

Tama breaks the mould

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

For the first time in her career, Tama Mirza is working under the direction of renowned Indian musician and filmmaker Anjan Dutt in the musical web-series, *Dui Bondhu*. The National Film Award-winning actress talked to The Daily Star about her experience of shooting for the series, her plans throughout the year, and more.

The actress began the conversation claiming that she is a fan of musician Anjan Dutt. "As a director, he immediately understood my comfort zone, and took care of the details accordingly. For example, he asked me if I wanted to begin shooting the scenes with him or if I would be more comfortable with another artiste. I immediately told him that I was thrilled to start with him."

After her portrayal of Moyna in *Surongo*, Tama needed a role to break out of that mould. She shared that her role in *Dui Bondhu* is completely opposite to her last portrayal. "After *Surongo*, I received many scripts, which I politely declined. They were all good scripts; however, I rejected them since I believed that I was not ready for those roles."

According to the star, she plays a character that doesn't think twice about her actions in *Dui Bondhu*. She further mentioned that her shooting experience in India was amazing. "During the shoot, I never felt that I was working with a foreign team, Anjan *da* is quite jolly by nature, and the entire team was very welcoming," she added.

Tama hinted that she will be working in two silver-screen projects this year. The announcements will come soon. The actress also shared that after she lost her dog Honey last year, she is still

trying to recover from the shock and emotional pain. "I don't want to take up too many projects, I am spending more time at home and with myself," said the actress, "I am spending more time with my family, going to the park for walk, and I've started doing yoga as well."

Tama's career took another turn after she began collaborating with director Raihan Rafi, particularly in the film *Surongo*. There are also rumours that the two are in a relationship. "Relationships have many sides, and with time, the bonding between people changes, it matures with time." Without clearing the air regarding this matter, the actress rather preferred to talk about Rafi's works. "As a filmmaker, he has surpassed his own level, and he doesn't need to prove himself anymore. I will always wish him good luck," she concluded.



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Is Swastika Mukherjee collaborating with Taposh?

Acclaimed Tollywood actress Swastika Mukherjee graced the Gaan Bangla Television and TM Network headquarters, and engaged in a lively *adda* with the organisation's CEO, music director Taposh, on Saturday. They captivated the audience with a musical performance.

Taposh posted a short video clip from the meet-up on his social media, where the actress is seen performing Rabindranath Tagore's *Na Na Go Na Korona Bhabona*, while Taposh joins her on Piano.

Since then, rumours have been speculating online regarding a collaboration between the two.

Shakib Khan steps into the corporate world



Dhallywood's 'King' Shakib Khan, known for his success as an actor and producer, has added a new role to his portfolio. Commencing January 20, he has taken on the position of director at the international organisation Remark HB, marking a new venture into the corporate world.

The products of this company will be available in various countries around the world, including the United States, Canada, Australia, the Middle East, Singapore, and Europe.

A press conference was held last Saturday afternoon at a five-star hotel in the capital to announce Shakib Khan's new venture as the director of the organisation.

Shakib Khan told The Daily Star, "Today is truly a joyful day for me, because the dreams I had seen a few years ago will now mark a new destination in my life."

COUNTRYWIDE

GINGER FARMING IN SACKS

Low cost, high profit

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Farmers in three upazilas of Meherpur are now cultivating ginger in sacks on a large scale and earning good profits.

Meanwhile, seeing the success of some, other farmers are also getting interested in this field.

Local agriculture department sees a bright prospect for commercial cultivation of ginger in sacks on a large scale.

A number of farmers in the region claimed that they are getting 2.5kg to 3kg of ginger from each sack, spending only Tk 22 to Tk 25 per sack.

According to Meherpur Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) a total of 20 hectares of land has been brought under ginger cultivation this season.

Apart from the farmland, Meherpur DAE is currently encouraging local farmers to cultivate ginger in sacks along with other crops.

Ginger can also be cultivated, using the innovative method, inside mango orchards, uncultivable lands and even at the courtyards.

Though ginger is usually cultivated in the hilly areas, Meherpur DAE has been encouraging farmers to cultivate the spice item in the uncultivated and unused land

around their homesteads or orchards.

During a recent visit this correspondent saw Borhan Uddin of Amjhupi village and Jannatul Ferdous of Rajnagar village cultivated ginger in sacks in the middle of their respective mango orchards.

Seeing their success, many other are now showing interest to ginger cultivation on unused land because of high profits at a low investment.

While talking, Borhan said he cultivated 800 sacks of ginger in the middle of his mango orchard last year, under the project titled "Improved Varieties and Technology Demonstration of Spices."

It costs him Tk 22 to Tk 25 to prepare each sack, including the price of soil, organic manure and seeds, Borhan said, adding that he expects to get 2.5kg of ginger from each bag by the end of this month.

Farmer Minarul Islam of the village said seeing Borhan's success the already prepared 500 sacks for ginger farming.

Sadar Upazila Agriculture Officer Alamgir Hossain said ginger is being cultivated commercially on 20 hectares of land in the district, but seeing Borhan's success many others are now taking preparation for farming ginger in sacks.



A farmer's courtyard, booming with ginger plants in sacks, at Amjhupi village in Meherpur Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

BNP to take

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Almost everyone in parliament are businesspeople, he said.

The syndicates are looting the country. The people are helpless, he said, adding, "If the commodity prices don't decrease, people will not survive."

While trying to "suppress" the BNP, the AL government has "defeated Bangladesh", Rizvi said.

Country logs

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According to the DGHS, with the 34 new cases recorded in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, the total number of confirmed cases is now 20,46,724. On Saturday, 13 new cases were reported.

With the new death, the total number of fatalities rose to 29,480 - taking the overall fatality rate to 1.44 percent.

Meanwhile, 18 patients recovered during this period. The total number of recoveries now stands at 20,14,171, with the recovery rate at 98.41 percent.

Due to the sudden rise in infection rate, the government has decided to administer Covid-19 vaccination again.

Prof Tahmina Shirin, director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Research and Disease Control, said it is not yet certain whether the new subvariant is related to the recent increase in the infection rate.

"People who are already vaccinated and will be taking the booster dose will be protected from the new subvariant."

She added that the number of reported detections does not give the true number of infections, as many people do not get tested for Covid-19 despite seeing symptoms.

Plane returns to Dhaka

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Tahera said all passengers were immediately given hotel accommodation and they would be sent to Dammam on another Biman flight around

11:00am today.

A senior pilot of the national flag carrier said that a crack in the windshield does not happen often.

"Cracking of windshield

midair is a scary incident. But the pilot in command handled the whole situation and landed the aircraft safely," a Biman pilot said wishing anonymity.

He also said the Biman

authorities have already informed Boeing about a replacement windshield.

In 2022, a Boeing 737-800 of Biman was grounded in Malaysia because its windshield had cracked.

Probe report not

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only five of the 14 pilots recruited were qualified to fly, while the rest failed their type-rating exams multiple times.

After the writ petition hearing, the HC had ordered that a three-member committee, comprised of an additional secretary from the civil aviation and tourism ministry and a high official each from Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB) and Biman, be formed.

On October last year,

the ministry appointed additional secretary Muhammad Ashraf Ali, Director of Flight Safety at CAAB Group Captain Md Mukit-ul-Alam Miah and Biman's Chief of Flight Safety Captain Enamul Haque Talukdar as members of the probe committee.

After having met only four times since then, the committee asked for another month to submit its report. The bench then gave them one week to report with an update.

Following this newspaper's March 1

report, Biman on March 6 had formed its own three-member investigation committee.

While it saw considerable progress and were also preparing a draft probe report, it was stopped in its tracks on October 18.

A letter sent to the committee from the administration department stated that since the HC had ordered a probe, their committee is being cancelled.

On the other hand, Captain Enamul Haque Talukdar, who was also in

the now-disbanded probe body formed by Biman, was removed from the ministry-appointed committee on January 14.

He was replaced by Captain Tasmin Doza, chief of training in Biman.

A letter issued by the aviation ministry stated that it was done because Doza is "superior in responsibility and relatively senior" compared to Talukdar.

This change came months after the deadline for submitting the probe report had passed.

Govt's main focus now on economic diplomacy: PM

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line with the election manifesto of the Awami League.

"But for that we have to explore new markets, and our time is short. Above all, if we have fixed a target, it will be easy to attain the target. We want to work this way," she said.

The PM asked all concerned to pay the same importance given to readymade garments, to other export items, including jute and leather goods, pharmaceuticals, IT products, and handicrafts, to increase foreign currency earnings.

At the inaugural programme, the PM also declared handicrafts as the product of 2024.

A documentary on the exports of the country was screened at the event.

Alongside local companies, those from Turkey, India, Pakistan, Singapore, Iran, and Hong Kong will exhibit their products at the trade fair, which will continue until February 20.

The commerce ministry and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) have been organising this fair since 1995.

The DITF usually commences on 1 January each year. However, the EPB postponed the fair due to the 12th national election held on January 7.

The fair remains open from 10:00am to 9:00pm daily and to 10:00pm on

weekends. The entry fee is Tk 50 for adults and Tk 25 for children. Freedom fighters and the people with disabilities need no fees.

BRTC buses have been arranged from Farmgate and Kuril Biswa Road to the fair premises for the convenience of visitors.

A total of 330 stalls have been allotted along with 23 pavilions and 27 mini-pavilions.

State Minister for Commerce Ahsanul Islam, Commerce Secretary Tapan Kanti Ghosh, President of Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry Mahbulul Alam and EPB Vice-chairman AHM Ahsan also spoke at the inaugural event.

Clinic director

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shocked to wake up on her hospital bed and find her baby gone. She said her husband was out trying to arrange the money at the time, so she started asking hospital staffers. But everyone avoided her, she added.

Suspecting foul play, Laboni filed a complaint with Rangpur's Kotwali Police Station on January 19.

Police during investigation found out that the hospital authorities sold the child to one Rubel Hussain and Bithi Aktar.

A police team then conducted a drive, rescued the newborn, and arrested the three, said the deputy commissioner. The child was reunited with the family, he said.