

# If I could, I would have screened '1971 Shei Shob Din' in 64 districts: HRIDI HUQ

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Noted actress and playwright Hridi Huq's directorial debut film of 2023, **1971 Shei Shob Din**, has received many accolades and critical acclaim for its bold and gripping narrative of Bangladesh's Liberation War.

Not only in the country, the government granted film has been able to grip international audiences, especially in America and Australia, with its meticulous storytelling and heartfelt performances. Hridi Huq's first endeavour rightfully succeeded in offering a window into history, while capturing the human emotions that transpired during the Liberation War of 1971.

Now, the actor-turned-director is set to travel all across the country to screen the movie to the Bangladeshi mass audience from February 15 to the end of March. On this auspicious note, Hridi Huq shared her thoughts and aspirations about the movie with The Daily Star.

"If I could, I would have screened **1971 Shei Shob Din** in 64 districts of our country. I am trying my best to showcase the movie to as many people as possible across Bangladesh. It occupies much of my time now, but I am loving it," said Hridi.

"What are we without our identity that took shape through the Liberation War? As a Bangladeshi, I wouldn't choose any other story that is not based on our history as it has to mean something to us as a nation. That is why I selected the Liberation War as the central plotline for my film and seeing the heartfelt response from my audience, I feel we are successful," the director explained while emphasising her inspiration behind the making of the film.

"When we released the film to the theatres, people from all over Bangladesh shared their interest and enthusiasm to watch the film. What can I ask more as a director? Besides, I will try my best to ensure my audiences get a chance to watch the film from where they are and that is my core mission right now," stressed Hridi, adding that her primary aspiration is to engage the younger generation to spread the spirit of the birth of the country through this initiative.

"My most treasured appraisal of the movie came

from my senior colleagues, cultural personalities, artists who watched the film and praised my efforts in depicting the most tragic chapter of us as a nation. The happiness I got from their appreciation is boundless," the actor-turned-director said.

"Let me tell you a story," said Hridi, recalling one of her film screenings in New York, USA, "One of the film's screenings was attended by Martyred Intellectual Dr Fazle Rabbi's daughter, and when she spoke to me about how much the film meant to her, that was my achievement right there. Nothing can make me feel more accomplished as a filmmaker than my audiences' admiration."

Hridi Huq informed The Daily Star that the film **1971 Shei Shob Din** has run for three weeks in New York, USA with several houseful shows. After travelling much of the world with her film, Hridi is going to travel across the country with her film in the upcoming months.

The film's narrative unfolds from the dark hours of March 25, 1971, to the triumphant day of December 16. The film revolves around a family's experiences during 1971, providing a poignant portrayal of the era.

Apart from directing, Hridi Huq herself features in **1971 Shei Shob Din**, alongside a talented ensemble cast comprising Mamunur Rashid, Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Munmun Ahmed, Shilpi Sharkar Apu, Ferdous, Taren, Litu Anam, Saju Khadem, Sanjida Preeti, and many more. Notably, Litu Anam makes a remarkable comeback to cinema with this film, after a hiatus of 15 years.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHIED

## Kangana Ranaut announces release date of 'Emergency'

Bollywood actress Kangana Ranaut has announced the release date for her self-directed and written film **Emergency** through a captivating new poster on Instagram.

The poster showcases Kangana Ranaut in the role of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. She captioned the post, "Unveil the untold story of India's darkest hour. Mark your calendars for **Emergency** on June 14, 2024. Experience history unfolding as the formidable and resolute Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, graces the silver screen."

The star-studded cast of the film includes Anupam Kher, Mahima Chaudhary, and Shreyas Talpade, amongst others.

## 'Masud Rana' film franchise's next to be declared soon

The announcement of the next instalment in the **Masud Rana** franchise is scheduled to be made on January 28 by Jaaz Multimedia, the production company behind the film.

The screenplay for this second film in the series is based on Qazi Anwar Hossain's highly acclaimed Bangladeshi spy-thriller novel, **Operation Cheetah**. Chairman Abdul Aziz of Jaaz Multimedia, penned the screenplay and dialogues for the film.

The movie is scheduled to be filmed in Bangladesh and other countries from March to April this year. It will be dubbed in both Bangla and English to be released across 30 countries.



## NEWS

### BNP in two minds about local polls

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"We are yet to discuss the issue in the party forum [after the Awami League's decision], but one thing is certain: people have no confidence in any election held under a partisan government," Goyeshwar Chandra Roy, a standing committee member of the BNP, told The Daily Star yesterday.

Another standing committee member said people boycotted the parliamentary polls in response to the BNP's call and that's why the party cannot run in the upazila election.

"If the BNP contests the polls, it may send a wrong message to the people as well. Many of the party men are still behind bars. If the party announces that it will run, fresh arrests may be made," said BNP leader Anwarul Huq, also a former chairman

of Noakhali's Sonaimuri upazila.

Another senior BNP leader said the AL may adopt the strategy of fielding "dummy candidates" like it did in the national polls to ensure a festive polls atmosphere.

"If the party grassroots don't show any interest in contesting the upazila elections, then the party may call upon the people to boycott the polls," he told this correspondent wishing anonymity.

Party leaders said the upazila chairmen and vice chairmen candidates usually maintain close communication with the local people and that's why turnouts in the local government elections always remain high.

Besides, people also consider many local issues in the local government polls for which the BNP will find it difficult to keep the turnout low, they

observed.

"What will be our achievement through boycotting the polls if we cannot ensure a poor turnout?" said an upazila-level BNP leader.

He argued if the BNP joins the elections, the party candidates would come under attacks, which in turn could expose the government's intention and justify the BNP's decision of boycotting the parliamentary elections.

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday at a press briefing at the party's Nayapaltan central office said no election under Sheikh Hasina will be fair, credible, and peaceful.

"So, the BNP had decided not to participate in any elections under Sheikh Hasina. The party still stands by that decision," he added.

### Border forces' statements at odds

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AK Arya, spokesperson of South Bengal Frontier BSF, said BSF Jawans had no idea that BGB personnel could be with the smugglers.

Meanwhile, Roisuddin's parents and siblings were in shock at her home in Monakasha area of Chapainawabganj.

According to Abdul Momin, a neighbour, Roisuddin's parents Kamruzzaman and Rumali Begum worked hard as labourers to educate their children.

Their two other sons work in the BGB and the army, he said.

"Two days have passed since his death, but we are still in the dark about the circumstances surrounding his death. His parents are still waiting for the body," said Momin.

In a late-night statement on Monday, BGB said Roisuddin was shot dead by BSF while he was chasing a group of cattle smugglers.

According to the press release issued by Jashore BGB 49 Battalion, a BGB patrol team from Jessore battalion confronted the smugglers

near the Dhanyakholo Border Outpost.

Roisuddin became isolated at one point due to fog, the statement reads. Initially, the BGB learnt from various sources that he was injured in a BSF firing and receiving treatment at a hospital in India.

The statement said during a flag meeting of the two sides, it was confirmed that he died at an Indian hospital.

[Our Rajshahi and New Delhi Correspondents contributed to the report.]

### Lobbying intense for reserved seats

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On the other hand, some influential leaders of the 14-party components have been lobbying for their wives to be nominated by the AL.

The wives of Rashed Khan Menon, president of Bangladesh Workers Party, and Hasanul Haq Inu, president and Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal, were both MPs for reserved seats in the 11th parliament.

Menon and Inu are both lobbying for their wives this time too, AL insiders said.

According to some AL policymakers, women who rose from the grassroots to be involved in central Awami League politics will be evaluated for the nominations, while family members of deceased AL leaders and ministers, who are involved in politics, are also likely to be nominated.

At the same time, the ruling party will consider some prominent people including actors, businesspersons and social workers, for the reserved seats.

Besides, the AL may also nominate members of AL-led 14-party alliance, whose leaders did not get the expected victory in the election and have low representation in the parliament.

Those vying for spots from AL and its front bodies are AL presidium member Syeda Zebunneza Haque; the party's Agriculture and Cooperative Affairs Secretary Faridunnahar Laili;

central committee members Tarana Halim, Sanjida Khanam, Marina Jahan; Mahila AL President Meher Afroz Chumki; its General Secretary Shabnam Jahan Sheila; late Sylhet Mayor Badruddin Ahmad Kamran's wife Asma Kamran; Jubo Mahila League founding president Nazma Akhter; and its General Secretary Apu Ukil.

The names of central Jubo Mahila League leader Kuheli Quddus, who is the daughter of late MP Abdul Quddus; member of AL's international affairs sub-committee Nehrinn Mostafa Dishi; and Shاون Mahmud, daughter of martyred intellectual Altaf Mahmud, are also being discussed.

Meanwhile, actors Apu Biswas, Nipun Akhtar, Rokeya Prachi, Tareen Jahan, Tanveen Sweetey and other popular faces are on the list of nominees.

Speaking to The Daily Star, AL Joint General Secretary AFM Bahauddin Nasim said, "Those who are devoted to the party and served it during its rough patches would be prioritised."

"Also, popular figures from different sections of the society, including actors, entrepreneurs, and daughters of deceased Awami League leaders, will also be considered for nomination."

According to the Jatiya Sangsad (Reserved Women's Seats) Election Act, the 50 reserved seats are

distributed proportionally among the winning parties or coalitions in the general election. Typically, a party or coalition receives one reserved seat for every six seats won.

Awami League won in 223 constituencies and they will get at least 37 seats. There are 62 independent lawmakers and if they all form a non-party coalition, they will get at least 10 seats.

### Israel suffers

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main Nasser hospital because it was unsafe to go to the cemetery. Another Khan Younis hospital, Al-Khair, was stormed by Israeli troops who arrested staff there, and a third, Al-Amal, run by the Palestinian Red Crescent, was unreachable, according to Palestinian officials.

The Red Crescent said a tank shell had hit its headquarters on Amal's fourth floor, a civilian had been killed at the entrance, and Israeli forces were firing from drones on anyone who moved nearby, making it impossible to dispatch ambulances for the entire Khan Younis area.

The Palestinian Prisoner's Society said that Israeli forces detained 25 Palestinians overnight across the occupied West Bank. This brings the total number of Palestinians arrested since October 7 to 6,220, reports Al Jazeera online.

### Biman ignored its board in hiring pilots

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"Biman paying for hiring unqualified Boeing 777 pilots".

The newspaper found that two first officers had faked their educational certificates.

This prompted a probe by Biman itself.

In August last year, the High Court bench of Justice JBM Hasan and

Justice Razik-Al-Jalil ordered the civil aviation ministry to launch a probe into allegations of anomalies in pilot recruitment, after hearing a petition filed by Md Tanvir Ahmed who showed the court The Daily Star report.

The HC ordered that a three-member committee be formed, comprising an additional secretary from the civil aviation and tourism

ministry and a high official each from the civil aviation authority and Biman.

When the probe committee member Group Captain Md Mukteer-ul-Alam Miah, director of flight safety regulations at the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh, was contacted, he refused to comment but said they would look into the meeting minutes.

### Comilla pick up first win

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Wellalage picked up Mohammad Rizwan and Towhid Hridoy off back-to-back deliveries in the fourth over before taking Liton Das's scalp soon after. Former skipper of Comilla, Imrul Kayes kept up his side's hope till the 16th over with a 41-ball 52 and once he departed young Jaker Ali Anik hit some lusty blows to make the target achievable. Comilla were also helped

by Barishal's fielding as Khushdil Shah was dropped twice. Matthew Forde hit a six and a four in the final over, with 13 required, to give Comilla the victory.

Earlier, Soumya Sarkar gave Barishal the momentum after the loss of wickets within the Powerplay. He particularly took on the spinners even as it appeared that he had to muscle a few to the boundary. Mushfiqur Rahim held his own, too, and the

duo put on 66 off 45 deliveries in the fourth-wicket stand before Soumya perished to a Mustafizur Rahman slower yorker, out bowled after a 31-ball 42. Mushfiqur continued his form, hitting a 44-ball 62 before he fell in the final over as Barishal managed 161 for nine. Mushfiqur, in the process, crossed the 3000-run mark as the second batter in the tournament's history.

### US, Britain hit Houthi targets in Yemen

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the six countries.

A senior US military official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said roughly 25 to 30 munitions were fired, some of them from warplanes launched from a US aircraft carrier. So far, eight rounds of strikes over the past month have failed to stop Houthi attacks against shipping.

The Houthis' military spokesman, Yahya Sarea, said yesterday that the US-British alliance had carried out 18 air strikes: 12 in the capital Sanaa,

three in the port city of Hodeidah, two in Taiz and one in Al-Bayda province. "These attacks will not go unanswered or unpunished," he said.

US officials said the strikes have degraded the Houthis' ability to carry out complex attacks. But they have declined to offer any specific numbers of missiles, radar, drones or other military capabilities destroyed so far.

"We are having the intended effect," the US military official told Pentagon reporters.

Speaking after the latest strikes, British foreign minister David Cameron said the action had sent a clear message to the Houthis.

"We will continue to degrade their ability to carry out these attacks whilst sending the clearest possible message that we back our words and our warnings with action," he said.

President Joe Biden said last week that air strikes would continue while acknowledging they might not be halting the Houthi attacks.