

NEWS bytes

Rod Stewart knighted

Rod Stewart has been knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in her annual Birthday Honours List, which also included recognition for astronaut Tim Peake and "Downton Abbey" star Penelope Wilton.

The raspy-voiced singer was honoured "for services to music and charity". The 71-year-old will be able to call himself Sir Roderick David Stewart from now on.

The twice-yearly royal honors reward hundreds of people for services to their community or national life. Most go to people who are not in the limelight, but there is also a sprinkling of famous faces.

Recipients also included 99-year-old singer Vera Lynn, who raised British spirits during World War II. She was made a Companion of Honor, an award limited to 65 people 'of distinction'.

Wilton, who played indomitable Isobel Crawley in Downton Abbey, was made a dame, the female equivalent of a knight.

Source: **Billboard**



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Maznun Mizan's leap of faith

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Actor Maznun Mizan is primarily a theatre and TV actor, but he has broken out of the mould recently. He is currently busy shooting for a film and hopes to take on many more. He recently talked about his upcoming film and his new passion for the silver screen:

What was it like to work in your first FDC film?

Maznun Mizan: It was awesome to be in "Bossgiri", directed by Shamim Ahmed Rony. I play a very positive role nicknamed 'System', a friend of Shakib Khan's character.

You have mostly worked in TV plays. How do you see yourself in films?

Maznun Mizan: I am confident about going into the realm of films. I am particularly interested in doing commercial films. If I get a good audience response, I plan to act in films regularly.

You recently also worked in the film "Bhubon Majhi"?

Maznun Mizan: We have finished shooting the film. It is an excellent story. Parambrata and I are good friends. The shooting was done mostly

in Kolkata. We did only 35 days of shoots in Bangladesh.

Any other upcoming films?

Maznun Mizan: The premiere show of "Madhu" was held recently and it now

With the film Bhubon Majhi, my dream to act as a Freedom Fighter came true

awaits a commercial release. Sumona Siddique directed this film based on the poem "Madhu" written by Rabindranath Tagore. It's a film for children.

Sounds like you're ready to take on the challenges of the silver screen?

Maznun Mizan: I am completely prepared for the challenges. I have worked in theatre for many years, acted in TV plays and now simultaneously work in films. I still have a lot to learn and I am learning something new every day.

Any unfulfilled dreams?

Maznun Mizan: All artists have unfulfilled dreams. I've been lucky of late. With the film Bhubon Majhi, my dream to act as a Freedom Fighter came true.

Any other roles that you have set your heart on?

Maznun Mizan: Honestly, I am waiting for the role of a singer. I have done many roles but never as a singer. Be it theatre or films, I want to play the role of a singer.

PHOTO: STAR



**BRINGING NOVERA'S LIFE TO STAGE
Dhrupodi's maiden production at Shilpakala**

ZAHANGIR ALOM

Aiming to demystify the life of pioneering Bangladeshi sculptor Novera Ahmed and revisit her lifelong journey towards artistic pursuit, a theatrical production "Novera" was staged at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on June 11.

Produced by acting and design school Dhrupodi, the monodrama is directed by Sajjad Rajib. Samiun Jahan Dola has scripted the production based on Hasnat Abdul Hye's novel on the same title, and has also donned the role of Novera, portraying her life from early years to death in a first-person narrative.

The underlying theme that Dola carried into the drama and brought about brilliantly is how Novera made the sky her limit and how society often reacted to her aspirations. The production revolves around Novera's dream of becoming a sculptor overcoming the barriers that came her way.

Luminaries including Novera's fellow sculptor Hamidur Rahman (with whom she accomplished the design of central Shaheed Minar); eminent journalist SM Ali who organised Novera's first and second solo exhibitions in Dhaka and Bangkok respectively; Novera's French husband; Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin and few others who had definitive roles in the sculptor's life came into the storytelling of the play.

A short Bharatanatyam choreography that was incorporated into the play, depicting Novera taking lessons in the Indian classical dance form in Mumbai from Vyjayanthimala, added colour to the production.

The portrayal of patriotism of the sculptor during the War of Liberation was marvelous. Music, lighting, choreography and the set enhanced the effect of the play. The Bangla translation of American poet Anne Sexton's poem "Bat" opened the play, encapsulating the life that the drama unfolds.

Novera's emotive world was showcased intensely with several timeless songs and poems by Tagore, DL Roy, Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury and Kazi Nazrul Islam.

The production had earlier premiered at Mahila Samiti Mancha at Bailey Road, Dhaka on May 13.

TV WATCH

"Bakshobondi" on ntv

OUR CORRESPONDENT

TV series "Bakshobondi" will air on ntv tonight at 9:45pm. Written by Pantho Shahriar and directed by Nayeem Imtiaz Neyamul, it casts Mamunur Rashid, Shamsul Alam Bokul, Sharmili Ahmed, Aruna Biswas, Nisho, Nayeem, Nadia, Farhana Mili, Samia and others. The series zooms in on the family of the retired Atiar, his wife Sahana, son Dewan and three daughters Rumpa, Jhumpa and Tumpa.

"Bakshobondi" airs on Mondays and Tuesdays.



A CORRESPONDENT

Single-episode TV drama "Mon Kharaper Drisshaboli" will air on Rtv this Eid. Written and directed by Kaushik Shankar Das, seasoned actors Riaz and Mou play the central lead.

The story revolves around newly married couple Rana and Preetha. About five months into the marriage, Preetha decides to go abroad for further studies, despite Rana's strong objections. A lonely Rana meets former classmate Jui at a book shop, and the duo end up spending a lot of time together. When Preetha learns of his she is annoyed and asks Rana to quit his job and join her. A perplexed, Rana consults Jui on his future course of action.

"Mon Kharaper Drisshaboli" this Eid

New Line's "The Conjuring 2" is scaring up a solid \$39 million in its opening weekend at the US box office, handily beating launches by "Warcraft" and "Now You See Me 2", estimates showed Saturday (early Sunday in Bangladesh time).

Universal's fantasy-actioner "Warcraft" is heading for a respectable \$27 million while Lionsgate's caper thriller "Now You See Me 2" should take in about \$24 million.

"The Conjuring 2" dominated moviegoing Friday with \$16.4 million, followed by \$10.7 million for "Warcraft" and \$8.4 million for "Now You See Me 2". Both sequels generated an A-Cinemascore among attendees, while "Warcraft" generated a B+.

"The Conjuring 2" brings back Vera Farmiga and Patrick Wilson, who return as the husband-wife team of paranormal investigators Lorraine and Ed Warren, three years after the original hauled in a stunning \$318 million worldwide. The duo deals with the 1977 case of demonic possession of an 11-year-old British girl, played by Madison Wolfe.

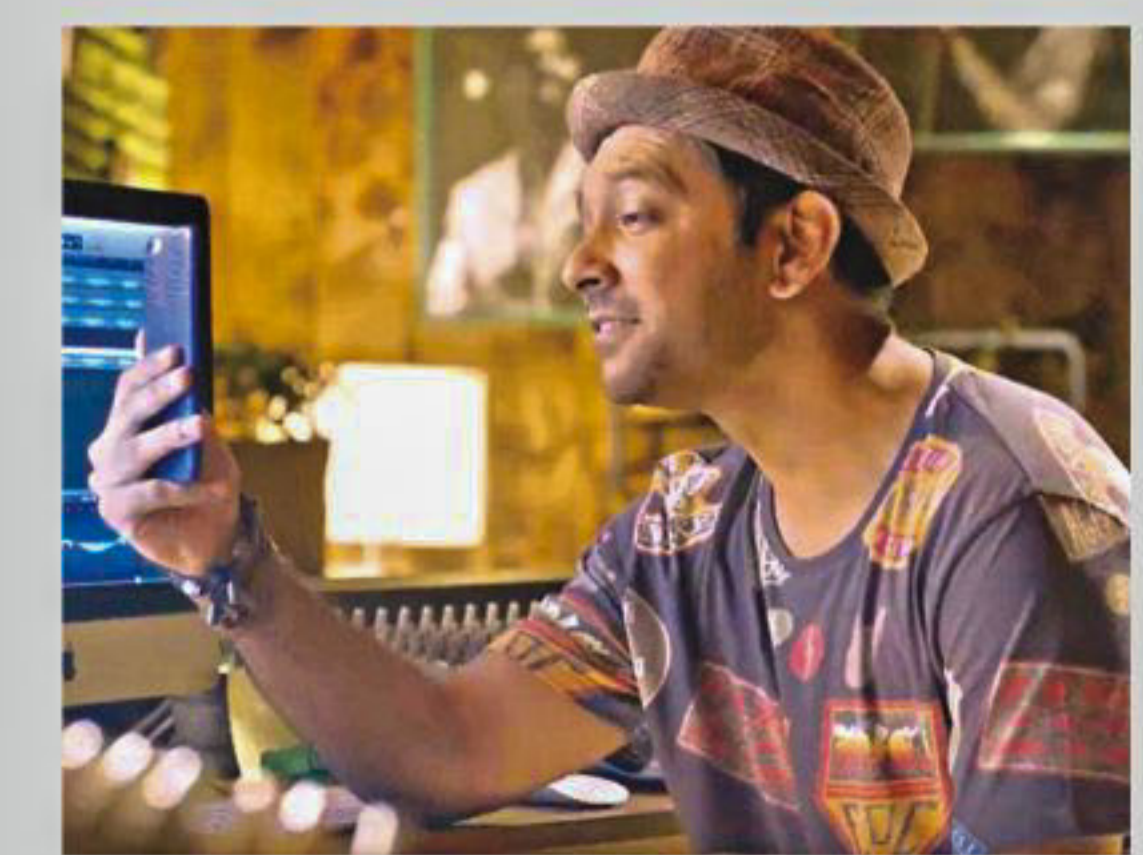
The film has also opened impressively in 44 international markets with \$19.5 million with number one opening days in 25 markets, including all of Latin America, Australia and several Asian markets.

Source: **Variety**

THE CONJURING 2
dominating US Box Office



TAHSAN-MIM
in new commercials



Tahsan and Mim, two of the most popular faces of the Bangladeshi show business, were recently seen filming a tele-film, and the duo have now paired up for a series of TV Commercials for mobile operators Grameenphone. The duo will feature in three advertisements, highlighting the operator's 3G network coverage, according to a press release. The first of the commercials was released on Grameenphone's Facebook page yesterday.

The story follows Tahsan, a successful musician, who is married to Mim -- a professional photographer who travels around the country. The two stay connected via the 3G network even in remote areas.