

Let's help flood victims reclaim their lives: APU BISWAS

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Apu Biswas, the renowned Dhallywood star, has appeared in numerous films over the course of her career. With several hits to her name, she remains a prominent figure in the industry. In February of this year, her latest film, *Chaya Brikkho*, was released.

The actress is looking forward to the release of her upcoming films. Although she was scheduled to originally film more projects this August, they have been postponed for the time being. Speaking on the matter, Apu shared with The Daily Star, "I, myself, am not focused on filming at the moment; my thoughts are with the flood victims. My heart aches for them."

She further expressed, "The news of the floods is everywhere, in the headlines on television and newspapers

— seeing the faces of those suffering brings tears to my eyes."

"The elderly, in particular, seem to be bearing the burden more heavily. And when I see the faces of the children, I can't help but think of my child in their place. I feel compelled to do something for those enduring this suffering," Apu further remarked.

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The Dhallywood star mentioned, "I sent a representative with all the cash I could spare. I believe it's essential for everyone to step up during times like these."

Apu then reflected upon past catastrophes and said, "The most heartwarming thing is that whenever our country faces a crisis or a natural



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



PHOTO: COLLECTED

disaster, people come together to help. This time, however, has been exceptional — surpassing all previous efforts, the students at TSC have mobilised with renewed vigour. Their dedication during this calamity sets a powerful example for us all."

Although Apu Biswas couldn't personally visit the flood-affected areas, she ensured that relief supplies were sent through a delegation. "I wanted to be there, but with a young impressionable child at home, I couldn't make the trip myself. Instead, I sent aid through my representatives."

The actress firmly believes that nothing is more noble than serving humanity. "All the love we have is best expressed through helping others. I believe that we are here for one another. The most important work we can do is support each other, especially during times

of crisis," she conveyed.

Apu Biswas, who commands a large fan base, acknowledged the role her supporters have played in her success. "Everything I am today, all the popularity I've gained, is entirely for my audience. Thanks to them," she noted. "Their love made me who I am. I urge them to help the flood victims in any way they can during this difficult time."

When asked about her expectations from the recently formed interim government, Apu Biswas expressed optimism. "I believe the new government will bring positive changes. I hope they work to eliminate discrimination because none of us want to see inequality in our society."

Lastly, the Dhallywood star appealed to everyone, stating, "Let's put aside our differences and come together to support the flood victims. Right now, this is our most urgent need. Let's help the people affected by the floods reclaim their lives, restore their smiles, and ease their sorrows."



Interim government to reshuffle Bangladesh Film Censor Board

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is set to reshuffle the Bangladesh Film Censor Board after Sheikh Hasina's government resigned on August 5.

The interim government aims to overhaul several institutions, starting with removing controversial board members and forming a new committee before resuming film screenings.

The last film approved was *Madhyobitto* on July 28, and no Bengali films have been reviewed since then. Ministry insiders suggest that directives for restructuring will be issued within a week.

Former board members like Kazi Hayat and Abdul Jalil expect the changes but haven't received official notifications yet. The only pending submission is *Bhoyal* by Biplob Haider, awaiting review.

Kaaktaal returns with 'Borshonabeg Concert'



Kaaktaal is set to host their postponed *Borshonabeg Concert* today at the National Library Auditorium, Dhaka. Initially scheduled for July 17, the concert was delayed due to political unrest. The event will feature the band's monsoon-themed songs alongside other tracks.

Rhythm Revolution organised the concert and intends to raise funds to support those affected by the flood. Lead vocalist Asif Iqbal said, "All of us want to celebrate the monsoon's beauty but more importantly we wish to aid the flood-affected communities going through unfair turmoil."

NEWS

History beckons Tigers

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Since their inaugural Test in 2000, Bangladesh went 1-0 up in a series involving two or more Tests only seven times.

Although they won series against teams like Zimbabwe (twice in 2005 and 2014) and West Indies (twice in 2009 and 2018), Bangladesh miserably failed to hold the lead or extend the margin in the three other instances against top-ranked opponents — against Australia in 2017 and twice against New Zealand in 2022 and 2023.

Apart from that, Bangladesh won their one-off Test series against Afghanistan and Ireland previously.

"The morale of the players is very, very good, and for obvious reasons," Bangladesh head coach Chandika Hathurusingha said during a press conference on Thursday.

"Beating Pakistan in Pakistan is not an easy task. They are a very strong team. Still, we expect a good

fight in the second game as well," the head coach added, mentioning that the Tigers might ring in some changes for the second game, keeping in mind the wicket and overcast condition.

Weather in Rawalpindi has deteriorated in the last few days as there has been persistent rain, forcing both teams to cancel a few practice sessions including the final one on Thursday.

Rain could also play spoilsport as the weather forecast suggests little to heavy rain on four of the five days, including today's opening day.

"We might have a few changes, depending on the condition tomorrow [Friday] when we look at the pitch. Today [Thursday], we didn't get to look at the pitch as it was covered and definitely the weather is slightly different from the last game," Hathurusingha added.

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan will once again be in the spotlight due to some recent off-

field developments surrounding the cricketer, who has seen his teammates rally around him following a murder case filed against the former Awami League lawmaker.

However, Bangladesh team management will hope to get the best out of their talismanic all-rounder to notch their maiden Test series win against Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Pakistan will be desperate to bounce back in the series with a victory and get their home record on the right track after failing to win any of their last nine Tests — they failed to register any victory on home soil since their 2-0 series win over South Africa in 2021.

After going with an all-pace attack in the first Test, the hosts named leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed and left-arm pacer Mir Hamza in their 12-member squad for the game, dropping premier pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi who has been allowed to spend time with his new-born son and family.

Over 1,000 killed

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treatment at the police hospital, many with injuries to the leg and head, but they were recovering well. An injured student coordinator was also receiving treatment at the hospital.

Nurjahan spoke to injured police officers in the hospital's surgery department and enquired about their conditions.

The health adviser also highlighted the government's efforts to provide specialised care for those blinded during the uprising. Many victims lost one or both eyes, she said.

The adviser said the government sent a list of patients with eye injuries to the Sheba Foundation, a US-

based organisation. It agreed to send doctors to Bangladesh as soon as possible, she said.

The facilities where the victims will be treated include the Ispahani Islamia Eye Institute and Hospital, the National Institute of Ophthalmology & Hospital (NIOH), and the Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex, according to the adviser.

She said many people sustained severe leg injuries, with some requiring amputations.

"We are in talks with various donor agencies, including the World Bank, to bring in a team of doctors from abroad for advanced treatment," the adviser said.

Exim Bank freed from the grip of Mazumder

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the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit's order to freeze his bank accounts and his family members.

He, however, remains the chairman of the private bank owners' forum Bangladesh Association of Banks since 2009, a position he leveraged to extract benefits from the previous Awami League regime of 15 years.

Mazumder, also the chairman of garment exporter Nassa Group, exerted his influence to change critical policies for the banking sector such that it favoured his businesses. He also took loans bypassing rules and regulations, according to people with knowledge of the matter.

For instance, at the 654th board meeting of Janata Bank in 2021, a Tk 261 crore interest waiver facility was approved for two concerns of Mazumder's Nassa Group: Nassa Taipei Spinners and Nassa Spinners.

The central bank initially rejected the facility as Janata approved the waiver violating banking norms but later walked back on the decision.

To ensure his access to the power centre, he would collect funds from banks and personally hand the cheque over to the former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, according to the managing directors of banks who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The new board was constituted as per section 45 of the Bank Companies Act, 1991 to protect the

interests of depositors and ensure good governance, said the BB letter to the Exim Bank managing director.

As of last year, Exim Bank's total outstanding loans stood at Tk 46,937.63 crore and defaulted loans of Tk 1,629.46 crore, as per data from the central bank. However, bank insiders said the actual volume of bad loans is much higher than that.

Md. Nazrul Islam Swapan, Md. Nurul Amin and Anjan Kumar Saha were retained on the new board. Swapan, who is a sponsor-director, holds 3.54 percent shares of the bank, while Saha holds 2 percent shares. Amin, also a sponsor-director, holds 2 percent shares.

Two new independent directors — SM Rezaul Karim, executive director of the central bank, and Khandaker Mamun, a chartered accountant — were added to the new board.

The previous government had decided to merge another crisis-hit Padma Bank with Exim Bank, a move that faced widespread criticism from different corners and was eventually put on hold.

Earlier, the BB reconstituted the boards of National Bank, Islami Bank Bangladesh, Social Islami Bank, Global Islami Bank, Union Bank and United Commercial Bank.

The central bank plans to reconstitute the board of more ailing banks next week.

1,369 pro-AL bots

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election be held under the current government."

But why would anyone make such comments so long after the election, and that too, on a completely unrelated, non-political post?

Researchers found that a network of 1,369 fake Facebook accounts was responsible for over 21,000 comments across various Facebook pages. These comments, often posted repeatedly on unrelated posts, praised the AL and criticised the BNP, especially leading up to and following the 12th parliamentary election on January 7 this year.

The bot network mainly targeted posts containing specific political keywords but occasionally made errors, leading to comments on irrelevant topics.

"However, they sometimes made errors, particularly with terms that, when written in Bangla script, coincidentally contained the letters corresponding to 'EC' [Election Commission]. For instance, in the case of *bdnews24.com*, an article about color printers mentioned 'Machine Identification Code (MIC)'. The bots mistakenly identified the 'IC' in 'MIC' as 'EC' when transliterated into Bangla, leading them to flood the post with hundreds of comments. The study revealed several such instances of these bot blunders," the dismislab report said.

The investigation also revealed that most of the bot profiles shared common traits, such as restricted privacy settings, stolen profile pictures, and minimal friend counts — features consistent with political bots.

This discovery sheds light on the growing issue of Coordinated Inauthentic Behavior (CIB) on social media platforms, raising concerns about the manipulation of public discourse in Bangladesh.

Court issues

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ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir moved the petition on behalf of the ACC.

In the application, Jahangir said the former ministers and lawmakers, who have graft allegations against their names, were trying to flee the country. So, a travel ban is needed to prevent them from leaving the country.

The ACC informed the court that an investigation is underway into the allegations that they all amassed huge amounts of money through illegal means during their tenure.

The judge sent a copy of the order to the special superintendent of police (Immigration) of the Special Branch for the next course of action.

Salman, Anisul put on remand

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mother Masuma.

At another hearing on the same case, former commerce minister Tipu Munshi was placed on a four-day remand.

In another case, a Dhaka court placed Major General (sacked) Ziaul Ahsan on a five-day fresh remand.

He is accused in a case filed with Adabor Police Station over the murder of a garment worker named Rubel.

Ziaul, the former director general of National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre, was placed on 18 days of remand in three other murder cases.

Former lawmaker Sadek Khan was placed on a five-day fresh remand in another case filed with Adabor Police Station over the killing of Jakir Hossain, 29.

On August 25, he was placed on a four-day remand in a case filed with Mohammadpur Police Station for the killing of truck driver Sujan.

Hasina faces 6 more cases

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Hasina and 37 others were sued over the death of Jakir Hossain Rana on August 5 during the Anti-discrimination Student Movement.

His father Jamal Uddin yesterday lodged the case at Sreepur Police Station. In the case statement, he mentioned that some police and BGB personnel at the behest of Hasina and several other accused opened fire, leaving his son killed.

Manju Mia, father of slain Rahmat Mia, filed another murder case at the same police station accusing Hasina and 60 others. He alleged that some police and BGB members on the instructions of Hasina and several other accused fired bullets, killing his

son on August 5.

Another murder case was filed at Basan Police Station against former PM Hasina and 154 others.

Pornima Begum, wife of Nazrul Islam, 32, who was killed on July 20 during the quota reform protest, lodged the case on Tuesday.

In Dhaka, Hasina and 87 others were sued over the death of Nadimul Hasan Elem, 25, in Dhaka's Sutrapur on July 19 during a protest.

His mother Kismot Ara yesterday filed the case with the court of Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Tariqul Islam.

After recording the complainant's statement, the magistrate asked the officer-in-charge of Sutrapur Police

Station to register the complaint as a first information report (FIR).

In Brahmanbaria, a murder case was filed against Hasina and 57 others over the killing of Zahirul Islam, 35, during a clash on March 27, 2021, between police and demonstrators protesting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh.

His elder brother Babul Miah on Wednesday night lodged the case at Brahmanbaria Sadar Police Station, said Mohammad Mozaffar Hossain, OC of the station.

According to the case statement, several former ministers and other accused ordered the law enforcers to use firearms against the protesters, which led to the death of Zahirul.