



# 'I embrace stories that reflect my beliefs'

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

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SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Runa Khan's journey into the world of cinema has been nothing short of inspiring. Winning the National Film Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in *Haldaa*, directed by Tauquir Ahmed, was a momentous start that marked her as an actress with a unique touch. Since then, Runa's passion and dedication have continued to captivate audiences and critics alike, making her a beloved figure in the Bangladeshi film industry.

Today, Runa stands at an exciting juncture in her career, eagerly awaiting the release of multiple new films and preparing to embark on a fresh project set to start filming this month.

In a recent interview with The Daily Star, she shared insights into her philosophy as an actor. "I want to embrace stories and roles that align with my beliefs. I am drawn to characters that capture life with honesty and simplicity."

Among her most memorable roles are Jui in *Haldaa*, Maimuna in *Chitkini*, Rozy in *Kalo Megher Bhela*. Each of these roles, she noted, has brought her closer to understanding the resilience and beauty of the human spirit—qualities she strives to bring to life in her work.

*Haldaa* was a transformative project for Runa. When Tauquir Ahmed introduced her to the storyline and the character of Jui, she felt an instant connection. Recalling her experience, she spoke warmly of Tauquir's dedication to detail, especially in helping her master the Chatogram dialect, which was essential to Jui's authenticity. Runa embraced intense preparation, meticulously rehearsing

her lines to capture the rhythm and tone of the regional dialogue.

"Directors are true artistes," she reflected, "and I see myself as a director's artiste, bringing their vision to life on screen." For Runa, Jui remains a character she holds dear—a role that will stay with her throughout her career.

In *Chitkini*, Runa took on the challenging role of Maimuna, a stone labourer and single mother whose life represents the resilience of rural women. Filmed in Panchagarh under the direction of Sajedul Awwal, Runa felt both challenged and enriched by her time on set, working with emerging talents and immersing herself in Maimuna's story.

In another notable project, *Shapludu*, directed by Golam Sohrab Dodul, she took on a brief yet impactful role as a female drug trafficker. "Though my screen time was limited to just five minutes, the character resonated with audiences, leaving an impression that continues to be a topic of conversation. The warm reception and appreciation I received for the performance was a delightful surprise," shared the artiste.

Growing up in a small town, Runa was exposed to a wide range of life experiences, which deeply influenced her craft. "Theatre became my training ground, giving me insights and skills that shaped my approach to acting. I always consider the social context each character represents, as this is key to portraying them authentically," revealed Runa.

She has also been excited about her role in *Bok: The Soul of Nature*, directed by Masud Pathik, which is set to be released

soon. Drawing inspiration from the poetry of Jibanananda Das, *Bok* allowed her to explore a new character in a unique setting. "In *Bok*, I embody Sobita, a character that unveils a different facet of my artistry, enriching my journey as an actress," Runa shared.

She continued, "With each film, I have received respect, love, and praise. Slowly, step by step, this is how I want to see myself in cinema—connected with meaningful films and dedicated to art."

Her performances in films like *Gohin Baluchor*, where she played Shamima, and *Kalo Megher Bhela*, where she portrayed Rozy, the mother of Dukhu, have earned her immense respect and love from both critics and fans. Runa feels honoured by the praise she received from poet Nirmalendu Goon, the writer of *Kalo Megher Bhela*, which was directed by his daughter, Mritytika Goon. "Having Nirmalendu da praise my performance was a great achievement for me," she recalled.

In *Ekti Na Bola Golpo*, directed by Pankaj Palit, Runa brought the character of Maimuna to life, displaying her remarkable ability to adapt to roles that are different in nature, while similar in name. "I received much love for my role in the film *Ekti Na Bola Golpo*, where I played the character Maimuna. Interestingly, I also portrayed a character named Maimuna in *Chitkini*," she candidly said.

The actress is gearing up to begin shooting this month for a new film, titled *Leclamonhon*, directed by Zahid Hossain. She concluded by saying, "I hope to bring another fresh side of myself to the screen this time."

## Shakib Khan's 'Dorod' to premiere in 20 countries

The highly anticipated film *Dorod*, starring Shakib Khan and directed by Anonno Mamun, is gearing up for a simultaneous release in 20 countries on November 15.



Action Cut Entertainment is managing the film's worldwide distribution beyond Bangladesh, including in the United States, Canada, the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, Malaysia, Italy, the United Kingdom, etc.

The plot of this romantic psychological thriller centres on a series of murders involving high-profile figures in Varanasi, India, with suspicion falling on the character Dulu Mia, played by Shakib.

The film's cast also includes Bollywood actress Sonal Chauhan, Payel Sarkar, Rahul Dev, Alok Jain, Rajesh Sharma, Safa Marwa, and Imtu Ratish.

## 'Priyo Maloti' to premiere at Cairo Int'l Film Festival



*Priyo Maloti*, starring Mehazabien Chowdhury, has been officially selected for the prestigious Cairo International Film Festival (CIFF).

Known as *Whispers of a Thirsty River* in English, the film is directed by Shankha Das Gupta and will represent Bangladesh in the World Cinema category at CIFF's 45th edition, taking place from November 13 to 22 at Cairo's historic Opera House.

Produced jointly by Frame Per Second and Chorki, *Priyo Maloti* delves into life's ordinary experiences, yet weaves in a unique political perspective, which the director believes will resonate with viewers.

The film stars Mehazabien in the titular role, along with Nader Chowdhury, Azad Abul Kalam, Shahjahan Samrat, and Rizvi Riju in supporting roles.

# NEWS

## Fresh probe into Pilkhana killings soon

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Enquired about the police's response to a recent fire at the Jatiyo Party headquarters, located close to the Ramna Model Police Station, the adviser said, "I don't have the details on that incident. I will look into it."

Regarding his discussions with the BGB officials, the adviser said that he instructed the force to foster positive relationships with the local communities, particularly in border areas.

"Good relations with the locals can help our operations as they provide assistance whenever needed."

He also emphasised the importance of preventing the smuggling of illegal goods, including drugs like Phensedyl, into the country. "Phensedyl and other contraband drugs often cross our borders. We must prevent this."

Mentioning the government's zero-tolerance to criminal activities, he said no criminal should be allowed to evade justice.

About the BGB's role in checking Rohingya infiltration, he said although infiltration is illegal, Bangladesh considers some incidents on humanitarian grounds.

"Rohingyas attempt to enter Bangladesh in some border areas where gunfire is reported across the border. We send them back, but a few of them may slip through the security cordon," he said.

## Another 58

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The notices said on October 21 evening there was a class for trainee cadets SIs on "Various Sections of Law" at the Chamney Memorial Hall.

But the instructors found the cadets yelling and sitting haphazardly. When the instructors asked the cadets to maintain discipline, they disobeyed and continued shouting.

The notices issued to the 10 others said they did not maintain discipline on October 10 evening. They allegedly shouted and did not pay attention to a class at the gymnasium.

The notices said such "undisciplined behaviour" in a class is against the rules and regulations of the academy.

He said around 1.3 million Rohingya are now sheltered in Bangladesh.

BGB Director General Major General Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddique and other senior officials of the force were present during the briefing.

### 20 SPECIAL PPS APPOINTED

The government has appointed 20 special public prosecutors (PPs) to handle a case filed with Lalbagh Police Station under the Explosive Substances Act over the 2009 BDR massacre.

The solicitor wing of the Law and Justice Division issued a notification in this regard on Sunday, reports BSS.

The 20 special public prosecutors are Md Borhan Uddin, Forhad Niyon, Zakir Hossain Bhuiyan, Mst Robhana Nasrin Shefali, Mohammad Jahangir Hossain, Md Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Md Shafiqul Boshor Sajal, Golam Moktadir Uzzal, Hannan Bhuiyan, Md Abdul Latif, Md Mehedi Hasan Jewel, Gazi Mashkurul Alam Sourabh, Md Helal Uddin, Md Zillur Rahman, Md Mahfujur Rahman Ilias, Md Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, Md Mehebab Hossain, Md Mizanur Rahman Shihab, Md Khurshid Alam, and Aigar Hossain.

On September 9, the government cancelled the appointments of 17 special PPs who were tasked with handling the case.

Sources said the PHQ, in consultation with the home ministry, conducted a background check on the political affiliations of 801 trainees in the batch. This check, undertaken by an intelligence agency, was conducted after the fall of the Awami League government on August 5.

Claiming themselves to be innocent, several dismissed trainee SIs earlier said they did not breach discipline.

"I was not involved in politics, nor did I get the job through anyone's recommendation. I was supposed to take part in the passing out ceremony within a few days, but I have been dismissed based on charges that I'm unaware of," one of them told this correspondent earlier.

## 117 women

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victims of rape last month. Of them, 27 were aged under 18.

In the release, the HRSS said it is worrying that 76 children faced violence last month, of whom 36 were killed and 40 were subjected to physical and mental torture.

The monthly report was prepared based on media reports and HRSS's own documentations, reads the release.

It added that at least nine people were killed and 400 were injured in 68 incidents of political violence last month — 26 were between BNP and Awami League; 25 BNP intra-party clashes; three between BNP and Jamaat-e-Islami; one AL intra-party clash; and 13 among different political parties.

Besides, 12 people involved in politics were killed in clashes over establishing supremacy and criminal attacks.

Last month, 45 journalists were subjected to 21 violent and other incidents. Of them, two were killed, 22 injured, three were harassed, two received threats, and seven were detained.

Nine journalists were accused in four cases.

Meanwhile, a journalist died when an earth-laden tractor hit him while he was on duty in Jamalpur and another journalist's hanging body was recovered by police in the capital.

Also last month, four journalists were detained in three cases filed under the Cyber Security Act-2023, while three people died either in clashes with law enforcement agencies or in their custody.

Besides, three Bangladeshis were killed in border incidents — two along the Bangladesh-India border and another along Bangladesh-Myanmar border.

At least 10 incidents of attacks on minority communities and their establishments also took place in October.

Besides, 19 people were killed and five others injured in 19 incidents of "mob violence", while 26 workers were killed and at least 59 others injured in 38 incidents of violence against workers.

Meanwhile, 29 workers died in workplace accidents.

## Govt will scrap

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government and assisting it in rebuilding the country, said the release.

Regarding repression on the minority communities, the adviser stated that minorities in Bangladesh are safe. "Special security arrangements were made during the last Durga Puja, and holidays were extended."

He said the previous fascist government had played political games with minorities, considering

## Work underway to ensure the voting rights

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Yunus that their work was going on in full swing. They hoped they would be able to submit their reports within the stipulated time of three months, meeting sources told The Daily Star.

The heads of the commissions also said that they had started discussions with the stakeholders and were reviewing relevant laws and regulations to bring necessary reforms.

"Professor Muhammad Yunus gave us a patient hearing and encouraged us to complete the job within the stipulated time," said a commission head.

Yunus said that this was a historical opportunity for them to work for a change in the country, and the nation would remember the contributions of the commissions.

The chief adviser also said that his government was ready to provide all kinds of assistance to the reform commissions.

The six commission chiefs are Prof Ali Riaz of the Constitutional Reform Commission; Justice Shah Abu Naim Mominur Rahman of the Judicial Reform Commission; Badiul Alam Majumdar of the Election System Reform Commission; Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury of the Public Administration Reform Commission; Safar Raj Hossain of the Police Administration Reform Commission; and Iftekharuzzaman of the Anti-Corruption Reform Commission.

In a national address on September 11, Yunus announced the formation of the six commissions to reform the electoral system, police, judiciary, public administration, the constitution, and the ACC.

The commissions were formed in the first week of October. At yesterday's meeting, Badiul said that they were taking appropriate

them as a vote bank. "Despite major incidents of minority oppression during their regime, they did not pursue justice."

Nahid sought Norway's cooperation in disseminating truth about the July uprising to counter the various negative international propaganda surrounding it.

The government wants to strengthen its relationship with Norway as a development partner, he

said, hoping for Norway's investment in the development of information technology sector and media, the release said.

Md Mushfiqur Rahman, secretary of the Posts and Telecommunications Division, Shish Haider Chowdhury, secretary of the Information and Communication Technology Division, and other senior officials of the ministry were present at the meeting.

steps to issue postal ballots for absentee voters. He said the voter list was being coordinated with the national identity cards, according to the chief adviser's press wing.

The Election Reform Commission is emphasising on ensuring women's participation in the electoral process. It is also in contact with the stakeholders through digital platforms, and taking suggestions from them.

The Police Reform Commission has already met 10 times and held four meetings with the stakeholders, commission chief Safar informed the chief adviser.

The commission is working on a proposal to change the related laws that deal with using force to control mobs. Some sections of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1898 are being reviewed to assess whether those can be changed, he added.

The commission has prepared a questionnaire to seek public opinion and it has already been posted online. The commission is analysing some proposals on amending a few laws and rules.

Mueyed informed the CA about the progress of the work of the Public Administration Reform Commission. He said they were working in full swing, and they had already sought and received opinions from the stakeholders through a website.

Members of the commission have already visited some districts and upazilas and exchanged views with the people from different walks of life. They are also holding meetings with the representatives from different government service cadres.

Ali Riaz informed Yunus that the Constitutional Reform Commission would seek written opinions and specific proposals from political parties and other stakeholders,

## How the US elects

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and campaign in states that could go either way — usually called battleground states or swing states.

For this election, the swing states are Nevada, with six electoral votes; Arizona, with 11; Georgia, with 16; North Carolina, also with 16; Pennsylvania, with 19; Michigan, with 15; and Wisconsin, with 10.

Harris and Trump are very likely to get, if there is no catastrophe, 226 and 219 electoral votes respectively from states that are almost certain to go their way.

Harris needs 44 more electoral votes and Trump 51 from the swing states that have 93 votes on offer.