then. Now the cyber security law is being enacted because it is required now. There is no alternative to the Cyber Security Act to build a transparent, accountable, and secure “Smart Bangladesh”.

The bill was passed by a voice vote.

### WHAT’S IN THE LAW

The bill was placed in parliament for passing yesterday keeping offences under sections 17, 19, 27 and 33 as non-bailable. The offences are related to intrusion into key information infrastructure, damaging computers and computer systems, cyber terrorism, and hacking.

In the DSA, sections 18 (1) (b), 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 46 were non-bailable, but the new law makes them bailable.

Trials of the cases already filed under the DSA will continue under the act.

## I’ll work to stamp out graft: CJ

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media persons and will share views with them in order to reduce the backlog of cases ... and ensure justice for all,” said Justice Obaidul Hassan.

He said the backlog of cases would be reduced, corruption would be eradicated, and people’s faith in the judiciary would be deepened if all concerned work sincerely and perform their duties properly.

The new chief justice said he would talk to the media for the interest of the judiciary and for the development of the judicial system.

“The media is the mirror of the society. I need to talk to media persons on different issues,” he said.

Earlier in the day, Justice Obaidul Hassan told reporters at his SC office that lawyers with political affiliations must be more patient.

“I don’t think that the judiciary is being used politically. The judges are doing their duties. I want to tell my lawyer friends who are involved in politics to be patient on the court premises and respectful of each other. And if it is done, the heat of politics will not touch the judiciary.”

He said the alternative dispute resolution and mediation system should be used and some laws should be updated so that more cases could be disposed of and the backlog of cases could be reduced.

“I will not say that there is no lack of faith in the judiciary. But it has not come to this due only to the judges. There are some other factors,” said Justice Obaidul Hassan.

## Global crisis won’t affect

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Hasina, also leader of the House, said there is a crisis in the global supply chain for different commodities, including food, following the Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war.

She said, “Amid this situation, the government has regularly been taking various steps at the national and international levels to ensure food security.”

The premier said Bangladesh has now become a role model on the global stage in the case of food security.

Hasina said the country’s food grain production was 328.96 lakh tonnes in 2008-09 fiscal year, which went up to 477.68 lakh tonnes in 2022-23 fiscal year.

### 1971 Genocide

Efforts to continue for recognition of the 1971 genocide, she said while responding to a query from AL lawmaker Anwer Hossain Khan from Laxmipur-1.

The PM said many countries demanded the recognition of genocide committed in their countries as International Genocide Day.

Later, the United Nations General Assembly on September 11, 2015, adopted a resolution through discussion to observe December 9 as the International Day for the Prevention of Genocide.

“Since December 9 has been observed as the International Day

for the Prevention of Genocide, the proposal to observe another international day on the same issue would not be rational,” she said.

She, however, said the foreign ministry, the Liberation War affairs ministry, the Liberation War Museum, and some members of the martyrs’ families are making efforts to get international recognition of the genocide that took place in Bangladesh in 1971.

The head of government said individuals and organisations working on genocide are also trying to get recognition of the genocide.

### HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES

Responding to a question from Jatiya Party MP Hafiz Uddin Ahmed from Thakurgaon-3, the PM informed the House that around 854km of highways have been upgraded to four-lane, around 11,434km of highways was developed, while construction of 1,131 bridges (123,254m) have been completed through 431 projects under the Roads and Highways Department from 2009 to 2023.

In the current financial year, she said work is underway to upgrade some 574km of highways to four-lane, develop 4,634km of highways and construct 750 bridges (64,844m) under 131 projects.

The overall proposed investment in the economic zones has now reached \$26 billion, Hasina said while replying to a query from AL lawmaker Md Mamunur Rashid Kiron from Noakhali-3.

## Take action against DC

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Following the incident, the EC said as the 12th national election is nearing, officials of the administration should behave impartially, reflecting the meaning and underlying spirit of the constitution.

In the letter, the EC also said this is evident in different laws and articles, including those of 120 and 126 in the constitution and those of 5 and 91 (c) in the Representation of the People Order, and that the EC has jurisdiction over elections not only after announcement of the polls schedule but also at all times.

According to the letter, deputy commissioners usually perform

election duties as returning officers and carry out important duties to maintain law and order as district magistrates during elections.

“In such a situation, people should keep their faith intact in the government, democracy, the election system, and the Election Commission. It would be appropriate to withdraw Md Imran Ahmed from the duties of deputy commissioner and abstain him from any election-related duties in the next parliamentary election subject to verification of the incident,” it read.

At the same time, it is necessary to warn deputy commissioners of such comments, the EC noted in the letter.

## Filmmaker Sohanoor no more

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after his death news broke out, as stars like Shakib Khan, Moushumi, Emon Saha, Shahriar Nazim Joy, among many others, expressed condolences on social media.

“I don’t know what to say,” wrote Shakib.

“We talked just a few days ago. Some of you might not know this, but he gave me the name ‘Shakib Khan’.”

Sohan was born in Sylhet in 1966. He started his career as an assistant director to Shibli Sadiq in

1977. His first directorial film was named “Biswas Obiswas” in 1988, but he truly broke new ground after making “Keyamot Theke Keyamot” in 1993, starring Salman Shah and Moushumi.

Some of his notable works are “Amar Desh Amar Prem”, “Swajan”, “Amar Ghor Amar Behesta”, “Ananta Bhalobasha”, “Shami Chintai”, “Amar Jaan Amar Pran”, “Poran Joliya Jay Re”, “Koti Takar Prem”, “She Amar Mon Kereche” and “Lobhe Paap Paape Mrittu”.

Having served as the president of the Bangladesh Film Director’s Association and a member of the Bangladesh Film Censor Board, he was a highly respected name in the country’s film industry.

He was the reason that stars like Salman Shah, Shakib, Moushumi and Agun, among many others, became a household name in the industry.

Sohan’s body was taken to Tangail, his wife’s home town, last night. He will be laid to rest today beside her grave.