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Salahuddin Lavlu has finished shooting for 'Haradhoner Ekti Bagan' with Chanchal Chowdhury and Shahnaz Khushi, among others. PHOTO: COLLECTED

# Cameras roll for Eid productions

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Shooting for Eid-Ul-Fitr productions have begun in full swing. After two years of the coronavirus pandemic, cast and crew members are spending

Shihab Shaheen just finished shooting for his Eid special tele-fiction "Aghoton" at Uttara. The single-episode production features Ziaul Faruk Apurba and Sabila Nur. "This production is a comedy, and I hope the audience enjoys watching it as much as we enjoyed making it," says Apurba, from the sets.

"I think Shihab Shaheen's work is amazing, and this production is no different," shares Sabila Nur.

Salahuddin Lavlu has finished shooting for "Haradhoner Ekti Bagan" with Chanchal Chowdhury and Shahnaz Khushi, among others. He will soon begin shooting for his other Eid projects.

"The pandemic interrupted a lot of our work," shares Chanchal Chowdhury. "I hope things turn out to be different this year."

Mehazabien Chowdhury usually makes notable appearances in one-hour television productions throughout the year. However, she is yet to be seen in any series on television. The actress has started shooting for Eid specials, and will be seen opposite Apurba in a Muhidul Islam directorial project, among many others.

"Biye Ami Korbo Na", an Eid tele-fiction directed by Sohel Hasan, features Niloy Alamgir and Jannatul Sumaiya Himi, among others.

Mosharraf Karim will be starring in multiple special productions this Eid, including "Passport", "Ohom", and "Gorom Shorkar". All of them are directed by Shamim Zaman.

"Actors are born to perform, and I am a fish in the same pond," he says. "However, I never compromise when it comes to choosing characters and scripts."

Zahid Hasan has never disappointed his fans when it comes to Eid television specials. Apart from playing charming roles, he also looks to direct various productions.

He has been preparing for his directorial ventures and plans to start shooting for them soon. "I will be seen on screen in one of my own directorial projects this time," says an excited Zahid Hasan.

Fazlur Rahman Babu has been reigning over the silver screen, television, theatre, and streaming platforms for a while. The noted actor has started shooting for his Eid productions from today. He will be busy with back-to-back shoots at different locations across and outside Dhaka, including Uttara, Pubail, and Sreemangal.

Mir Sabbir will star in two television serials this Eid, directed by Barna Nath and Saidur Rahman Russel. "I will also start shooting for one of my directorial ventures from next month," he adds.

## Music world pays tribute to Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



Fellow musicians paid tribute to Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins across social media. He passed away at the age of 50. The noted drummer's death was announced by the band in the midst of a festival tour of South America. Miley Cyrus, who was part of the lineup alongside Foo Fighters at the Estereo Picnic festival in Bogota, Columbia, said she would dedicate her March 26 show to him.

Members of rock band Nickelback said they were in "utter disbelief" at the news.

Former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr also expressed his condolences and wished "peace and love" for those close to Hawkins.

"God bless Taylor," he wrote.



## James Bond reality show in the works

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Amazon's Prime Video recently announced a James Bond-inspired reality competition series, "007's Road to a Million."

The international race will span eight episodes with contestants vying to win £1 million in cash. They will compete in two-person teams and be tasked with passing physical obstacles as well as answering questions hidden in different locations.

Production for the show is slated to begin later this year. Bond producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G Wilson are attached to it.

The series is set to be filmed at historic sites featured throughout the Bond franchise.

# NEWS

## Online sales

FROM PAGE 12  
Currently, the BR is supposed to sell 50 percent tickets at the counters and the rest online.

Contacted, Sardar Shahadat Ali, additional director-general (operations) of BR, admitted that people were not getting tickets through online.

"They [the vendor] said they were working on the issue, but could not tell when it would be fixed," he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Contacted, Farhat Ahmed, manager (public relations) at Shohoz Limited, said the website received around 22 lakh traffic within a few minutes.

"This could be a result of a cyber attack too," he said.

## DB makes

FROM PAGE 12  
motives behind the murder.

Local ruling party men have alleged that law enforcers picked up some ward-level leaders of AL and its front organisations. However, law enforcers didn't claim any arrest over the incident as of yet.

Tipu was shot dead while he was returning home at Khilgaon Bagichha by his microbus from his restaurant in Motijheel AGB Colony area around 10:15pm on Thursday.

At that time, a rickshaw passenger Samia Afran Jamal Prity, 22, was also shot. She was later declared dead in hospital.

Tipu's wife Farhana Islam Doly, also the councillor of wards 1, 11, 12 (Motijheel area) of Dhaka South City Corporation, filed a case with Shahjahanpur Police Station in connection with the killing.

Party activists and family members said political feuds within the party could be a reason behind Tipu's murder.

## Small farmers in a vicious trap

FROM PAGE 1  
department yesterday said, "We've noticed one sort of feudal system emerging in the Barind villages."

Farmers are losing crops and land to the system as they keep struggling to survive, he said, adding that many operators exploit farmers taking advantage of the water crisis in the region.

He said areas in Nachol and Gomostapur upazilas in Chapainawabganj; Tanore and Godagari in Rajshahi; and Porsha, Sapahar, and Niamatpur upazilas in Naogaon, have severe water shortages.

Bimol Hasda, a farmer in Issoripur village, said he had to wait for 15 days to get water to his Boro field. "I needed water for at least two hours, but was given only for one hour."

Bimol now fears he might have a poor yield, like he had last year. "If this continues, I will have nowhere to go. I don't know how I will feed my family."

The government's Barind Multipurpose Development Authority (BMDA) appointed operators for its 16,000 deep tube-wells in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, earning around Tk 150 crore in revenues annually.

More than half of those tube-wells are in Rajshahi, Chapainawabganj and Naogaon districts where water for irrigation is scarce, said BMDA sources, adding that there are also around 56,000 private irrigation wells approved by upazila irrigation committees.

Experts and development activists working in the region said money and politics come into play in picking operators.

Several farmers said many became extremely rich within years after installing water pumps in their areas.

Mazed Ali of Godagari's Jogpur village said, "The well works like oil mines for many. Their owners are denying us water. They are making huge money within a short period of time after forcing us to sell our land."

In cases, the operators would help well-off farmers buy or take lease of such land, in exchange of money, he said.

They also illegally take crops from farmers for meeting costs of maintenance of equipment needed to supply water to the fields. Besides, they take money from them when the

tube-wells go out of order.

The farmers also said they have to pay more for the water, which is supplied to their land through dug-up paths.

For example, a private pump owner charges them Tk 110 for one hour of water, whereas it should be around Tk 28.

BMDA provided smart cards to farmers for getting the water, but the operators don't let them use it. Rather, the operators somehow collect the cards themselves and take cash from those seeking water, they said.

Contacted, BMDA Executive Director Abdur Rashid said they receive complaints from farmers in this regard. "We terminated one or two operators, but complaints keep coming."

"We will look into the matter."

Speaking to The Daily Star in front of his two-storey home, the only concrete building in Godagari's Issoripur village, Sakhawat denied depriving farmers of irrigation water.

Asked about the delay in supplying water to Abhinath's field, he said, "We have to maintain serial numbers as the demand for water is always high."

## Recognise

FROM PAGE 2  
stronger understanding of our collective heritage. And Bangladesh and its growing community is a part of our collective heritage," she added.

Adam Muller, director of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba; Jeremy Maron, curator at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights; and Imtiaz Ahmed, director at the Centre for Genocide Studies of Dhaka University, were also present.

Meanwhile, in two separate events on Friday, the Bangladesh high commissioner in the UK and Bangladesh's permanent representative to the UN urged the international community to recognise the 1971 genocide.

The facts of the 1971 genocide are well documented and yet it has not been recognised in the UN discourses, said Rabab Fatima, permanent representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, said in a webinar.

"We believe UN's mandate to advance prevention will be incomplete if the past tragedies, such as ours, remain unrecognised."

The programme was organised to mark National Genocide Day.

In April 1971, Sir Peter Shore, MP, who was the chair of the UK's Foreign Affairs Committee, moved a motion in the UK parliament condemning atrocities committed in erstwhile East Pakistan, followed by another motion, supported by over 233 cross-party members, calling for the end of genocide in East Bengal and the recognition of Bangladesh, said Saida Muna Tasneem, Bangladesh High Commissioner to the UK, in another event commemorating the day.

## Households with pre-paid

FROM PAGE 12  
for per cubic meter gas to Tk 18 from the existing Tk 12.6 for the pre-paid households. Subsequently, 35-45 cubic metres of gas consumption will set the households back by Tk 630-810 a month.

The Daily Star spoke with a host of pre-paid households and all seemed frustrated with the recommendation.

"We welcomed the pre-paid meters as a good initiative as it reduced our cost on gas drastically. If it becomes a burden to us, nobody will cooperate with the government with such good initiatives later," said Tuhin Rahman, a pre-paid meter user at the capital's West Nakhla para.

Meanwhile, the BERC recommended hiking the tariff for double burners at non-metered households to Tk 1,080 from 950 and to Tk 990 from Tk 925 for a single burner.

Here, the committee recommended preparing the bill assuming gas consumption of 55 to 60 cubic metres per month.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the Centre for Policy Dialogue, termed the recommendation as "discriminatory".

"First of all, at this moment, there is no logical ground to increase the gas price as people are already under the pressure of inflation."

The government should much rather deploy other methods like reducing the taxes, increasing subsidy allocation for liquefied natural gas imports, using the profits of previous years or taking short-term loans from abroad.

The logic behind the committee's recommendation for a gas price hike should be transparent.

"It will encourage

those who use gas more than they need. It should be considered," he said, adding that how could the households get the highest hike proposal instead of the industries or captive power plants.

For the power sector, the per cubic metre of gas will cost Tk 1.1 more at Tk 5.34 and for the captive power plants Tk 1.65 more at Tk 15.50.

For fertiliser factories, it will cost Tk 5.34 instead of Tk 4.45, for tea industries Tk 12.65 instead of Tk 10.70 for tea industries.

For commercial users like hotels and restaurants, a Tk 4.6 hike per cubic metre of the gas tariff has been recommended and for CNG feeds Tk 6.5.

The small and cottage industries will see their gas tariff come down by 32 percent, while the large and mid-sized industries will face an increase of about 18 percent.

## Blinken heads to Israel, Morocco, Algeria

AFP, Warsaw

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was expected to fly in Israel as the Ukraine war rages, aiming to rally regional support for Kyiv and quell the Jewish state's worries about a looming nuclear deal with Iran.

On the first stop of a tour that will include the West Bank, Morocco and Algeria, Blinken will join a mini-summit of counterparts from Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco, the so-called "Abraham Accords" countries that have normalized relations with Israel.