

I HAD TO GO INTO HIDING IN 2018: MOUSUMI HAMID

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Renowned actress Mousumi Hamid recently returned to Dhaka after completing the shoot of a new film in Bandarban and Cox's Bazar. Directed by Tasnova Tabassum Atoshi, the film's title is yet to be finalised. This marks her return to work after a tumultuous month, which saw the rise of the anti-discrimination student movement and the collapse of the previous government.

However, the actress' activities haven't been confined to the entertainment industry. Mousumi was a prominent voice in the recently concluded movement. She took to the streets and voiced her support for the students on social media. "I joined the protests for four to five days. I stood with the students because I believe in their cause," she said.

Recalling a specific incident, Mousumi described how, like many others, she changed her social media profile picture to red in solidarity with the movement. Not long after, she received a phone call during the then ongoing curfew, with someone repeatedly inquiring about her whereabouts. Fearful for her safety, she and her husband fled their home. "We returned 12 hours later, only to receive another call the next day, warning me not to post anything else. But I didn't stop. I spoke out against injustice, and I wasn't afraid."

When asked about the state of our freedom of speech before August 5, Mousumi candidly stated, "There wasn't much freedom of speech, and I am living proof of that. Everyone was afraid to speak up. But after the downfall of the former government, that fear is gone. Now, we can speak freely."

Mousumi also revisited her experience during the 2018 protests when actress Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed was arrested. "Back then, I posted several things on Facebook in support of Nawshaba, which led to me receiving threatening phone calls. I couldn't speak out then, but now, with the new sense of freedom, I feel like I can finally share my experiences."

Taking the advice of friends, Mousumi deleted some of her posts and turned off her phone out

of fear after the arrest of Nawshaba. "I went underground for 13 days, being completely out of contact with everyone. I remember the fear I felt as I travelled from Cox's Bazar to Sreemangal, not knowing what would happen next."

At that time, actor Sazu Khadem *bhai* was of great help. He called many people and told them, "Mousumi never gets involved with politics, so make sure she isn't harmed." After that, I continued shooting, but I kept thinking that I could be arrested at any moment."

The actress also disclosed that during this period, a director warned her that a case had been filed against her and advised her to stay hidden. "That was the life I led back then," she recounted.

Reflecting on the current situation, Mousumi expressed relief. "Now, I feel free. We can all express our opinions openly. Life is much better for everyone now."

Mousumi shared the shooting experience of her upcoming musical, saying, "We shot in Cox's Bazar and Bandarban. The story is beautiful, and it felt great to work amid the serenity of nature. After going through an uncertain and restless month, being able to shoot by the sea and in the hills has done wonders for my mood, especially being near the mountains."

In addition to this project, Mousumi expressed excitement about another of her upcoming films *Noya Manush*, which is set to release later this year.

Mousumi has also been active on OTT platforms, with a new web-film set to begin shooting soon. She also mentioned another upcoming project with the popular streaming platform Hoichoi.



PHOTOS:
SHAHREAR KABIR
HEEMEL/ABRAR

Sarajevo Film Festival celebrates Meg Ryan's film impact

Renowned Hollywood actress, director, and producer Meg Ryan was recently recognised by the Sarajevo Film Festival, receiving the Honorary Heart of Sarajevo on Tuesday night for her valuable impact on the film industry.



Ryan was among four distinguished film creators honoured with this award, joining US and Palestinian directors Alexander Payne and Elia Suleiman, as well as US actor and producer John Turturro.

Festival Director Jovan Marjanović praised Ryan's exceptional talent while presenting her with the silver heart-shaped award.

Ryan symbolically hosted a special screening of her 1998 romantic comedy hit, *You've Got Mail*, at an open-air cinema, the very location where it was first shown during the festival in 1999.



Jennifer Lopez files for divorce from Ben Affleck

Jennifer Lopez has officially filed for divorce from Ben Affleck, marking the end of their two-year-long marriage. The couple, once famously known as "Bennifer," first captured headlines in the early 2000s before splitting in 2004.

Lopez went on to marry Marc Anthony, while Affleck wed Jennifer Garner, with both marriages eventually ending in divorce.

After reuniting in 2021, Lopez described their initial breakup as her "biggest heartbreak."

Their divorce filing in Los Angeles County Superior Court comes exactly two years after their Georgia wedding celebration. Representatives for both stars have not commented on the split.

NEWS

Pacers shine but Pakistan recover

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Bangladesh the first breakthrough when he dismissed opener Abdullah Shafique for two in the fourth over, courtesy of Zakir Hasan taking a spectacular flying catch at the fifth slip.

Mahmud and Shoriful continued to put pressure on the Pakistani batters, and it took little time for left-arm seamer Shoriful to remove skipper Shan Masood.

Although the on-field umpire did not initially give Masood out, a review showed that the ball had touched the bat before it reached the wicketkeeper Liton Das. Masood was unhappy with the change in decision and exchanged some heated words with the umpires, as he seemed to believe that the ball had only hit his pads.

Before the series started, Shoriful had stated in the media that Pakistani batting maestro Babar Azam was his "dream wicket". It took only two balls for him to make that dream a reality, dismissing the right-hander for a duck, reducing Pakistan to 16 for three.

Shoriful can credit part of his success against Babar to Liton, who took a superb diving one-handed catch to his left, silencing the home fans.

Since Babar's dismissal, Bangladeshi bowlers were unable to sustain the pressure, allowing Pakistani opener Ayub and Shakeel to adopt an aggressive approach.

The hosts reached the 100-run mark after the Tea break, and as the partnership looked increasingly dangerous for Bangladesh, Hasan returned to remove Ayub -- who had earlier completed his maiden Test fifty -- at the slip cordon where Mehidy Hasan Miraz took a sharp catch, ending a 98-run stand for the fourth wicket.

Later, Shakeel also completed his seventh Test fifty and shared an unbroken stand of 44 runs with Mohammad Rizwan (24 not out) to see out the remaining overs of the day before bad light forced the umpires to call off proceedings.

BNP's ties

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part in the meeting with a four-member delegation from China.

"We want to make it clear that the BNP has always believed in the 'One China Policy' and we want to reaffirm this stance with even greater firmness," Fakhru said.

He told the media that China believes the relationship between the Communist Party of China and the BNP will continue to strengthen. "We believe that China's investment for the development of Bangladesh will increase further."

Fakhru added, "We, the BNP, are delighted to hold the meeting with the Chinese ambassador after a long time. We consider this visit, after the mass protest, as a highly significant meeting."

"China has reiterated its commitment to the people of Bangladesh, clearly stating that they don't believe in supremacy. In the geopolitical context of Bangladesh, China has always stood by the people

Govt should ensure

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their legitimate rights to freedom and independence, especially in the light of Israeli occupation's criminal aggression and genocidal war continuing for more than 10 months in the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and Jerusalem.

He said Bangladesh and Palestine and their peoples are united by strong historical relations based on brotherhood and support.

"We and our Palestinian people will continue to have gratitude and appreciation to Bangladesh for permanently and continuously standing by our people, and its absolute solidarity and support since its independence in 1971," the letter said.

Abbas expressed his support to the interim government and the people of Bangladesh, and wished good luck and success to Yunus in performing the lofty tasks entrusted to him.

Meanwhile, Pentagon on Tuesday said it will look forward to working with Bangladesh to support the shared values and interests such as a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Pentagon Press Secretary Maj Gen

of this country, and they continue to do so today."

The BNP secretary general praised China's global role, saying, "We applaud the significant role that China is playing on the global stage today. We have sincerely thanked and expressed our gratitude for China's assistance to both developed and developing countries."

After the meeting, Ambassador Yao Wen told media, "We discussed the current situation in Bangladesh. We hope that under the leadership of the interim government, Bangladesh will achieve stability and normalisation. We fully support this interim government."

"China will not interfere in the internal affairs of Bangladesh. The people of Bangladesh look forward to our continued support, and we are committed to that."

"We are working together for a better relationship between Bangladesh and China."

Pat Ryder made the comment in a briefing in Washington when he was asked how Pentagon views the role of the Bangladesh Army in supporting peace and stability under the interim government led by Nobel laureate Prof Yunus.

Pat Ryder said, "Well, as you know, we do have a defense relationship with Bangladesh. We will look forward to working to support our shared values and interests, such as a free and open Indo-Pacific. I don't have anything to read out right now in terms of any types of contact."

"As it relates to the Bangladesh government, we would also expect human rights to be observed and there to be an avoidance of any type of violence," he added.

In a briefing yesterday, UN secretary-general's Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said UN hopes the interim government, led by Dr Yunus, will take an inclusive approach, including by considering the voices of young people as well as women, and minority and indigenous communities.

He said the UN also counts on the interim government to ensure the full protection of all citizens, particularly the minorities.

Students force DU dean to quit

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and signed it in front of the students.

However, the agitators then insisted that Mahub must sign the resignation letter they had prepared.

The dean then wrote another resignation letter, similar to the one prepared by the students, but refused to submit it to the office in-person.

The dean of another faculty of the university, wishing to be unnamed, told The Daily Star that he has his resignation letter ready after seeing what happened to Prof Mahub.

In another development, a group of students from the Mathematics department padlocked the office of Prof Chandra Nath Podder, demanding his permanent removal as teacher.

The agitators started demonstrating in front of the department around noon alleging that he opposed the Anti-

Constitutional changes required

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After the Liberation War, the proclamations were not incorporated in the 1972 constitution, he said.

"The constitution should not dictate the people. It should be written again to incorporate the people's will. But we need to figure out how it will be done -- through the constituent assembly or by other ways."

All the colonial era legal framework and administrative structures have to be reformed, he added.

Meghmallar Bosu of Dhaka University said it is necessary to change or amend the constitution. But it will require political unity so that the next government does not nullify the changes.

He recommended proportional representation in parliament, which was echoed by DU's coordinator Mozammel Haque.

Proportional representation is an electoral system in which the distribution of seats corresponds

Discrimination Student Movement.

Emerging from a meeting around 1:00pm, Chandra met the protesters and heard their demand.

Following a five-hour negotiation between the teacher and students, the students left the department saying they would announce their next course of action soon.

Another group of students of the Institute of Nutrition and Food Science yesterday demanded permanent removal of two teachers and apology from the rest of the teachers.

Meanwhile, a group of students of the university's Sociology department yesterday sent a letter to the department demanding resignation of Chairman Prof Zeenat Huda.

They also demanded Prof AKM Jamal Uddin, Prof Sadeka Halim, and Prof Moshir Rahman be relieved of all academic and administrative duties.

close to the proportion of the total votes cast for each party.

About banning religion-based politics, he said, "We did not find anything good in such types of decisions earlier. When you oppress a party, they become victims and get public sympathy. The same will happen if the state bans a political party by law. It should be done through socio and political unity."

Umama Fatema, a coordinator of the movement and a DU student, said such parties always use religion as a tool for oppression, but they never use it as a tool for freedom.

"It will not be wise to ban student politics on campuses when the administrators are politically affiliated. They will only favour their party's student wings, banned or not," she said, adding that the elections to students' unions in campuses are vital.

Arif Sohel also spoke for students' union-based politics on

The agitating students also issued a 48-hour ultimatum to the authorities to meet their demands and warned that they would lay siege to the department if their demands were not met.

Also, a group of students of the Economics department wrote to the department chairperson yesterday demanding removal of Prof Shahadat Hossain Siddique and Syed Naimul Wadood.

Prof Zeenat in her letter to the law affairs adviser alleged that those groups of students [protesters] were creating a scary situation on campus, and that the teachers were feeling insecure.

"I would like to inform you that a good number of teachers of Dhaka University are in vulnerable condition. They are being threatened and attacked so that they resign as chairman, director, and dean," reads the letter.

"The student union-based politics will naturally fill the vacuum that the political-party based students' politics will leave behind and a new kind of students' politics will arise."

Terminating the 2014 polls "voterless election", 2018 election "night vote", and this year's polls "dummy independent" election, Mustafiz Rahman of Jagannath University said the country's current state is the result of those so-called elections.

Editor and Publisher of The Daily Star Mahfuz Anam also joined the discussion moderated by The Daily Star journalist Shuchismita Tithi.

Mahfuz said our inability to accept different views and to live with differing opinions is a huge disease.

"Now, your future vision is for a democratic Bangladesh. To achieve that, we need to bring a culture of tolerance towards different opinions. You have set so many examples and I hope you can set this example as well."

Help us get back laundered money

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Kiminori hoped that Bangladesh will be rebuilt under the leadership of Prof Yunus.

The Nobel laureate expressed his gratitude for Japan's continuous support and expressed his desire to take Japan-Bangladesh relations to its "peak". Both sides concurred that

they would closely work together to make it happen.

The envoy conveyed Japan's intention to continue supporting Bangladesh's development and prosperity under the "Strategic Partnership" enshrined between the two countries.

Kiminori stressed the

importance of establishing peace and stability in the country and the region, including sustainable response to Rohingya refugees, advancing economic and business cooperation, and boosting people-to-people exchange.

He expressed Japan's readiness to work together in these areas.