



Syed Ahmed Shawki



Chanchal Chowdhury in 'Karagar'.

# Is 'Karagar' another landmark for OTT?

One night in prison, the authority finds an extra prisoner in custody. He is mute, and through sign language, he claims that he has been there for 250 years. Relentless intrigue, 109 artistes and a jaw-dropping plot -- Syed Ahmed Shawki's "Karagar" had the makings of a classic ever since the concept was revealed to the audience.

SHARMIN JOYA

After the immense success of "Taqdeer", the director took about two years to come up with another thriller/mystery.

The seven-episode series was released on August 19, on the popular OTT platform Hoichoi. In conversation with The Daily Star, Shawki discussed the origin story of the project.

"While 'Taqdeer' was contemporary, 'Karagar' is focused on history," shares the director. "A plot based on history requires a lot of research and time. It took an entire team to build up the script and work on the pre-production."

Initially, the director wanted to take a few more years to shoot the project. Shawki informs that the series is shot in Dhaka Central Jail, which will be renovated soon. "Since we wouldn't get the venue after a certain time period, we had no option but to shoot two seasons at once".

Dhaka Central Jail, located on Old Dhaka, is one of the largest prisons in Bangladesh. Besides housing criminals, it was notoriously used to keep political prisoners -- especially during the Language Movement of 1952, the 6 Point Movement, and the Liberation War of

Bangladesh.

"The place itself is the witness of the major historical events, and we chose one event and ran with it," says the director. The story, screenplay and dialogues of the show were done by Neamoth Ullah Masum. He was also the co-writer of "Taqdeer", alongside Shawki.

According to the director, two seasons of "Karagar" is planned out through twelve days, and it took them almost an entire month to complete the shooting. "We plan for more seasons after this", says the director.

The series stars Chanchal Chowdhury, Intekhab Dinar, Afzal Hossain, F S Nayeem, Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Bijori Barkatullah, and Tasnia Farin among many others.

How did the prisoner get inside a cell sealed for 50 years? "Why is the prisoner claiming to be the murderer of Mir Jafar, who historically died of leprosy disease?" or "How can someone who claims to be staying here for 250 years, understand modern sign language?" -- Many questions might plague a curious mind.

In response to this, Shawki simply urged the audiences to watch "Karagar" and find out for themselves.



COLLAGE: REMNANT GLIMPSE

## Mahiya Mahi's 'Live' teaser revealed

The teaser for Mahiya Mahi's upcoming film "Live" has been released. The actress will be seen alongside three protagonists -- Symon Sadik, Ador Azad, and Khairul Basar.

It shows that hat Mahiya Mahi is framed for a brutal murder. The evidence is against her, but Symon Sadik is adamant about proving her innocence.

"Live" is slated for release in theatres on September 9.

## 'Moshari' scores award at Oscar Qualifying film festival

Nuhash Humayun's horror short film "Moshari" bagged the Best Horror film at the Oscar qualifying 'Hollyshorts Film Festival'. The film was also among the top 8 films in the entire competition.

The critically acclaimed film is being appreciated and widely recognised at international film festivals for its unique plot and execution.

Recently, "Moshari" also won the Jury's Choice award at the Bucheon International Film Festival in South Korea.



# NEWS

## ASI withdrawn for assaulting

FROM PAGE 12

and head.

"As the officer-in-charge of the station was not in his room, ASI Arif approached me and asked me why I was at the police station. I told him the entire story but he didn't believe me. At one point of conversation, he grabbed me by the collar and took me to a room."

"ASI Arif then called AL leader Mannan, cousin of the accused. After talking to him, Arif punched and kicked me. He also beat me with a stick."

"My mother and daughter, who were outside the room, cried for help, but no one at the police station came to my aid... He [ASI Arif] asked me to leave."

The injured man was taken to Shivalaya Upazila Health Complex and given first aid.

Sources at the hospital said there were injury marks on his legs, hands

## Many take

FROM PAGE 12

Meanwhile, another worker Swapna Bauri said, "We work six days a week and get only Tk 600-700, with which we can't even run our family poorly. So, we will continue the strike."

BTWU General Secretary (acting) Nipen Paul said they refused the proposed Tk 145 wage a day.

"We announced to continue the strike until a wage of Tk 300 is fixed."

The workers of 167 tea estates across the country on August 9, 2022, enforced a two-hour work abstention from 9:00am to 11:00am daily demanding a pay hike.

After four days, they went on an indefinite work abstention.

## Step down

FROM PAGE 12

Mahmud said while Momen is an AL MP, he is not a central committee member of the party that he can speak on behalf of the AL when outside of Bangladesh.

When a cabinet member goes abroad, he speaks to the foreign dignitaries formally or informally.

"If he [foreign minister] says something to someone personally, the government or the party will not take responsibility for that," Mahmud said at a press conference at the secretariat on contemporary issues.

On enforced disappearances, he said: "BNP is very vocal about human rights now and speaking of disappearances but they themselves enforced the disappearances of their leaders."

Mahmud went on to cite the 2003 abduction of BNP leader Jamal Uddin Ahmed Chowdhury of Anwara in Chattogram as an example. Two years after he went missing from the port city, Chowdhury's skeleton was found at a remote village in Fatikchhari upazila.

"Like this, they have enforced the disappearances of their leaders. Today, they are trying to confuse people by speaking of the disappearances."

Asked what steps are being taken to bring back Tarique Rahman, who was sentenced to life in the grenade attack on August 21, from the UK, Mahmud said: "Talks are ongoing with the British government. But they have some domestic laws -- there are some complications."

Morgan sources said a police team, including some in plainclothes,

## More attacks may happen

FROM PAGE 1

The barbaric attack claimed the lives of 22 AL leaders and activists and injured several hundred.

"We, who survived the August 21 grenade attack, have the responsibility to the people. And our pledge on this day is to perform the duties till the last breath," Hasina said.

Mentioning that it was impossible to carry out such heinous attacks without state patronage, she said the then BNP government's subsequent activities such as destroying evidence, including unexploded grenades, helping killers flee the scene and even the country, clearly shows state sponsorship.

Hasina said Khaleda knew everything well as she referred to then prime minister's remarks a few days before the attack that Hasina would never be the prime minister or even the opposition leader.

She said after assuming office in 2001, the BNP Jamaat alliance government established a reign of terror across the country and killed thousands of AL men.

Recalling the terrible scene of the grenade attack, Hasina, who was the leader of the opposition in parliament at that time, said the

Pointing out that six opposition lawmakers were injured in the attack, she said they were not allowed to utter a single word or discuss the matter in parliament.

Hasina said the entire world is now

witnessing economic debacle due to the coronavirus pandemic, ongoing

Russia-Ukraine war, sanctions and

counter sanctions, and people have

been suffering immensely for those

reasons.

She called upon all to join hands

with the government to help rescue Bangladesh from the situation.

About BNP's participation in elections, the premier questioned how the BNP would take part in the polls as its leaders are either accused (in different cases) or fugitives.

The BNP is running after foreigners to come to power, Hasina said, adding that people would decide which party will assume office.

"BNP's character is to resort to murder. We are urged to sit with them to bring them to election. Why? I don't understand. Are there no people in Bangladesh?" she questioned.

AL General Secretary Obaidul Quader, also road transport and bridges minister, delivered the introductory speech at the discussion.

At the beginning of the meeting, one minute's silence was observed as a mark of profound respect for the martyrs of the August 21 grenade attack and the August 15 carnage.

Immediately after reaching the venue, Hasina placed a wreath at the makeshift podium to show respect to the August 21 martyrs.

Later, she along with AL's general secretary placed another wreath on behalf of the party.

## We'll sue cops first

FROM PAGE 1

College Hospital after autopsy.

Around 7:30pm yesterday, relatives and locals formed a human chain in Rampura Bazar area, demanding justice for Sumon. They blocked the DIT Road.

Around 10:30pm, members of Chhatra League swooped on the protesters, claimed sources and relatives of the deceased.

An official of Rampura Police Station said he saw some people moving the protesters and clearing the road.

Sumon, a 25-year-old deliveryman, died inside the lockup of Hatirjheel Police Station early Saturday, hours after his arrest. Police said he died by suicide.

His family members alleged that police demanded a bribe, and tortured and framed him.

"They killed my husband. We went to the police station to file a murder case, but police didn't record it. We want justice," Sumon's wife Jannat told this newspaper yesterday.

Police have refuted the allegations and showed CCTV footage of Sumon dying by suicide inside the lockup.

"It is obvious that police were negligent. How can a man in police custody die by suicide?" a relative of the deceased said.

After the autopsy around 4:00pm on Saturday, Sumon's body has been kept in the mortuary of Suhrawardy Medical College morgue.

The family members said police told them not to take the body to Rampura, saying that it may cause new protests and asked them to take the body to their village home for burial.

The death in police custody sparked protests in front of the police station on Saturday and police had to resort to truncheon charge to disperse the agitating crowd.

On Saturday, Tejgaon Division Deputy Commissioner HM Azmiul Haque said the deceased stood accused in a case over theft of Tk 53 lakh from a company on August 15.

Meanwhile, police filed an unnatural death case with Hatirjheel Police Station on Saturday.

Morgan sources said a police

team, including some in plainclothes,

went to the morgue around 7:30pm

yesterday and introduced themselves as "people from the administration".

They enquired about the body but left around 45 minutes later sensing the presence of the media.

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## Rohingya repatriation

FROM PAGE 12

The meeting was held just a day before UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Myanmar Noeleen Heyzer's visits Bangladesh.

She would be visiting Bangladesh today following her visit to Myanmar where she highlighted Myanmar's responsibility for conducive conditions for the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return of the Rohingyas.

At the meeting, Masud said UN presented the quick impact projects that the UN agencies are implementing in Rakhine villages.

Besides, China, Japan and India are also working to improve conditions there, he added.

The Bangladesh government sought more information from the UN agencies on the projects they are implementing, including the videos, so that those can be presented before the Rohingyas as a confidence-building measure, he added.

The foreign secretary said the taskforce has adopted two policies -- skill development and capacity building -- so that Rohingyas can use it after returning to Myanmar.

An important update was that the WFP will soon start providing food assistance to the 30,000 Rohingyas moved to Bhasan Char from Cox's Bazar.

The satellite was decommissioned in 2020 and was set to go into a so-called "graveyard orbit" before it was hijacked.

A separate hack on Starlink satellites was presented at the hacking conference, with a security researcher from Belgium able to gain access to SpaceX's space internet network using a handmade circuit board.

Three children have been rescued following Saturday's disaster, emergency services said, adding that they were in "good condition" and being monitored in a hospital.

## Iraq keeps up search after 4 bodies pulled from collapsed shrine

AFP, Karbala

Iraqi rescue workers were desperately searching for survivors trapped under rubble after a landslide hit a Shia Muslim shrine yesterday, killing at least four people.

"We have found four bodies, including of a woman" at the site near Karbala, central Iraq, civil defence official Abdelrahman Jawdat told AFP.

Between six and eight pilgrims had been reported trapped under the debris of the shrine, known as Qattarat al-Imam Ali, civil defence spokesman Nawas Sabah Shaker had said earlier.

Three children have been rescued following Saturday's disaster, emergency services said, adding that they were in "good condition" and being monitored in a hospital.