

# ‘I dedicate this win to Rubaiyat Hossain’

Reekita Nondine Shimu on receiving the National Film Award



PHOTO: COURTESY

**She began her journey of acting at the age of six with the theatre group Tokai Natyodol, later playing lead child artiste in Abul Hayat’s directorial television series “Alo Amar Alo”. Reekita Nondine Shimu stepped into the silver screen when Tareque Masud featured her in “Runway” in 2010. She also worked in films like— ‘Matir Projar Deshe’ (2018) and the Indian film ‘Once Upon a Time in Calcutta’ (2021).**

SHARMIN JOYA

The actress, who won the Best Actress award in Festival de Saint-Jean-de-Luz, in France in 2019 for Rubaiyat Hossain’s *Shimu*, was announced the Best Actress in the National Film Award for her portrayal of her namesake this year. She will be taking home the award jointly with Jaya Ahsan (*Beauty Circus*).

**What was the first thought that came to your mind upon hearing the news?** Thank you! I got a message from (Azmeri Haque) Badhan apu, who wrote, ‘Congratulations, so proud of you!’ Before I could reply to her, (Syed Ahmed) Shawki bhai congratulated me over the phone. I was still confused and thought they were making mistake, and I asked him to give me a proof! However, a little later I got a call from Rubaiyat apu, who shared that she is really happy and proud. I could finally believe it, and felt really honoured and elated.

**How was your journey with *Shimu* and Rubaiyat Hossain?**

It was a journey for life. Rubaiyat apu holds a special place in my heart. We all know that her father (former Communication Minister Abul Hossain) recently passed away. Even while mourning, she praised me for my achievement.

Our film is going to get awards in three more categories—Best Director; Rubaiyat Hossain, Best Editing; Sujon Mahmud and Best Costume Designer and Makeup; Tansina Shawon.

While talking about *Shimu*, Rubaiyat Hossain gave me all the strength to pull off this role. The people of the RMG sector deal with great challenges every day, and learning about them and their story really inspired me. I was a little nervous before taking up this role, however, her support made it all possible. Previously we had collaborated in *Under Construction*, in 2015.

**Despite of not having proper institutions of learning filmmaking, Bangladesh made it possible to compete with international level, thanks to the effort of actors like you and directors like Rubaiyat Hossain. Thoughts?** We have resources, but we need proper



institutes to improve our technical sides. If we get such authorised organisations, then the directors will feel less pressure while working in a project and the creativity will flourish more.

**You have appeared in OTT projects like ‘Taqdeer’ and ‘Kaiser’. Do you look forward to working more on the web?**

I really enjoy working in the OTT industry. Both the projects I had worked had strong stories and scripts that I couldn’t say no to. I look forward to working more in OTT, and I am in talks with a project whose shooting will begin next month.

**What are your upcoming projects?** I don’t get too many roles, however, I believe that directors will think of me and give me challenging roles. Recently, I have completed working in a government-granted project, which is slated to be released next year.

## Goutam Halder no more



Goutam Halder

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Distinguished Bengali filmmaker and theatre artiste Goutam Halder passed away after suffering from a heart attack on Friday at the age of 67.

Halder passed away at a private hospital after being admitted due to chest pain that he experienced at his Salt Lake residence

earlier in the day, as reported by sources within the Bengali film industry.

Goutam Halder had an impressive portfolio, having directed approximately 80 stage productions, including a recent staging of Rabindranath Tagore’s *Raktakarabi*. In the realm of Bengali cinema, he made his debut with the film *Bhalo Theko* in 2003, featuring Vidya Balan in the lead role. Furthermore, he directed *Nirvana* in 2019, with Rakhi Gulzar in the starring role.

## Matthew Perry Foundation launched to help victims of addiction

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Beloved actor Matthew Perry was laid to rest on Friday at a Los Angeles cemetery in a memorial attended by relatives and his *Friends* co-stars Matt LeBlanc, Jennifer Aniston, Courteney Cox, Lisa Kudrow and David Schwimmer. Perry’s close friends took up an initiative to help people who are struggling with addiction by establishing the Matthew Perry Foundation, to honour the star who himself suffered from substance abuse and thrived in helping others on this long and perilous journey of recovery to a normal life.

The Matthew Perry Foundation’s website went up on Friday.



# NEWS

## Police fear more violence

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police deployments across the country over the next two days [today and tomorrow]. Also, there will be special deployments at entry and exit points, bus terminals, and in front of BNP offices in the capital.”

“The police have made preparations to ensure smooth traffic operations while also preventing violence and arson attacks. To that end, all police stations in the capital have been told to beef up their patrols,” he added.

Besides, as many as 65,000 Ansar and VDP members will be deployed across the country to ensure smooth movement of rail, road, and river transport.

They will perform duties at railway stations, bus stands, launch terminals, important private facilities, and public places for two days starting today, Jahidul Islam, a deputy director at Bangladesh Ansar and VDP, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Meanwhile, AL’s Dhaka city units (north and south) will mobilise activists at unit offices and also at bus terminals in the capital. AL men have been asked to identify miscreants during the two-day blockade and hand them over to the police, said sources.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina also urged the city dwellers to resist the arson attacks yesterday at her Arambagh rally, while on Friday she urged her party members to put up resistance against arsonists in every area of the country.

“Our leaders and activists across the country will remain on high alert and will take to the streets. We will not allow anybody to unleash violence,” AL Organising Secretary Mirza Azam told the Daily Star.

According to police intelligence, there is a possibility of violence during the blockades, and thus police will be vigilant across the country.

Police were asked to keep an eye on unattended objects and interrogate suspicious loiterers, while special teams like the Armed Police Battalion and the bomb disposal units will be kept on standby.

Besides, police will continue to arrest warrant-listed criminals and masterminds behind the recent arson attacks and violence across the country.

## Clashes leave worker

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and lodged itself in her eye,” said Md Imran, Rasheda’s nephew.

Rasheda was on her way home after the SM Knitwear management closed the factory following the demonstrations.

Munsi Asaduzzaman, senior assistant superintendent of police, and Abdur Noor, an inspector of Gazipur industrial police, were also injured.

Some 42 garment factories could not go into operation yesterday following incidents of labour unrest. Of the factories, 37 were in Ashulia, three at Maona and one at Mirpur in Dhaka, according to the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA).

As many as 300 garment factories in Gazipur, Ashulia and Mirpur were shut last week as workers protested for their desired minimum wage as well as the attacks on them by “outsider” goons and the police.

The factories in Mirpur were opened under heavy police presence, with armed cops guarding the streets surrounding the factory

district. There are about 235 garment factories in Mirpur.

Last month, Sirajul Islam Rony, the workers’ representative at the minimum wage board, proposed a salary of at least Tk 20,393 for the country’s four million garment workers. But the striking workers are demanding a minimum wage of Tk 23,000.

Siddiqui Rahman, the factory owners’ representative at the wage board, proposed a minimum wage of Tk 10,400.

The minimum wage at present is Tk 8,300.

The government should announce the minimum wage as soon as possible so that normalcy can be restored in the sector at the earliest, said Nazma Akter, president of Sammilito Garment Sramik Federation, a workers’ platform.

The factory owners also want the announcement of the minimum wage soon so that the unrest dies down, said BGMEA President Faruque Hassan.

The new minimum wage is scheduled to come into effect next month.

## 157 killed in Nepal quake

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(1802 GMT) on Friday with a 6.4 magnitude, Nepal’s National Seismological Centre said. The German Research Centre for Geosciences measured it at 5.7 and the US Geological Survey at 5.6.

Officials fear the death toll could rise as first responders had reached the hilly area near the epicentre, some 500 km (300 miles) west of the capital Kathmandu, only early yesterday and began searching for survivors.

“The number of injured could be in the hundreds and the deaths could go up as well,” Jajarkot district official Harish Chandra Sharma told Reuters by phone.

Although the quake’s magnitude was not severe, the damage and the death toll are high due to the poor quality of construction in the area and because it struck while people slept, officials said.

Rescue work was expected to be slow as emergency teams must first clear roads blocked by landslides in many places, they said, adding that helicopters and small planes have been asked to be ready to join the

effort.

The quake is the deadliest since 2015 when about 9,000 people were killed in two earthquakes. Whole towns, centuries-old temples and other historic sites were reduced to rubble then, with more than a million houses destroyed, at a cost to the economy of \$6 billion.

The death toll included 105 people killed in Jajarkot and 52 in neighbouring Rukum West district, both in Karnali province, Rama Acharya, an official in the disaster department of the federal home (interior) ministry, told Reuters.

The epicentre was in the village of Ramidanda. The National Seismological Centre said 175 aftershocks were recorded in Jajarkot and six of them were of magnitude 4 or higher.

Three towns and three villages were known to be affected in Jajarkot, which has a population of 190,000 with villages scattered in remote hills, authorities said.

At least 85 people were injured in Rukum West and 55 in Jajarkot, an official in the prime minister’s office said.

## From Uttara to Motijheel in 30 mins!

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more months to get the full benefit of the mega structure. For now, the authorities concerned will be able to open three of the seven stations of this section, and the services will be available for four hours a day.

According to metro rail authorities, trains will be operated between Agargaon and Motijheel every 10 minutes from 7:30am to 11:30am today, while the Uttara-Agargaon route will remain open from 7:30am to 8:30pm.

The three stations in operation are in Farmgate, Secretariat (Press Club) and Motijheel.

Until last Thursday, trains in the Uttara-Agargaon section used to be operated from 8:00am to 8:30pm.

The MRT authorities said three more months will be required to open the remaining four stations and increase the service hours.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina

yesterday inaugurated the Agargaon-Motijheel section at the Agargaon Metro Station, after which she and some dignitaries took a ride up to Motijheel.

Operated by a female conductor, the vehicle took 24 minutes to reach Motijheel, where Hasina unveiled the inauguration plaque.

“Today, we’re very delighted to open metro rail services between Uttara and Motijheel,” she told reporters on board, adding, “We will extend it up to Kamalapur railway station.”

She expressed gratitude to Japan, the major financier of the Tk 33,472 crore project, the road transport and bridges ministry and all those involved in the metro rail project.

The PM also unveiled the inauguration plaque of the construction of MRT Line 5 (northern route), kicking off the physical work of the country’s third

metro rail.

The 20km line from Hemayetpur to Bhatara via Gabtoli, Mirpur-10 and Gulshan will be implemented at a cost of Tk 41,239 crore and with a deadline set for 2028.

MRT Line 5 (northern route) is the third of the six planned metro lines the government is going to construct to establish a 140km network in Dhaka and its adjacent areas to reduce traffic congestion and pollution.

Meanwhile, the construction of MRT Line-1, the first underground, the country’s first underground metro rail, started this February.

Bangladesh entered the electricity-run metro rail era with the opening of MRT Line 6 up to Agargaon 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.

## Cats have 276

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in Arkansas, told CNN Wednesday, adding that their findings suggest that domestication has a significant impact on the development of facial signaling.

Florkiewicz explained that domesticated cats are typically more socially tolerant than their wildcat counterparts because of the way they live in proximity to humans, so the researchers were expecting to see expression in both positive and negative contexts—but they were surprised to “observe 276 morphologically distinct facial expressions.”

According to Florkiewicz and lead author Lauren Scott, a medical student from the University of Kansas Medical Center with a personal interest in cats, domestication allows more cat-to-cat social interactions, which is why the pair believed they would show more expression.

Your cat might also be secretly signaling their affection in the way they look at you, writes Emily Blackwell.

To collect data, Scott filmed 53 cats at a local cat café when both were based at University of California, Los Angeles, between August 2021 and June 2022. From the 194 minutes of video footage gathered, she recorded 186 feline interactions. The cats were adult domestic shorthairs of both sexes, all neutered or spayed.

meetings]. Be patient. We know who are instigating them [the workers], the ones giving the orders. Whether they are at home or abroad, they will surely be punished.”

**‘RALLY BEHIND WHOEVER GETS AL NOMINATION’**

Hasina asked her party supporters to campaign for those who get the party’s nomination in the coming national election.

“The schedule for the upcoming [national] election may be announced any time.”

“Everyone in the party should be united, so that the BNP-Jamaat, a group of murderers, can no longer burn people to death.”

The rally started around 3:00pm on Toyenbee Circular Road. But large groups of people started thronging the venue hours earlier. The event caused gridlocks in the adjacent areas.

The two mayors of the city, Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh and Atiqul Islam Atiq, also spoke at the programme presided over by AL City South President Abu Ahmed Mannafi.

## ‘BNP a party of arsonists’

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destructive activities, she said. “If they don’t stop, we know well how to make them stop.

“They set buses on fire, cars on fire. But they forget [something]: Don’t they have cars? Don’t they own properties? They should think about where they would go and what they would do if people started burning them. Since we do not believe in this, the people of the country are being patient. But for how long?”

**HAVE TO RETURN TO VILLAGE IF YOU SHUT FACTORIES**

Addressing the demonstrating garment factory workers, she said, “You will be the loser if you harm the country by vandalising factories and creating an abnormal atmosphere [in the industry]. If the factories are shuttered, you will have to return to the villages.

“The God almighty will be disappointed if you vandalise the factories that put food on your table. Whatever you need, we always listen to your demands.”

“The wage commission has sat [for