

Sabila Nur ventures into writing, co-authors debut book

Popular actress Sabila Nur has officially stepped into the world of writing, albeit she previously wrote stories for television dramas.

She debuted as an author at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair with the book *Bhalobasha Otopor*, a collection of 10 short stories co-written with Salam Russell.

Surprising fans Sabila announced her book belatedly on February 26 via her Facebook account, just before the fair ended.

She recently explained her decision to local media, stating, "Acting is my priority. I simply write occasionally, so I don't consider myself a professional writer. That's why I chose to keep it all low-key. Despite the late reveal, *Bhalobasha Otopor* remains available online."

Previously, her scripts inspired the dramas *Parapar* (2021) and *Ridika* (2022), in which she also starred.




PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Everything we do in life is our ‘Amalnama’: ZAHID HASAN

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Zahid Hasan is making his highly anticipated return to the screen with *Amalnama*, a web-film directed by Raihan Rafi. The film's teaser, recently released by Chorki, features the veteran actor in a bold new role as a police officer.

Excited about the project, the *Made in Bangladesh* actor shared with The Daily Star, "I am returning with a web-film after a considerable break, and it feels great. I chose this project because I connected with the story and my character. The project represents how I envisioned making my comeback."

Amalnama, inspired by a true story, has already generated buzz on social media. Zahid's decision to join the film was largely influenced by his admiration for both the script and the director's vision. He explained, "Raihan Rafi approached me with the story. I liked the plot and my character, so I agreed to be part of it."



As a seasoned actor, Zahid prioritises meaningful roles over quantity. "I'm an actor because I love the job. I've come this far thanks to my passion for acting. Now, let's see how the audience responds to *Amalnama*. I'll be happy if they enjoy it," he said.

Alongside *Amalnama*, Zahid

will also appear in *Utshob*, a film directed by Tanim Noor, set for release this Eid-ul-Azha. Reflecting on his choices, he added, "I don't take on projects unless I truly like them. After my break, I've worked on two projects and enjoyed both. The audience will see me in different roles in these films."

Zahid also offered an insightful perspective on the theme of *Amalnama*, "Everything we do in life becomes part of our 'Amalnama,' and that's what the film highlights."

He notably praised Raihan Rafi's growth and success, saying, "Raihan is like a younger brother to us. He keeps delivering great projects, and it's exciting to see his success. His work is well-loved by the audience, and he's even receiving offers from across the border."

With *Amalnama* set to premiere soon, fans are eagerly awaiting Zahid Hasan's return. His comeback, combined with Raihan Rafi's storytelling, promises an exciting web-film experience.

David Warner to make Tollywood debut with ‘Robinhood’

Australian cricketer David Warner has long admired Indian cinema, especially Allu Arjun. During the pandemic, he often recreated Arjun's dialogues and dances with his family. Though many expected a collaboration, Warner's Telugu cinema debut will take a different path.

At a Hyderabad event on March 3, producer Ravi Shankar officially announced that Warner would make his Telugu film debut. However, rather than joining an Allu Arjun project, he will be featured in Venky Kudumula's directorial *Robinhood*, featuring Nithiin and Sreeleela.

Hints of Warner's cinematic venture had surfaced months earlier when Australian media leaked behind-the-scenes snapshots from an Indian film shoot in September last year.

This cinematic milestone comes after his partnership with acclaimed director SS Rajamouli on a commercial project earlier in April last year.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?



'Late Night Comedy Show 1'

The *Late Night Comedy Show 1*, among a series of shows, has been announced to commemorate the 15th anniversary of Naved's Comedy Club (NCC). Tonight, comedians Tashdid, Sarah, Toru, and Naved Mahub will take the stage at the club's venue, which has fast gained popularity as a hub for comedy performances.

Guests wishing to attend must register with a fee of Tk 350. The event is scheduled for late at night, aligning with the time people typically stay awake in anticipation of Sehri during Ramadan.

DATE: THURSDAY | MARCH 6
TIME: 11:59PM
VENUE: NAVEED'S COMEDY CLUB

University of Cambridge screens Mro-language film ‘Dear Mother’



A Mro-language film titled *Kio Ri Pekra Uo*, known in English as *Dear Mother*, is being showcased at the University of Cambridge. According to a press release from the film's creators, the film was screened yesterday at 8:30pm (Bangladesh time), organised by the Indigenous Studies Group at Cambridge.

Directed by SK Shuvo Shadique, the 67-minute-long film, released in 2023, has been screened at top universities in Bangladesh, as well as the University of British Columbia and the University of Edinburgh. The International Centre for Social Science in Amsterdam has preserved the film researchers and cinephiles.

NEWS

Hasina, clan to be tried in person

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physically present in Bangladesh or in absentia, in India.

Prof Yunus recently visited one of the now "infamous secret jails", code-named the "House of Mirrors".

"This is just the ugliest thing that you can see, you can feel, or you can observe."

Prof Yunus said the number and range of people involved in the alleged crimes was "taking time" to work through. "Everybody was involved in it all."

"The whole government was involved in it. So, you cannot distinguish who was really and enthusiastically doing it, who was doing it under orders and who was not quite supportive but carrying out those kinds of things."

Hasina, the military and police are also accused of a violent crackdown on protesters in July and August which the UN estimates killed as many as 1,400 people in the days before the former prime minister fled.

Prof Yunus tried to manage expectations around how quickly the

families of victims will see justice, and whether that will happen under his watch.

Elections for a new government in the country could happen as early as December.

"Some will get punished, some will still be under the process, some will still be untraceable," the chief adviser said.

ANTI-GRAFT PROBES

Prof Yunus has had a large in-tray to deal with since taking over a country in turmoil, including anti-corruption probes into those connected to Hasina.

British Labour MP Tulip Siddiq, who is Hasina's niece, is one of those being investigated by the country's Anti-Corruption Commission.

Prof Yunus said the case against her was "serious", that she had a large amount of "wealth left behind" in the country and "everything" would be looked at.

Tulip resigned as anti-corruption minister in January after being named in the investigation in Bangladesh.

A spokesperson for the London MP said she "totally denies the claims" and had "not been contacted on these matters".

REFUGEE CRISIS

The influx of Rohingya refugees into Bangladesh is another challenge for the Yunus-led interim government.

There's been a sharp rise in the number of the mainly Muslim minority fleeing Myanmar into Bangladesh amid violence escalating in the country's long-running civil war.

Prof Yunus said they were now in talks with "rebel groups" in Myanmar about the possibility of a "safe zone" to eventually help the Rohingya refugees to return to their homeland.

He also acknowledged big problems in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, home to the largest refugee camp in the world, where an estimated one million Rohingya refugees have fled to – and where "violence, drugs and paramilitary activities" are rife.

The tension, Yunus said, "will not disappear".

Govt to blame if crimes against women

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group of students against another in the name of ensuring disciplinary actions? Is this the kind of repressive and authoritarian academic environment we envisioned for post-uprising Bangladesh?"

Private university students made undeniable contributions to the mass uprising, but their roles were not recognised even by the new student organisation.

"Naturally, this exclusion led to frustration. But instead of addressing their grievances, they were assaulted and subjected to sexual harassment [on Dhaka University campus]."

Besides, the teachers expressed deep anger at the incidents of "mob injustice".

"To make matters worse, the home affairs adviser himself justified the attackers' actions by invoking religion and misinterpreting the law, effectively shifting the blame onto the victims in an utterly condemnable stance. We strongly denounce this act of power abuse and intimidation."

The statement put forth several demands, including the immediate withdrawal of the expulsion of nine CU students, resignation of the proctor, and formation of an independent and impartial investigation committee with

representation from the University Grants Commission and female student representatives.

Other demands include a proper investigation by Dhaka University's Anti Sexual Harassment Cell into the assault and sexual harassment of female private university students by members of the new student organisation at Dhaka University.

The statement also called for the immediate identification and prosecution of those responsible for the mob attack on two female students in Lalmatia, as well as an unconditional retraction of the home affairs adviser's misogynistic statement.

Pakistan FM due in April

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once in New York and again in Egypt – as part of the efforts to thaw the frozen relationship between the two countries.

Now, the two countries are also planning to resume formal bilateral meetings: foreign secretary-level consultations, which were last held in 2010, and the joint economic commission, which was held for the last time in 2005.

The issues were discussed when Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, additional secretary (Asia Pacific) at Pakistan's foreign ministry, called on Md Jashim Uddin, Bangladesh's foreign secretary, at the ministry of foreign affairs yesterday.

"Both sides discussed the importance of holding the meetings," said a foreign ministry statement.

The two sides discussed the various aspects of bilateral relations as part of the preparation for the Pakistani foreign

minister's visit. They discussed exploring avenues for cultural cooperation, including music, cinema, drama, youth exchanges and people-to-people contacts.

Siddiqui also handed Jashim Uddin a letter from Dar addressing Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain.

Jashim Uddin and Siddiqui expressed satisfaction over the recent visits of several trade delegations from Pakistan to Bangladesh, emphasising the importance of visits by the product-specific trade delegations from Bangladesh to Pakistan.

Cooperation in the sectors of tourism, people-to-people contact, cultural exchanges, the issue of forcibly displaced Rohingyas and international forums were also discussed.

They also highlighted the importance of strengthened regional and multilateral cooperation through SAARC, OIC and D-8 during the meeting, which was also attended

by Pakistan High Commissioner to Bangladesh Syed Ahmed Maroof.

Bangladeshi visas for Pakistani nationals have been eased, while the two countries are planning to resume direct shipping and flights.

In a separate statement, the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka said both sides reviewed the current state of Pakistan-Bangladesh relations, which are based on "mutual respect and shared values".

They expressed satisfaction over the "positive trajectory of ties" and agreed to remain engaged in further enhancing cooperation.

Siddiqui also held meetings with Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman, Cultural Affairs Secretary Ataur Rahman and Home Secretary Nasimul Ghani.

Man arrested

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Speaking to this newspaper, DU Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed said, "Around 4:30pm, we received a complaint that one of our students was harassed by our library's assistant bookbinder, Arnob Sardar. Later, some students brought him to my office. When we questioned him, he admitted to the harassment. We then handed him over to the police."

"He is now at the station [early today]. A case has been filed against him, and the librarian has been asked to take official action against him."

SI Ekramul Haque, duty-officer at Shahbagh Police Station, around 1:00am told The Daily Star that a group of seven or eight people showed up at the station to question why Arnob was in police custody and why he was being punished.

The arrestee will be produced before a court tomorrow, he added.

Protest halts work at BSEC

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gate around 2:15pm. They rescued BSEC Chairman Rashid and other commissioners and escorted them to Rashid's room around 2:30pm.

Some BSEC officials attempted to escape upon seeing the army personnel, who charged truncheons on the protesters. At that time, BSEC officials were chanting slogans demanding Rashid's resignation.

Saifur had been made an Officer on Special Duty (OSD), seen as a punishment, in September 2024 due to alleged corruption.

Chairman Rashid said the commission ordered Saifur's forced retirement following rules and regulations, as significant violations

had been allegedly found against him in several investigations.

He said the BSEC requested the protesters to submit a list of their demands for a review by the commission. "However, they insisted on immediate acceptance of their demands," he said.

In a written statement, the BSEC chairman said the regulator is investigating multiple instances of corruption in the stock market that took place over the last 15 years and has found that several BSEC officials were involved. Therefore, the BSEC is taking action against them.

Due to these measures against corruption, some officials confined the BSEC chairman and commissioners and

engaged in misconduct, the statement added.

Farzana Lalarukh, a commissioner of the BSEC, said, "Despite repeated requests, the protesters did not restore electricity supply. They created a frightful situation by threatening us and throwing things."

Before all officials were dispersed, Md Mahbubul Alam, an executive director of the BSEC, said the commission did not provide a clear response to the officials' demands when those were raised before the commission.

"Now, they are demanding the resignation of the chairman and commissioners. If they do not resign, all BSEC officials will go on work abstention from tomorrow [Thursday]."