

Recognition always brings out a childlike feeling inside me: AFRAN NISHO

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After ruling the television industry for more than a decade, Afran Nisho managed to transfer his talents successfully to the OTT arena as well. From donning the role of Salam Sharif (*Morichika*), to the titular role in *Kaiser* and Rashed Chowdhury in *Redrum*, Nisho has left a permanent mark for his performances.

Afran Nisho won the Best Actor award at *Blender's Choice-The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards 2022* for his role in *Redrum*, directed by Vicky Zahed. He shared his emotions regarding the winning moment, his thoughts on OTT industry and more.

"It is a childlike feeling to receive awards for your work. Particularly, when people vote for you," said Nisho. "I am also grateful to the jury board for appreciating my work."

The actor was also nominated for Tanim Noor's web-series *Kaiser*. In the previous iteration of *Blender's Choice-The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards*, Nisho won an award for playing the negative role in the web-series *Morichika*, directed by Shihab Shaheen. In his career of two decades, he has dedicated each award he received to the legendary Humayun Faridee.

"Whenever I receive an award, I always think of one person, and that is Humayun Faridee. I want to dedicate my achievement to Faridee *bhai* each time, because I feel, despite of being such a great artiste, he was underappreciated."

Noting Faridee's immense contribution in the field of acting, Nisho added an urge to archive the works of such great artistes properly. "The younger generation needs to experience and understand their legacy," he said, "I believe that even through a paywall, people would want to watch those artistes' works."

OTT is a blessing for the entertainment industry, and agreeing to this, the actor shared that this medium has vastly helped the audience to grow and local industry is in a phase of being able to compete in a wide-open field with international competitors. "The narrations have changed, and audience have become more tolerant and mature -- they can accept

strong and dark stories."

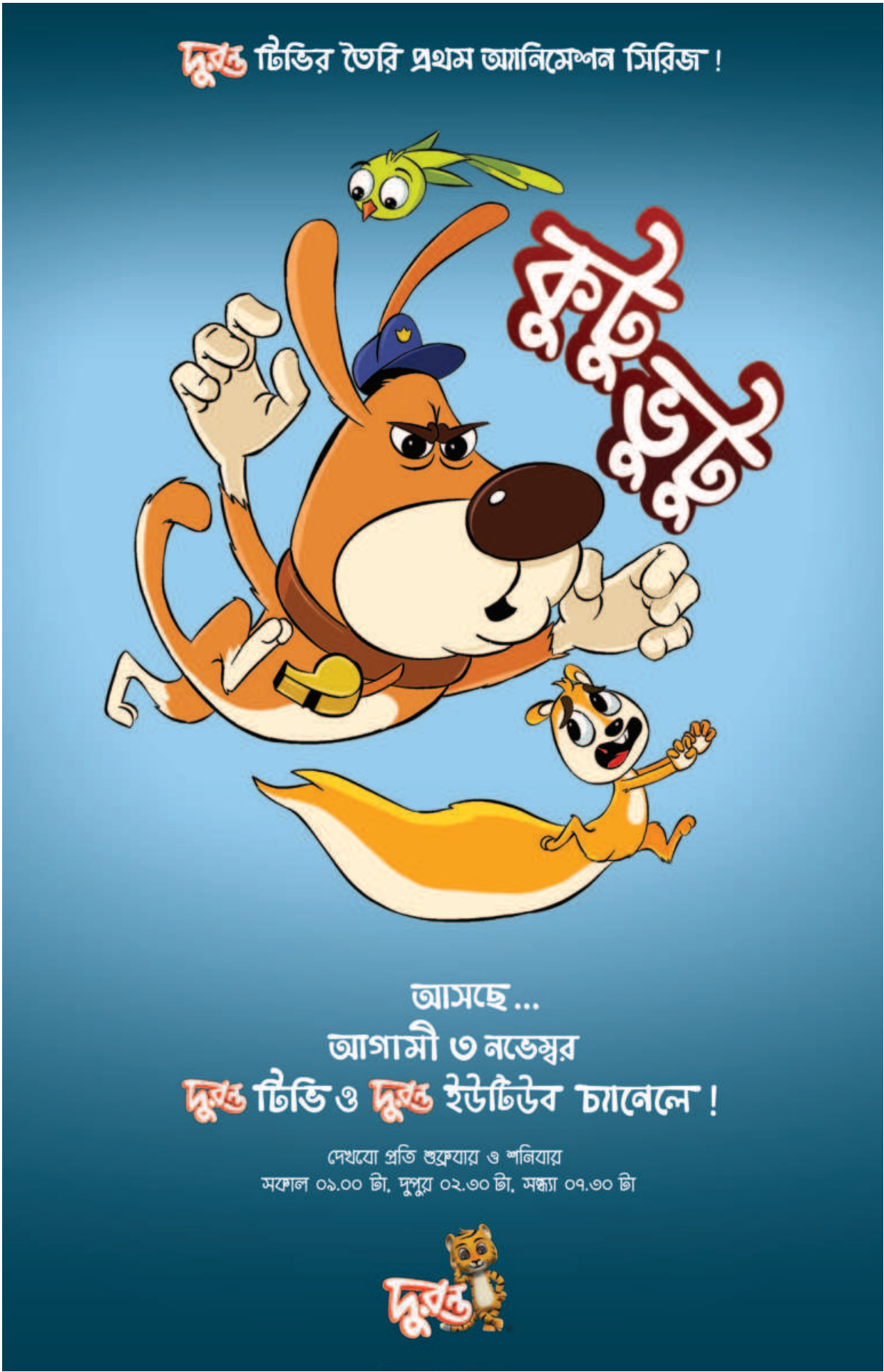
Web platforms have brought variation to storytelling. "At the same time, since OTT has the flexibility of storytelling without budgetary concerns, directors can tell their stories in their own vision," he added. "OTT has played a great role in elevating the film industry as well."

Nisho is in the talks for more OTT projects, including

A *Common Man* under the direction of Ashfaque Nipun, *Ashur* (based on the life of the serial killer Roshu Kha) to be directed by Shihab Shaheen. At the same time, the *Punorjonmo* famed actor is preparing himself for yet another exciting role on the big screen, which is to be announced soon.



PHOTO: CHECKMATE EVENTS



NEWS

US keeping eye on polls environment

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many others injured, while vehicles and a police hospital were vandalised amid political violence throughout the week.

Miller said holding free and fair elections is everyone's responsibility, including all political parties, voters, the government, civil society, and media.

In response to question, he said they expect the government to comply with its obligations under the Vienna Convention for the safety of diplomats.

Asked if the US will slap visa sanctions on the those who involved in violence, including the killing of police officers and vandalising the residence of the chief justice, Miller said, "We don't announce visa or any other sanctions before we make them."

Meanwhile, Human Rights Watch urged Bangladesh's international partners to insist that elections cannot be considered fair when the opposition is targeted, harassed, and thrown behind bars.

"International partners should make clear that they will not continue business as usual with Bangladesh as authorities carry out election abuses," said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy director of HRW's Asia Division.

"They should condemn the mass arrests and targeting of the opposition and lay out consequences for trade and diplomatic ties if Bangladesh fails to backtrack on its abuses," she said

in a report published on the HRW website yesterday.

Quoting witnesses, the New York-based rights organisation said Bangladesh police used unnecessary force during political protests on October 28, 2023, when the BNP rally was held in Dhaka.

Although violence was committed by all sides, the events were part of a continuing police crackdown on the political opposition, it said.

The Bangladesh government, it added, is ignoring international calls for restraint and its own pledges to hold a peaceful, free, and fair election planned for January 2024.

"Many Bangladeshis say they have been fearing an escalation in violence because of the government's crackdown on the political opposition in an attempt to subvert participation and voting."

The government has increasingly carried out arbitrary mass arrests over the last year in what appears to be a coordinated effort to stifle the opposition ahead of the upcoming election, HRW said.

While the authorities blame BNP for the October 28 violence, the opposition has accused the government of infiltrating its rally to initiate violence and discredit what it said was a 'peaceful movement', the report said, adding that political party leaders should call on their supporters to campaign peacefully.

The United Nations Office of the

High Commissioner for Human Rights called on "all political actors to make clear that such violence is unacceptable and to avoid any statements or actions that could constitute incitement to violence", it further said.

"Witnesses interviewed by Human Rights Watch said that the police excessively shot rubber bullets and tear gas [shells] into the crowd. The government should publicly order the security forces to abide by the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials while responding to violent protests."

The HRW said the mass arrests appear to reflect orders from police officials to systematically arrest and convict opposition members so that they would be disqualified from participating in the national election. Trials are apparently continuing late into the night to ramp up these efforts and, according to BNP, at least 50 people have already been convicted, it said.

"All allegations of 'torture and other abuses' of detainees should be thoroughly and independently investigated, and those responsible should be held to account."

Only one case of torture has ever led to a conviction under the country's Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention) Act since it was passed a decade ago, according to media reports, HRW mentioned.

Metro to roll up to Motijheel November 5

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"Once all 16 stations between Uttara and Motijheel become operational, the journey will take around 38 minutes," he added.

He said around 90,000 people use the metro daily, adding that, the number of users is expected to reach 500,000 once the line from Uttara to Motijheel is fully functional.

Currently, 25-27 percent of metro rail users use permanent passes, while the majority travel with one-time passes. "However, the number of permanent pass users is increasing," he added.

On November 4, the prime minister

will inaugurate the Agargaon-Motijheel section at 2:30pm from the Agargaon station. Then she will take the metro to Motijheel for another inaugural programme at the Motijheel station.

On the day, she will also inaugurate the construction of MRT Line-5 (northern route), which will be a 20km line from Hemayetpur to Bhataria via Gabtoli, Mirpur 10, Gulshan. The deadline for the Tk 41,239 crore project is 2028.

During a visit to the Motijheel station yesterday, this correspondent found people were busy decorating

the station and preparing the stage for the inauguration programme.

The Uttara-Agargaon section of the country's first metro-rail line, formally known as MRT Line 6, opened in December last year.

Since then, the demand for trains on the Agargaon-Motijheel route has increased as the major catchment area runs from Mirpur to Motijheel.

The government is implementing the fast-track project to build the 21.26km elevated metro line from Uttara to Kamalapur at a cost of Tk 33,472 crore. The project's deadline is December 2025.

Israel again hits Gaza refugee camp

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saying it was covering its own "defeats."

Israel has relentlessly pounded Gaza since October 7 when Hamas fighters intruded into Israel and killed at least 1,400 people.

The bombing campaign has killed 8,796 people, including 3,648 children, in Gaza so far, its health ministry said.

AFP reporters saw more tanks pour over the border into northern Gaza, as Israel stepped up its ground incursion launched late last week.

Images provided by the military

showed Israeli troops picking through bombed-out houses searching for militants or some of the 240 hostages seized by Hamas.

Israel said 15 soldiers died in ground fighting in Gaza on Tuesday, taking to 330 the number of troops killed.

The situation in Gaza remained desperate, with food, fuel and medicine for the 2.4 million residents all running short, according to aid groups.

With fears mounting that the violence could spiral into a regional war, US President Joe Biden called

for "urgent mechanisms" to dial down tensions and said top diplomat Antony Blinken would embark on another Middle East tour from today.

Turkey and Iran called for a regional conference to prevent a conflagration, as Israel faces a daily barrage of aerial attacks from Hamas and other Iran-backed groups around the Middle East, including Yemen's Huthi rebels.

Meanwhile, at least four Palestinians were killed during Israeli raids in the occupied West Bank yesterday, bringing the death toll in the Palestinian territory to more than 120.

Saima elected WHO regional director

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closed meeting during its 76th session in New Delhi, India. Health Minister Zahed Maleque and health secretary, among others, were present.

Saima was wrote on X, formerly Twitter, "Thank you to @WHOSEARO Member States for choosing me to be their next Regional Director!"

"I would like to pay tribute to our outgoing RD, Dr. Poonam Khetrapal Singh, for her decade of service to the public health of our region.

"A special tribute as well for my fellow nominee in this race, Dr. Acharya. In his long & distinguished career, he has been an invaluable asset to @WHO - and I hope our region will continue to benefit from his knowledge & experience.

"I look forward to building a healthier South-East Asia."

The nomination will be submitted for appointment by the 154th session of the WHO Executive Board, which takes place from January 22 to 27,

2024 in Geneva, Switzerland.

The newly appointed regional director will take office on February 1, 2024 for a five-year term and be eligible for reappointment once.

Earlier, Saima was nominated by the Government of Bangladesh for the post of regional director of WHO SEARO.

Her significant achievements include drafting three international resolutions that were subsequently adopted by member countries of the UN and WHO.

Arson, sporadic clashes continue

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Several other vehicles were vandalised at different places. Police arrested three suspected arsonists in Dhaka and Savar.

In Pabna, unidentified people hurled a crude bomb and brickbats at the Maitree Express near the Ishwardi junction, damaging one of its windowpanes. The incident took place around 12:40pm when the train from Kolkata was heading towards Dhaka.

In Gazipur, Jamaat men attempted

to block the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway in Dhirasram area, but police foiled their bid.

The BNP, Jamaat, and the former's like-minded parties separately called the three-day countryside blockade of roads, railways, and waterways protesting police action on their demonstrations and arrests of their activists.

Two BNP leaders in Kishoreganj and another one in Sylhet were killed on Tuesday, prompting the party to

call hartal for yesterday in the two districts.

Police in Kishoreganj filed three cases accusing 45 named and 1,600 unnamed people of violence.

Rafiqul Islam, president of Bhairab upazila BNP, said several party men, including Ashique, were injured in a clash near Bhairab's Durjoy Mor area around 8:00am on Tuesday when police fired tear gas at them.

In Barishal, 19 BNP leaders and activists were arrested.