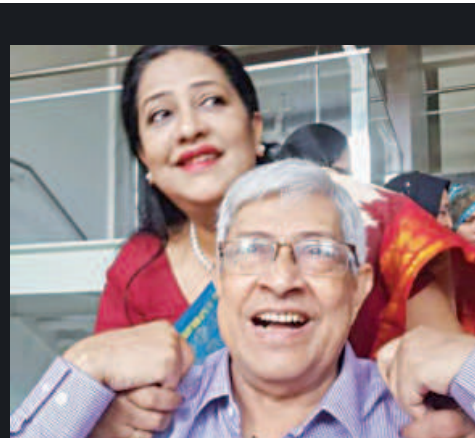


'Ghuddi' stars reminisce SYED SALAHUDDIN ZAKI



Ghuddi actress Suborna Mustafa also expressed her grief and recalled her time with the director. She shared with The Daily Star, "He was a man dedicated to his work. Even at his elderly age, he continued working without ever sparing a thought on taking a break or quitting."

Syed Salahuddin Zaki was a multifaceted creative force in the world of entertainment and media, leaving an indelible mark as a director, scriptwriter, actor, and author. Leaving a void in the film industry, the director passed away yesterday at 11:53 pm, at United Hospital in Gulshan.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

His artistic journey commenced with a remarkable achievement in 1980, when he clinched the prestigious National Film Award for Best Dialogue for his inaugural directorial venture, *Ghuddi*, starring Raisul Islam Asad and Suborna Mustafa.

This early recognition was merely a glimpse of the talent that would go on to shape his prolific career in the film industry. Over the years, Zaki produced a series of memorable films, including *Laal Benarasi* and *Ayna Bibir Pala*, showcasing his prowess as both a visionary director and a storyteller.

Renowned actor Raisul Islam Asad, a multiple National Film Award winner,

owes a significant part of his success to director Zaki, who played a pivotal role in shaping his career. The celebrated actor made waves in the industry with his remarkable performance in the film *Ghuddi*. Asad also collaborated with the esteemed director on *Ayna Bibir Pala*.

Their connection, however, extended beyond the silver screen, with numerous shared experiences during their time in Dhaka Theatre and the tumultuous days of the Liberation War. As the news of the director's passing reverberated, Raisul Islam Asad shared his heartfelt sentiments with The Daily Star.

"I find myself at a loss for words, utterly speechless. It's nearly impossible to fathom a world without Zaki *bhai*," said Asad. "Although we understand

that, by the laws of nature, everyone must ultimately depart from this world, certain losses remain inconceivable. I've lost someone dear to my heart."

He continued, "It's impossible to encapsulate his essence adequately in words. I could talk about him endlessly. He was a visionary, a man of unparalleled artistic sensibilities. His passion for the arts knew no bounds. His entire world revolved around cinema, drama, and art."

After completing his studies in Pune, India, Zaki returned to Bangladesh and later on, joined Dhaka Theatre. Their bond deepened during the Liberation War when they were first introduced. Post-independence, they spent numerous years side by side in Dhaka Theatre. Asad fondly recalls those years

as a period of growth, understanding, and learning.

"Countless memories flood my mind today, from our time in various drama circles before our Dhaka Theatre journey. However, the memories we created within the folds of this theatre troupe are the most cherished. Can they ever truly fade away?" he mused.

Asad highlighted one of their remarkable collaborations, the film *Ghuddi*, which stands as a cinematic masterpiece. "Suborna Mustafa and I shared the screen in the film, an enduring cinematic production in Bangladeshi film industry. The movie soared to great heights. Yet, beyond my on-screen role, I served as his assistant for an extended period. Even if I had never ventured into acting, I would have gladly remained by his side as an assistant."

It's a twist of fate that Asad never anticipated. "I was never meant to be an actor. It was all Zaki *bhai*, because of him, I stepped into this realm. His unwavering belief in me propelled me into acting. Sometimes, I ponder how different my life would have been if not

for Zaki *bhai*'s influence. It's quite likely that I might never have pursued acting at all."

Ghuddi actress Suborna Mustafa also expressed her grief and recalled her time with the director. She shared with The Daily Star, "He was a man dedicated to his work. Even at his elderly age, he continued working without ever sparing a thought on taking a break or quitting."

Suborna continued, "I was just 14 when I first met him regarding a production. Since then, he has been a friend, a brother and a guide for me. My father used to know him even before I met him."

"I only got to know him better after he joined Dhaka Theatre. It was then that he asked me to be a part of *Ghuddi*," the actress said.

"My heart weighs heavy today. Just a few days ago, he was doing well as he returned home from the hospital and resumed his work. Now, he left us so suddenly and for good."

Suborna Mustafa conveyed her prayers and condolences for Syed Salahuddin Zaki's family.



NEWS

Dhaka had better address

FROM PAGE 12
religious minorities.

It deplored the sentencing of Odhikar leaders Adilur Rahman Khan and ASM Nasiruddin Elan. It urged that the ruling be immediately and unconditionally quashed and registration of the rights body be reinstated.

It also asked the government to "guarantee the conditions for free, fair and participatory elections in 2024".

Most notably, the resolution said that the "Everything But Arms (EBA) enhanced engagement process remains ongoing with Bangladesh owing to its serious violations of international conventions" and that the EU "is concerned that the Odhikar case is a regrettable step back, bearing consequences as to whether EBA preferences [should] continue to apply to Bangladesh".

Under the EBA, Bangladesh has been accessing duty-free facilities for its exports to the 27-member bloc for the last two decades. In 2022-23, Bangladesh's export to the EU was \$25 billion out of the total \$55.55 billion.

The GSP facility was scheduled to expire when Bangladesh graduates from LDC. However, the EU extended the GSP period until 2029, which would help smooth graduation,

especially against the backdrop of the pandemic and the Ukraine-Russia war that slowed the global economy.

Analysts say the European Parliament's resolution is "qualitatively different", especially as it talks about EBA. It is a "credible threat", they said.

Prof Raihan said the US, whose close ally is the EU, has taken action to ensure free and fair elections in Bangladesh. After the sanctions against Rab in 2021, Washington announced the new visa policy in May this year, saying that it would deny visas to those involved in election rigging and intimidation. There appears to be an alignment between the US and the EU.

"So, the perception that the EU does not mix up business with politics may not be right this time. Bangladesh should not ignore the credible threat," he said.

He said if not immediately, the EU may consider GSP suspension after the elections if it thinks that the rights situation has not improved.

In that case, Bangladesh's exports will face competitiveness from other countries, including India and China. "Once the GSP is suspended, it will take years to reinstate," he said.

The US suspended the GSP facility in 2013 after the Rana Plaza disaster and is yet to reinstate it, he reminded.

Obaidul Haque, an associate professor who teaches European Affairs at the Department of International Relations of Dhaka University, said Bangladesh had continuously ignored the warnings from Washington on human rights issues. That ultimately led to the sanctions on Rab.

"There might be consequences if the government ignores the European Parliament's warnings too," he said.

At a time when global polarisation is happening fast, the whole world will be looking at Bangladesh's next elections, he said.

The US and the EU are diversifying their engagements and businesses. They are eager to come up with support for infrastructure development as part of their Indo-Pacific policies.

Obaidul said they don't want an ally that lacks democratic and human rights values. Bangladesh needs to engage with the EU, instead of getting confrontational, and make the required corrections.

The experts believe that the rights lobbyists perceive that there is a lack of democratic values and the judiciary lacks credibility. The government needs to work on this to clarify and correct where necessary.

Over 100 Rohingyas detained for fleeing camps

FROM PAGE 12
detainees, 40 were sent back to their camps, and 61 were taken to Ukhiya Police Station for quizzing.

"If no criminal charges are found against their names, they will also be sent back to their camps," the OC said.

The operation followed a meeting of the National Committee on Security and Management of the Displaced Rohingyas Citizens of Myanmar Sheltered in Bangladesh held recently.

The meeting made some decisions, including strengthening law enforcement supervision and surveillance to ensure that registered Rohingyas living in camps cannot leave at will.

In view of that decision, police have started a special operation.

Govt to buy 2m bags of iv fluids

FROM PAGE 12

additional director general (Planning and Development) under the Directorate General of Health Services told The Daily Star that civil surgeons and divisional directors were instructed to be in the field to check market manipulation by unscrupulous IV fluid traders.

The country has seen a huge surge in demand for injectable saline, an essential part of dengue treatment, due to the soaring number of patients in Dhaka and beyond.

AL rolls out new programmes

FROM PAGE 12

Tongi and Dhaka (north) city AL at Kafrul in the capital.

On the occasion of Eid-e-Miladun Nabi, the party will organise a doa mahfil at its central office on Bangabandhu Avenue on September 28.

Marking the birthday of AL President and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the party will hold a discussion at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre on September 29.

Krishak League will hold a farmers' rally at the south gate of Baitul Mukarram national mosque on September 30, while the AL will

arrange a rally in Chattogram's Mirsharai on October 4.

Unveiling the programmes, Hanif called upon the leaders and activists of the party and its associate bodies to actively participate in those.

The AL leader alleged that the BNP wants to divert the people's attention by telling lies in the name of democracy.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Abu Ahmad Mannaf, president of Dhaka south city AL, said they will stay on the streets in Dhaka until the election day as the BNP wants to foil the polls. "We will not let the BNP take control of the streets."

Passerby now

FROM PAGE 12

most wanted criminals. Emon topped the list.

Following the publication, Emon fled to India but the Indian police arrested him and handed him over to Bangladesh authorities.

Based on Emon's information, police recovered a revolver and 33 bullets from a market in the capital's Rayerbagh on March 16, 2008.

Later, an arms case was filed against him and the police submitted a charge sheet against Emon on April 5, 2008.

A Dhaka court in 2015 sentenced Emon to 17 years' rigorous imprisonment in the case.

US wanted to know

FROM PAGE 12

for them.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan said a suspect in the murder of the labour leader has been arrested and that reform to the labour law is underway.

The meeting discussed the revival of the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) status of Bangladesh, which was suspended in June 2013 after the Rana Plaza building collapse citing poor labour and workplace safety.

Faruque yesterday demanded duty-free market access of Bangladeshi garment items, made from the imported American cotton, to the US markets.

The BGMEA said local suppliers have improved workplace safety in line with the recommendations from the international buyers' forums Accord and Alliance. It sought cooperation from the USTR so the American businesspeople procure more RMG products from Bangladesh.

Faruque expressed concern that the Bangladeshi garment suppliers are being affected due to the Russia-Ukraine war although the country is not directly involved in the war.

Brendan Lynch, acting assistant USTR for the South and Central Asia, led the visiting delegation to the meeting.

The team is touring Bangladesh for holding the seventh round of meetings under the Trade and Investment Cooperation Forum Agreement (Ticfa). The meeting is set to begin in Dhaka today.

This govt will be forced to step down

FROM PAGE 12

small processions.

Speaking as the chief guest at the rally, Abbas called upon the government to stop the oppression of the people.

Pointing to the comment made by a deputy commissioner that the BNP cannot be handed over power, Abbas said, "Who are you to say this? The people will decide."

He alleged that the government damaged the electoral system.

"Why is the Awami League government now afraid to hold elections under the caretaker government? Because they will be defeated."

Criticising Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Abdus Salam, convener of BNP's Dhaka (south) city unit, said, "Just a few days ago, she said she won't go to America,

but she is now there."

He said if the BNP comes to power, Hasina will be accused in hundreds of cases and she will have to stay in jail.

Claiming that the government is afraid of sending Khaleda abroad for better treatment, Salam said, "The negligence in her treatment will be exposed if she goes abroad."

The BNP held another rally in Gazipur's Tongi yesterday.

Speaking at the event, BNP standing committee member Amir Khasru Mahmud Chowdhury said, "Our one-point movement is progressing towards a successful ending."

Gayeshwar Chandra Roy, another party standing committee member, said they will continue their movement until Hasina resigns.