

An Eid without MEHAZABIEN

“I will be at home this Eid. At other times, I had to spend a very hectic time during Eid, because I had so many projects coming up. However, this time is different as I will just sit in front of the TV and review my colleagues’ projects, which I guess will be fun. I am very excited to watch what my co-artistes are doing this Eid.”

ANTARA RAISA

In the last couple of years, Eid has meant watching television dramas starring Mehzabien on all major television channels. This time, Eid will be different for all of us, as there will be no new Eid projects from Mehzabien Chowdhury this year.

Recently, the actress created a strong position on OTT platforms with brilliant projects like *The Silence*, *Redrum*, and *Kajoler Dinratri*.

“Right now, I am focusing more on OTT platforms. That is why I didn’t shoot any dramas this Eid.”

Apart from this, two of her web-projects, *Ami Ki Tumi* directed by Vicky Zahed, and *Nil Joler Kabbo*, directed by Shihab Shaheen, will be released on the newly launched OTT platform iScreen.

“Vicky Zahed’s *Ami Ki Tumi* will be of mixed genre. The audience will get the flavour of every element in the series. Apart from this, *Nil Joler Kabbo* was initially shot as a drama. However, then, iScreen offered us a deal that we liked. Now, the shooting of the project is underway.”

This Eid will be different for Mehzabien too, as she will just relax and watch the projects of her co-artistes.

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PHOTOS: TAKEN FROM FACEBOOK

this Eid.”

When asked to share one of her favorite memories of Eid, she recalled the day when she first wore a salwar kameez.

“As I grew up in Saudi Arabia, salwar kameez was not a very common attire for girls. So, when I turned 8 that year, my mother stitched a matching kameez for me on the occasion

of Eid. I was so excited to wear that dress. On Eid, I wore my kameez and enjoyed my morning with my parents. In the afternoon, I took a nap wearing the kameez, and it got wrinkled. So, I woke up when my parents were asleep and tried to iron my kameez. However, unfortunately, I burned the dress while ironing it. My mother still has that salwar kameez, but I don’t. It’s a memory that I will never forget.”



Mosharraf Karim is a born actor: Chanchal Chowdhury

Noted actor Chanchal Chowdhury recently praised his fellow actor Mosharraf Karim and the entire team of *Mohanagar 2*, with a heartwarming post on Facebook, that is being appreciated by fans.

“In terms of acting, there is nothing new to say about Mosharraf Karim, as he is a born actor. Instead, I will talk about *Mohanagar 2* and how Ashfaq Nipun has blown away the audience with its outstanding trailer,” said the actor.

The *Hawa* actor stated that he is overwhelmed by the numerous surprises and twists shown in the trailer and is super excited to see some of the new faces joining the series.



‘I keep Rajya away from smartphones’

Dhallywood stars Pori Moni and Sariful Razz became parents to a beautiful baby boy, Rajya, last year in August. Since then, their life has drastically changed, and the couple have dedicated much of their time to their little world.

In a recent post, Pori has said that she tries her best to keep Rajya away from smartphones, which consume most of today’s younger generation. “My boy is growing up, and I have noticed that naturally, he is quite curious about phones. I try my best to not use them when I am with him”, she wrote. “I hope you will understand my issue and message me if I don’t receive your call. I will try my best to get back to you”.

NEWS

New wage board

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salary, up 51 percent from Tk 5,300 fixed in 2013.

The wage board also comprise representatives from factory owners, garment workers and the Bangladesh Employers’ Federation, an independent member and a senior government official.

Md. Siddiqur Rahman, a former president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), is representing the factory owners in the new board, according to Faruque Hassan, the current president of the sector’s apex trade body.

Sirajul Islam Rony, president of the Bangladesh National Garment Workers Employees League, is representing the workers on the new board. He was also the workers’ representative on the minimum wage board in 2013.

The new board will hold the first meeting soon, Rony said, without disclosing the exact date.

Culprits

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April 19 last year.
The crimes related to the production, storage, transfer, transportation, supply, marketing, distribution of food grains such as paddy, rice, wheat, flour and corn have been brought under the purview of this proposed law. Punishments have been suggested as per the magnitude of the crimes, the cabinet secretary said.

The proposed law, which has 20 sections, has been drafted combining the Food (Special Court) Act-1956 and the Food Grains Supply (Prevention of Prejudicial Activity) Ordinance-1979, he added.

Under the proposed law, the offence of supplying unsafe or adulterated food products to the market carries imprisonment ranging from two to five years and fine of up to Tk 10 lakh for.

The cabinet also approved the draft of Bangladesh Dairy Board Bill-2023.

The bill proposed to constitute a new body named “Bangladesh Dairy Development Board” to oversee the dairy related matters. The minister of fisheries and livestock has been proposed to be the ex-officio head of this board, consisting of total 19 members.

All those who are producing milk commercially or producing dairy food should come under the purview of this board.

Boro destroyed as saline

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“But then some influential people removed the dam to let saline water enter their shrimp enclosures.”

However, Rampal Upazila Nirbahi Officer Najibul Alam said no permission was taken by the farmers to erect dams or cultivate paddy, adding that the local chairmen have been given the responsibility to resolve the dispute between Boro farmers and shrimp enclosures owners.

Not only in Kalekharber, Boro farmers of other villages – Singurbunia, Ranjoypur and Aruadonga, in the same union – have also been suffering.

Farmers in these areas have alleged that shrimp farmers, led by Zulu Hazi, an influential shrimp cultivator of Rajnagar union, have removed the embankments to allow saline water into their enclosures.

Contacted, Zulu said, “We had taken the paddy farmers’ consent in this regard. However, we will take necessary steps so that the water cannot enter the paddy fields.”

Those in Dema union as well are fearing losses as influential locals have opened up the sluice gates over Chabaki river in Chabaki and Bashbaria areas.

These two were done to let saline water enter shrimp farms.

Md Suján Sheikh, a farmer of Dema union, said he invested around Tk 70,000 to cultivate Boro on four bighas of land in Kashimpur village.

“My cropland was within the block set up by the Agricultural Extension Department. I have also irrigated the field through the irrigation line established by the agricultural office. Now, due to entry of saline water in the adjacent river, my Boro was affected. It looks like a burnt field.”

Several other growers of the union have all had their Boro paddies destroyed by salinity.

Farmers in this coastal district have been showing increased interests in growing Boro over the past several years to ensure their food security ever since the cultivation of Aman, once the only large crop grown there, has been falling gradually.

According to data by the

Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the acreage of Boro paddy in Bagerhat rose by 28 percent – from 2009-10’s 45,459 hectares to 2021-22’s 58,315 hectares. Meanwhile, Boro production jumped 62 percent to 2.68 lakh tonnes in last 12 years.

Farmers said they could have had a good yield if the dams hadn’t been taken down.

Locals of Dema union alleged that the sluice gates are controlled by the union Awami League President Jahangir Hossain and he was responsible for letting the saline water into the polder area to farm black tiger shrimps, generally grown in brackish water.

Contacted, Jahangir Hossain denied the allegation.

He said the saline water was brought in through sluice gates during Maghi Purnima, a Buddhist festival, with the consent of the farmers.

“The water was fresh at that time and no more water was added later,” he said. He also blamed an “unknown disease” for the damage of the paddies.

“Farmers are wrongly blaming saline water.”

Md Masum Billah, executive engineer of Bagerhat BWDB, said they had kept the sluice gates closed to make sure saline water could not enter.

“But we don’t know who opened the gate and let the water in during the night. I heard a duplicate key was made for this. We are looking into the matter seriously.”

Sadia Sultana, agriculture officer of Bagerhat Sadar, on March 24 said some rice plants have died due to high salinity.

“We have tested the soil on the farmers’ lands. The salinity in the soil was found to be quite high. As there has been less rainfall, the salinity did not decrease.”

She, however, claimed she had not heard about the saline water being released into the fields by influential people.

Bagerhat Sadar Upazila Nirbahi Officer Rubaiya Tasnim said they would inspect the entire area and report the amount of damage.

Indian EC

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the TMC, NCP and CPI, asking them to reply why their national party status should not be revoked after their performance in the previous Lok Sabha elections that year.

Under paragraph 6B of the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968, a party is eligible for the national party status if it is a recognised state party in four or more states and if its candidates get at least six percent of the total valid votes polled in four or more states in the last Lok Sabha or assembly election.

Moreover, a national party must have at least four MPs elected in the last Lok Sabha election or it must win at least two percent of the total Lok Sabha seats in at least three states.

At present, the TMC has 23 Lok Sabha members and five members in Meghalaya assembly. But the party failed to win a single seat in Tripura and Goa.

The party failed to meet the other criteria for being a national party, according to the Indian EC.

The EC decision would be a blow to the TMC aspirations to go national and weaken Mamata’s position as a prime ministerial candidate.

Earlier, there were seven national parties in India – Trinamool, Bahujan Samaj Party, BJP, CPI, CPI (Marxist), Congress and NCP.

Zafrullah

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After Zafrullah fell seriously ill on April 5, he was taken to Gonoshasthaya Nagar Hospital in the capital’s Dhanmondi.

On April 8 Mohib Ullah Khondoker, vice principal of Gonoshasthaya Samaj Vittik Medical College told The Daily Star, “Dr Zafrullah Chowdhury has been suffering from various problems. His immune system is not functioning. Because of this, many infections have occurred in his body.”

He said, “Zafrullah Chowdhury’s treatment is going on under the leadership of Dr Mamun Mostafi with advice from renowned experts. On April 7, a medical board was formed with the renowned doctors of the country.”

Zafrullah has been suffering from kidney complications for a long time. Since being infected with Covid-19, he has been suffering from liver problems along with kidney problems. Zafrullah is also suffering from Septicemia.

Interviewee in DW

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After this, Sub-inspector Riad Ahmed lodged a case against Nafiz under the Narcotics Control Act with Bhatara Police Station yesterday. His laptop and phone were also seized, according to the case statement.

Nafiz was produced before a Dhaka court in connection with the narcotics case. Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mainul Islam rejected his bail prayer and sent him to Dhaka Central Jail in Keraniganj.

Meanwhile, DC Ahad said the raid was conducted as an arrest warrant had earlier been issued against him in a pornography case.

An application was filed with a Dhaka Metropolitan Sessions Judge’s Court to show him arrested in the case filed with the same police station under the Pornography Control Act in 2021.

On November 4, 2021, Nafiz was arrested in a drive conducted by Rab. At that time, Rab informed media about the recovery of foreign liquor and drugs, including crystal meth, from his house.

Talking to reporters, Nafiz claimed that he has permission to consume alcohol, but said he did not have crystal meth.

Rab then stated that Nafiz was running an alcohol business under the name “Syndicate International” on social media. Rab further said private photos of women were found in his phone and hard disk that they suspect were taken using spy

cameras.

At that time, three cases were filed against him under the narcotics control, pornography control, and telecommunications control acts with Bhatara Police Station.

In 2017, Nafiz was arrested in connection with the murder of 14-year-old Adnan Kabir in Uttara over establishing supremacy in teen gangs in the area.

DW ran an article on its website on April 3 titled ‘Death squad’: Inside Bangladesh’s Rapid Action Battalion, where DW also credited Netra News for taking part in the investigation.

The same day it published a video on YouTube, titled “How the elite police force Rab terrorises the people of Bangladesh | DW Documentary”.

In the documentary, Nafiz was seen recounting his experience of being brutally tortured in custody at the Rab-1 office.

The police raid came a week after the DW documentary was published.

Meanwhile, in a DW report published on its website yesterday, Naomi Conrad and Birgitta Schülke, who were part of the DW investigative team, expressed concern over Nafiz’s immediate safety.

“He was well aware that something like this might happen and had taken some precautions – but sadly, the security forces seem bent on silencing our interview partners. We are very worried for his safety,” Schülke said.

Thai shooting death toll rises to six: police

AFP, Bangkok

Two more people have been found dead following a weekend shootout in southern Thailand, police said yesterday, taking the death toll to six.

Police are hunting two gunmen over the bloodshed in the southern province of Surat Thani, while local media reported that a third was among the dead.

Authorities found the body of a man in his 20s in a car on Sunday evening, and a woman’s body was found yesterday, police officer Ampai Meemassu told AFP. Four people had been confirmed dead on

Saturday.

The two newly confirmed victims were identified as the son and wife of one of the suspects, Ampai said.

Thai media reported that the victims and suspects were all part of the same extended family.

Thailand has high rates of gun ownership and there has been a steady trickle of violent incidents in the past 12 months, including one of the deadliest attacks in recent history.

The kingdom was stunned in October after a former police sergeant murdered 36 people, 24 of them children, in the northeastern Nong Bua Lam Phu province.