



JAMES releasing new song before Eid



James is all set to entertain audiences this *chaand raat* with an all new Eid special track.

Bashundhara Digital announced the news on their official Facebook page and revealed that the song will be available for streaming from their YouTube channel.

James's manager, Rubaiyat Thakur Robin revealed to a local media that the singer will be holding a special press conference tomorrow to talk further about the song.

He is hopeful that the audience will shower their love on the new song as they have before.

REMEMBERING FARAAZ through Proshanta Karmakar's art

Proshanta Karmakar Buddha is a freelance Bangladeshi artist who had taken part in 102 national and international exhibitions. Most of the pieces of 'Peace' are dedicated to Faraaz.

AISHWARYA RAIHAN

The Holey Artisan attack of July, 2016 had left a deep scar on our minds, the memory of which is still vivid. That day, along with several other martyrs was a twenty-year-old Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, who sacrificed his life to protect his friends.

In Faraaz's loving memory, Safiuddin Shilpalay inaugurated Proshanta Karmakar Buddha's 37th solo painting exhibition, on April 15, 2023. This date also marks Faraaz's 27th birthday.

The inauguration of 'Peace' took place at Safiuddin Shilpalay at 11.30 AM, yesterday. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Faraaz's mother, Simeen Rahman, Group CEO, Transcom Limited as the chief guest. Marjorie Stern, Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer from the Public Diplomacy Section of the US Embassy, appeared at the event as the special guest. Ambassador Waliur Rahman, former Special Envoy of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, presided over the event.

The ceremony started with artist Shahidul Haq Sharto performing a patriotic Tagore song. After the welcoming speech, Ambassador Waliur Rahman recited affectionate notes for Faraaz, and Marjorie Stern spoke about the artist Proshanta's skills and accolades. Faraaz's family thanked the artist and all the guests,



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

and in his memory, they lit candles. After that, the exhibition was opened for everyone to visit.

Proshanta Karmakar Buddha is a freelance Bangladeshi artist who had taken part in 102 national and international exhibitions. Most of the pieces of 'Peace' are dedicated to Faraaz. The first one upon the entrance is a portrait painting of Faraaz, smiling with his friends by his side, on a vibrant backdrop. Several of his portraits are done keeping our national flag as the background, to commemorate the young man's bravery and compassion. The artist said that "We are Faraaz, because his loyalty has sparked a fire in

our hearts, and Faraaz will always live among us, he is immortal".

The artist's other paintings included fenestrations of old buildings and heritage sites in black and white, some of them with added colored portraits, rural scenes of beautiful Bangladesh, the best one being boats on a circular canvas. He has also done black and white portraits of senior indigenous individuals. Two large pieces held brilliant details of potters' hands in motion, showing their artistic and cultural value.

Slated to run till April 19, 2023, the exhibition also has abstract paintings in bright colors and letters inspired from love and compassion that is extended towards Faraaz Ayaaz Hossain, by the people he has left behind.

NEWS

Dhaka sizzles on hottest day in 58 years

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1965. Since then, the highest temperature recorded in the capital before yesterday was 40.2 degrees Celsius on April 14, 2014.

"Sky remains clear as clouds are not forming due to northerly wind coming from the north direction. So, the temperature in the daytime is increasing and night temperature falling," he said.

The situation will continue for a few more days, he added.

Asked, Ashraf Dewan, professor at the School of Earth & Planetary Sciences, Curtin University, Australia, who had research published on the cause of temperature rise in the urban area of Bangladesh, said, the main reasons for high temperature in Dhaka this season are rapid land use change like loss of wetlands and tree felling.

Also, manifold use of air conditions and industrial activities, too many tall buildings preventing wind flow and trapping of heat by buildings, are some other reasons, he said.

People in different districts are facing immense suffering due to inclement weather.

In Sirajganj and Pabna, the ongoing heatwave is severely affecting people's

lives. Those living in the shoal areas and embankments are in an even worse condition.

The water level of the Jamuna has significantly decreased. As a result, vast shoal areas have surfaced, said locals.

"The shoals are covered by sands. These areas become hotter than plainland due to the scorching sun. Survival is extremely difficult here," said Lukmihan Sardar, of Haat-Pachil village in Sirajganj's Shahzadpur upazila.

"My home was devoured in the Jamuna last year. My family and I have been living on the embankment ever since... We are passing days amid untold sufferings here," he added.

Asma Begum, homemaker of Bonnir Char in Sirajganj Sadar, said, "During the daytime, our tin-roof house turns into a hot oven. We are passing miserable lives."

Afsar Bhuiyan, a farmer in the area, said, "We cannot work in croplands for long because of the heat. It affects our daily income."

In Chuadanga, normal lives are being disrupted due to extreme heat too.

Abdul Alim, 45, a rickshaw-van puller in the area, said, "It is very

difficult to pull a rickshaw-van in such weather. On top that, the number of passengers has significantly dropped as no one comes out of their homes unless it is an emergency."

Besides, corn, paddy, wheat and other crops are being affected by the intense heat, said farmers.

BE AWARE OF HEAT STROKES
Physicians advised people to avoid activities under direct sun for long to avert heat strokes.

"A heat stroke can be as serious as a brain stroke if left untreated. The aged and the younger people are vulnerable to heat stroke," said Mohammad Khalequzzaman, associate professor at the Department of Public Health and Informatics at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

"People who fast may suffer from dehydration as they avoid drinking during the daytime. They are usually more vulnerable to heat strokes."

The physician advised people to drink adequate water in sehri and iftar and consume fruits like watermelon to rehydrate.

[Our correspondent in Pabna and a correspondent in Chuadanga contributed to this report.]

DSA being used to gag dissenting voices

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any new law if it is enacted following the same method."

He said an environment must be created that ensures freedom of expression for the people to build a digital or smart Bangladesh.

Rights researcher Rozyna Begum said after analysing different sections of the act, they found that it is not possible to make it rights-friendly through amendment. "It has to be fully abolished."

She said many DSA cases were filed after victims were picked up. "Their whereabouts were not disclosed, a violation of human rights."

Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua, who moderated the programme, said, "Taking advantage of the act, victims are picked up first and then cases are filed. It's kind of a short-term enforced disappearance."

Most DSA cases were dismissed at the beginning of charge framing. It takes two-three months for the

dismissal. And the purpose of this case is to send someone to jail for this period, he said.

"So, we demand abolishment of the act," he said.

Rights activist Rezaur Rahman Lenin said the misuse of DSA created a culture of fear among the internet users, he said.

At the event, several victims, who landed in jail in DSA cases, said they were tortured mentally and physically.

AL goes for 3 fresh picks

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the AL granted him amnesty.

Soon after Azmat's nomination was announced, suspended GCC mayor Zahangir told The Daily Star that he would participate in the election if the people of Gazipur wanted him to.

"I will go in the direction in which the situation takes me. I am a son of Gazipur. If the voters of Gazipur, the people of Gazipur want, I will stand by them," he said.

In Barishal, Serniabat, the current mayor, wanted the nomination. His uncle Abul Khair Abdullah, the new nominee, is a central committee member of Jubo League with no political post in Barishal.

Local sources say Khair has rivalry with his brother Abul Hasnat Abdullah, the MP from Barishal-1 constituency and the father of current mayor Serniabat.

Hasnat is also a member of the nomination board that chose Khair over Serniabat.

Sources present at yesterday's meeting said Hasnat repeatedly requested AL chief Sheikh Hasina to choose the current mayor, his son, as the AL nominee.

Hasina replied that Khair was a victim of the August 15, 1975, massacre and he was shot.

Even though Khair never got anything, he made sacrifices for the party, she added.

On August 15, 1975, Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated along with most of his family members by a group of army personnel.

At the meeting, Hasina asked party leaders to recruit new members, hold councils at grassroots, and strengthen the organisation before the national election, slated for January next year.

Livelihoods burnt to ashes

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Md Rasel, owner of three shops, said his products worth Tk 1 crore were burned down.

"I could not move any item. Some goods were not burned, but damaged after getting soaked in the water used by firefighters to douse the fire."

Arifuzzaman Arif, owner of Mishu Fashion, said he had Eid panjabis worth Tk 50 lakh in his three shops. He received new stocks worth Tk 3 lakh on Friday, but all of it was destroyed in the fire.

The trader took a Tk 10 lakh loan to buy goods ahead of Eid. He now has no idea how to repay it.

Jahid Hossain, proprietor of three shops, said he had stocked clothes worth Tk 2 lakh for Eid, all of which went up in flames.

"The fire has ruined my business, which is the only source of income for my family of six," said Raj, proprietor of two shops.

"I left the market around 3:00am today [yesterday]. The money from the sales of the last few days was in the shops. The money and goods are

worth about Tk 12 lakh. But nothing is left now."

Amena Begum, who owns Sultan Fashion on the second floor, said she bought goods worth Tk 10 lakh from Kaliganj and Mirpur a day ago. "The flames have burned all the goods. My son is crying. How would I console him?"

Another shop owner Amit said he bought products worth Tk 8 lakh for the Eid season. "Besides the goods, money from Friday's sales were in the shop. The fire has gutted everything."

Several other traders were seen breaking down in tears as the blaze destroyed their livelihoods.

Putting themselves in harm's way, a number of shop employees entered the market to salvage whatever goods and money they could.

One of them was 22-year-old Jibon Hossain, a staffer of a shop named Next Level. He entered the market hoping to recover Tk 2 lakh, but he managed to recover Tk 1.7 lakh. He injured himself in the process.

Jibon is now being treated at the burn unit of Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

Shopkeeper killed

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Sarail police in a text message to local reporters said they fired 70 shots to disperse the clashing villagers.

Mozammel Hossain Reza, additional superintendent of police (Sadar), said that Faisal seemed to have died due to an explosion of a crude bomb.

The exact cause of his death will be known after an autopsy at Brahmanbaria General Hospital.

Villagers Iqbal Mia and Dulal Mia quarrelled after the accident around Friday noon.

In the evening, both villagers along with nearly 100 others gathered at Kalikachha Bazar and engaged in a clash, witnesses said, adding that the groups blasted several crude bombs and threw brick chunks at each other.

Police soon reached the scene and calmed the situation.

At least 50 people, including a journalist, were also injured in the clash, police said, adding that three people were arrested from the scene.

US wants fair elections

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remarks yesterday, Bryan Schiller, spokesperson for US embassy, said the US wants a free and fair election in Bangladesh, in accordance with international standards that allow the people to choose their leaders.

"We do not have an opinion about the details of how the election is run," he told The Daily Star.

Talking to journalists on Friday, Momen said, "We told them what we have done for a fair election. We have prepared a voter list with photos, made transparent ballot boxes, and formed a strong Election Commission. They are happy with it."

"They want us not to fight during the election. A few people died on January 6 [during the Capitol riot in 2021] in their country. That's why

they want Bangladesh to hold an ideal election," he added.

Momen said transparent elections depend on active cooperation from all parties and segments of the public.

Terming Bangladesh "the land of magic", Momen said, "We can do whatever we want. Years after the Rana Plaza incident, we now have eight out of 10 most eco-friendly factories in the world."

Regarding the discussion on the Digital Security Act with the US secretary of state, he said it has not been used properly in some cases.

"But all the countries of the world have such laws... We will rectify any deviations... They don't want repeal of the law, but want its misuse stopped," Momen said.

Run and you'll be

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any election under the government since March 2021.

In 2022, going beyond the party's decision, BNP leaders Taimur Alam Khandaker and Monirul Haque Sakku had contested the last polls to Narayanganj and Cumilla city corporations as independents and both lost. The party expelled them.

Fakhru said, "We are in a movement. So, there is no question of joining any polls under the incumbent government."

Meanwhile, seeking anonymity, one of the members of the BNP's standing committee, said, "We are thinking of announcing divisional programmes to make people aware of why the party boycotted the polls and why people should not join the polls."

The Election Commission has already announced the schedule for the polls to five city corporations -- Gazipur, Sylhet, Khulna, Barishal and Rajshahi.

In 2018, the Awami League candidates won four of these mayoral posts while the BNP's nominee got victory in one.

The opposition party's candidates won all five mayoral polls in those cities in 2013.

Soon after the election schedule was announced, Nazrul Islam Manju, who contested Khulna city mayoral polls in 2018, told The Daily Star that he was under pressure from the leaders and activists of the city to run.

Manju, however, yesterday said that he would not run. "It is tough to contest election going beyond the party decision."

BNP leader Ariful Haq Chowdhury, incumbent mayor of Sylhet City Corporation, said he was in London and that there was a surprise to come.

He, however, did not clarify. The party insiders said he would not join the polls this time.