

When dance speaks the language of resilience and spirit



PHOTOS: COURTESY

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SHARMIN JOYA

The mirror often reflects only surface beauty, but true beauty lies within—resilience and spirit define a person. *A Rising Lioness: In Search of Beauty*, a powerful dance drama directed and choreographed by Adity Roy, founder of Adity Dance CIC, a UK-registered organisation, challenges conventional notions of beauty. Inspired by the extraordinary life of Jannatul Ferdous Ivy—a burn survivor, writer, filmmaker, and human rights activist—the production is a moving exploration of inner strength.

Sponsored by Tower Hamlets, Queen Mary University, Arts Council England and Stonebridge Legal Solutions, the two-day show took place at Rich Mix Centre in the UK on November 15 and 16, paying a tribute to Ivy’s remarkable journey of hope and perseverance.

Named one of the BBC’s 100 most inspirational and powerful women in 2023, Ivy has emerged as a beacon of strength—not just for marginalised individuals or trauma survivors but for anyone hesitant to live their life in full spirit. She has transformed 28 years of pain into a source of strength, dedicating herself to empowering burn survivors and women with disabilities since 2019. Through her work, she inspires positive perspectives and self-help skills within these communities.

Reflecting on the performance, Ivy shared, “It was surreal to witness the artistes portray my journey through dance. The language of the performance, expressed through various dance forms, was tremendous. I’m so grateful to

Adity and her team. Adity is a true patriot and a beautiful human being, who brings voice to those often unheard through her dance.”

The production narrates a story of perseverance and transformation. It begins with a young woman enjoying a love-filled life, tragically altered by a devastating burn accident that scars 60% of her body. Abandoned by her romantic partner and burdened by trauma, she endures numerous surgeries and countless societal rejections. Yet, she rises above adversity, pursuing higher education, writing, filmmaking, and mountain hiking—all while inspiring others to build a more inclusive society.

“Ivy apu’s journey is incredibly inspiring, and we tried to bring her vivid persona and courage to the stage, portraying the immense pain she has endured,” said Adity Roy.

Adity, recognised with the Nritya Visharad Award for her production *Avinashi Anurag* (Eternal Love), has a

history of using dance to raise awareness about societal issues, including challenges faced by children with special needs.

Arenowned dancescholar, and a Bangladeshi expat based in the UK, Adity is celebrated for her expertise in Bharatanatyam, ballet, and contemporary dance. Trained under legendary mentors such as the late Guru Professor CV Chandrasekhar, Smt Pushkala Gopal, and Santosh Menon, her style blends classical traditions with innovative, contemporary expression.

“Addressing social issues through dance has always been my primary focus,” Adity explained. “In *A Rising Lioness: In Search*



Adity Roy and Jannatul Ferdous Ivy

COUNTRYWIDE

ROAD CONSTRUCTION WORK

Sand lifting threatens Kuakata reserve forest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A contractor of Patuakhali Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) is extracting sand from Kuakata reserve forest for construction of a paved road, affecting trees under the green belt of the forest.

Large and small ditches inside the forest area, caused by the sand lifting, not only posing threat to the reserve forest, but also destroying numerous trees of the plantation project.

Locals said despite repeated complaints to the authorities concerned nothing has been done so far to stop the heinous act.

Patuakhali LGED is constructing a 10-kilometre-long and 16-feet-wide road on both sides of Kuakata Zero Point to facilitate movement of tourists in Kuakata beach area.

Local contraction firm Younus and Brothers got the work order and conducting the construction work of the road at a cost of Tk 22.27 crore.

In the first phase, sand filling work to build a five kilometre portion of the paved road, stretching from Kuakata Zero Point to Gangamati area, is going on.

Sub-contractor Kabir Hossain, who was given the task of earth filling, was supposed to buy sand from local markets and use it in the road work, but extracting sand from inside the reserved forest area by installing dredger machines and using it in the road construction work.

As a result, numerous trees are dying due to creation of large ditches in the forest area, caused by the illegal sand extraction.

While talking to this correspondent, Kalapara Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Rabiul Islam said after learning about the matter he sent the assistant commissioner (Land) and stopped the sand extraction.

However, the upazila administration’s statement does not match the reality as sand lifting is still going on in full swing.

Local resident Dulal Fakir said the areas from where the sand is being extracted should be filled up immediately, otherwise it will surely damage the nearby flood control dyke.

Another local Babul Munshi said the coastal flood control dyke basically protect us from various natural disasters including cyclones.

Despite repeated attempts sub-contractor Kabir Hossain refused to make any comment in this regard and said sand is being supplied as per the rules. Mahipur Range Officer Abul Kalam said an influential gang is extracting sand from the reserved forest to build a road and the matter has been already reported to the upazila administration.

Indo-Bangla high-level meet

FROM PAGE 12
and the sheltering of the former prime minister Sheikh Hasina in India.

Bangladesh Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus in his address to the nation on November 17, said Dhaka will request New Delhi for Hasina’s extradition.

Since the fall of the Awami League government, the Indian High Commission has limited the visas being issued to Bangladeshi tourists.

Besides, many of the projects under the Indian

Line of Credit have also remained halted as the Indian contractors have not yet returned to Bangladesh for security concerns.

Meanwhile, Foreign Adviser Tuhid Hossain earlier told the media that Dhaka will review the agreements and MoUs signed with New Delhi over the last few years.

Indian scholar Prof Sreeradha Datta, who specialises in South Asian affairs, earlier told The Daily Star that a high-level

meeting between the two countries should be held at the earliest to ease relations.

Bangladesh Foreign Adviser Tuhid Hossain and Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York in late September.

However, Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s meeting there could not be held as their stay in New York then did not overlap.

Take battery-run rickshaws

FROM PAGE 12
nationwide. However, as this directive had not been enforced, president and general secretary of the rickshaw owners unity alliance, Zahurul Islam Masum and Momin Ali, filed the petition for immediate intervention.

On May 15 this year, then road transport and bridges minister Obaidul Quader asked the authorities concerned to take steps to stop battery-run rickshaws from plying the city roads.

After the ban came into effect, auto-rickshaw drivers on May 18 took to the streets.

They demonstrated in the Mirpur-10, Pallabi, and Agargaon areas, and also clashed with police. At least 20 people were reportedly injured.

The following day, drivers staged protests in Rampura, Badda, Kuril, and Khilkhet areas.

Considering it, then prime minister Sheikh Hasina on May 19 instructed the authorities to cancel the decision on banning battery-run auto-rickshaws.

However, the ban on battery-run auto-rickshaws on 22 highways remained in force as per an earlier decision.

It’s now mandatory for all

FROM PAGE 12
The National Committee on Air Pollution Control, in its second meeting last year, made a similar decision to prevent water, air, and sound pollution, said officials.

RHD is one of the major government agencies implementing many projects for building or expanding roads and bridges. It is now implementing 122 infrastructure projects, of which 17 are foreign-funded, shows planning ministry documents.

At the monthly coordination meeting of the Road Transport and Highways Division on September 24, its Senior Secretary Ehsanul Hoque asked whether RHD carries out EIA and takes ECC before undertaking any project.

In reply, RHD Chief Engineer Syed Moinul Hasan said they do EIAs and take ECCs for the foreign-aided projects, but they usually do not take such clearances for the government-funded ones, read the meeting minutes.

Then the meeting decided that assessment must be

done and ECC has to be taken for any government-funded project.

At the meeting, the chief engineer mentioned that 48 Development Project Proposals (DPPs) were now pending at different stages of the approval process.

Moinul told The Daily Star yesterday that they usually carry out EIA based on the project size. Now, they will make EIA and ECC mandatory for every project.

He added that some of the DPPs are now at the preliminary stage and some at the advance stage.

Responding to a question, Moinul said, “Yes. It would take time to carry out the assessments, but we will do as per the directive.”

Another top RHD official said some of the pending DPPs may not be moved forward for now given the changed situation.

But it will take time to do EIAs for the other proposed projects in the approval process and thus the number of RHD projects will decrease in the coming days, the official said, wishing not to be named.

Bangladeshi silent film ‘Nirvana’ selected for Eurasia int’l film fest



Bangladeshi silent film *Nirvana*, directed by Asif Islam, has officially been selected for screening at the 17th Eurasia International Film Festival as part of its official competition.

The festival runs from November 24 to December 1 in Kazakhstan, with *Nirvana* slated for screening on November 25. At least 11 films from 11 countries will be competing at the festival.

Earlier, the film bagged the Special Jury

Award at the Moscow International Film Festival (MIFF) and also claimed an award at the Ganges-sur-Seine International Film Festival in France.

Nirvana is a silent film that explores the themes of grief, loss, and self-discovery involving three factory workers, featuring Priyam Archi, Fatema Tuz Zohra, and Imran Mahathir.

Taylor Swift’s London concerts cost \$1m only in security



Taylor Swift’s *The Eras Tour* concerts in London cost the Metropolitan Police over US \$1 million in security, according to recent Hollywood reports.

Security expenses surged from US \$85,000 per night in June to US \$125,000 per night in August due to heightened threats, including disrupted bomb plots at her Vienna shows.

Reports claim Swift’s mother and manager, Andrea Swift, negotiated directly with officials, demanding extensive security, and even threatened to cancel the concerts if demands weren’t met.

Critics are urging Swift to reimburse part of the costs, drawing comparisons to Harry Styles, who repaid US \$70,000 of his concert’s security expenses last year.

Economy now stabilised

FROM PAGE 12
when the government assumed power, he said.

Several steps have been taken and the fruits of those are yet to be visible, he said, adding that some austerity measures were taken, like reducing foreign trips of officials, purchase of luxury cars, and reducing the budget.

He said projects were being reviewed and those taken up under political considerations were being cancelled.

“We’re trying to control our expenditure and the budget deficit. The challenges before us are to mobilise more revenue ... If we don’t increase revenue generation, then we wouldn’t be able to finance our development projects,” he added.

Salehuddin said the National Board of Revenue (NBR) has started the process of fully automatic income tax, customs, and VAT services, ensuring transparency to foster

trust among taxpayers and businesses.

He said individuals’ submissions of e-returns have exceeded four lakh. “The companies will get this benefit soon....”

Salehuddin said the policy and operation divisions of the NBR would be separated. “An act was passed in 2008, but it is yet to be followed.”

About price hikes, he said the government has reduced or cut import duties on various types of essentials, like rice, eggs, and onions, and withdrawn collateral (margin) for opening Letters of Credits for their import.

“But still inflation is high, we know, but it started a long time ago. We need more time and the people need to have patience...” he said.

NBR Chairman Md Abdur Rahman Khan said the prices of some products like eggs and sugar have reduced a little after the duties were cuts.

Prices of some products

are still high as their prices are high in the international market, he said.

Finance Secretary Khairuzzaman Mozumder said they were hopeful of getting \$2.1 billion from Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) by December.

The ADB and WB would provide \$600 million and \$500 million in loans, he said.

“We’ve requested an additional \$1 billion with the existing \$4.7 billion in support from the IMF for this year. Discussions are set to conclude when the IMF team visits on December 4, and we’re optimistic about the outcome,” he said.

Secretary of Economic Relations Division Shahriar Kader Siddiky said they were aiming to get \$1 billion from the WB by repurposing the existing loan programmes.

He said \$723 million has been finalised and talks on the rest of the amount will conclude by December.

HC orders inquiry into Adani deal

FROM PAGE 12
authorities to submit documents regarding the process leading up to the deal with Adani Power. At the same time, the HC also issued an order asking the relevant government

authorities to explain why the Adani deal should not be declared illegal.

It fixed February 25, 2025, for the next date of hearing.

The HC bench of Justice Farah Mahbub and Justice

Debasish Roy Chowdhury gave the directives and the rule following a writ petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer Md Abdul Qaiyum challenging the legality of the power purchase agreement signed on November 5, 2017.

Ukraine fires first

FROM PAGE 12
It comes just after the United States President Joe Biden gave Kyiv permission to use long-range missiles to strike military targets inside Russia.

Military experts say US missiles can help Ukraine defend a pocket it has captured as a bargaining chip inside Russia but are not likely to change the course of the 33-month-old war.

Hong Kong jails 45 pro-democracy campaigners

FROM PAGE 12
democracy protests in 2019, and the democrats have been treated in accordance with local laws.

After a 118-day trial, 14 of the democrats were found guilty in May, including Australian citizen Gordon Ng and activists Owen Chow and Gwyneth Ho, while two were acquitted.

The other 31 pleaded guilty and all 45 were given sentences ranging from 4-10 years.

Australia’s Foreign Minister Penny Wong said she was “gravely concerned” about the sentences, and called on China to “cease suppression of freedoms of expression, assembly, media and civil society,” in Hong Kong.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian told reporters that “no one can engage in illegal activities in the name of democracy and attempt to escape legal punishment”, adding that Beijing “firmly supports” Hong Kong’s efforts to safeguard national security.

Hit by battery-run rickshaw

FROM PAGE 12
pronounced her dead, said Shamsur Rahman, chief medical officer at JU Medical Centre.

“Her condition was critical when she was brought to the centre,” he said.

Around 8:45pm, students marched on campus, demanding a ban on battery-powered rickshaws on campus.

In 2022, Puja Majumder, a student of journalism, was seriously injured in an auto-rickshaw accident.

Students then demanded a ban on auto-rickshaws on campus. But that demand was not met.