



Abanti Sithi and Rehaan Rasul receive the Best Singer Award from Foad Nasser Babu. PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



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ANTARA RAISA  
Abanti Sithi won over the hearts of many with her melodious voice and ingenious ability to whistle. However, she became a musical sensation after the release of the song “Rupkothar Jogote”. Recently she won the Best Singer Award at the Blender’s Choice The Daily Star OTT & Digital Content Awards. The artiste truly showcased her tenacity when, despite having a broken foot, she showed up to the award show in a wheelchair. In a conversation with The Daily Star, she shared her feelings about receiving the award and her upcoming projects.  
**What are your feelings after winning the Best Singer Award?**  
I’m delighted to have received an award for a song that is very close to my heart. Most of

# ‘Rupkothar Jogote’ was a turning point in my career

ABANTI SITHI

my fans know me because of this song. So, receiving this award in the popular category feels like a token of their appreciation.  
**You attended the event in a wheelchair, after breaking your leg. What motivated you come here even with an injury?**  
It was hard to resist the temptation of receiving an award for one of my songs. So, even though I broke my leg, I choose to attend the event in a wheelchair. It was a great feeling to see all of the stars under one roof.  
**When you initially recorded this song, did you think it would be this big of a hit?**  
No, I didn’t. I recorded the song during the COVID-19 lockdown. I was depressed at that time, because I was working hard to make a name for myself in the industry, however,

nothing was working out.  
At times, I even contemplated quitting music. I still remember that one day I returned from the studio with a job preparatory book. I was ready to call it quits and move to a different line of work. Thankfully, the music composer behind the song, Sajid Sarkar, encouraged me to keep pushing forward. Everything worked out in the end, as “Rupkothar Jogote” was a turning point in my career.  
**Where will we hear your voice next?**  
I have worked on the song “Koshter Bahar” for the web-series “Shuklopokkho”, which was released on Chorki. Apart from this, my original song, “Proloy”, was released under the banner of Protune. Currently, I am recording songs for Durga Puja.

## Brendan Fraser tears up following standing ovation for ‘The Whale’

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK



PHOTO: VIANNEY LE CAER/AP

On Sunday night, the Venice Film Festival witnessed the world premiere of “The Whale”, which stars Brendan Fraser. Audiences were so moved by the actor’s performance, that by the end of the screening, when the credits began to roll, they got on their feet and gave Fraser a six-minute long standing ovation for his performance. The actor could be seen visibly moved by the gesture, sobbing throughout the six-minutes. Other stars such as Phoebe Waller-Bridge and Nick Kroll could also be seen tearing up at the love and respect being shown for Fraser. “The Whale” stars Brendan Fraser as a man suffering from severe obesity, who struggles to reconnect with his teenage daughter.

## Robiul Alam Robi’s ‘Cafe Desire’ coming to Chorki

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

A good number of productions by Chorki are slated for release soon. One such upcoming project is director Robiul Alam Robi’s “Cafe Desire”, which is an anthology film. The film will cast Shamol Mawla, Shohel Mondol, Priyontee Urbee, and many other renowned artistes. The release date of the production is yet to be announced. The platform also announced Raihan Rafi’s “Nishwas” featuring Tasnia Farin and Anam Biswas’s “Dui Diner Dunia” featuring Fazlur Rahman Babu and Chanchal Chowdhury. The former will be released this month, while the latter is expected to hit the streaming platform in October.



# NEWS

## No power

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now,” he said.  
Subsequently, the Payra 1320 MW power plant stopped production for about two hours from 9:00 am to 11:00 am.  
The Power Grid Company Bangladesh formed a four-member committee to identify the reason and submit a report in two days.  
Earlier on November 1, 2014, the whole country went into a blackout for about 10 hours when power tripped at a substation in Bheramara in Kushtia when the 400 KV transmission line was bringing 445 MW of power from India.  
**Toyota recalls cars**  
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check your vehicle immediately,” Navan said it on its website.  
Lutful Karim, assistant general manager and head of marketing (Toyota) at Navana Ltd, said they are offering the replacement of airbags free of cost.  
“We are also giving the replacement to reconditioned cars,” he said.  
Bangladesh car market is dominated by used (reconditioned) cars.

## UN preparing for worse to come in Pakistan floods

AFP, Geneva  
The United Nations warned yesterday that the humanitarian situation in flood-ravaged Pakistan was expected to get worse, a day after establishing an air bridge to deliver aid to victims.  
More than 33 million people in Pakistan have been affected by the flooding, brought on by record monsoon rains amplified by climate change. The floods have caused at least 1,300 deaths and washed away homes, businesses, roads and bridges.  
The UN’s World Health Organization said more than 1,460 health centres had been damaged, of which 432 were fully wrecked, the majority of them in the southeastern province of Sindh.  
More than 4,500 medical camps have been set up by the WHO and its partners, while more than 230,000 rapid tests for acute watery diarrhoea, malaria, dengue, hepatitis and chikungunya have been distributed.

## Rogues rewarded

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leaders to BCL units.”  
The leaders of the new committee at Islamic University (IU) unit also face criminal allegations.  
Faisal Siddike Arafat, who was made the president of the new 24-member committee, is accused in several cases including attempt to murder.  
A former assistant secretary of the previous committee, Arafat was expelled from BCL for his involvement in vandalising a temple on the campus in March 2016. Nearly two years later in January 2018, he allegedly helped some of his followers, detained for using drugs on campus, escape from a police van.  
He, however, was reinstated in the organisation a month later following his application to the Chhatra League central leadership, according to IU sources.  
In January 2020, Arafat was made prime accused in the case filed over the attempted murder of Rakibul Islam, the then general secretary of IU BCL, according to media reports.  
Contacted, Arafat refuted all allegations, saying the case was politically motivated.  
“The central committee didn’t find my involvement in vandalising the temple and so they withdrew the suspension order. Even the university’s Puja Udjapan Parishad also said I was not involved in the incident,” he added.  
On the other hand, he said the IU thana police provided him with a signed paper saying he “was not involved in snatching away the detainees from the police van”.  
Tanmoy Saha Tony, vice president of IU BCL, said that apart from Arafat, there are some examples of ineligible persons getting posts, depriving many others.  
He said Nasim Ahmed Joy was given the general secretary’s post in the new committee even though he did not have any post in any previous committee.  
“It happened because top leaders of the central committee get a huge amount of money in exchange for two top posts [of president and general secretary of the university unit],” said Tanmoy.

This newspaper could not independently verify this claim.  
Sadhin Sahed, social services secretary of central BCL, who is tasked with overseeing organisational activities of Islamic University BCL, told The Daily Star, “The central committee had withdrawn the suspension order, as allegation of vandalising temples against Arafat was not found to be true. So we put his name on the list with other candidates.  
“We recommended possible leaders’ names on the basis of their popularity. We found out that he is very popular among the leaders and activists of IU BCL.  
“But whoever we propose for a committee, our top leaders ultimately pick the committee.”  
The announcement of a new committee at Chittagong University raised the eyebrows of many.  
Of the 376-member full committee, declared on July 31, 10 stand accused in murder and other cases, according to BCL leaders.  
Pradip Chakraborty and Jahedul Awal, appointed as vice presidents of the new committee, are accused in the case filed over BCL leader Tapos Sarkar’s murder in 2014.  
On the other hand, Raju Munshi, now the joint secretary, is accused in a case for a double murder in Chattogram’s CRB area in 2013.  
Mofazzal Haider Ibne Hossain and Mizanur Rahman Khan, who were seen wielding sharp weapons during a clash in 2015, were made vice presidents, said CU sources.  
Rejaul Haque Rubel, the new CU BCL unit president, and Iqbal Hossain, the general secretary, are not regular students anymore. Rejaul enrolled in the university in 2007 and Tipu in 2011.  
In the new committee, at least two dozen office-bearers are not regular students.  
Asked about this, Rejaul said, “It’s possible if the vice chancellor wants. The full committee was announced after many years, so many who got posts are not regular students.”  
He claimed most cases filed against BCL leaders were politically motivated.  
“If any of our leaders were found

to have been involved in criminal activities, we would take action against them,” he said.  
Talking to The Daily Star, Haider Rahman Jitu, training affairs secretary of central BCL, tasked with CU unit BCL, said there has been a long queue of leaders from too many factions in CU demanding top posts in the unit.  
As they didn’t have a full-fledged committee for a long time, they had to ignore many things while appointing leaders to the committee.  
Asked about the reasons behind selecting those controversial leaders for top posts, he replied, “We are open to taking organisational actions against anyone involved with crime, so if anyone files complaint against them, we will take action.”  
Al Masud Hasanuzzaman, a professor in the government and politics department at Jahangirnagar University, said, “Usually, the pro-ruling party student bodies try to control campuses and pick these types of leaders thinking they could help in achieving that.  
“But it is a negative sign for the future health of the country’s politics.”  
Al Nahian Khan Joy and Lekhak Bhattacharya could not be reached on the phone despite repeated attempts.

## Video of kidnapped

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the United Nations Office of Security and Safety in Yemen,” said he and four colleagues were kidnapped on February 11, reports Al Arabia News.  
Formed in a merger of Al-Qaeda’s Yemen and Saudi branches, AQAP has carried out attacks on both rebel and government targets in Yemen as well as foreigners.  
It has been accused of plotting attacks beyond the Middle East and its leaders have been targeted by a US drone war for more than two decades, although the number of strikes has dropped off in recent years.  
Yemen’s UN-brokered ceasefire has drastically reduced fighting since the truce began in April, but outbreaks of violence continue.

## Rejoinder, our reply

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“In the case of capacity payment for power generators, the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) are investing billions of dollars to provide similar rights to be used by the government and the society of Bangladesh via Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB),” it stated, adding, “The goal behind this is to attain a certain level of guaranteed power generation capacity for the nation-building and prosperity needs.  
“Its effectiveness is clearly demonstrated in Bangladesh’s ability to raise itself to 100 percent electrification in 2022, from 18.3 percent in the 1990’s and from 2009’s 5GW capacity to more than four times or 22.5GW in 2022. This enabled 8 percent GDP growth while improving social and physical infrastructure.  
“On top of ensuring our future of common prosperity, capacity payments ensure that a fixed capital outlay is catered for. This is also necessary as the power generated can only be marketed through Power Grid Corporation of Bangladesh (PGCB) for transmission and at consumer end via DESA, DESCO, BREB etc (distribution), all of which are government-controlled entities,” said Summit.  
“This helps the government to provide much needed tariff stability and subsidy to certain sectors.”  
The group explained that “On the other hand, if the policy would have been free-market then PGCB (Transmission) and such as DESCO

(Distribution) would have to be privatised. Of course, that would open the market to sudden very high tariffs of electricity. Example electricity prices in France are 700 percent more today than pre-Ukraine war. Whereas for Bangladesh, the tariff price over the critical period has not risen, though there are plans to raise it”.  
“Bangladesh, on the retailing side of electricity is on a centralised plan basis. As an IPP, one is not able to sell directly to end consumers which one can see in a fully liberalized retail market like France.  
“However, the demand forecasting became impossible given COVID-19, Ukraine-Russia war, high energy price and global inflation and gave rise to misalignment between the capacity available and the capacity to be brought online. While there is no perfect system, it’s a work-in-progress to ensure progression of society while decreasing any misalignment.”  
The rejoinder iterated that the IPPs rightfully deserve the capacity payment as they have invested as per the laws, policies, rules and contracts. Summit has invested more than Tk 20,000 crore for the generation capacity of about 2,700MW, concluded the rejoinder.  
Our reply  
None of the facts mentioned in our story was disclaimed or contested by Summit. As it appears, it is a clarification, not a rejoinder. So, we thank Summit for its views, but stand firmly by our report.

## SL close to final

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Nissanka started cautiously before he hammered Arshdeep Singh for two fours and a six in an 18-run fifth over.  
Mendis joined in the fun and cleared the fence three times, including with a brilliant shot over wide long-off against Ravichandran Ashwin.  
Nissanka reached his fifty in 33 balls, but Indian leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal broke the partnership and struck twice in one over.  
Mendis also completed his fifty but Sri Lanka lost Danushka Gunathilaka for one off Ashwin.

Chahal then trapped Mendis lbw to put Sri Lanka in trouble at 110-4 from 14 overs.  
But Rajapaksa and Shanaka dug them out of that hole with some inspired batting, leaving only seven needed from the final over.  
With two still to get from two balls, Shanaka played and missed outside off stump, but wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant and bowler Arshdeep both failed with their run out attempts and the match finished on an overthrow.  
Earlier, left-arm quick Dilshan Madushanka took 3-24 in India’s 173-8 after Rohit smashed 72 off 41 deliveries.