



Farzana Chobi



Bidya Sinha Mim



Ashna Habib Bhabna



Shanarei Devi Shanu

EKUSHEY BOI MELA 2024

Where the stars land on pages

More than 12 celebrities are set to publish their books this year. Here are the details of their published works.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

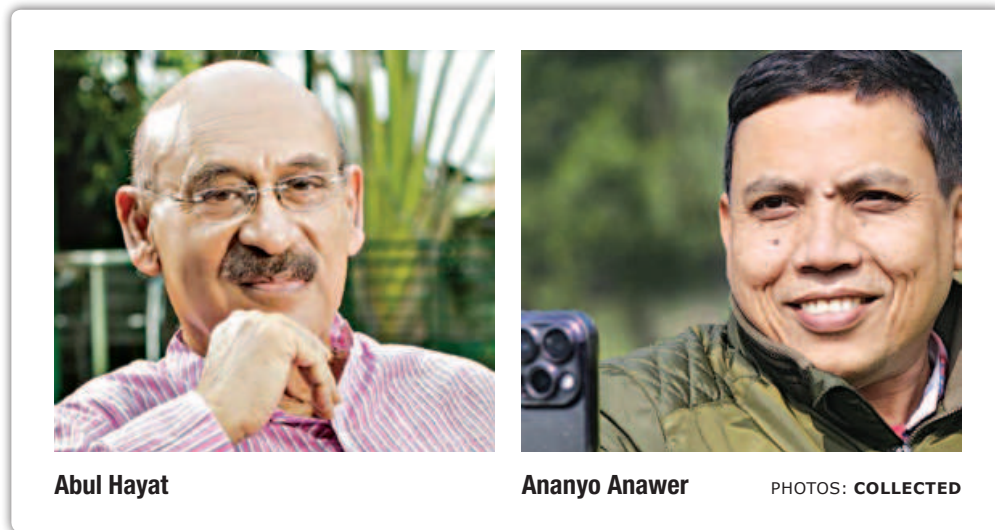
Over the years, an increasing number of celebrities from music, film and television have released their books at the Ekushey Book Fair. Enthusiastic fans eagerly seek out books authored by their favourite celebrities, inscribed with a personalised signature, all while hoping to catch a glimpse of the stars themselves.

More than 12 celebrities are set to publish their books this year. Here are the details of their published works:

Abul Hayat, the recipient of the coveted Ekushey Padak, will publish a new novel titled *Opoman* from Priyo Bangla Publications. "I've been involved in writing for a long time. I write columns, and scripts for dramas and stories. This time, I've written a novel. I hope the readers will like it," said the veteran artist.

Closeup One famed singer Putul Saja Sultana's written novel *Gotap Brittanta* will be available from February 1, from Anannya Prokashoni. "This is my sixth novel. I'm really very hopeful that the readers will like it," said Putul. "Like every year, I'll be available at the designated stall to meet the readers."

Mizan Publishers will bring *Kajer Meve*, authored by actress Ashna Habib Bhabna. "I always love to create art, be it painting or writing stories, I'm confident that book lovers will admire my novel," said the *Lal Moroger*



Abul Hayat

Ananyo Anawer

PHOTOS: COLLECTED

Jhuti actress.

The new novel *Chhayabondi Maya* by director Aranyo Anawer, known for his works in television and cinema, will be available at the book fair, published by Mizan Publishers.

Actress Farzana Chobi will be making her debut as an author this year with her novel *Jolchhobi*, which the actress is very excited about. "I hope the readers will accept my work, only that way my hard work will be paid off," she shared.

Former Lux Superstar champion and actress Shanarei Devi Shanu's poetry book *Aloukik Shobder Ghan* will be published by Ajob Proshoni. "Poetry is something very connected with my life. I really wish that bookworms will love my poetry," she said.

Bidya Sinha Mim's novel *Purnota* was published years ago. The book will return to this year's Boi Mela, from the publication house Shobdoshilpo. "Readers accepted 'Purnota' wonderfully when it was published. This time, they will be delighted to know that the book is coming in a new form," shared Mim.

Alongside stars, several entertainment journalists are also set to release new books at this year's fair. Amongst them is Tanvir Tareq, with his book *Shesh Bhromoner Agey*, which will be published by Onno Prokash. This book is a collection of short stories, containing 12 tales.

Additionally, Anindya Prokash is going to publish the novel *Rajput*, written by Mahtab Hossain.

AR Rahman clarifies use of AI to recreate voices of late singers

Renowned composer AR Rahman has addressed the controversy surrounding his use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) to recreate the voices of late singers Bamba Bakya and Shahul Hameed for the song *Thimiri Yezhuda* in Rajinikanth's upcoming film *Lal Salaam*.



The move sparked mixed reactions from fans, prompting Rahman to provide clarification.

Taking to his X account on Tuesday, Rahman shared a post of Sony Music South, emphasising the utilisation of AI to replicate the late singers' voices. In the caption, he stated, "We took permission from their families and sent deserving remuneration for using their voice algorithms... technology is not a threat and a nuisance if we use it right."

'Suits' sets new streaming record, surpassing 'The Office'

Legal drama *Suits* took the top spot as the most streamed title ever from another audience favourite *The Office* in 2023, while shows on Netflix dominated overall streaming charts, according to Nielsen data.

Available for streaming on Netflix and Comcast-owned Peacock, *Suits* racked up 57.7 billion viewing minutes in 2023. *The Office* had generated 57.1 billion viewing minutes in 2020 amid pandemic-induced lockdowns, according to the report.

Some of the other widely streamed shows last year were *Bluey*, *NCIS*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *The Big Bang Theory*.



NEWS

12 Rohingyas killed in military's shelling

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Türk said the people of Myanmar have been suffering for too long.

"Pitched battles between the military and armed opposition groups have resulted in mass displacement and civilian casualties."

Sources have verified that over 554 people have died since October.

In 2023, the overall number of civilians reportedly killed by the military rose to over 1,600 – an increase of some 300 from the previous year. Over the last three years, some 1,576 individuals have died while being held by the military, the

statement added.

The international community should redouble efforts to hold the military accountable, Türk said, recalling the International Court of Justice' provisional measures for Myanmar to protect the members of the Rohingya community from the acts that may amount to genocide.

"This crisis will only be resolved by insisting on accountability for the military's leadership, the release of political prisoners and the restoration of civilian rule," Türk said.

He urged all member states to take

appropriate measures to address this crisis, including to consider imposing further targeted sanctions on the military – limiting access to weapons, jet fuel and foreign currency – to constrain their ability to commit serious violations and disregard international law.

"I commend the courage and resilience of Myanmar's civil society and democratic movement, representing all ethnic communities, and urge their inclusion in any political process to restore democracy and respect for human rights in Myanmar."

Pak court jails Imran for 10yrs

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ruling. "We don't accept this illegal decision," Khan's lawyer, Naeem Panjutha, posted on social media platform X.

The PTI has not called for protests or demonstrations before the election. A bomb in Pakistan's Balochistan region killed three PTI members yesterday, the party said, hours after Khan was sentenced. There were no details of who was responsible.

Khan aide Zulfikar Bukhari told Reuters that the legal team was given no chance to represent Khan or cross examine witnesses. The proceedings were carried out in maximum security Adiala jail in Rawalpindi.

Another of Khan's lawyers, Ali Zafar, told ARY television that given the circumstances of the trial and sentencing, the chances of the case being quashed on appeal were "100 percent."

Bukhari called the conviction an attempt to weaken support for Khan. "People will now make sure they come out and vote in larger numbers," he told Reuters.

Khan was previously sentenced to three years in a corruption case, which had already ruled him out of the election next week.

His legal team was hoping to get him released from jail, where he has been since August last year, but

the latest conviction means that it is unlikely even as the charges are contested in a higher court.

The party of three-time Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Khan's main political opponent, said the verdict was not harsh enough.

"I think, based on his carelessness and crime – pertaining to important national interests – this is a very light sentence," Ahsan Iqbal, a senior Sharif aide, said in a TV interview.

Analysts believe Sharif's party is the frontrunner to form the next government. Sharif and his daughter, Maryam Nawaz, were convicted and jailed over graft allegations days before the last general election in 2018.

HC questions imposition

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contradictory to articles 32 and 35 (5) of the constitution and relevant provisions of international treaties and conventions.

Article 32 of the constitution says, "No person shall be deprived of life or personal liberty save in accordance with the law."

According to article 35(5), "No person shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading punishment or treatment."

In the petition, the lawyer challenged section 53 of the Penal Code and section 368(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) containing the provision of the death penalty, saying that the section is unconstitutional, illegal, and without lawful authority.

Section 53 of the Penal Code, 1860, states that the punishments for which offenders are liable under

the provisions of this Code are firstly death and secondly imprisonment for life.

Section 368(1) of the CrPC, 1898, says, "When any person is sentenced to death, the sentence shall direct that he be hanged by the neck till he is dead."

Petitioner Ishrat earlier told The Daily Star that Bangladesh is a signatory to international treaties and conventions, including the United Nations Human Rights Universal Declaration, 1948, which has discouraged the enforcement of the death penalty as a punishment.

More than 100 countries have already repealed this provision, she added.

Deputy Attorney General Tushar Kanti Roy and Assistant Attorney General Md Selim Azad represented the state during the hearing of the petition.

12th nat'l polls landmark

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the maiden session of 12th parliament. The speech was earlier approved by the cabinet.

Shahabuddin said the free, fair and impartial 12th national election, which has been appreciated at home and abroad, is a watershed moment in the history of the country's democracy.

"I firmly believe this is the victory of the people and also of democracy."

He lauded the efforts of all the authorities concerned, including the Election Commission and the armed forces, for successfully conducting a free, fair and impartial election through upholding the spirit of the constitution.

Regarding the election, the president said a quarter tried to obstruct the peaceful course of democracy in Bangladesh by carrying out violence. Their anti-democratic and violent activities temporarily made people anxious, but those did not deter voters from casting ballots, he said.

"The parties who stayed away from the polls carried out their political programmes without any hindrance."

He hoped the political parties will shun violence and anarchy and observe constructive programmes in a non-violent way to establish the constitutional rights of the people and ensure democracy.

"It is expected that the government will also play an appropriate role in this regard."

Shahabuddin called upon the government to take stern actions to reform the financial sector and fight corruption.

He said the country may face different formidable challenges in future and that is why the authorities need to be very cautious.

"I implore everyone to exercise caution so no one can conspire against the rights of the people."

Everyone should be careful so no person can provoke anarchy in the name of movement and harm the people's lives and livelihood, he said.

All rumours and misinformation should be dealt with appropriately through involving the citizens, the president observed.

He said to make development sustainable, democracy must be strengthened institutionally, and the practice of democracy must be spread to the grassroots. Maintaining political stability is essential to continue the trend of development, he said.

Shahabuddin called upon the MPs to play a meaningful role in the parliamentary standing committees so the transparency and accountability of the government can be ensured.

State no party to case against Prof Yunus

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that a senior international lawyer lead a small team of independent legal experts to conduct a review of the cases against Prof Yunus.

Asked, Hasan Mahmud said the statement on Prof Yunus was published in the Washington Post as an ad, not as news. Such ad was also published before.

He, however, did not elaborate on the government not being any party to the case involving Prof Yunus.

On January 1, Prof Yunus and three other top officials of Grameen Telecom were sentenced to six months in jail in a case filed on September 9, 2021, by Labour Inspector (General) SM Arifuzzaman over labour law violations.

Lawyer Md Yousuf Ali, a lawyer for Grameen Telecom workers, on May 22, 2022, had told The Daily Star that

all the other cases filed against Prof Yunus and Grameen Telecom were withdrawn by the latter's employees after they reached a settlement over the claim of payments.

He said his clients had filed 104 cases with the labour courts and six cases with the High Court, claiming over Tk 437 crore as due payments. As Grameen Telecom agreed to pay the money, all 176 workers and employees instructed the lawyer to withdraw the cases.

For further clarification, The Daily Star yesterday called the foreign minister and texted him. He, however, did not respond to any.

About the meeting with non-resident envoys, Hasan Mahmud said they expressed interest in investing here to advance trade relations.

"Some countries have expressed interest in recruiting manpower from

Bangladesh. There are scopes for agriculture in Africa."

The envoys, who met the minister, are from Botswana, Cambodia, Czech Republic, The Gambia, Hungary, Jamaica, Luxembourg, Mongolia, North Macedonia, Peru, Slovakia, Slovenia, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Later, Swedish Foreign Minister Alexander Beg von Linde and Secretary General of The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Indra Mani Pandey called on the minister.

Hasan Mahmud and Linde discussed cooperation on green energy, investment in ICT, and Rohingya repatriation.

With Pandey, he held discussions on climate change, infrastructure development, and the construction of the new BIMSTEC secretariat building in Dhaka.