



Almas



Cinema Palace



Sugandha Cinema

## The state of cinema halls IN CHATTOGRAM

**After the year 2000, these halls slowly started to shut down. Most of them were re-constructed as shopping malls. Another theatre, Almas, was closed down during the COVID-19 pandemic, while another named Dinar was shut off long ago.**

ZAHID AKBAR

The city of port Chattogram has only 4 running cinema halls— Silver Screen, Cinema Palace, Sugandha Cinema and recently inaugurated STAR Cineplex. It was opened on December 2 at Bali Arcade Shopping complex, located at Nawab Siraj Uddin Road, at the city's Chawkbazar area. The new multiplex has three halls.

There was a time when Chattogram had 27 active cinema halls – and all of them made handsome revenues. These halls include the likes of Melody, Shongit, Nupur, Sagorika, Utophar, Akash, Gulzar, Rongom, Ujala, Jolsha, Lion, Banani, Shanai, Rhythm, Chandni and Kornophuli, among others.

After the year 2000, these halls slowly started to shut down. Most of them were re-constructed as shopping malls. Another theatre, Almas, was closed down during the COVID-19 pandemic, while another named Dinar was shut off long ago.

Both the cinemas are under the ownership of Muktijoddha Kalyan Trust at the moment. They are supposed to be reconstructed as high-rise buildings. Sadly, due to not being able to make profits out of cinema, many hall owners had to switch their business.

Mahboob Rahman Ruhel, the Chairman of STAR Cineplex informed The Daily Star, "Like other hall owners, we also faced huge losses during the pandemic," he also stated that the films "Poran" and "Hawa" have revived their business. "Good films definitely attract the audience, this is why we were encouraged to open a multiplex in Chattogram."



At the inauguration of STAR Cineplex, Chattogram.

PHOTOS: STAR & COLLECTED

According to Ruhel, if films are made with the same quality as our OTT platforms and released in halls first, it will surely pull the audiences to the halls.

On the other hand, Shahadat, the owner of Sugandha, believes that the ambience of the halls needs to be improved immediately. "Increasing the number of seats won't be effective, if we cannot provide a comfortable environment for our viewers," he shared. "We are trying to work on these, and at the same time, the promotional campaigns should be one of the primary concerns, apart from producing good quality projects."

He also added that Sugandha earned generous revenues with film "Mission Extreme", "Raat Jaga Phool", "Rehana Maryam Noor", "Poran" and "Hawa".

Gouropod Chowdhury from Cinema Palace

also spoke to The Daily Star regarding this matter. "We are still surviving, regardless of many struggles. We rarely make good business in the recent times, this trend should continue to keep our business sustained."

Salam, an avid cinema lover from the city also shared his thoughts. "The ambience of the halls, good story, and well-planned promotional campaign are all a complete package for a film to succeed. As an audience why would I spend money if I don't get to watch a film comfortably?"

He is hopeful because the situation is improving. "Also, we have seen that people appreciated good films, as we have already witnessed in the recent times that the films like "Debi", "Poran", "Hawa" and "Made in Chittagong" were successful in pulling the audiences to the theatres.



## 'Kura Pokkhir Shunne Ura' nominated for Kolkata International Film Festival

Muhammad Quayum's debut directorial movie, *Kura Pokkhir Shunne Ura* (The Golden Wings of Watercocks) has been nominated at the 28th edition of the prestigious Kolkata International Film Festival (KIFF). The film was nominated under the "International Competition: Innovation in Moving Images" category.

Muhammad Quayum, the film's director, confirmed the news to The Daily Star.

"I am really happy that my film was nominated under such an important category. We have worked really hard for this film and this recognition motivates us to dream even bigger," said the director.

KIFF will take place between December 15 and 22, screening 180 movies from 42 countries.

## Gems of Nazrul organise tribute show on Victory Day

Gems of Nazrul has organised a special musical production to pay tribute to Bangladesh's 51st Victory Day. The programme will be broadcasted on Channel i, at one-minute past midnight, on December 16.

The 24th production by Gems of Nazrul will feature artistes performing the iconic marching song *Chol Chol*. The video will be available on the official YouTube channel of Gems of Nazrul and their associated social media pages.

The performance will pay tribute to the leadership and sacrifice that culminated during the country's fight for independence.

## NEWS

### Tuku, 6 others

FROM PAGE 12  
premises that all the arrestees, including Tuku, "were not named in the case". Besides, they had no connection with the incident. They called the police action political harassment.

All the accused were produced before the court amid tight security around 4:30pm. Additional police personnel were deployed.

Over 100 leaders and activists of BNP and Jubo Dal chanted slogans, demanding release of the seven, all arrested from different areas of Dhaka on December 3.

Tuku was reportedly picked up by law enforcers in Amin Bazar, while he was returning from the BNP's rally in Rajshahi.

Meanwhile, Dhaka's Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Muhammad Asaduzzaman Nur yesterday issued arrest warrants against 25 leaders and activists of BNP and its front organisations in another case filed with Ramna Police Station for assaulting police and preventing them from discharging their duties in February last year.

BNP's central committee executive member Nipun Roy Chowdhury, Jubo Dal President Tuku and its former president Saiful Alam Nirob are among the 25 accused.

The magistrate also cancelled their bail secured from different courts as they were absent at the court, said court sources.

### Be careful

FROM PAGE 2  
court reporters.

LRP President Ashutosh Sarkar expressed sorrow for the mistakes of some media outlets, saying that the LRF members are very much conscious about reporting on the Supreme Court proceedings.

But few media outlets ran distorted reports regarding the HC bench's comment, which is a human error, he said, adding that the LRF members will be informed of the court's message.

### Iran abolishes

FROM PAGE 12  
The units were set up by Iran's Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, which is today headed by President Ebrahim Raisi.

### The invisible killer

FROM PAGE 12  
the most polluted division while Sylhet is the least polluted. The western regions (Khulna and Rajshahi) are more polluted than the eastern ones (Sylhet and Chattogram).

Dhaka city ranked the second most polluted city in the world from 2018 to 2021. It has sites with major construction and persistent traffic and has the highest level of air pollution in the country.

At these sites, PM2.5 is on average 150 percent above the WHO AQG. Exposure to such high level of polluted air is equivalent to smoking about 1.7 cigarettes per day, the report said.

The second highest concentration of PM2.5 levels has been found near brick kilns in greater Dhaka, which is 136 percent above the WHO AQG, equivalent to smoking 1.6 cigarettes per day.

Incidence of lower respiratory tract infections was significantly higher among children living near major construction and traffic sites than elsewhere in the country, including near brick kilns.

In Dhaka division, in addition to local pollution sources, up to one-fifth of the total PM2.5 concentration comes from transboundary sources.

Sylhet division, which has the cleanest air, still experiences average PM2.5 levels 80 percent above WHO AQG. This is equivalent to smoking 1.2 cigarettes per day.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, who was present at the event as chief guest, said Bangladesh has many environmental laws but the lack of implementation of those is the problem.

Emphasising the usage of cleaner fuel, he said, "We need to import quality fuel to reduce the level of pollution."

He noted that the number of vehicles was increasing every year.

Md Anwar Hossain Howlader, secretary to Health and Family Welfare, said in government tenders, it is mentioned how to conduct the construction work reducing air pollution. But they do not follow it so that they can make more profits.

"We cannot stop the development work, but it is possible to reduce

the pollution level if they follow the government directions and obey the law," he said.

Agreeing with Saber, he said the government officials who are responsible for monitoring, do not conduct their duties properly, making things worse.

According to the report, a one percent increase in exposure to PM2.5 over WHO's AQG can result in a 12.8 percent increase in the probability of a person experiencing breathing difficulties, a 12.5 percent increase in the probability of having wet coughs, and an 8.1 percent higher risk of contracting lower respiratory tract infections.

Air pollution also affects mental health. Depression is most reported in locations with major construction and persistent traffic. The study finds that a one percent increase in exposure to PM2.5 above the WHO AQG is associated with a 20 percent higher probability of being depressed.

"Air pollution causes the climate to change, and climate change worsens the air quality. Over time, climate change and urbanisation will further intensify air pollution," said Wameq Azfar Raza, a World Bank health specialist and the lead of the report.

"The health sector needs to be well prepared to deal with the imminent health crisis arising from air pollution and climate change" he added.

The report recommended immediate actions, including improving public health services and response mechanisms, improving air pollution data monitoring systems, investing in early warning systems, and engaging in further research to reduce air pollution impacts on health.

### HC order probe

FROM PAGE 12  
On November 29, the English daily New Age published another report saying that S Alam Group and its associate companies have taken loans amounting to Tk 30,000 crore from Islami Bank, well above their limit.

Senior Lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan appeared for the ACC while Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik represented the state during the court proceedings on this issue.

### Mehedi, Shakib lead Tigers

FROM PAGE 1  
by all definitions Mustafizur is a genuine tail-ender. But that sheer impossibility somehow worked in Bangladesh's favour with the match firmly in India's grip.

Mustafizur, facing just his second delivery, punched an elegant cover drive off Mohammad Siraj for four but few would have imagined the scenario that was about to transpire.

Miraz remained unbeaten on 38 off 39, hitting the last delivery over cover to seize victory during an unbeaten 51-run stand. Fizz held up his end of the bargain, contributing 10 off 11 which also included a flicked four as India, having scalped nine wickets, found their nerves fraying in at the death.

The rub of the green came when

Miraz whacked a Shardul Thakur delivery that stayed up in the night sky. By the time the ball dropped, wicket-keeper KL Rahul had run with his gloves on to fine leg-boundary. But he dropped a sitter.

That seemed to signal to the batters that it might just be their day and while the experienced duo of Mushfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad failed to get the Tigers to what would have been an easy win, Miraz and Mustafizur prevailed under far more daunting circumstances.

Miraz, who hogged the strike despite Fizz's staunch determination to play deliveries to their merit, later divulged at a press conference what was being discussed during that unbelievable last-wicket stand.

"He [Fizz] told me not to worry about him but just to focus on my job," Miraz said. When the penny dropped, the Tigers found themselves on the right side and spectacularly.

Thus the performances of Shakib Al Hasan and Ebadot Hossain, who bagged a fiver and four for to knock India out for 186, had to take a backseat.

KL Rahul's 73 was not enough in the end. Skipper for the series Liton had earlier struck 41 but left the job unfinished after a 48 run third-wicket stand. After Shakib's dismissal, Mushy Mahmudullah departed off back-to-back deliveries. Having lost their way so many times under tight situations, this time the Tigers prevail to take a 1-0 lead.

### 30 may be new age

FROM PAGE 2  
national polls, delayed Chhatra League councils, and a stagnation in organisational activities during the pandemic, for changing the age limit.

"Since the organisational activities of Chhatra League remained stagnant during the Covid-19 pandemic, and the next national election is nearing, we the four leaders of Awami League [tasked with looking after BCL by the AL chief] and Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader proposed raising the age limit. The party chief will call the shots," said BM Mozammel.

Those who are leading the race in getting the top positions might be left out if the current age bar [29 years] remains.

The 30th Chhatra League national council is scheduled for tomorrow at the Suhrawardy Udyan. Hasina is expected to attend.

### WHO ARE IN THE RACE

The aspirants for the top posts – president and general secretary in Chhatra League – are busy lobbying top AL leaders, gathering at Madhur Canteen to flaunt their presence and visiting the AL chief's Dhanmondi's political office to draw attention of AL leaders.

After Obaidul Quader slammed Chhatra League leaders for swarming the Dhanmondi office, Chhatra League men started visiting the party office on Bangabandhu Avenue.

Top AL leaders said they would consider a candidate's previous activities, especially during different crisis periods of the country and the party, family background, image, and

knowledge-based activities.

According to reports, those who are ahead are Dhaka University Chhatra League General Secretary Saddam Hossain, central committee vice-presidents Rakib Hossain, Syed Arif Hossain and Khairul Hasan Akanda, Joint General Secretary Tahsan Ahmed Russel, and organising secretaries Barikul Islam Badhan, Sad Bin Kader Chowdhury, Sheikh Wali Asif Inan, and Sohanur Rahman Sohan.

Besides, central committee Training Affairs Secretary Haider Mohammad Jitu, Law Affairs Secretary Fuad Hossain Shahadat, Liberation War Affairs Secretary Mehedi Hasan Taposh, Joint General Secretary Arifuzzaman Al Imran, Relief and Disaster Management Affairs Secretary Emran Jamadder, Deputy Social Services Affairs Secretary Tanbir Hasan Shaikat, Deputy Employment Affairs Secretary Khadimul Bashir Joy, Deputy Information and Technology Affairs Secretary Ehsan Ullah Piyal, Assistant Secretary SM Rakib Sirazy, and Employment Affairs Secretary Rony Muhammad are also in discussion.

The council was initially slated for December 3, but was later deferred to December 8 on the instructions of Chhatra League organisational chief Hasina.

But the date of the 30th Chhatra League national council was rescheduled again to tomorrow to "allow BNP's December 10 rally".

In its last council held on May 11, 2018, Hasina chose Rezwanaul Haque Chowdhury Shovon and Golam Rabbani as Chhatra League president

and general secretary.

On September 14, 2019, Al Nahean Khan Joy and Lekhak Bhattacharjee, who were then vice-president and joint general secretary respectively of that committee, were made acting Chhatra League president and general secretary after Shovon and Rabbani were removed from their posts for their controversial activities.

On January 4, 2020, Hasina gave the duo the full responsibility of Chhatra League.

### Tougher action

FROM PAGE 12  
Al Meheraj Shahriar Mithun, a protester, was found requesting the outsiders, using a loudspeaker, not to access the campus while other protesters restricted heavy vehicles.

DU Proctor Prof AKM Golam Rabbani said they asked police to bar heavy vehicles from entering the campus. However, heavy vehicles were seen plying on the roads inside the campus.

Besides, left-leaning student organisations also held a protest rally in the afternoon expressing solidarity with the student demands.

With the woman lodged between the front and rear axles, Jafar Shah drove for about a kilometre, ignoring the screams of shocked onlookers, before people in Nilkhet area stopped him.

Jakir Hossain, the victim's brother, filed a case against Jafar with Shahbagh Police Station on Friday night.

Later, a Dhaka court, on Saturday, directed police to place the investigation report into the case before it on January 9.