

Dedicating this win to circus community: JAYA AHSAN

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU

For the fifth time, the celebrated actress Jaya Ahsan has won the National Film Award. She received this honour for her role in Mahmud Didar's *Beauty Circus*, marking her as the third actress in Bangladesh to achieve the highest number of National Film Awards. Shabana and Babita had previously attained such distinctions.

In the ongoing discourse about the Bangladeshi and Indian film industries, Jaya stands out as a highly acclaimed actress. In a recent interview with The Daily Star following her award win, she discussed her achievement, recent projects, and more.

Did you have any conversation with the PM while receiving the award?

I deeply respect and admire Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. I believe she has watched our film. When presenting the award, she said, 'It feels good to present you the award.' This is a supreme honour for me.

How do you feel about setting another record by winning the National Film Award for the fifth time?

Beauty Circus holds a special place in my heart, and I put in a lot of hard work for this character. As artistes, we always strive to connect with people, and their appreciation for our work means a great deal.

You are equally beloved on both sides of the border, and you are seen in a variety of roles.

Diverse characters always attract artistes. It's not just about me; I would say every artiste harbours the wish to portray new and challenging roles. I am no different.

Yesterday marked a special day in your life. Could you please share more about it?

Yes, yesterday was my mother's birthday. I dedicated this award as a token of love for her on her birthday, and she is extremely happy about the win. Her birthday serves as a reunion for our close ones. We had a great time together and celebrated her birthday.

How challenging was it to portray Beauty on the screen?

Portraying Beauty on screen was quite challenging and risky, especially when walking on the ropes and acting like a professional tightrope walker. I was informed that a fall could result in a serious injury. It's important to mention that Shamim *bhai*, our art director, played a significant role in supporting me to portray the role effortlessly.

Circus culture is nearly extinct now, and I have dedicated my award to the artistes of the circus. I hold immense respect for this community.



PHOTO: BSS



PHOTO: COLLECTED



Salman Khan delivers biggest opening weekend of his career with 'Tiger 3'

Tiger 3 has achieved remarkable success by shattering two records on its third day in theatres. Within its initial two days of release, the YRF Spy Universe gained an impressive Rs 100 crore, and on Tuesday alone, it raked in an estimated Rs 43.5 crore. According to YRF reports, the film's net domestic total has soared to Rs 148 crore.

Notably, *Tiger 3* marks Salman Khan's 17th film to surpass the coveted Rs 100 crore mark, solidifying his box office prowess. Furthermore, this film boasts the distinction of delivering Salman's most substantial opening weekend to date.

Angelina Jolie calls out Pakistan as it depots Afghan refugees



American actress and renowned human rights activist Angelina Jolie has voiced her distress and sadness in response to the mass expulsion of Afghan refugees from Pakistan. Taking to Instagram, Jolie directly called out Pakistan for its recent decision to send back scores of Afghans, emphasising the nation's historical role in supporting Afghan refugee families.

Jolie stated in her social media post, "Pakistan has been a supporter of many Afghan refugee families for decades. I'm saddened they would so abruptly push back refugees who face the impossible realities of trying to survive in today's Afghanistan, where women have again been deprived of all rights and the possibility of education, many are being imprisoned, and there is a deep humanitarian crisis."

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3 UN officials voice

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diminishes the independence of the judiciary and erodes fundamental human rights."

They added, "The severe crackdown against workers demanding fair wages and political activists calling for free and fair elections, judicial harassment of journalists, human rights defenders and civil society leaders, and failure to reform laws suppressing freedom of expression in Bangladesh are grave concerns."

They further said the ongoing harassment of Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, investigative journalist Rozina Islam or human rights defenders like Adilur Rahman Khan and Nasiruddin Elan

as a form of retaliation for their work "sends a chilling message that any dissent or critical opinion may lead to the most severe sanctions, no matter how outrageous the accusations or how prominent the person".

"Despite promises from the government of significant legal change... the new Cyber Security Act has made only few improvements and continues to retain many of the flaws of the legislation, threatening the legitimate exercise of the right to freedom of expression."

The UN officials also urged the international community to press Bangladesh to ensure a conducive environment for a free and fair polls.

Safeguard

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On human rights aspects, the delegation encouraged Bangladesh to accept and implement the recommendations of the 2023 Universal Periodic Review.

The EU mission suggested that Bangladesh step up its efforts to ensure that its policies and practices are aligned with the International Labour Organisation's standards while stressing the need to fully implement the National Action Plan (NAP) on the labour sector.

It particularly stressed on guaranteeing freedom of association, collective bargaining and an inclusive and representative participation of labour unions through tripartite consultation.

It also regretted that the recent amendments to the Bangladesh Labour Act only partially addressed the concerns of the EU and ILO.

However, the mission welcomed the commitment by the government to swiftly introduce further amendments to the law towards these objectives.

"Noting delays in the agreed timetable under the NAP, the EU team urged the authorities to accelerate the necessary reforms," the statement added.

Pampaloni said they will continue to work closely with Bangladesh to accelerate the necessary reforms while continuing the enhanced monitoring process of EBA compliance.

After a meeting with the EU delegation at the state guesthouse Padma, Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen said the EU mission observed that there is a scope for improvement in areas of child labour, workplace safety and labour union.

Asked if the delegation spoke about the current labour unrest after announcing the minimum wage, Momen said: "The wage was hiked by 56 percent but not all were onboard."

On amending the labour law, Labour and Employment Secretary Ehsan E Elahi said the due amendments aligning with the ILO suggestions will be done eventually.

"We have achieved nearly 80 percent of the nine targets of the NAP," he said.

Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh and EU Ambassador to Bangladesh Charles Whiteley were also present at the meeting.

Six vehicles torched, 30 vandalised

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In Chattogram, two buses were torched in Wasa area of Khulshi around 10:50pm.

Allegedly BNP men vandalised 10 lorries and CNG-run auto-rickshaws in different places of Noakhali town, said Mir Jahedul Haque Rony, officer-in-charge of Sudharam Model Police Station.

Najmul Hasan Rajib, Noakhali additional superintendent of police, said suspected BNP Jamaat men blocked the Chowmuhani-Feni regional highway by setting fire to tyres at Samirmunshirhat area in Senbagh upazila.

They fled before police reached the scene, he said.

In Chandpur, at least 20 vehicles

were vandalised on the Chandpur-Cumilla regional highway in Ghosherhat and Palli Bidyut areas.

At least 15 drivers and passengers were injured.

Chandpur Superintendent of Police Saiful Islam said, "We've beefed up security in various parts of the town."

Unidentified criminals exploded at least four crude bombs at the Nightingale intersection, close to the BNP headquarters in the capital around 7:30pm. However, no injuries were reported.

Around 10:15pm, criminals hurled three crude bombs at Dhaka University's TSC, after which Chhatra League men beat up three suspects and handed them over to Shahbagh

police.

In Bogura, several crude bombs went off in the town, including one near the gate of the police superintendent's residence.

Yesterday was also the first day of the BNP and its like-minded parties' 48-hour nationwide blockade.

DMP Joint Commissioner (operations) Biplob Kumar Sarker said that they have been continuing raids and arrests of the accused and suspects involved in violence, arson, and vandalism since October 28.

He said police were not obstructing the programmes of any political parties, but stern legal action would be taken if anyone indulged in violence or sabotage.

Find way to end political deadlock

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call when the BNP and several like-minded parties are enforcing blockades demanding that the next polls be held under a non-partisan election-time government.

CEC Awal said for a free, fair, inclusive, and festive election, there is a need for a conducive political environment.

But for a long time, the EC has been noticing differences among the political leadership regarding the polls, particularly on the issue of the institutional system of elections, he said.

There may be ideological

differences in multi-party politics, he said, adding, "But if conflict and violence take place due to differences, instability can be created, which will have a negative impact on the election process."

So, consensus and solutions are needed, he said.

He requested the people to go to polling centres in festivity and exercise their voting rights freely, keeping aside all concerns, anxieties, and discomforts.

"The Election Commission will welcome the spontaneous participation and competition of all parties in the election," the CEC

added.

He said reaching a consensus and finding a solution is not impossible through dialogue avoiding vengefulness and distrust.

Tolerance, trust, and compassion are essential determinants for sustainable and stable democracy, the CEC added.

He mentioned that they have invited all registered political parties several times but they rejected the call. He, however, did not mention the names of any political party.

Talking about the candidates, he said meaningful competition is an essential element of an election.

Attach lands

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the authorities concerned to send copies of the order to the Dhaka district registrar and the Dhaka deputy commissioner for taking initiatives to attach the properties.

In the plea, the IO said they found 138 kathas of land under the name of Bacchu and his family members in Bashundhara Residential Area in the capital.

The ACC learnt that Bacchu was trying to sell the land after he was charged in 58 other graft cases, the plea said.

Meanwhile, the court found some errors in the investigations into the 58 corruption cases against Bacchu and 146 others over embezzlement of

Tk 2,265 crore, Jahangir said.

While scrutinising the case dockets and other relevant documents, the court found the errors.

The court summoned five investigation officers, who probed 59 corruption cases, between November 19 and 26 for their explanations about the errors.

The officials are ACC Director Morshed Alam and deputy directors Gulshan Anowar Proddhan, Mohammad Ibrahim, Md Sirajul Haque and Monayem Hossain.

After hearing their explanations, the court will decide whether it will accept the charges against Bacchu and 146 others, said the prosecutor.

prepared any blacklists of the workers who agitated and punished them.

"If the owners make any blacklists of the workers, we will also ask the buyers to blacklist them."

Hundreds of thousands of workers demonstrated in various industrial belts, demanding the increase of the minimum wage to Tk 23,000.

Recently, the minimum wage board for garment workers set the minimum salary at Tk 12,500 from Tk 8,000 now.

Union leaders have rejected the new wage.

23,000 RMG workers

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accused, and arrestees immediately.

Addressing the press conference, IBC President Amirul Haque Amin demanded the immediate and unconditional release of the arrested workers.

He also urged factory owners to ensure treatment for the injured workers and give compensation to the families of the workers who died during the unrest.

IBC Vice President Babul Akhter threatened to lodge complaints with buyers against the factories if they

France issues arrest warrant for Syria's Assad

AFP, Paris

France has issued an international arrest warrant for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, accused of complicity in crimes against humanity over chemical attacks in 2013, a judicial source and plaintiffs in the case said yesterday.

The judicial source told AFP Assad was also suspected of complicity in war crimes for the attacks, blamed by the opposition on the regime, that killed more than 1,400 people near Damascus in August 2013.