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**ZAREEN NAWAR**

Since her debut in 2001 with the drama *Shesh Belay*, Chayanika Chowdhury has been a household name in Bangladesh’s showbiz industry. Moreover, in a male-dominated industry, she has carved her own mark as a courageous woman, stepping into the silver-screen with films like *Bishwoshundori* and *Prohelika*. She drops by The Daily Star to talk about her illustrious career of 22 years.

**What can you tell us about your feelings when you look back at your body of work thus far?**

As I think about how far I have come in the industry today, I feel a sense of rejuvenation. I tend to ponder ever single day about how I can make my coming days or years worthwhile. When I think about my struggles and the kind of insults I have had to overcome, I cannot help but think that I am where I am today because of the people who tried to offend me. I, in fact, want to thank those very people for bringing me here today.



**Who are the ones who have supported you throughout your career?**

I was given my first platform thanks to Mujibur Rahman of Light and Shadow. It was a massive opportunity for me, I would’ve never realised my own capabilities had I not been given that support. I want to thank Anjan Chowdhury,

Ajay Kumar Buru and Jamal Hossain for *Prohelika*. I have people like Tamalika Karmaker, Mahfuz Ahmed, Imdadul Haq Milan and Faria Hossain including the teams I have worked with so far to thank, for my career.

**Your second film ‘Prohelika’, has been very successful. What kind of reviews have you been getting?**

“Your *Prohelika* is just wonderful”, is the first thing I have been hearing from people. The audience seems to be impressed by the story, songs and acting. Many have been excited by how they could not believe how they were seeing Bubly on-screen. I’ve heard ‘fantastic comeback’ being used to describe Mahfuz Ahmed’s acting, and the cinematography is again something that people seemed to love. Lastly, many viewers confessed that they noticed how they should not judge something based on looks only.

**How was directing your first film ‘Bishwoshundori’, compared to ‘Prohelika’?**

The first child is and always will be special and it is something

that I should not compare other creations with. I can, however, admit that I was able to overcome a few of my mistakes whilst directing the second film. So, I basically learned much from my first one. I tried to do everything perfectly with *Prohelika*. The outpour of love I received following its release has been miraculous. It competed with Shakib Khan and Nisho’s films around Eid, even my producer was hesitant about releasing it when we did. *Prohelika*’s performance ultimately delighted all of us, and I could go ahead with its release because I was confident about my craft.

**When you were directing ‘Prohelika’, did you feel like you were experiencing a new challenge at any point?**

We had to shoot an eleven-minute-long sequence in one go. We might have rehearsed it three or four times, but it had to be done in one take. We didn’t even need to film it a second time. It was an exciting challenge. The underwater shots were beautiful, but demanding as well.

## I am nervous about ‘Khufiya’: Badhan



The highly anticipated trailer for the Netflix film *Khufiya*, directed by Vishal Bhardwaj, was unveiled yesterday. This marks the Bollywood debut of actress Azmeri Haque Badhan, and it’s already creating quite a buzz in the industry.

*Khufiya* unfolds as a gripping espionage thriller, where the Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) is confronted with the haunting presence of a mole within its ranks.

“I am nervous about ‘Khufiya’ at this moment. The reason is that I have acted alongside an actress like Tabu. Most of my scenes are with her. The audience has high expectations, and this anticipation has made me anxious. One thing that feels good, sharing screen with Tabu, is like a dream come true. This is a great achievement for me,” said Badhan to The Daily Star.

## European Film Festival commences in Bangladesh



A seven-day European Film Festival has begun encompassing films from Bangladesh and Europe. The festival commenced with the screening of the Dutch movie *Mally Can Fly* at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy’s National Theater in Dhaka, on Sunday.

Film screenings will take place at Alliance Française, Shilpakala Academy, Institute of Modern Languages (IML) of Dhaka University and Dutch Club, until September 23.

Outside Dhaka, exhibitions are also being held at Khulna University, Varendra University (VU) in Rajshahi and Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University in Mymensingh.

# NEWS

## AL leader killed, 17 hurt

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lawmaker Selima Ahmed, has been trying to establish his supremacy in the area.

On the other hand, Chalibhanga Union Parishad Chairman Humayun Kabir is not a supporter of the MP.

Followers of Quaiyum and Humayun locked into a clash with local weapons yesterday morning over taking control of the local sand business.

Nizam, who rushed to the spot after learning of the incident, was fatally struck by a harpoon allegedly thrown by the followers of Quaiyum.

Later, he was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he died while undergoing treatment, according to police and family members.

Ten other people who sustained shotgun pellet wounds and injuries caused by harpoon attacks were

undergoing treatment at the same hospital, Bachchu Miah, in-charge of DMCH Police Outpost, told this newspaper.

Contacted, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Meghna Police Station Delowar Hossen said they have detained five persons for quizzing and no case has been filed in connection with the incident.

Meanwhile, in Narsingdi, at least seven people were injured in another harpoon attack during a clash between two AL factions in the Chardighaldi area of the Sadar upazila also over establishing supremacy.

The clash broke out between the followers of the incumbent Chairman of Chardighaldi Union Parishad (UP) Delowar Hossain Shahin, and former chairman of the UP and vice-president of the union unit AL Abu Mansur.

According to locals, Shahin,

also former General Secretary of Madhabdi upazila unit Chhatra League, was forced to stay out of the area due to his rivalry with Abu Mansur.

When he and his supporters tried to enter the Chardighaldi area, the Mansur-led group obstructed them, which led to a clash between the two factions.

Both Shahin and Mansur blamed each other for the clash.

Talking to The Daily Star, Abdul Aziz, officer-in-charge (OC) of Madhabdi Police Station, said, “We came to know that several people were injured in the clash that took place around 6:00am. We are looking into the matter, but we have yet to receive any written complaint from any side.”

[Our correspondents from Cumilla and Brahmanbaria contributed to this report.]

## Bus ride smoother than ever

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They expressed content as they reached their destinations in a reasonably short time.

Gias Uddin said that people like him, who don’t own a car, were not being able to take advantage of the expressway until yesterday.

“A Farmgate-airport trip by road would usually take a person around two hours. But the time has now come down to just about half an hour with the launch of the BRTC bus service via the expressway,” he said.

Yesterday, eight double-deckers operated on the route from 11:25am.

After entering the expressway via the Bijoy Sarani ramp, the first BRTC bus paid toll at 11:50am and reached Kawla near the airport at 12:05pm.

Earlier, Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM Aman Ullah Nuri inaugurated the bus service on Manik Mia Avenue.

Speaking to reporters, he said, “We have launched this service on an experimental basis. Buses will operate from 7:30am every day. The service will continue as long as there will be passengers.”

He said more buses will operate on this route if the number of passengers

increases. Passengers can travel from Farmgate to the airport by paying the current BRTC bus fares, the secretary added.

The fare for a 15km Khejur Bagan-airport trip has been fixed at Tk 35 and the 17km Khejur Bagan-Jasimuddin Road trip at Tk 40. There is no scope for charging extra fares as tickets will be sold under e-ticketing system, BRTC sources said.

The toll for buses using the expressway has been set at Tk 160.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had opened the airport-Farmgate section of the expressway on September 2.

## Govt extends suspension by six months

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Huq briefed reporters on the issue at the Secretariat.

Khaleda was freed from jail on March 25, 2020, after the government suspended her jail sentence for six months. She was released during a time when the world was grappling with the pandemic.

The BNP chief landed in jail on February 8, 2017, after being sentenced to five years’ imprisonment by a special court in Dhaka in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case.

On October 30, the following

year, the High Court enhanced her punishment to 10 years after dismissing her appeal.

The former prime minister was convicted by another special court in Dhaka in the Zia Charitable Trust corruption case on October 29, 2018. She was sentenced to seven years’ imprisonment by the court.

In another development, Khaleda was taken back to a cabin at the Evercare Hospital from the coronary care unit (CCU) around 11:30am yesterday, said her personal physician AZM Zahid Hossain.

“Khaleda Zia was moved to the CCU at 1:30am as per the advice of her medical board,” he told The Daily Star.

Zahid added that the medical board, consisting of local and foreign physicians, held an emergency meeting around 11:30pm on Sunday. The board decided to move her to the CCU.

The BNP chief has been suffering from multiple health complications, including arthritis, diabetes, kidney issues, liver problems, and heart diseases for a long time, according to the board.

## 24 personalities

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Many countries faced a similar situation due to the war, they said.

Later, most of the countries could keep the inflation within a tolerable level by strictly implementing their monetary policies, taking austerity measures, and managing the market, they added.

“We are noticing that Bangladesh has so far been unable to tame the inflation,” the statement said, adding that the government has failed to effectively manage the market.

There is an allegation that syndicates at different stages in the supply chain, from production to retail level, are controlling the prices, but the government bodies concerned cannot rein them in, they said.

Describing the situation as unacceptable, the eminent citizens said if needed, the government should involve the society and take prompt steps to overcome the situation and control the prices of essentials, including meat, lentil, onion, egg, and potato, to reduce the sufferings of the people.

The signatories to the statement include Sultana Kamal, former adviser to a caretaker government, Rasheda K Choudhury, former adviser to a caretaker government, Ramendu Majumdar, cultural personality, Sarwar Ali, trustee of Liberation War Museum, Prof MM Akash of Dhaka University, Khushi Kabir, rights activist, Rana Dasgupta, general secretary of Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad, and Prof Robaet Ferdous of Dhaka University.

## DMP probe body

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to the DMP commissioner tomorrow [today]. If necessary, he may later forward it to the inspector general of police,” the official added.

On September 9, ADC Harun and some other police officials took the two Chhatra League leaders to Shahbagh Police Station around 9:00pm and tortured them for about an hour, BCL leaders alleged.

A week ago, DB Chief Harun Or Rashid alleged ADC Harun was assaulted first by the president’s Assistant Personal Secretary Azizul Haque at the Birdem Hospital that evening. “This should be investigated too,” he said.

Azizul’s wife, Sanjida Afrin, also an ADC of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, gave The Daily Star a similar account of the Birdem Hospital incident.

## China hits out at German FM’s ‘dictator’ Xi comment

**AFP, Beijing**

China yesterday lashed out against German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock for calling President Xi Jinping a “dictator”, branding the comment “an open political provocation” that was “extremely absurd”.

Beijing is Berlin’s top trade partner but Germany published a new policy in July to contend with a more “assertive” China after months of wrangling within the government over its strategy.

Baerbock, who has pushed for a more hawkish line, made the remarks in a Fox News interview on September 14 during a visit to the United States.

While talking about the Ukraine war, she said: “If Putin were to win this war, what sign would that be for other dictators in the world, like Xi, like the Chinese president? So therefore

Ukraine has to win this war.”

China said yesterday it was “strongly dissatisfied” and that it had made “solemn representations to the German side through diplomatic channels”.

“(The comments) are extremely absurd and are a serious infringement of China’s political dignity and an open political provocation,” foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said at a daily news conference.

Berlin’s new China policy marks a fine balance between the two differing positions in its coalition government, calling Beijing a “partner, competitor, systemic rival”.

Baerbock, of the German Greens, has pushed for a harder line against China and for a greater emphasis on human rights, while Chancellor Olaf Scholz, a Social Democrat, has backed a more trade-friendly stance.

## Bangladesh at bottom

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Engineering and Technology (Buet).

He said solar energy is not the only option. “We need to think about green hydrogen.”

Prof M Shamsul Alam, senior vice president of Consumers’ Association of Bangladesh, said energy has now become an import-dependent sector.

“There is no energy security as the government is finding it difficult to pay the import bills [primary fuels] due to a lack of US dollars.”

He said the government is doing business and also fixing energy prices which is contradictory.

“The government is making predatory profits. The sector needs a strong and independent regulatory body,” Shamsul observed.

Shafiqul Alam, energy finance analyst at the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis, said the government is going to build three LNG storage regasification units (FSRU) to increase the storage capacity of imported LNG.

“If the government cannot utilise the facilities fully, it will have to pay capacity charges to the regasification units,” he added.

Speaking at the event, State Minister for Planning Shamsul Alam said people in Germany get sunlight for only two to three hours every day.

“But they have built huge buildings, especially in schools and colleges, with photovoltaic glasses to produce electricity. We have built buildings using glass. Why don’t we use such photovoltaic glasses?”

Md Rafiqul Islam, joint secretary (planning) at Energy and Mineral Resources Division, said the government has increased the local gas production and has taken up an exclusive programme to boost the production further.

“It is not true that the government only depends on imports. If we don’t import LNG, industrial growth will become stagnant,” he added.

Sanem Executive Director Prof Selim Raihan moderated the event.