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Yesterday (Saturday) marked the 80th birthday of the esteemed Ekushey Padak-winning artiste. In a conversation with The Daily Star, he shared his thoughts on reaching this milestone.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Famed actor Abul Hayat has left an indelible mark on both television and film, having been a part of countless productions. In addition to his acting career, he has also gained recognition as a successful theatre director. With more than 50 years devoted to his craft, his work in stage plays has further enriched his multifaceted career. His performances in popular TV dramas have earned him widespread acclaim and admiration from audiences over the years.

Yesterday (Saturday) marked the 80th birthday of the esteemed Ekushey Padak-winning artiste. In a conversation with The Daily Star, he shared his thoughts on reaching this milestone.

"I feel wonderful," he expressed. "I don't feel like I've aged at all. I still feel youthful in my heart, as though a child lives within me. I'm still working and progressing, all thanks to the grace of Almighty Allah, who has granted me a long life. Now, I can proudly say that I've reached 80 years."

When asked how he spent the day, Abul Hayat shared, "There were many plans, but I set them aside. So much blood has been spilled in the country, people have lost their lives, many

have been injured, and several districts are still dealing with severe floods. I decided to cancel everything thinking about the suffering of others. I simply stayed home all day."

"However, it was also my granddaughter's birthday, and she cut a cake, which was enough to make the day special for me. I had to visit the office of the Bangladesh Film Artistes Association as they requested my presence, but I insisted that no formal arrangements be made. They spoke a few words dedicated to me and that was the extent of the day's events."

When asked about the positive aspects of his long life, Abul Hayat reflected, "Yes, my life has been positive. Like a river, everyone experiences highs and lows, but on the whole, I've lived a beautiful life. I've received so much love from people, and I still do. I've been fortunate to have everything I could ask for in this life. I feel fortunate."

Reflecting on his wife's role in his career and family life, Abul Hayat explained, "Her contribution has been immense. While I was acting, she took care of the family and looked after the children. She has always supported me and still does to this day. I've been able to work with ease because of her constant support. From the early days of my youth until now, she has been by my side, and I consider

myself very lucky in that regard."

When asked about his daughters, Bipasha Hayat and Natasha Hayat, Abul Hayat smiled and said, "They are well-educated and have grown into remarkable individuals, each pursuing their own artistic paths. My main wish was for them to become good-hearted people, and that's exactly who they've become."

"The country has evolved, and I'm hopeful that more positive changes will come through hard work," remarked the actor, on the future of Bangladesh. "I'm very optimistic about the future and believe something wonderful is on the horizon for us. I am confident that the younger generation will go far and achieve great things."

On the subject of his upcoming autobiography, the veteran actor revealed, "It took me many years to have finally completed writing it. Currently, we're working on the cover design, which my daughter Bipasha is handling. I've named the book *Robi Poth*. It captures many substantial moments from my life, and I've aimed to highlight different aspects of my journey. I can't say how successful I've been, but I've certainly tried to express the essence of my experiences and the various events of my life."

Selena Gomez makes the billionaire list



Last Friday, Bloomberg reported that Selena Gomez has joined the billionaires' list with an estimated net worth of US \$1.3 billion. Her beauty brand, Rare Beauty, launched in February 2019, played a major role in her achieving this significant mark as an entrepreneur.

According to the outlet, over 80% of Selena Gomez's wealth comes from her majority ownership in Rare Beauty. The beauty brand has also emerged as a key player in the influencer market.

Besides, Selena Gomez's hit show *Only Murders in the Building* has been renewed for a fifth season. She is the third most-followed person on Instagram and can earn up to \$30 million per endorsement deal, according to Page Six.



Oasis debut album 'Definitely, Maybe' tops charts again

Oasis's debut album *Definitely, Maybe* climbed back to the top of the UK charts last Friday, 30 years after its initial release, driven by excitement surrounding the band's reunion concerts next year.

The album originally debuted at No. 1 in 1994 and has returned to the top spot, thanks to the release of a deluxe 30th anniversary edition.

According to the Official Charts Company, the album saw a "408% week-on-week increase" and topped the vinyl albums chart, with over half of its weekly sales coming from vinyl records.

COUNTRYWIDE

Battery-run vehicles flood Habiganj town

MINTU DESHWARA

A significant rise in number of battery-run auto-rickshaws has paved way to serious traffic congestion at Mantola Bazar Intersection in Habiganj's Madhabpur upazila.

As a result, residents of neighbouring Chaumuhani, Bahra, Dharamghar and Andiura unions, especially students, office-goers, workers and shoppers, who commute through the road daily, are facing immense sufferings due to lengthy delays on their way.

All the business activities in the area are also being significantly disrupted.

Visiting the area recently, this correspondent saw numerous battery-run autorickshaws parked randomly on both sides of the road, leaving barely a narrow lane for vehicular movement and causing severe traffic congestion.

The scenario prevails all day from morning till night, local people said, adding that many of these auto-rickshaw drivers lack formal training and proper documents.

The CNG-run autorickshaws parked at two nearby stands on College Road and Madhya Bazar further add to the menace, they alleged.

Although the illegal auto-rickshaw stands have been causing serious traffic

jams in the area, still the authorities concerned continue to turn a blind eye, they said.

They urged the authorities concerned for strict enforcement of traffic regulations and action against offenders.

"The number of battery-run auto-rickshaws has increased significantly in recent times and most of the drivers neither have any training, nor any driving license. This has not only led to an escalation of traffic congestion, but often causing minor accidents," said Sadikur Rahman, a local resident.

"Due to traffic congestions, it now takes around an hour to commute a distance that should not take more than 15 minutes," said Zamiur Hossain, an office-goer.

Billal Hossain, a trader at Mantola Bazar, said these auto-rickshaws, mostly unauthorised and poorly regulated, used to be imported from China earlier, but now even local garages are assembling those, causing the rise in their number on the roads. "Controlling the situation has become very challenging. Even after appointing village guards to manage the traffic on the important road, the traffic congestion continues to persist," said Mohammad Alauddin, president of the local shop owners' association.



A large part of congestion the town dwellers face every day is due to illegal parking of auto-rickshaws near Mantola Bazar in Habiganj's Madhabpur upazila. PHOTO: STAR

53 firearms recovered 257 lives lost in accidents

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"All three categories of firearms were recovered in the drive, but it may take some time to say separately about the data," he said.

Without mentioning any timeframe, Enamul said the drive will continue.

After the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5 amid an uprising, mobs looted firearms and bullets from different police stations and establishments across the country in reprisal of the law enforcers' use of excessive force and lethal weapons on demonstrators.

The new interim government then gave a September 3 deadline for submitting the looted firearms to nearby police stations.

The government also ordered to deposit licensed firearms within the same timeframe, suspending the licences issued in the last 15 years during the AL government's tenure.

The joint drive was launched on September 4 after the end of the deadline.

According to the PHQ, 5,818 firearms and 6,07,262 bullets were looted

from police, different police stations, and establishments. Of those, 3,933 guns and 3,12,857 bullets were recovered until 12:00am on September 5. It means 1,885 arms and 2,94,405 bullets remained missing, according to a home ministry notification issued yesterday.

The guns include Chinese rifles, SMGs, pistols, shotguns, teargas launchers, and signal pistols.

PHQ data shows 32,005 teargas shells, 1,455 teargas grenades, 4,692 sound grenades, 290 smoke grenades, 55 stun grenades, 893 multiple bang stun grenades, and 177 teargas spray were also looted.

Of those, 23,194 teargas shells, 704 teargas grenades, 2,128 sound grenades, 213 colour smoke grenades, 18 stun grenades, 533 multiple bang stun grenades, and 94 teargas sprays have been recovered so far, the ministry said in the notification.

Neither the ministry nor the PHQ disclosed the number of firearm licences issued in the last 15 years and how many were submitted within the deadline.

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Power in Social Action (YPSA).

Among its various responsibilities, YPSA works to ensure a safe working environment at shipbreaking yards in the country.

Shahin said, "When our shipbreaking yards are becoming green yards one after another, this sort of accident is totally unacceptable. We want the owners of the shipbreaking yards and the monitoring authorities of the government to be more cautious in this regard in a bid to avert such accidents in the future."

Some 30 to 35 shipbreaking yards presently operate in Sitakunda. Of those, four yards, including that of SN Corporation, are certified as green yards.

Activists working for the rights of shipbreaking workers say if such an explosion can occur at a certified green shipbreaking yard, it goes without saying that the safety precautions at other yards are no better.

They say frequent accidents have been happening at these yards due to "sheer negligence" by the owners towards the workers' safety and lack of monitoring from the government offices concerned.

As per international rules, the owners must remove the toxic elements from a ship before bringing it ashore for dismantling, but most owners of ship-breaking yards do not do so properly, said Tapan Dutta, convener of Shipbreaking Workers' Trade Union

Forum.

"Instead, it's when owners compel the workers to dismantle ships with toxic elements that result in frequent accidents.

"Moreover, although, as per rule, the owners must train up the workers before engaging them in the work of dismantling ships, most of the owners do not do that either, and instead they engage the freshmen in dismantling ships without proper training that also results in repeated accidents in yards."

Bangladesh Ship Breakers and Recyclers Association (BSBRA) opened a training centre in Chattogram city few years ago, which is now "inactive," Tapan added.

Fazlul Kabir Mintu, member secretary of the same union forum, said, adequate safety gear is not provided to the workers, and that's why the rate of death is so high when accidents occur.

"Shipbreaking workers are engaged in risky work. As per the labour law, workers must be given rest for half an hour after every two hours to allow them to hold concentration during the work.

"But this rule is not followed at shipbreaking yards. Instead, the workers are forced to perform duty at a stretch of 8-10 hours."

Contacted, Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishment Inspector Shuvankar Dutta said a team visited the yard after the accident and that the department would take action after an investigation.

FATALITIES AT SHIPBREAKING YARDS		
YEAR		DEATHS
2014		9
2015		16
2016		17
2017		15
2018		20
2019		22
2020		11
2021		14
2022		10
2023		5
2024		1 (So far)

Six killed

FROM PAGE 2

According to Indian media reports, the civilian was shot dead in his sleep. "He was fired upon in his room itself," Kumar told Reuters, adding that security forces had been deployed to control the situation.

Manipur has ordered all schools in the state to remain shut for the day.

A state of 3.2 million people, Manipur has been divided into two ethnic enclaves since the conflict began in May 2023 - a valley controlled by the Meiteis

and the Kuki-dominated hills. The areas are separated by a stretch of no-man's land monitored by federal paramilitary forces.

On Sept 1, two people were killed and several injured in the valley district of Imphal West. Later in the week, a 78-year-old man was killed and six were injured when a "long-range rocket" was deployed by militants and fell on the house of a former chief minister in the valley's Bishnupur district, police said on Friday.

Teenager sued under CSA

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Locals took him to the police office, saying that he hurt their religious sentiments. But they later beat him up, officials said.

Tajul Islam, the deputy

commissioner at whose office the incident happened, said he tried to calm the mob by promising legal action against the teenager, but in vain.

Eventually, army teams had to rush there to help

the police control the crowd.

An Inter Services Public Relations press release later stated that the accused was admitted to a hospital and treated under army supervision.