

A 70-YEAR MUSICAL LEGACY VISITS DHAKA

Meet the Harvard Krokodiloes

Ever since their inception, they have been striving to bring the music of the Great American Songbook, as well as more traditional aires, to audiences across the globe.

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Last week, a group of 12 young students serenaded North South University with their otherworldly acapella chops, introducing an auditorium full of students to their unique style.

The Harvard Krokodiloes, popularly known as the Kroks, is Harvard University's oldest acapella singing group. They were in Dhaka last week, and as a part of their two-day itinerary. They not only performed in NSU, but did a television shoot, got familiarised with local music at Shurer Dhara, and conducted a small workshop at Bengal Shilpalaya.

Founded in 1946, the Kroks trace back to 1770 in Harvard's Hasty Pudding Club, one of the oldest collegiate social organisations in the United States. Inspired by the stuffed crocodiles on the wall of the Pudding's Upstairs Bar, the founding singers borrowed the Greek word for crocodile, and the Krokodiloes were born.

Ever since their inception, they have been striving to bring the music of the Great American Songbook, as well as more traditional aires, to audiences across the globe. Their fine musicianship, youthful energy, unique blend of snappy choreography and witty humour make them instant crowd-pleasers. Their specialisation lies within their voices as they do not use any instrument and portray this to be the rawest expression of their emotions.

Touring has always been a defining characteristic of the Harvard Krokodiloes. Each summer, the band participates in an annual world tour, as they continue to bring the classic songs of America's Golden Age of



PHOTO: NAVEM SHAAN

music to audiences around the globe. This year, they are spending 82 days exploring 20 countries and 24 cities across the globe.

"These tours help us spread awareness about acapella music, and exchange cultures. This is indeed a wonderful experience for this close-knit community of music lovers," shared Jonathan D'Souza, the band's tour manager. He is currently pursuing his undergraduate degree in Environmental Science and Engineering. The other members of the troupe include Will Granger, Kieran Anderson, Jongtae

Jeon, Jeffrey Ding, Eton Shon, Joey Griffith, Ian Hayes, Hari Narayanan, Gregor Kossmann, Cyril Leahy, and Rick Zhou.

At NSU, the Kroks came across a beatboxing group Beatmosphere, who according to them, replicated the sounds of Dhaka. This provided them with a raw local experience and they look forward to trying something similar with their music. "NSU presented us with one of the biggest audiences in a long time. It was striking how many people loved this new music form and came up to the stage for pictures, autographs and merchandise," asserts Jonathan.

In order to promote cultural infusion, the Kroks add new songs to their list every year, and these are produced entirely by the group members. "Our members bring out new music by adding a touch of modernity while staying true to our roots," he added.

The Kroks say that they have been amazed by the generosity, selflessness and care they have received during this tour. They have found Dhaka's art scene to be diverse, drawing special attention to the rickshaw painting and wall art practices. "Dhaka has a very authentic art-culture scene, and the people here are not afraid to express it," concludes Jonathan.

Beyonce drops new single 'Break My Soul'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Grammy award winning singer, Beyonce just dropped her new single "Break my soul". This is the singer's first single to be released from her upcoming solo studio album, "Renaissance: Act 1."

Beyonce announced the news via her Instagram account with the caption "6. Break my soul."

This upcoming album will be the artists first solo album release since her 2016 superhit album, "Lemonade". In the meanwhile, she has worked on several other projects such as soundtracks for movies and collaboration with other artists.

"Renaissance: Act 1" is slated to be released on July 29 and is available to be pre-saved on TIDAL, Jay-Z's music streaming platform.



Sachin Tendulkar praises Shabaash Mithu trailer

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Sachin Tendulkar heaped praise on "Shabaash Mithu" for its recently released trailer. He also added that the story of Mithali Raj has inspired millions and that he is looking forward to watching the movie.

The trailer for Srijit Mukherji directorial "Shabaash Mithu", a sports drama starring Taapsee Pannu in the lead role, was released yesterday. So far, the trailer has garnered an amazing response from fans. The movie will be a biopic of Mithali Raj.

Mithali Raj is one of the greatest woman cricketers and the former captain of the Indian women's cricket team, she broke multiple records in her 23-year career. She only recently retired announced her retirement from cricket.



COUNTRYWIDE

Allowance too scanty to survive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Sukhobala Sen, 90, has been receiving old age allowance of Tk 500 for eight years but she can hardly afford to buy her prescribed medications for a week with the meagre amount of money.

She has to depend on her day labourer son Bhabani Chandra Sen, 55, of Rasulpur village of Baura union in Patgram upazila of Lalmonirhat district.

"If the allowance were Tk 3,000 per month, I could survive the whole month easily," She said adding that her son has to struggle to run his family as the prices of essentials have soared many times.

"I don't want to be a burden to my son," Sukhobala also said.

Physically inability widow allowance beneficiary Kandri Bala (58) is spending her days in despair and anxiety. She is not getting food support properly.

She gets widow allowance Tk 500 every month. With this money she can't go well for a week. She could have somehow survived if she had received an allowance of Tk 3000 every month.

Kandri Bala gets Tk 500 widow allowance every month, but with that money she can't go well for a week.

Physically challenged Kandri Balar, 58, a beneficiary of widow's allowance, has been passing days in despair. She gets a monthly allowance of Tk 500. However, she cannot manage the expenses of a week with the money. She also echoed Sukhobala urging that the government raise the allowance to Tk 3,000.

Khodeja Bewa, 68, an old age

allowance beneficiary of Sardob village in Kurigram Sadar upazila, told The Daily Star that the amount she gets is too little to survive.

"I cannot run a month with the money but have nothing to do," she said.

According to the Department of Social Services that 1,48,919 people in five upazilas of Lalmonirhat and 2,24,970 people in nine upazilas of Kurigram are getting government allowance.

Most of the beneficiaries are elderly people. Government pays old age allowance Tk 500, widow allowance Tk 500, disability allowance Tk 750, disabled student allowance Tk 750-1300, special allowance of transgender people Tk 600, special education allowance of Dalit and disadvantaged people Tk 500, education allowance for transgender and dalits and disadvantaged people Tk 700-1200 every month.



Sukhobala Sen, a nonagenarian, of Rasulpur village in Lalmonirhat's Patgram upazila has to depend on her day labourer son for survival as the allowance she is entitled is too meagre.

PHOTO: STAR

HC blasts

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After being informed by the official of the matter, UNO Rezaul kept Kamal and Mehedi waiting and took their IDs.

He also threatened them with punishment via a mobile court.

The district judge of Faridpur wrote about the incident to the chief justice and the law minister.

The HC bench on June 7 issued a contempt of court rule against the UNO and the official and summoned them.

The UNO and the official apologised yesterday.

The HC bench exempted them from personal appearance before this court and fixed June 26 for passing an order.

During the proceedings, the HC bench told UNO Rezaul that his conduct was exposed and people think that a clash has taken place between the judiciary and the executive.

874 new Covid

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A total of 7,927 samples were tested across the country during this period.

At least 84 patients have recovered from Covid-19 within this time.

The total number of recoveries now stands at 1,905,983 and the recovery rate at 97.34 percent, added the release.

Remand for Halder

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Directorate in its plea for extension of judicial custody.

The 14-day tenure of the previous judicial custody of Halder and five of his associates expired yesterday.

The six were arrested on May 14 after the ED, which handles money laundering and foreign exchange cases in India, conducted raids on 11 premises in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal following a tip-off by Bangladesh's Financial Intelligence Unit.

Halder was living in India under a disguised identity of an Indian citizen of Shibshankar Halder.

The searches revealed he along with his associates fraudulently obtained various government identities like ration cards from the authorities in

West Bengal, Indian voter ID cards, PAN and Aadhar cards.

The Bangladeshi nationals have also managed to float companies in India with fraudulently obtained identities and even purchased properties in West Bengal, which constitute an offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002, the ED said.

Halder has been accused of siphoning about Tk 10,000 crore from Bangladesh. Besides the Bangladeshi and Indian passports, he also has a Grenadian passport.

The others arrested along with Halder are his brother Pranesh, Swapan Maitra, Uttam Maitra, Imam Hossain and Amana Sultana.

Death toll now 22

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Hospital in Sylhet.

In Netrokona, a 32-year-old woman named Julekha Begum drowned as a boat sank in floodwater at Jurail village in Kendua upazila of Netrokona district on Tuesday.

Julekha, her 7-year-old daughter Tanjina, sister-

in-law Nazmunnahar and two others were going to Jurail Haor by a small boat yesterday morning.

Tanjina fell into the water from the boat. Julekha managed to save her but she drowned in the floodwater, said Mir Mahbubur Rahman, inspector of Kendua police station.

12-yr-old found dead

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the hospital, the victim's cousin Nahid Hossain said Shihab was a meritorious student and was admitted to the school as a residential student four months ago.

On Monday, his teachers called the family and said Shihab was sick.

When the family went to the school, they were told to go to the hospital instead, he said.

Shihab's grandfather

Ismail Hossain said that when family members would call the hostel to speak to Shihab, they were never allowed.

Asked how such a young child could die by suicide, like the school authorities are saying, Mohammad Shahid, a teacher, said, "It could happen as times have changed."

Sarwar Hosain, additional superintendent of police (Sadar Circle) in Tangail, said

that a case was being filed in this regard. "The reason behind the death could be known only after the autopsy."

Many guardians of the students have urged the authorities to conduct a proper investigation into Shihab's death. They also reported instances of mental and physical torture.

The Daily Star, however, could not independently verify the claims.

PM opens two

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"We want peace in our country. If a peaceful situation prevails, we'll be able to make economic development," she said.

Among projects inaugurated today are 12 newly constructed district-level police hospitals, six women barracks for Bangladesh Police, the online GD (general diary) activities to reach the services to the doorstep of the people, and the distribution of 120 houses constructed in the second phase for homeless families.

As part of the government's initiative to construct separate barracks for female police members in 64 districts, the six barracks have been constructed.

Tourist boats

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already," said Suman, speaking from Chhatak upazila. He was headed to a madrasa for women, which has been turned into a shelter, to distribute dry food.

Gonoshasthaya Kendra's hospital in Shantiganj of Sunamganj is also housing 2,000 people whose homes have been flooded. GSK has pledged to distribute 100 tonnes of dry food and provide free medical services until the waters recede.

Meanwhile, Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF) has initially allocated Tk 1.98 crore to distribute emergency food items, water purification tablets and oral rehydration solution packets among the flood victims, said the organisation in a press release.

The relief is being distributed by 11 partner NGOs who are also using their own funds to carry out various aid initiatives.