

Nazifa Tushi keeps the momentum going with ‘ANNiE’

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

From winning hearts as the quirky Reshma Pakhi in *Pressure Cooker* to portraying Sadu's wife in *Roid*, Nazifa Tushi has steadily established herself as one of the most versatile performers of her generation.

Fresh off the success of *Roid*, where both audiences and critics have praised her performance, Tushi is now riding a wave of overwhelming love from fans who simply cannot seem to get enough of her. The excitement only intensified when the trailer for *ANNiE*, directed by Abdullah Mohammad Saad, dropped on Monday (June 8), instantly drawing attention with its dark, unsettling tone and Tushi's striking new transformation.

The Daily Star caught up with Nazifa Tushi to talk about *ANNiE* and the passion that continues to drive her as an actress.

"This is the first time that a mini series from Bangladesh is having its world premiere at the prestigious Serienecamp Festival in Cologne, Germany, yesterday. Unfortunately, due to visa-related issues, our entire team was unable to attend the premiere. Instead, we recorded a session that was screened for the audience at the festival," said Tushi.

"We are hopeful that audiences and industry professionals will recognise the potential of *ANNiE* and that the series will soon find buyers, allowing us to bring it to both local and international audiences," she added.

The trailer of *ANNiE* highlights several themes, including inequality, mistrust, and social violence embedded within relationships

between men and women, among other layered aspects.

Speaking about the project, Tushi shared, "This series is a mixture of multiple genres. I haven't worked in something like this before. It is also my first collaboration with Abdullah Mohammad Saad, and the level of satisfaction I gained from this project is immense. As an actor and as a human being, I have learned a great deal. My perception of the world has changed through this work."

"What people don't know is that this was my first project after *Hawa*, but it is only being released now. I wish I could have attended the premiere. I haven't even watched my own work yet. Saad *bhai* is very strict; he doesn't show anything to his actors. The trailer was the first thing I saw," she added.

Tushi also revealed that *ANNiE* contains no background music, adding that she believes the series is aimed at a niche audience, but those who watch it will truly appreciate its depth.

"I'm really happy that people are watching my projects and loving them. I'm grateful to my audience and directors for pushing me into such unique characters and challenging me as an artiste. I want to be loved by audiences, but I don't want too much praise either, because I fear whether I will always be able to give my 100 percent."

"To reach this position, I struggled for 10 years. I waited a long time for the right scripts, even though many were coming my way," she added.

With *Roid* receiving an impressive

response in theatres, Nazifa Tushi is delighted that audiences are embracing such an artistic film that encourages viewers to think deeply. "I am flabbergasted by the incredible reviews people are writing and trying to decipher the core message of *Roid*. It has a lot of biblical and artistic inspirations blended beautifully into the story. The team of *Andhar* also shared a group photo from their recording studio, where curious fans zoomed in on Tushi's look from the film.

Reacting to it, she laughed, "Yes, I saw that post and it was so funny. I loved the fact that audiences are so curious about me that they spotted my look from so far away, where I was sleeping in a bathtub. The way people are engaging with my work and eagerly waiting for my projects truly means a lot. I really hope I get more characters like this. For me, audience love matters the most, more than awards."

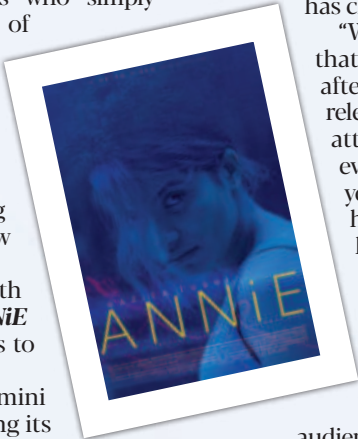


PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Shahnewaz Kakoli

to travel to Bengaluru for advanced treatment

National Film Award-winning filmmaker Shahnewaz Kakoli is set to travel to Bengaluru, India, later this month for advanced medical treatment, as her condition has shown little improvement following a stroke.

Her husband, actor Pran Roy, said preparations are underway to take her to Manipal Hospital. The couple plans to travel to Bengaluru between June 15 and 20. However, Pran Roy said the biggest challenge now is arranging the substantial funds required for treatment abroad.

Kakoli remains unable to walk and has limited movement on the left side of her body. Months of therapy at CRP in Mirpur have brought some improvement, but her overall condition remains a concern.

Kakoli made her directorial debut with *Uttorer Sur* in 2012, which won four National Film Awards.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'The Treasury of Timeless Ragas'



Celebrated Agra Gharana exponent Shubhra Guha leads an evening of Hindustani classical music, joined by her disciples Sanjukta Biswas and Sabina Mumtaz. Accompanied by Tinku Shil on harmonium and Iftakhar Alam on tabla, the recital offers a rare opportunity to experience a living vocal tradition shaped by rigour, nuance and improvisation.

Date: Friday | June 12, 2026

Time: 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Venue: Satori Academy of Arts, Banani

NEWS

Women MPs to step in where BNP lost

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won this time, the plan is to coordinate with local leaders and activists so that we can return to the political field better in the coming days," Fahima said.

"Through this coordination, we want to build stronger public contact in those areas through local leaders," she said, adding that the role should not be seen as supervision over elected MPs from other parties.

Another reserved-seat MP, Sunсила Jabrin Priyanka, described the distribution as "smart", saying it serves both political and organisational goals.

She said BNP leaders and activists had worked for years in many constituencies where the party could not win and still needed political support, access to elected representatives, and help in addressing local problems.

"In a seat where a Jamaat MP has won, the BNP will try to develop the area and strengthen its position. The BNP also has leaders and activists there who worked for the party for many years," Priyanka said.

She added that grassroots BNP activists may not feel comfortable seeking help from an MP of another party.

"For example, if a Chhatra Dal activist needs a DO letter, or demi-official letter, for a job or administrative support, he will want that support from a BNP MP, not from a Jamaat MP," she said.

The distribution of responsibilities suggests the BNP has placed particular emphasis on constituencies where Jamaat has a strong organisational presence.

Ferdousi Ahmed has been assigned Dhaka-12, Dhaka-15 and Dhaka-16, where influential Jamaat leaders are MPs. Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman represents Dhaka-15.

Bithika Binte Hossain has been assigned Satkhira-1, Satkhira-2, Satkhira-3 and Satkhira-4, all won by Jamaat candidates.

Arifa Sultana Ruma has been assigned Pabna-1, Pabna-3 and Pabna-4. Jesmin Jui has been assigned Pirojpur-1, while Selina Rahman has been given responsibility for Barguna-1.

Sanjida Islam Tulce has been assigned the three Chapainawabganj constituencies, Sultana Ahmed four seats in Jashore, and Rasheda Begum Hira one seat in Cumilla.

A senior BNP leader, requesting anonymity, said the move is part of a long-term political plan. The party will assess how effectively the reserved-seat MPs perform in these areas and whether they can help rebuild BNP's public connection in constituencies it lost.

Their performance may also be considered when the BNP decides nominations for direct elections in the future, the leader added.

Fahima said the new responsibilities would allow reserved-seat MPs to work beyond their usual political areas and demonstrate their abilities on a broader platform.

"We have to work there after judging the past and present reasons behind our loss," she said.

However, party leaders acknowledged that implementation will not be easy.

Many of the women MPs have been assigned constituencies outside their own political bases, meaning they will need to gain the trust of local BNP leaders, meet grassroots expectations, and keep the party active without creating direct conflict with sitting opposition MPs.

According to MPs and party leaders, local influence is often built over years through family networks, organisational work, sustained presence, and personal relationships. As a result, reserved-seat MPs entering from outside may face resistance from local leaders who already wield strong influence.

Party sources said managing grassroots expectations could become one of the biggest challenges.

Another senior BNP leader, also requesting anonymity, said the assigned MPs will ultimately have to prove they can work with local leaders, support activists, and rebuild public engagement without creating conflict.

Russia may recruit

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readymade garments and pharmaceuticals, to the Russian market.

In this regard, the Russian side welcomed Bangladesh's proposal to send a business delegation to Russia in the coming weeks.

Cooperation in technology, particularly artificial intelligence, also came up prominently during the visit.

Khalilur proposed that a Russian delegation on the application of AI in agriculture and health visit Bangladesh, and the Russian authorities readily agreed.

They also expressed interest in assisting Bangladesh in preparing its national AI policy and establishing institutions of excellence in AI in the country.

Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Adviser Humaiun Kobir and Bangladesh Ambassador to Russia Nazrul Islam were also present.

Shishu Hospital to get 106 more beds

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will vertically expand its existing hospital building, Block-C, by constructing the 4th to 9th floors. The first three floors of the building were completed in 2014 under a Tk 1,425 crore project.

"This project will increase facilities for the treatment of more children in our hospital. It is a very crucial step to expand our services," Prof Mirza Md Ziaul Islam, director of the hospital, told The Daily Star yesterday.

He said expansion of the hospital building had long been due, as the previous project was completed in 2014. Besides, the number of patients has continued to rise, he added.

"Given the demand, we actually need 2,000 beds," he said.

Once completed, the hospital's bed capacity will rise from 681 to 787 with the addition of 106 new beds, including six cabins. The number of intensive care unit beds will increase from 68 to 75, while operating theatres will go up from six to 11.

According to the hospital's annual report, 3.43 lakh patients received treatment at its outpatient department last year, while 42,625 patients were admitted during the same period. The hospital also carried out surgeries on 6,786 patients last year.

Islami Bank seeks

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Acting Managing Director Md Altaf Hossain confirmed to The Daily Star that Islami Bank was struggling with withdrawals, noting that the ongoing instability has prompted many customers to withdraw their deposits.

The central bank announced Khurshid's appointment as chairman on May 24.

On June 1, the first working day after the Eid holidays, hundreds of

Health ministry officials said the expansion was aimed at improving access to specialised healthcare for children by strengthening the hospital's infrastructure and treatment facilities.

The project will also help introduce three new paediatric surgical departments: paediatric urology and kidney transplantation, paediatric surgical oncology, and paediatric orthopaedic surgery. Modern medical equipment will also be procured under the project.

With these additions, the hospital will have 38 departments, up from the existing 35.

Officials expect the hospital's outpatient department to serve around 1,500 patients daily after the project is completed, up from the current average of 1,200 patients a day.

According to project documents, around Tk 253 crore, or 73 percent of the total allocation, will be spent on modern medical equipment. Another Tk 63 crore has been earmarked for construction work and supporting infrastructure.

The project was initially scheduled to be implemented from January 2026 to December 2027. It will now be implemented between July 2026

and June 2028, according to the documents.

The expansion aligns with the government's 2026 election manifesto commitment to ensuring comprehensive healthcare services for mothers and children, a health ministry official said.

In March 1972, Prof Tofayel Ahmed, with support from several voluntary organisations and the government, founded the country's first children's hospital, Dhaka Shishu Hospital, according to the hospital website.

The number of beds increased gradually over the years.

In 2021, parliament passed the Bangladesh Shishu Hospital Act, renaming the hospital as Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute and making it a government statutory body.

The Ecneec yesterday approved eight development projects, including this one, with an estimated cost of Tk 2,266.41 crore, reports BSS.

Of the total project cost, Tk 2,229.13 crore will come from the government's own resources, while the remaining Tk 37.28 crore will come from the implementing agencies' own funds.

Among the approved projects, three are new, three are revised, and two have received tenure extensions.

HC summons judge

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after a 17-year-old girl was raped and murdered between December 26 and 27 that year," the DAG said, adding that the victim's father filed the case against Khalil Uddin and Md Golam Hossain, who are now in jail.

Contacted, accused Hossain's lawyer Md Abdur Razzak said, "The HC issued the summons order as the Habiganj tribunal is yet to finish trial of the case though the charges were framed around four years ago."

Mohsin further said the trial proceedings of a rape and murder case are supposed to be completed within 180 days after charges are framed by the trial court concerned.

The bench observed that the failure to conclude rape and murder trials within the prescribed timeframe contributes to the continued occurrence of incidents similar to the rape and murder of eight-year-old Ramisa, he said.

Advocate Md Abdur Razzak appeared for accused petitioner Golam Hossain during the hearing of his bail petition yesterday.

The court also fixed June 23 for the next hearing on Hossain's bail petition.

World conflicts hit peak

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invasion of Ukraine and Israeli military operations against Syria.

"Unfortunately there is not a lot of positive things," researcher Siri Aas Rustad told a group of media outlets, including AFP. "Usually I'm able to sort of squeeze something positive out of it, but this year it's shocking, the numbers."

Last year was the third deadliest since the end of the Cold War, with around 245,000 deaths directly related to fighting or political violence -- nearly 76,500 of them attributed to attacks directly targeting civilians, compared with 14,200 in 2024.

The sharp increase in civilian deaths is due to the conflict between the army and paramilitaries in Sudan, where the siege and massacres carried out in El-Fasher city in the Darfur region are estimated to have left some 60,000 people dead.

Since the end of the Cold War, only 1994 and 2021 have seen more bloodshed, due to the Rwanda genocide and the war in Ethiopia's Tigray region respectively.

"What has happened in the past five or six years is that we have several big conflicts going on at the same time and they seem to take over from each other. The world doesn't get any break," Rustad said.

"And that's different from previously -- this continuous high intensity level of conflict globally."

The PRIO study is based on figures compiled by the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, attached to Uppsala University.

It distinguishes between three main types of organised violence: conflicts involving at least one state, non-state conflicts, and one-sided violence against civilians.

Africa remained the region most affected by the first type of conflict with 29, followed by Asia, the Middle East, the Americas, and Europe.

Rustad said Israel was "clearly one of the most aggressive countries in the world at the moment", pointing to its involvement in different types of conflicts in Gaza, Syria, Lebanon, against Iran, and against Houthis rebels.