



Adnan Al Rajeev's 'ALI' wins Best Short Film at KIMFF

Bangladeshi short film *ALI* has added another international accolade to its growing list of achievements, winning Best Short Film in the International Competition section of the Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival (KIMFF) in Nepal.

Directed by Adnan Al Rajeev, the award was accepted on behalf of the team by Prabin Kumar Rawat. Following the announcement, the filmmakers thanked the festival jury, selectors, organisers, and everyone involved in the project.

The victory comes shortly after *ALI* made history at the 78th Cannes Film Festival, where it received a Special Mention in the Short Film Competition, becoming the first Bangladeshi short film to earn the distinction.

The 15 minute Bangladesh-Philippines co-production stars Al Amin and Indrani Soma and explores themes of identity, self-expression, and social restriction.

I wanted to break away from a stereotypical image: Sabila Nur

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

This Eid-ul-Azha, *Rockstar* is running in 103 cinemas across the country. At Star Cineplex, the film had 18 shows on its opening day, which increased to 36 shows the following day. Directed by Azman Rusho, Sabila Nur plays the character of Mira in *Rockstar*, with audiences praising her chemistry with Shakib Khan.

While promoting the film in theatres, the actress has also spoken to the media about her experience.

Sabila Nur said, "I always try to do different kinds of characters. When I worked in *Taandob*, the audience did not expect to see me in a song like *Lichur Bagane*. I wanted to break that image. Later, when I did *Bonolota Express*, it was completely different from *Taandob*. In my third film, *Rockstar*, audiences are seeing me in a new way. That is what I always try to do."

Speaking about her character Mira, she said, "If I talk about Mira's journey, we did not really get much time to prepare for the character. We only had around two to three weeks. Still, I tried my best to portray the role."

Sharing her experience of working with Shakib Khan, she added, "Sharing the screen with Shakib *bhai* is always a great experience. He is very dedicated and disciplined. As a co-artist, he is very supportive. In my

second film with him, I got the opportunity to actually perform. There is a chemistry between Mira's character and Agun's character, played by Shakib Khan. *Rockstar* is a completely different kind of film."

While talking about the plot, she said, "It shows the life of a person, his music journey, and some harsh realities. It is a completely new story made in our own context."



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Dua Lipa and Callum Turner tie the knot

Dua Lipa and Callum Turner have officially tied the knot in a private ceremony held at Old Marylebone Town Hall in London on May 31, according to multiple international media reports.

The wedding was attended by a close circle of family and friends. For the occasion, Lipa wore a Schiaparelli Couture suit dress designed by Daniel Roseberry, paired with matching gloves, Christian Louboutin shoes, and a white hat by Stephen Jones. Turner opted for a classic navy suit and tie.

The couple's relationship first attracted public attention in early 2024 before becoming Instagram official later that year. Lipa confirmed their engagement in an interview with British Vogue in June 2025.

The marriage marks a new chapter for one of entertainment's most closely followed couples.

Rumeen Farhana joins protest against 'Bonolota Express' screening halt

Barrister Rumeen Farhana joined a human chain and protest programme in Brahmanbaria yesterday in response to the reported suspension of screenings of the film *Bonolota Express*.



The demonstration was held at Shabbazpur Union at 4:15pm yesterday. Farhana, a lawyer and politician, had earlier announced her participation through a post on her official Facebook page.

"Today, a human chain and protest programme will be held in Brahmanbaria protesting the closure of screenings of the film *Bonolota Express*. I will be present there," she wrote ahead of the event.

NEWS

Tofail Ahmed: a life tied to the nation's history

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of ICU Senior Consultant Dr Raihan Rabbani. He died at 3:30pm, the release said.

His first namaz-e-janaza was held after Maghrib prayers at Taqwa Mosque in Dhaka's Dhanmondi. The body was later kept at the mortuary of Square Hospital.

The body will be taken to Bhola today by a helicopter or refrigerated ambulance. Another janaza will be held there after Zuhr prayers, followed by burial at the family graveyard.

Alongside family members and well-wishers, former minister and veteran politician Abdul Latif Siddiqui; former minister Saber Hossain Chowdhury; Chairman of a faction of the Jatiyo Party Anisul Islam Mahmud; Secretary General of another faction of the Jatiyo Party Shameem Haider Patwari; former general secretary of the Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB) Ruhin Hossain Prince, attended the janaza.

Before the janaza, Prince told reporters: "We must forever remember Tofail Ahmed's contribution to our politics, the Liberation War, and our independence. His courageous journey will continue to revitalise us. As long as Bangladesh exists, he will live on in the hearts of the people."

"His demise is an irreparable loss. Even when he was ailing, there was a sense of encouragement among us that he was still with us. May his inspiration, glory, sacrifice, and courage guide the nation forward," he added.

Terming Tofail a legendary politician, Shameem Patwary said: "As the DUCSU GS [general secretary] from 1967 to 1969, he was intrinsically involved in the political turbulence and the ups and downs of that era. He was a highly courageous and visionary leader, a fiery orator, and an extraordinary parliamentarian."

"Everyone, irrespective of party affiliation, should pay their respects to him. We believe a janaza should have been held at the Jatiya Sangsad today (yesterday). The government should have taken that initiative," he said.

Mentioning Tofail's contribution as an organiser of the Liberation War, he demanded that he be buried with state honour. "There is no legal scope for an exception to this. If it is not

done, the relevant individuals will be held accountable before history."

Around 7:15pm, as the freezer van carrying the body departed for Square Hospital, Awami League leaders and activists outside the Taqwa Mosque chanted slogans, including "Joy Bangla, Joy Bangabandhu" and "Tofail bhaiyer bhoy nai, rajpath chari nai".

Police dispersed the crowd and detained seven people, according to Sheikh Zahidul Islam, deputy commissioner of Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Ramna Division.

Jisanul Haque, additional deputy commissioner of the Dhanmondi zone, said: "Some people attempted to create chaos by putting up a barricade while the ambulance was heading towards Square Hospital. A few of those creating the disorder have been detained."

"I do not think the troublemakers have any specific (political) identity. If any ordinary citizen has been detained, we will certainly release them after verification," he added.

Several parties and organisations, including the Awami League, whose activities are now banned, Jatiyo Party, Bangladesh Workers Party, Bangladesh Udichi Shilpigosthi and Bangladesh Hindu-Bouddha-Christian Oikya Parishad, issued statements mourning his death.

Tofail Ahmed's political life spanned more than six decades, closely tied to Bangladesh's nationalist movement and the Liberation War.

From the fiery frontlines of student rebellion to the quiet dignity of giving away all he owned, Tofail's journey is far more than a record of positions held or speeches delivered; it is the story of a heart that never stopped believing in Bangladesh.

Staring down at the Pakistani military dictators, he helped forge the Bangalee nationalist movement that culminated in the Liberation War of 1971 and walked alongside Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the struggle for independence.

He was elected to parliament in 1970 at the age of 27 and emerged as a key organiser of the Liberation War and one of the key leaders of the Bangladesh Liberation Front, widely known as the Mujib Bahini. He

also participated in the Constituent Assembly in 1971 and the drafting of the 1972 Constitution.

In independent Bangladesh, he went on to serve as a member of parliament for eight terms.

He served as political secretary to Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman with the rank of state minister from 1972 to 1975. He was again elected to parliament in 1973 and in multiple subsequent elections, including in 1986, 1991, 1996, 2008, 2014, 2018 and 2024. Over the years, he served in the cabinet three times and chaired a parliamentary standing committee, earning recognition as one of the most seasoned voices in and outside parliament.

Tofail was born on October 22, 1943, in Koralia village of Bhola.

He was actively involved in student politics from his college days, elected sports secretary of the Brojomohun College Students' Union and vice president of Ashwini Kumar Hall in 1962.

During his years at Dhaka University, he served as sports secretary of Iqbal Hall (now Shahid Sergeant Zahurul Haque Hall) in 1964, vice president of the Soil Science Department in 1965, and vice president of the Iqbal Hall Students' Union in 1966-67.

From 1967 to 1969, he was vice president of the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU) and a leader of the All-Party Student Action Committee.

By linking student demands with Bangabandhu's Six-Point programme, the committee launched a mass movement based on an 11-point charter of demands.

Its sustained protest programmes culminated in the mass uprising of January 24, 1969, with Tofail emerging as one of its principal leaders.

In the face of the uprising, the Pakistan government was compelled to release Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and all other accused in the Agartala Conspiracy Case.

Later that year, on February 23, the Student Action Committee organised a rally at the then Racecourse Maidan in Dhaka (now Suhrawardy Udyan), where Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was conferred the title "Bangabandhu" – a declaration made by Tofail.

In 1969, he was elected president of the Bangladesh Chhatra League. The next year, he joined the Awami League.

After the assassination of Bangabandhu on August 15, 1975, Tofail was arrested in September and spent 33 months in prison. He was also imprisoned at least seven more times in his political career. He played a vital role in the movement to restore democracy in Bangladesh. He was imprisoned four times during the Ershad regime and again during the 1995 movement for elections under a caretaker government. He was also jailed in 2002.

While detained in Kushtia Jail in 1979, he was elected organising secretary of the Awami League. He later became the party's presidium member and advisory council member.

After the 1996 election, which brought the Awami League back to power after 21 years, he was appointed minister for industries and commerce.

During the 2007 emergency rule, Tofail was among a small group of senior leaders who proposed reforming the Awami League.

Following the 2008 general election, although the Awami League returned to power, political analysts believe Tofail was excluded from the cabinet and dropped from the party's presidium due to his stance during the caretaker government period.

From 2009 to 2013, he served as chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on the ministry of industries.

He also served as housing and public works minister and industries minister in 2013-2014, and commerce minister from 2014 to 2019.

In 2021, Tofail announced that he would donate all his movable and immovable property to the Tofail Ahmed Foundation, which works to provide healthcare, old-age home support and stipends for the underprivileged.

He suffered a stroke a few years ago, which left the left side of his body paralysed and required the use of a wheelchair.

Tofail is survived by a daughter, son-in-law, and a host of relatives and well-wishers who mourn his death.

CHT affairs minister

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Prime Minister's Additional Press Secretary Atikur Rahman Ruman confirmed the matter.

Later in the day, a gazette notification was issued, stating that the president had accepted the resignation.

In the resignation letter, 63-year-old Dipen said he had been suffering from various physical complications since assuming office.

"Due to my illness, I have faced difficulties in carrying out the regular duties of the ministry," he wrote.

"I consider it necessary to resign from my current position in the interest of the development of the current government and to increase the dynamism of administrative work," the letter said.

Following the resignation, his supporters in Rangamati staged a demonstration and blocked a road in front of the district BNP office in the afternoon, demanding withdrawal of the resignation.

Leaders and activists of BNP, Mahila Dal, Chhatra Dal and other affiliated bodies joined the hour-long protest around 5:00pm. The blockade halted traffic, leaving vehicles stuck on both sides of the road. Traffic returned to normal after the protest ended around 6:00pm.

According to BNP leader Saiful Islam Bhutto, Dipen's resignation is a major setback in the efforts to build a "rainbow nation" involving both hill and Bangalee communities.

"Dipen Dewan is not physically ill. I have travelled with him in remote areas for a long time, but I have never seen him weak or sick," said Saiful, vice president of BNP's Rangamati district unit.

"Some BNP leaders are trying to create an unstable situation in the Chittagong Hill Tracts by misleading the prime minister and giving false information," he added.

Local BNP leaders said Dipen Dewan's resignation came as a surprise to them.

They said the resignation may have stemmed from internal disagreements over the ministry's operation, control of Rangamati politics, and the appointment of administrators to the district councils in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

The Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs mainly deals with the three hill districts, which together have three parliamentary constituencies. BNP candidates won all three seats,

Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban, in the national election.

Dipen Dewan did not speak to the media immediately after submitting his resignation. This correspondent tried to reach him throughout the day over the phone and text messages, but he did not respond.

Advocate Dipen Dewan, a former senior joint district judge, left government service in 2005 and joined BNP politics. Khaleda Zia was prime minister at the time.

Dipen's father, Subimal Dewan, was the indigenous affairs adviser to BNP founder and former president Ziaur Rahman. Subimal was also the founding general secretary of BNP's Rangamati district unit.

In 2010, Dipen was elected president of the Rangamati district BNP. In 2016, he was made BNP's central assistant religious affairs secretary, a post he still holds.

Dipen contested a parliamentary election for the first time on February 12 and defeated UPDF-backed independent candidate Pahal Chakma by 169,066 votes.

After BNP formed the government under Tarique Rahman's leadership on February 17, Dipen was given charge of the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs.

Mir Mohammad Helal Uddin, a member of parliament from Chattogram 5, Hathazari, is serving as the state minister for the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs. He is also the state minister for land.

Man dies jumping from air balloon in the Netherlands

AFP, The Hague

A Dutch mayor on Sunday offered psychological assistance to inhabitants of her town who witnessed a man make a deadly jump from an air balloon.

The body of the man fell into a garden in the town of Zundert, the birthplace of impressionist artist Vincent van Gogh, near the border with Belgium.

Zundert mayor Joyce Vermue said on social media that the "tragic incident" happened on Saturday evening. "A person jumped from a hot air balloon above Zundert. The person landed in a garden and died."