

NEWS bytes

Kutcher highest-paid TV actor



Ashton Kutcher was the best paid actor on US TV for the second year running, having earned an estimated \$24m for his role in "Two and a Half Men". His co-star Jon Cryer jumped from seventh to second, earning \$21m.

Kutcher's predecessor on "Two and a Half Men", Charlie Sheen -- who was fired from the CBS show -- came back to the top ten with his role in "Anger Management".

Twenty-year-old Angus T Jones, who also stars in "Two and a Half Men" as Jake Harper, made the list.

"Grey's Anatomy" star Patrick Dempsey, Michael C Hall of "Dexter" and Mark Harmon of "NCIS" also feature in the top 10, along with Ray Romano, Neil Patrick Harris and Tim Allen.

Source: BBC

“I am my own competitor”

... Shakib Khan



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

The highest paid actor and winner of the National Film Award, Shakib Khan rules the Bangladeshi film industry with his powerful acting. The famous actor recently took some time off to talk to The Daily Star about his professional life:

The word is that you are set to make your debut as film producer?

Shakib: Right. It is a long cherished dream of mine to produce films. I live and breathe cinema. The film industry has given me a great deal now it is my turn to repay the debt.

Who is the director of that film?

Shakib: Bodiul Alam Khokon, who has also directed many of my hit films.

The movie is tentatively titled "Raja Handsome" where I will have two heroines as co-stars. The movie will be shot in Malaysia. It will take a few days to fine tune the details of the project.

How many of your movies have been released this Eid?

Shakib: There are a few: "Purnodairgho Prem Kahani", with Jaya Ahsan as co-star. Then there's "Full and Final" where Bobby is cast opposite me.

Do you regard anyone as a serious competitor in the film industry?

Shakib: I don't think so. I feel I am my own competitor. I am very dedicated to my work and want to excel my own performance all the time.

Tell us about the two TVCs you have done?

Shakib: I've been getting numerous

offers for TV commercials over the years. But, I am not too interested in doing them. However, it was a new experience in my career.

You're also venturing into entrepreneurship. How did that begin?

Shakib: While I went abroad for shooting or on holidays, the buzzing food courts greatly impressed me. So I have set up a restaurant named "Hot Chicken" in Jamuna Future Park. The next branch will be in Uttara.

What is it like to be president of Chalachitra Shilpi Samity?

Shakib: As an artiste, I feel very proud to be in that rank, but it's also something I enjoy very much. As I am elected by artistes, I want to do something worthwhile for them.

Pentagon's 20th anniversary celebrations on...

A CORRESPONDENT

Pentagon, a popular band of the early '90s, is celebrating two decades in the country's music arena. The band will perform at 11:30pm on October 25 on Desh TV and at the same time on October 27 on Channel i, as part of reaching this landmark. The band also performed on Maasranga TV yesterday.

Pentagon recently held their 20th anniversary programmes at a city restaurant where senior musicians Faisal Siddiqui Boggy, Naquib Kham, Pilu Khan, Foad Nasser Babu, Labu Rahman, Kazi Hablu, Maqsoodul Haque, Ayub Bachchu, along with singers Rafiqul Islam, Abida Sultana and Shuvro Dev were highly visible.



Band members at the anniversary programme.

IT'S TRUE!



Apart from being a successful actor and film producer, Australian star Nicole Kidman is also a singer. Her collaboration with Ewan McGregor on "Come What May" peaked at No.27 in the UK Singles Chart. Later she collaborated with Robbie Williams on "Somethin' Stupid", a cover of Williams' swing covers album "Swing When You're Winning". It peaked at No.8 in the Australian ARIAnet Singles Chart, and at No.1 for three weeks in the UK. In 2006, while voicing a role in the animated movie "Happy Feet", she provided vocals for Norma Jean's "heartsong", a slightly altered version of "Kiss" by Prince. Kidman sang in Rob Marshall's movie musical "Nine". Her current husband Keith Urban is an acclaimed country singer, and the two have occasionally sung on-stage.



Nayan sings in South Korea

A CORRESPONDENT

Young folk singer MH Nayan recently sang Baul Shah Abdul Karim's immortal song "Agy Ki Shundor Din Kataitam" in a festival at South Korea. The festival, a part of cultural exchange to mark 40 years of diplomatic relations between Bangladesh and South Korea, also featured songs of Lalon Shah, Dewan Hason Raja, Kalu Shah Fakir, Durbin Shah, kabial Ramesh Sheel and Jasimuddin.

Nayan had earlier performed his folk and baul songs in Japan and China, on their government's invitations.

A women-centric production Shadhona gears up to premiere Champabati



From the rehearsal room: Behind-the-scene from "Champabati".

PHOTO: RIDWAN ADID RUPON

RIDWAN ADID RUPON

After a number of successful productions, Shadhona Cultural Circle, a familiar name in the subcontinent's cultural arena, has a new production in the pipeline: "Champabati"-- a dance drama, incorporating folk art forms.

"Champabati", an adaptation of poet Jasimuddin's much acclaimed drama "Bede'r Meye", is all about women; their inner strength and the courage with which they deal with the adversities of life. Adapted by Syed Shamsul Haq, it articulates the stories of

Champa , the beautiful and vociferous snake-charmer, Maleka, the feisty wife of the village head, and young Asmani, the wife of Champa's ex-paramour, Goya.

"Champabati" is also a narrative on the interactions between the wandering "Bede" (gypsy) community and the orthodox villagers of Bengal. It's about different ways of life, interspersed with the tales of these three women. The author, Syed Shamsul Haq in this drama rightly said, "As the bird soars high in the sky, it leaves behind its plume. A woman's life inscribed with water merges too into the water."

Shadhona has been working with diverse folk art forms of the region like Lathi Khela and Raibeshe -- a martial dance form of Bengal that goes back almost 2,000 years to the time of Raja Pratapaditya. The production also extensively uses other traditional dance forms -- Jhumur, Bihu, Pata, Chhau of Purulia and Mayurbhanj and Kalaripayattu of Kerala. Incorporation of these different dance forms lends diversity to "Champabati".

What gives the age-old narrative a new life is its unusual music. "Champabati" boasts a number of musical tracks by Anusheh Anadil, Nirjher

Chowdhury, Rokon Emon, Shofi Mandal, Duniya, and Nadia Dora.

Shabbir Ahmed Khan has directed the production, while Shamim Hasan has done the dramatic direction. Zahidul Kabir Liton is the music director of the production. Nirjher Chowdhury and Rokon Emon have redone the musical arrangement, which was initially designed six years ago by Durbadol Chattopadhyay of Kolkata.

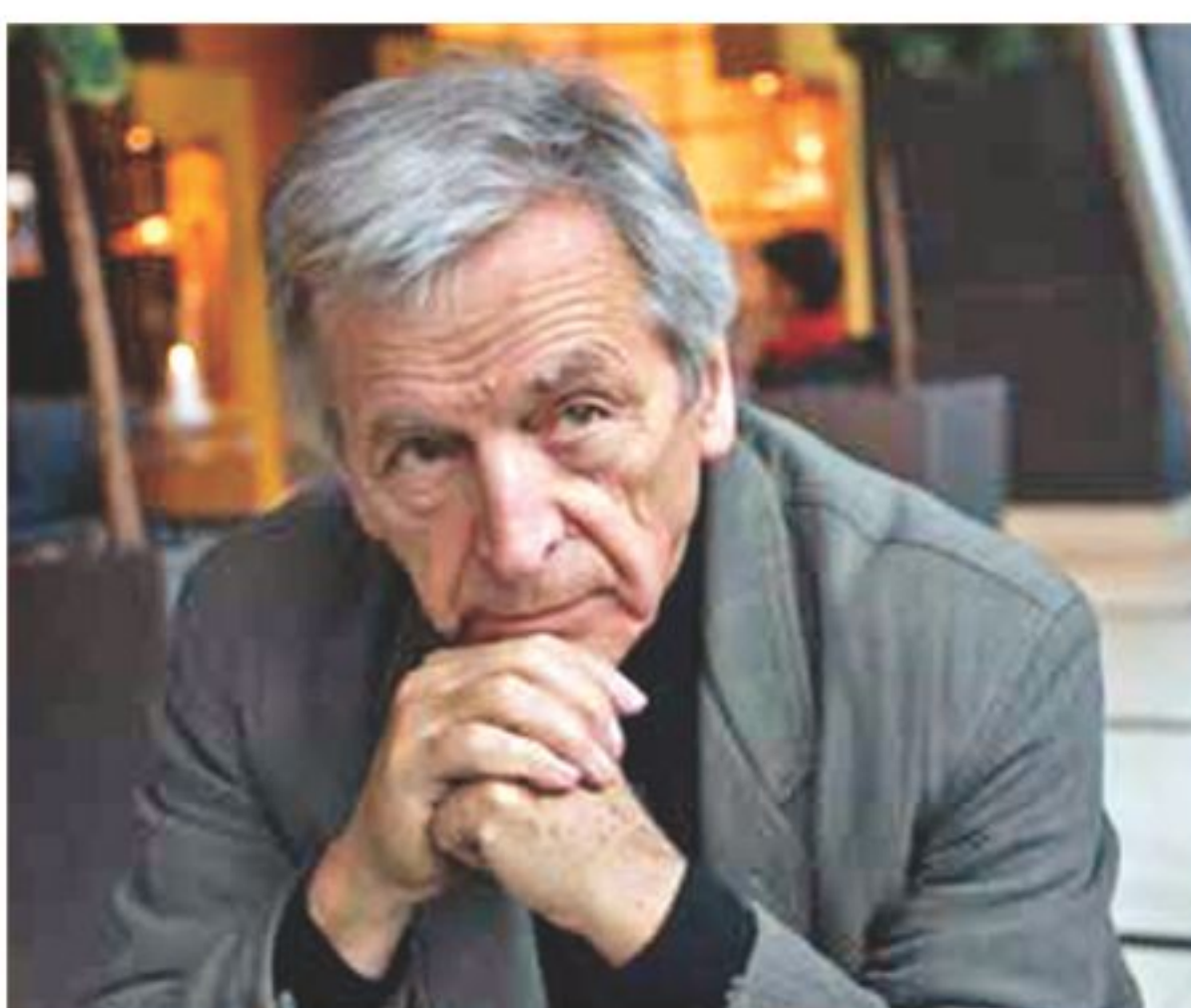
The production is set to be premiered on October 25, (Friday) at the Experimental Theatre Hall of the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Filmmaker Costa Gavras is feted in Mumbai Lifetime Achievement award at film festival

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Internationally-acclaimed Greek director Costa Gavras, whose artistically-made highly political films like "Z" and "The Missing" never cease to appeal to viewers across time-span, was conferred the Lifetime Achievement award at a film festival organised by the Mumbai Academy of Moving Image (MAMI) on Thursday night.

One of world cinema's most feted filmmakers, Gavras is best known for his political thrillers, such as the Best Foreign Language Oscar-winner "Z" (1969), "The Missing" (1982) starring Jack Lemmon, for which Gavras



won the Best Writing (Adapted Screenplay) Oscar, "The Little Apocalypse" (1993) and "Amen" (2002).

Presenting the award to 80-year-old Gavras, Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithivraj Chavan said he was happy to honour the director whose films were a huge influence on him.

Costa Gavras, whose latest film "Capital" deals with the murky world of private banks in the US, received a standing ovation as he reached the dais to receive his award.

The filmmaker said he was moved to be acknowledged by a cinema-loving audience. "We are in a big fight, an exceptional fight for making free movies. This award will help me in this fight and give me courage to make more such movies," said Gavras.

The biggest quality about Costa Gavras' political films is that his message against capitalism and dictatorship comes out seamlessly out of the stories he narrates and one never feels it is superimposed in any way. The director always avoids the temptation of being loud in his political films.

This year's Mumbai festival's competition jury is presided over by "Driving Miss Daisy" director Bruce Beresford with fellow members including French actress Nathalie Baye, Japanese film-maker Masato Harada, Indian actress Konkona Sen Sharma and Canada-based Indian director Deepa Mehta.

The India Gold competition jury is headed by Oscar winning Iranian director Asghar Farhadi while other jurors include Australian film editor Jill Bilcock ("Moulin Rouge"), British actor-director Waris Hussein ("Passage to India"), Afghan director Siddiq Barmak ("Osama") and Hong Kong International Film Festival director and film critic Roger Garcia.

The festival opened with a screening of Lee Daniels' "The Butler", starring Forest Whitaker. The festival's closing film is "The Fifth Estate", which will screen after the awards ceremony on October 24.

The festival, featuring more than 200 films from 65 countries, with a focus on Spanish, French and Cambodian cinema, will also pay tribute to the late Bollywood icon Yash Chopra, who died in October last year, late Bengali director Rituparno Ghosh and late Bollywood actor Pran.

Aurthohin's AMJONOTA is an instant hit

A CORRESPONDENT

Aurthohin, one of the most heavyweight rock bands in the country, have been silent for a while. However, their new single "Amjonota", released online for a free download on the eve of Eid, has created quite a stir among listeners. As soon as news of the release of the song spread from Aurthohin's official Facebook fan page and of their front-man 'Bassbaba' Sumon -- which alone is followed by nearly 59,000 people -- the ramped up demand caused the song to be required to upload on several different locations.

"Amjonota", penned by Sumon himself, is a scathing commentary of the country's instabilities and incidents that has transpired over this year, and how the general people have looked upon them. A wide range of issues -- including political instability, religious bigotry, online propaganda, border killings, the power plant at Sunderbans and a recent debate over cultural aggression -- have all been addressed in simple and straightforward lyrics, with a catchy, funky composition and a strong chorus.

The song has been released under ME Label, and is available for download on their web site.



Poet Belal Chowdhury receives a crest, shawl and flower bouquet from Rawnak Sultana, Dr. Rakibul Hasan and Nasreen Akhtar, as part of honours conferred by mass media organisation Ghashphul. Poets Rafiq Azad and Asad Chowdhury are also seen. The Autumnal Poetry Festival organised by Ghashphul was held recently at the Public Library auditorium, on the closing day of a book fair by Adorn Publications. Veteran and young poets recited their poems at the event.