



## Asaduzzaman Noor returns to the stage with 'Remand'

Eminent actor and Member of Parliament, Asaduzzaman Noor will soon be seen in the play *Remand*, performed by theatre troupe Hridmoncho. The play will be a part of the theatre festival 'Notuner Utshob'. The festival will kick-off on January 22 and will be staged at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Asaduzzaman Noor will be playing the role of a writer, who gets embroiled in controversy. The mysterious writer falls into custody of the police and is interrogated. The whole story revolves around the incidents that take place in the interrogation room.

Shuvasis Sinha has penned the screenplay and also directed *Remand*. The play also stars Kamaluddin Kabir, Sajib Hossain and Shanaz Jahan, among others.

## Bittersweet times for CHANCHAL CHOWDHURY

**"I am grateful that a star like Amitabh Bachchan has not only shared the poster of the Mrinal Sen biopic, but also wrote my name in his feed."**

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

There can be little doubt over the fact that Chanchal Chowdhury is the biggest 'star' in Bangladesh right now. Most of the actor's project has received international acclaim, with *Hawa* even being shortlisted for the Golden Globes.

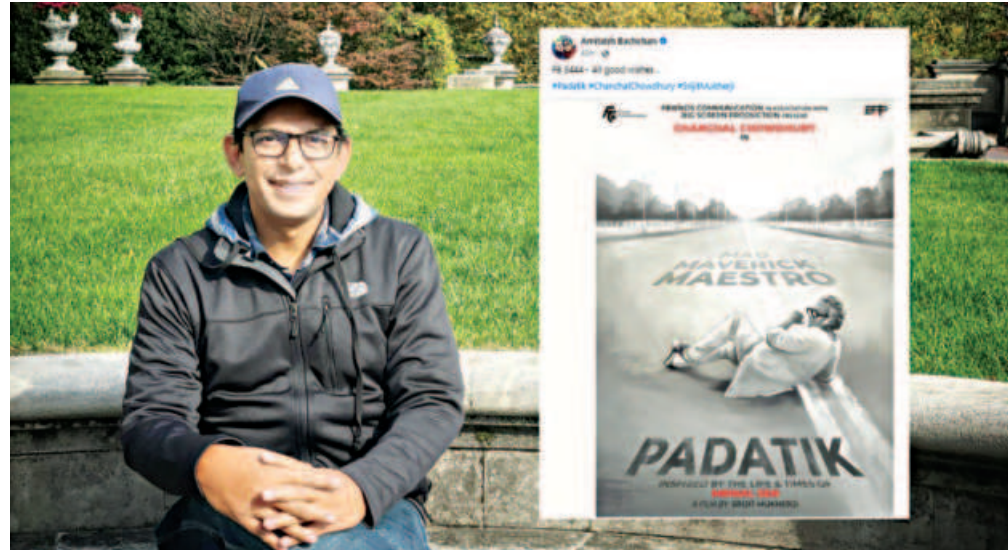
Chanchal's first-look reveal as Mrinal Sen, for the director's biopic *Padatik*, also had fans raving on social media. The actor also received warm wishes from Bollywood legend, Amitabh Bachchan for starring in the Mrinal Sen biopic.

However, not everything has been great for the actor, as he only recently lost his father. The actor talked to The Daily Star while at his ancestral home in Kamarhaat, Pabna. The actor had returned for his late father's sradh programme.

"It was a day of mixed emotions for me. I lost my father a few days ago. When my family and friends joined me to honour him, it felt surreal that I would get a news like this," he said.

"I am grateful that a star like Amitabh Bachchan has not only shared the poster of the Mrinal Sen biopic, but also wrote my name", said the star. "You have to understand that he is not just a megastar in India, but the entire world respects him."

Chanchal said that due to his personal loss, the shooting for *Padatik* was delayed. Hopefully, I can get back to shooting by the end of the month.



"Even a few days back, I did not understand my father's absence. But now I understand it. I feel the emptiness. This house, without my father in it, feels so empty. It feels as if he left a gaping hole behind him, when he passed away. No one will understand this pain, except perhaps those who have also lost their father," he said.

"Days go by, but I can no longer see my father pacing around this house. I miss him during every waking moment. I will always remember my father and will continue to remember him in the days to come."

Chanchal went on to say that his father was a schoolteacher. "Baba was the ideal man. He was renowned for being a disciplined, principled and ideal teacher. He was always honest, and this honesty has manifested into all of our siblings. My father was able to educate all of my brothers and sisters. This was his greatest achievement."

Chanchal Chowdhury, for all that he has achieved, made his father proud, going on to achieve remarkable feats in his field. There is a lot to learn about how the actor learned these values from his father.

## Ezra Miller gets fine, probation after home break-in



On Friday, Ezra Miller pleaded guilty to charges of a break-in and theft of alcohol, from a neighbour's home in Vermont. This followed a string of arrests and reports of erratic behaviour from last year.

Miller, who appeared in both the *Justice League* movies and stars in the upcoming *The Flash*, agreed to enter a plea and abide by the conditions.

Two other charges were dropped, one of which was a felony burglary count that could have carried a sentence of 25 years in prison.

Miller was arrested twice last year in Hawaii, including for disorderly conduct and harassment at a karaoke bar.

## NEWS

### A police officer's bias

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Jyotirmoy Barua told The Daily Star that, "The incident of theft is true, and she deserves to be punished for that but in this case the investigation officer showed sheer negligence towards a victim of rape."

"As the accused were in police custody, the investigation officer should have taken measures for the victim's medical test when he came to learn about the rape. The medical report is highly valued in Section 32 of the Women and Child Repression Prevention Act. The police could have sought remand of the accused", he said.

"If the accused had confessed to raping the girl, the officer could have submitted separate charge sheets - one for theft and another for rape", Jyotirmoy Barua added.

Barua suggested department proceedings against the investigation officer over his playing down the rape

incident even after knowing the fact.

When contacted about rape evidence, Fazlul Karim, additional deputy commissioner (South) of Barisal Metropolitan Police, told The Daily Star, "We have a written complaint of gang rape along with the victim's statements on gang rape that she has given to the Dhaka Metropolitan Police under section 164."

Asked about the medical report, the ADC said "The evidence in the rape case has become difficult to find now as the incident took place almost a year ago. Also, the medical report would not be of much use as it occurred a long time ago."

If the investigation officer Sohail Rana had informed the court earlier when he learnt that the victim had been gang raped then the Barishal police could have tried to collect the medical evidence immediately, Fazlul Karim added.

### Mamata capable

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"I think it would be a mistake to take the dismissive view that there is no other party that can take the place of BJP," according to Sen.

He said, "The BJP has substantially reduced the vision of India. It has narrowed the understanding of India as just Hindu India and as a Hindi-speaking India in such a strong way that it would be sad if there is no alternative to the BJP in India today."

"If the BJP looks strong and powerful, it has a good deal of

weakness too. So, I think other political parties will be able to come to a debate if they really try. I do not know enough to be able to dismiss the anti-BJP parties together," he said.

Replying to a question, Sen said, "The Congress seems to have weakened a lot and I do not know how much somebody can rely on Congress. However, the Congress certainly provides an all-India vision which no other party can take over. Then again, there are divisions within the Congress."

### Musk faces US fraud trial over Tesla tweet

AFP, SAN FRANCISCO

Elon Musk, the CEO of electric car giant Tesla, will face trial on Tuesday over allegedly manipulating the stock market with a tweet after a federal judge rejected his request to move the case out of California.

The case dates back to August 2018 when Musk tweeted that he had sufficient funding to take Tesla private, causing a whirlwind in the company's share price.

Musk was swiftly sued by shareholders for allegedly costing them billions of dollars with the Twitter post that said funding was "secured" to buy out the company's shareholders.

According to a spokesperson for the court, Judge Edward Chen on Friday refused to transfer the proceedings to Texas, the southern state where Musk moved Tesla's headquarters and jury selection is scheduled to begin on Tuesday.

### Swiss firm claims

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Earth's average temperature to be limited at 1.5 degrees Celsius, which scientists say would keep the impact of climate change at manageable levels.

Many businesses, including fossil fuel companies, rely heavily on carbon offset schemes based on afforestation to compensate for continuing carbon emissions.

But there has been growing interest in the newest carbon dioxide removal (CDR) method, of which Climeworks is the industry leader - a chemical process known as direct air carbon capture and storage (DACCS).

In its report last year, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned that regardless of how quickly the world slashes greenhouse gas emissions, it will still need to suck CO2 from the atmosphere to avoid climate catastrophe.

But it remains to be seen whether this can be done at scale.

So far, Climeworks's direct air capture facility in Iceland - the largest in the world - removes in a year what humanity emits in three to four seconds.

The company has not divulged how much its clients are paying for the service, and how much CO2 each client wants extracted.

### 'Disastrous' flood warning in California as another storm hits

AFP, Los Angeles

Disastrous flooding could hit parts of California this weekend, forecasters warned Friday, as the eighth storm in succession barreled in over land already too waterlogged to soak up any more rain.

The most populous US state has been pummeled by near-record downpours over a very wet three weeks, which have already caused flooding, landslides and widespread power outages.

At least 19 people are known to have died as communities struggle to cope with the constant deluge.

On Friday yet another system moved in, with forecasters warning the Monterey Peninsula could be cut off and the whole city of Salinas - home to 160,000 people - flooded.

### IMF deputy MD in town

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"We wanted to emphasise that it [the loan] is not the purpose of this visit," a spokesperson for the Washington-based multilateral lender told The Daily Star.

Tomorrow morning, the IMF official will visit and take a ride on the country's first metro rail.

She will then call on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In the afternoon, Antoinette will hold a meeting with the development partners working in Bangladesh.

On Tuesday morning, she will visit the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban and hold a meeting with Speaker of the House Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury.

### AL's number one enemy is infighting

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Hasina then asked her party colleagues to prepare well for the election, slated for January 2024.

She also asked them to visit people at their doors and highlight government achievements and make the masses aware of the "negative politics" of the BNP, said sources.

Hasina asked the leaders to be careful about the BNP's programmes and said the BNP was trying to bring a 1/11-like situation, they added.

Besides, the meeting decided to take a stronger stance to resist the BNP's "sabotage".

The IMF official, who was previously the finance minister of post-conflict Liberia, will also experience Bangladesh's much-talked about demographic dividend, as she will have an interactive session with Dhaka University students on the campus later that day.

Meanwhile, the IMF executive board is expected to convene later this month to take a call on Bangladesh's loan proposal.

The government has agreed to as many as 30 conditions, including some key structural reforms that had been stalled for years.

If the board approves the loan application, the first instalment of

\$447.8 million would be released in February. It will be followed by six equal instalments of \$659.18 million subject to fulfilling the timebound reform measures laid out in the loan proposal.

At the end of July last year, the finance ministry said it had sent in a formal request to the IMF for the \$4.5 billion loan.

In October that year, an IMF delegation, led by Rahul Anand, head of IMF's Asia and Pacific Division, visited Bangladesh and held several meetings with officials of various government divisions.

During the visit, Bangladesh and the IMF had drafted a primary loan programme.

Meanwhile, addressing a meeting of the Dhaka city (south and north) AL committees, their associated bodies and pro-AL organisations, General Secretary Obaidul Quader warned the party leaders and pro-AL bodies to be vigilant over the BNP programmes.

The meeting was held mainly to finalise the AL action as the BNP will hold a rally and demonstration tomorrow.

It was decided that the AL will organise programmes and call them "discussions" and "peace rallies" on that day. However, insiders say these programmes will be held to "take control of the streets" and counter

the BNP's preannounced rallies and demonstrations across the country.

AL's two Dhaka City units will organise two separate discussions, protesting the "terror and anarchy of the BNP" at the AL headquarters on Bangabandhu Avenue and at Natunbazar 100 Feet.

Quader is likely to attend these events.

Jubo League's two city units will organise two "peace rallies" at the Central Shaheed Minar and Farmgate while Chhatra League activists will "sit-in" at Shahbagh like they did during the last three BNP events.

### Iran executes British-Iranian

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UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly warned on Twitter that the execution would not go unchallenged, before announcing sanctions on Iran's prosecutor general to underline Britain's "disgust" at Akbari's execution.

France condemned the execution "in the strongest terms" and said it cannot go "unanswered".

Iran summoned the British ambassador to protest what it described as "unconventional interventions", after the UK said it would summon Tehran's envoy.

News of the hanging came only hours after the United States had joined its ally Britain in calling for Iran not to go ahead with the execution.

Amnesty International called the execution "abhorrent".

It tweeted that Akbari had been subjected to "torture and other ill-treatment" such as being "forcibly administered chemical substances and being held in prolonged solitary confinement".

Media outlets in Iran, which does not recognise dual nationality for its citizens, had broadcast a video this week in which Akbari appeared to speak of his contacts with Britain.

BBC Persian this week aired an audio message it said was from Akbari in which he said he was tortured and forced to confess on camera to crimes he did not commit.

Mizan Online, citing the intelligence ministry, said Akbari had become a "key

spy" for MI6 due to "the importance of his position".

Akbari, a veteran of the 1980-88 Iran Iraq war, was arrested between March 2019 and March 2020, state media said.

He was once identified by the government's official Iran newspaper as a former deputy defence minister under Ali Shamkhani, who currently heads Iran's Supreme National Security Council.

Akbari had also been an adviser to the navy commander and headed a division at the defence ministry's research centre, state media said.

Mizan said he had retired a decade ago and moved to "research and business activities in the private sector".