

# ‘Priyo Maloti’ offers a fresh, authentic narrative: Mehazabien

Mehazabien’s excitement was visible while speaking about the experience, “It feels great, really great. I’ll finally be able to see myself on the big screen, and the audience will get to see me in this new light as well.”

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

After 15 years of dominating television and digital platforms, prominent actress Mehazabien Chowdhury is ready to take on a new challenge: the silver screen. The celebrated actress, who has gained immense popularity for her work in dramas and OTT platforms, is now set to star in two films, marking her debut in cinema.

Both of her films, *Priyo Maloti* and *Saba*, have already received international recognition, having been screened at multiple film festivals abroad. However, it is with *Priyo Maloti* that Mehazabien will make her official theatrical debut.

Mehazabien’s excitement was visible while speaking about the experience, “It feels great, really great. I’ll finally be able to see myself on the big screen, and the audience will get to see me in this new light as well.”

*Priyo Maloti*, directed by Shankha Dasgupta, is a story deeply rooted in the lives of ordinary people. “It’s our story, the story of our lives. It’s completely original. The audience will get to experience a film with a fresh, authentic narrative,” Mehazabien explained. “There is always a demand for good stories, and this film delivers just that.”



The actress, who has garnered a reputation for portraying complex characters, finds the role of Maloti particularly challenging. “It was tough. It wasn’t easy at all. The character was a real challenge,” she admitted.

When asked about the film’s thematic focus, Mehazabien candidly responded, “To be honest, *Priyo Maloti* is a story about women. It captures the journey of women’s lives, their struggles, and their resilience.”

The plot follows Maloti, whose life is



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

upended by a fire that leaves her husband missing. With no government assistance forthcoming, she is forced to embark on a difficult journey to secure a living, setting the stage for the narrative’s emotional depth. The film, based on a true story, highlights the trials and tribulations of those left behind in the wake of personal tragedy.

Mehazabien believes that the story will resonate with the audience on a deep level. “I believe that the story will move people. It’s a narrative that will linger in their minds.”

She also spoke highly of the director,

Shankha Dasgupta, praising his meticulous approach. “He has crafted this film with such care. All of us, the entire cast and crew, gave it our all, with complete dedication and love,” she said.

*Priyo Maloti* is poised to bring Mehazabien’s talent to the forefront of cinema, with audiences eagerly awaiting her first appearance on the big screen.

Mehazabien’s transition from television to cinema, marked by her involvement in meaningful, nuanced films, signals a new chapter in her already illustrious career.



## ‘Paatal Lok’ season 2 teaser dropped

Amazon Prime Video has dropped a gripping teaser for the much-awaited second season of *Paatal Lok*, showcasing Jaideep Ahlawat’s gritty return as Hathiram Chaudhary. The teaser features Hathiram in a brutal fight, bloodied yet defiant, ending with the chilling line: “The Door to Hell Opens Soon.”

Prime Video shared the teaser with the caption: “Mausam badalne wala hai. #PaatalLokOnPrime.”

Created by Sudip Sharma, the new season promises a darker investigation as Hathiram reunites with Ishwak Singh’s Ansari. Directed by Avinash Arun and produced by Karnesh Sharma under Clean Slate Filmz, the release date remains under wraps. Ahlawat was last seen in Netflix’s *Maharaj*.

## Bangladesh Int’l Short and Independent Film Festival to showcase 276 films from 100 nations

The 17th Bangladesh International Short and Independent Film Festival, organised by the Bangladesh Short Film Forum, will screen 276 films from over 100 countries from December 20-27 at the National Museum in Dhaka.

The event opens on December 20 at 4pm, with Nahid Islam, adviser to the Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications, and IT, inaugurating. Special guests include photographer Nasir Ali Mamun and fiction writer Mashrur Arefin.

Dedicated to the July-August Uprisings’ martyrs and celebrating SM Sultan’s centenary, highlights include Palestinian films on December 25 and Arab films on December 26. Mostofa Sarwar Farooki will grace the award ceremony on December 27.

# COUNTRYWIDE

## Dried fish trade thriving in Netrakona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Huge quantities of dried fish are produced every year in different haor areas of Netrakona while several hundred marginalised people are involved in the business worth hundreds of crores annually.

The district fisheries department has set a target of producing 425 tonnes of dried fish this year as the haor areas in five upazilas of the district see huge quantities of dried fish production this season, Netrakona District Fisheries Officer (DFO) Mohammad Shahjahan Kabir said.

In addition to the flash floods, heavy rainfall has helped much to increase the amount of country fishes in the open waterbodies in different upazilas of the district, the DFO said adding that the production of dried fish was around 400 tonnes last season, which was 230 tonnes the year before.

Alongside the fishers, hundreds of families in the region are involved in this profession and hope to earn a good amount of money by producing different types quality dried fishes, locally called Shutki, this season.

Fishers are enjoying a good business of dries fish due to its high demand and good prices in last couple of years, the DFO further said.

Usually local haors like Dingaputa, Boali, Chhayar, Kirtankhola Haor and the several rivers including Dhanu, Moghra, Satmadhalai and Kongsha are main sources of different country varieties that include puti, chingri, shol, boal, batasi,

tengra and chanda, fishers said.

Many ponds in five upazilas of the district got washed away due to the flash floods this year, resulting a good catch in different haors, fisher Sukhen Das of Gaglajur village in Mohanganj upazila said.

Sukhen, who has been involved with the profession since his boyhood, said last season he produced nearly 150 maunds of dried fishes and expecting a higher production this year than that of the previous year.

“Dried fishes produced here have a good demand across the country,” said Arati Rani Das of the same locality.

Shamim Reza, Khaliajury upazila fisheries officer, said hundreds of families in different haor areas have been producing dried fishes, using traditional methods for decades.

The upazila fisheries department has a target to produce 100 tonnes of dried fishes this year, Shamim said.

Usually fish drying season starts in September every year, when different types of indigenous fishes are available in local haors, and continues till March next year, he said, adding that fishermen set up bamboo platforms in the open field to dry their catches.

While talking, a number of fishermen said they sell their products to buyers, coming from different areas of the country including Mymensingh, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Kishoreganj and Dhaka.

Each kilogramme of dried fish is currently selling for Tk 350 to Tk 500, depending on its variety, fishers said.

## Killings at Pilkhana

FROM PAGE 12

High Court that it will not form any committee about the BDR (renamed Border Guard Bangladesh) massacre now as two criminal cases are pending with the Appellate Division and a Dhaka Court over the incident.

Deputy Attorney General Tanim Khan placed a letter from the home ministry to this effect before the HC bench of justices Farah Mahbub and Debasish Roy Chowdhury during the hearing of a writ petition. The bench fixed January 5 for passing an order on this issue.

On December 16, Mahin Sarker, a member of the executive committee of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement, in a social media post, has announced to lay siege to the ministry related to the formation of a commission for the BDR killings.

Then Md Sarjis Alam, chief organiser of the Jatiya Nagorik Committee, in another social media status supported Mahin and declared a programme at the Central Shaheed Minar around 11:00am yesterday.

But the home adviser Jahangir Alam addressed the briefing around 9:40am, and said, “The interim government is determined to re-investigate the BDR killings and ensure justice.”

He highlighted that the home ministry has been active in this matter since the formation of the interim government, and as the ministry’s adviser, he had consistently advocated for re-investigating the incident.

“I first made the announcement at the home ministry on September 2 and again during my visit to the BGB headquarters on November 4, which received wide coverage in print, electronic, and online media,” he said.

The adviser emphasised his personal commitment to justice for the BDR killings, both as a former member of the army and as a citizen.

Jahangir reiterated the interim government’s commitment to establishing people’s

rights, good governance, and justice, aiming for a discrimination-free society.

He clarified that the exact number of committee members had not yet been finalised but suggested it could be between five and nine, with more representation from the armed forces. The senior-most member of the committee will serve as its head.

After finalising the committee’s composition, discussions will determine the scope of its work and the timeframe for submitting the report.

Regarding whether there will be a committee or a commission, the adviser said, “When we sit, the commission can be formed. It doesn’t seem to be much difference between forming a committee and a commission.”

In response to queries, the adviser said there was no conflict with the law ministry over the committee’s formation and that the government would seek legal opinions, if necessary.

## Nothing wrong

FROM PAGE 12

political parties and individuals jealous and they have “begun conspiring”. Such conspiracies are also a threat to the independence and sovereignty of the country, he said.

“Since before 1981, we have faced conspiracies both domestically and internationally. But the BNP has always believed in people’s right to vote.”

Tarique urged BNP leaders to gain people’s trust. “When people vote freely, they think carefully

before casting.

“If we want to repair the state and implement our plans, we must go to power with people’s support.”

Referring to the Awami League and former prime minister Sheikh Hasina, he said the autocrat and some of its accomplices had fled, but their conspiracies are here.

“If anyone among us breaches public trust for personal gains, strict action must be taken to prevent them from tarnishing the party’s reputation.”

## Promotions

FROM PAGE 12

Commission was separated from the Public Service Commission.

The commission is also considering organising the remaining cadres into five distinct clusters.

Muyeed added that the commission will suggest eliminating the police verification requirement for government jobs and passports.

“Every citizen has the right to obtain a passport. Unless there is a legal restriction, everyone has the right to travel abroad.”

The senior secretary said the reform commission will also propose formation of separate bodies to oversee the health and education sectors as it believes the current structure of the education and health cadres is no longer necessary.

“Education and health are vital sectors for the public. The commission is actively considering offering special benefits to professionals working in these areas. However, the final decision will be made by the government.”

He said the commission has agreed to recommend upgrading Faridpur and Cumilla to administrative divisions. “If the government wishes, it can implement this

recommendation.”

A proposal in this regard was placed at a cabinet meeting in November last year, but it could not be implemented due to economic condition of the country.

Reform commission members Prof Syeda Shahina Sobhan, Mohammad Tarek, Mohammad Ayub Mia, and Md Hafizur Rahman Bhuiyan, and student representative Mehadi Hasan attended yesterday’s meeting.

Expressing frustration over the comments from the reform commission members, Administrative Service Association Secretary-General Mahbubur Rahman last night told The Daily Star that the administration cadre officials were deeply disheartened by the reform commission’s comments.

“In a meeting tonight [last night], we discussed the issue and made some decisions. We will soon inform the media about our stance.” He said 25 percent posts of deputy secretary are kept aside for other cadres as per a court order, and the authorities should consider whether the reform commission can raise question over the issue.



Fishermen in Netrakona have turned to drying their catch and preserve them for sell, especially ahead of winter when supply of fish across the country is heightened.

PHOTO: STAR