

WOMEN-CENTRIC ROLES FLOURISH ON OTT: MITHILA

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Rafiath Rashid Mithila has taken on several remarkable roles in the OTT space, from Shayla in *Myself Allen Swapan* to the journalist Jinia in *Baaji*. She is naturally drawn to characters that challenge her, and allow her to push the boundaries of her craft.

According to Mithila, OTT platforms have played a major role in amplifying female perspectives by making space for more women directors and female-led narratives.

"Movies are mostly dominated by the male perspective, where stories are usually told from a man's point of view. With the rise of OTT, more female directors are stepping forward and telling stories through a woman's lens," she said.

"We are now seeing more female-centered stories told from their own perspective, which is crucial. Genres like thrillers and dramas are exploring these narratives with more depth. Even in *Myself Allen Swapan*, where the focus is on Allen Swapan, Shayla's character plays a significant role in driving the story forward," she added.

The actress also shared that *Myself Allen Swapan* is full of emotional highs and lows, and Shayla is a character who experiences intense inner conflict. "I have portrayed many characters throughout my career, but this is the first time I have played someone like Shayla. I gave my full effort to bring her to life. For days, I immersed myself in becoming her and living within her world," she said.

Speaking about her role in *Baaji*, the actress said, "I approached my character in the show with the same dedication. We all worked on this project with great eagerness, and I believe the audience will appreciate it."

Beyond OTT, Mithila also impressed viewers with her performance in *Kajol Rekha*. Her portrayal of Kankon Dasi in the anthology film earned her widespread praise, with many suggesting it ranks among her finest performances to date.

PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSHED



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India ignoring

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anyone is involved in any radical militant group.

"Two more people have been arrested on the same charges. We have been given an indication that more arrests will be made," he said.

Earlier, the ministry of foreign affairs said Dhaka will cooperate with Kuala Lumpur in the 'terror investigation' after Malaysia arrested 36 Bangladeshis in recent security operations.

If anyone is involved, they want punishment according to the provisions of that country.

"If proven against them under the law there, they can be jailed for two to seven years. If they are acquitted, it

will be fine."

Meanwhile, while addressing the inauguration of a month-long photography and graffiti exhibition at the Foreign Service Academy, Touhid said the history of the July movement will serve as a mirror for future leaders of Bangladesh, reminding them of the distinctions between justice and injustice, who stood where, who spoke the truth and who ultimately paid the price.

The July movement evolved into a people's movement that transcended classes and professions, uniting people in the fight for justice and human rights, beyond partisan boundaries, he added.

'Prove they're Rohingyas'

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the National Register of Citizens", reports NDTV online.

"I challenge you to prove that Bengali speaking people are Rohingyas," the CM said yesterday. She launched a sharp attack at the BJP, accusing it of rigging polls in Maharashtra and Delhi by "removing names from electoral rolls."

"BJP won in Maharashtra by removing names from electoral rolls, it is doing same in Bihar now. BJP has plans to remove names from Bengal's electoral rolls, we will fight them inch by inch," the TMC leader added.

'Not Satyajit Ray's ancestral home'

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structure for the Shishu Academy.

Standing just behind Shashi Lodge — one of the region's most prominent archaeological landmarks — the house has fallen into disrepair after years of neglect by the authorities.

After the partition in 1947, the property came under government ownership, and in 1989, it started housing Mymensingh Shishu Academy.

It has remained abandoned for over a decade, and Shishu Academy's activities have been operating from a rented space. A decision was made to construct a semi-concrete building on the site to house the academy, said Md Mehedi Zaman, Mymensingh's district children affairs officer.

THE DEBATE

Earlier, a debate arose over the history of the house.

Some said the structure is the ancestral home of eminent litterateur Upendrakishore Ray Chowdhury, father of celebrated poet Sukumar Ray and grandfather of Satyajit Ray.

But some others said it was constructed by Maharaja Shashikanto Acharya Chowdhury of Muktagachha.

On Monday, Sabina Yeasmin,

field officer of the Department of Archaeology (Dhaka and Mymensingh divisions), wrote to the district children affairs officer, seeking information about the demolition of the house. In her letter, she described the house as the ancestral home of the Ray family.

"This is a historic house belonging to the Ray family. Though not listed as a protected site, it is over a hundred years old and linked to Satyajit Ray's ancestors. It should be considered for heritage protection," she said that day.

Swapan Dhar, a researcher on archaeology in Mymensingh and a part-time lecturer at the Department of Theatre at Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University, rejected the claim.

He asserted that the house in question was not the ancestral home of Satyajit Ray's forefathers, but rather one of the houses belonging to philanthropist Ranada Prasad Saha, reports BBC Bangla.

Dhar claimed this information came to light during a 2010 research project jointly funded by the governments of Bangladesh and Germany.

However, the researcher added that there indeed was a house

belonging to Satyajit Ray's ancestors on Harikishore Road, but it was demolished about a decade ago.

There is no doubt this road was named after Satyajit Ray's ancestor Harikishore, he added.

A local elderly resident, Rabindranath Paul, 69, also a journalist, told this correspondent the house is the ancestral home of Ray family. Later, Ranada Prasad Shaha bought the house from the Ray family.

Social activist Ali Yusuf in his Facebook post claimed the house was constructed by Maharaja Shashikanto Acharya.

Man shot dead

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Rubel and Sajib were hospitalised.

A pistol and a magazine were recovered from their possession, said the police official.

In another incident, a 30-year-old man, Al Amin, was stabbed to death by criminals over a previous enmity in the Dhaka Udyan area around 7:00pm yesterday, said Hafizur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Mohamadpur Police Station.

He added that police were trying to arrest those responsible.

Justice within this govt's tenure

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Ramzan said, "My brother sacrificed his life while protesting discrimination and through that struggle, the people of this country have gained a new kind of freedom. Today marks one year, but there has been no judicial progress. People at home and abroad know that my brother was killed in police firing. This truth is not hidden. Yet where is the justice?"

He asked, "Whom can I share this sorrow with? Who can I go to for justice for my brother? I find no words to express it."

He added that the chief adviser, the chief justice, and other high-ranking officials visited their home last year. "Everyone came, expressed sympathy, and gave assurances. But we want only one thing — justice for my brother's murder. That hasn't even begun yet."

He believes that Abu Sayed's sacrifice gave a generation the courage to speak up.

Stressing the need for constitutional reforms, he said, "The country has changed. The constitution needs changing too. Without that, fair elections or citizens' rights cannot be ensured. The light that Abu Sayed

has kindled is the light for building a Bangladesh free from discrimination."

Meanwhile, Law Adviser Prof Asif Nazrul said, "We firmly believe that justice for the murder of Shaheed Abu Sayed will be served during the tenure of our government."

"To make the trial internationally credible, we are carefully considering every step," he said while speaking at a commemorative event marking the first death anniversary of Abu Sayed at the Shadhinata Sarok ground of Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur (BRUR), yesterday.

The event's chief guest was Shaheed Abu Sayeed's father, Mokbul Hossain. Twenty-one other family members of martyrs from Rangpur district were present as special guests.

The adviser said, "Many lives have been lost in the struggle for democracy, but the kind of courageous and ideological sacrifice made by Abu Sayed is rare. He is truly a Bir Shrestha [valiant hero] of our time."

"It will take us years to fully understand the magnitude of his sacrifice. The students knew that the police might open fire, but they didn't

back down. That sheer courage laid the foundation of the movement."

Today, our ability to speak freely and question the authority is owed in large part to the July uprising, he said.

Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Education Adviser Prof CR Abrar, Liberation War Affairs Adviser Faruk E-Azam, Bir Protik, University Grants Commission Chairman Prof SMA Fayez, and BRUR Vice-Chancellor Prof Shaikat Ali, among others, spoke at the programme.

20 crushed to death

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have killed at least 17 people across the enclave yesterday.

On Tuesday, the UN rights office in Geneva said it had recorded at least 875 killings within the past six weeks in the vicinity of aid sites and food convoys in Gaza — the majority of them close to GHF distribution points.

Most of those deaths were caused by gunfire that locals have blamed on the Israeli military. The UN has called the GHF's model unsafe and a breach of humanitarian impartiality standards — an allegation GHF has denied.

"People who flock in their thousands (to GHF sites) are hungry and exhausted, and they get squeezed into narrow places, amid shortages of aid and the absence of organization and discipline by the GHF," Amjad Al-Shawa, director of the Palestinian NGOs Network, told Reuters.

NBR official suspended

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the United States Trade Representative, The Daily Star has learnt from people with knowledge of the matter.

In May, Bangladesh and the US signed a non-disclosure agreement to protect sensitive information related to the negotiations.

A case has been filed in connection with the incident under the Official Secrecy Act with the Sher-e-Bangla Nagar Police Station, Officer-in-Charge Imaul Haque told to The Daily Star yesterday.