

# Want all films to do well this Eid: Nirab



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

want. I don't think that there is any pressure or competition. It all depends on the production—if your film is good, then the results will be good.

**How is Bubly as a co-actor?**  
She is an amazing actor, very dedicated to her craft. She is very co-operative too. I have worked with Bubly on two projects, one of them is *Chokh*, which has already been released, and the other is *Koyla* which is awaiting release.

**You previously talked about funding problems for 'big canvas' films. Can you shed some light on the hurdles actually are?**

While not having enough budget is a common enough huddle our industry, it is the reality. You see, before a producer decides to invest in a film, he will surely conduct market research on the film's probable return. And, producers would



invest money based on the research, and how much he might earn. This is why many amazing stories don't get a proper budget. To improve this situation, we need to change the state of our cinema halls.

I mean, we go to the theatres for entertainment, so the atmosphere there has to be top-notch. Otherwise, why would I pay for it, if the state of the theatre is worse than my home?

**The OTT platforms have been on rise in current times. Do you have any plans for OTT?**

No, don't have any plans for OTT projects right now. I already have my hands full with many films which are awaiting release, including *Koyla*, *Sporsho*, and *Roudro Chaya*, amongst others. Many of these productions have completed their shooting.

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## NEWS

### Service up to Motijheel to start in October

FROM PAGE 12  
Agargaon-Motijheel section would open in November.

In his speech at the seminar, MAN Siddique, managing director of DMITCL, the implementing agency of the project, gave details about the project's progress and preparation.

He said the metro rail's performance test on the Agargaon-Motijheel section will begin next month, followed by the integrity test in September.

Then, in October, they will conduct a passenger-free trial run on this section before launching the formal operation, Siddique added.

When asked if there is a link between the next general election and moving up the launch date, Quader denied it.

When the Uttara-Agargaon section opened last year, work on the Agargaon-Motijheel section had advanced significantly, the minister said at a post-seminar press briefing. "Our ability to finish earlier [than scheduled], demonstrates our current capability," he said.

In August 2021, the performance test on the Uttara-Agargaon section began and the metro rail authority took till December 2022 to open the section.

When asked, how the tests would be now completed in such a short time, Quader said, "We are now more experienced than before."

Two Dhaka city corporation mayors Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh and Atiqul Islam, Rawshan Ara Mannan, chairman of the parliamentary standing committee on road transport and bridges ministry, Japanese ambassador in Dhaka Iwama Kiminori and Ichiguchi Tomohide, chief representative of JICA Bangladesh Office, also spoke the programme with Road Transport and Highways Division Secretary ABM Amin Ullah Nuri in the chair.

DMTCL is building the 21.26km metro rail from Uttara to Kamalapur at a cost of Tk 33,472 crore. The project deadline is December 2025.

### Editors concerned

FROM PAGE 1  
He died on Thursday, a day after he was attacked by supporters of Mahmudul Alam Babu, chairman of Sadhurpara Union Parishad in Bakshiganj upazila.

Meanwhile, the US embassy in Bangladesh said it was saddened to learn of the killing of Nadim.

"We look forward to a comprehensive, unbiased, and transparent investigation of the circumstances and a prosecution of the parties responsible for his death," said Haynes Mahoney, acting spokesman for the embassy.

"A free press and democracy require that journalists investigate and report information without physical danger, harassment or intimidation," the spokesman added.

**OTHER DEVELOPMENTS**  
A Jamalpur court yesterday placed Babu on a five-day remand in the murder case.

Two other accused – Rezaul Karim and Moniruzzaman Monir alias Monirul – were remanded for four days, while another accused Zakirul Islam was placed on a three-day remand.

Jamalpur Senior Judicial Magistrate Tanvir Ahmed passed the order after police produced the four before the court with a seven-

day remand prayer for each, said the plaintiff's lawyer Md Yusuf Ali.

Rab arrested Babu, 50, and his two associates Monirul, 35, and Zakirul, 31, from Panchagarh's Debiganj upazila Saturday morning.

Babu, now expelled general secretary of Sadhurpara Union unit Awami League, masterminded the murder of Nadim because of a personal vendetta against him over reports, said Rab.

On Saturday, a Rab team held Rezaul Karim, 26, from Dupchanchia upazila of Bogura.

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said that after probe, the Nadim murder case will be sent to the Speedy Trial Tribunal for ensuring fair trial within the quickest possible time.

"I want to assure you that justice will be ensured in this case," he said while replying to queries from reporters after attending a meeting at the Judicial Administration Training Institute in the capital.

On Saturday, Nadim's widow Monira Begum lodged a case with Bakshiganj Police Station against 22 named and 20-25 unnamed people. Babu was made the key accused in the case.

[Our Jamalpur correspondent contributed to this report.]

### Blinken, Qin hold 'candid' talks

FROM PAGE 12  
to the status of self-governed Taiwan and Beijing's human rights record.

"The secretary emphasized the importance of diplomacy and maintaining open channels of communication across the full range of issues to reduce the risk of misperception and miscalculation," State Department spokesman Matthew Miller said.

"The secretary raised a number of issues of concern, as well as opportunities to explore cooperation on shared transnational issues with the PRC where our interests align," Miller added in a statement.

He said Blinken invited Qin to visit Washington "to continue the discussions, and they agreed to schedule a reciprocal visit at a mutually suitable time."

Chinese state media reported that

Foreign Minister Qin Gang told US Secretary of State Antony Blinken that China is committed to building a "stable, predictable, and constructive" relationship with the United States.

### Woman

FROM PAGE 12  
case against the three bus staffers with Bhaluka Police Station.

Later, a patrol team of Bhaluka police seized the bus and arrested the driver and helpers with the help of locals.

The arrestees – bus driver Rakib Mia, 21, his helper Arif Mia, 20, and supervisor Ananda Das, 19, were produced before a Mymensingh court with a seven-day remand prayer yesterday afternoon.

On hearing the remand prayer, the court sent them to jail, the OC added.

### Lopsided deal

FROM PAGE 1  
period with Sabre.

"The cost estimates presented by Sabre GBLB Inc against its offered services were under-represented in the financial evaluation report," says the CAG report.

The audit flagged that the financial proposal, of which The Daily Star has a copy, states that the costs of using the PSS and DCS will increase by 2 percent every year, but this was not taken into consideration during evaluation.

Biman's contract with Sabre has many elements that were not mentioned in the financial proposal, says the audit.

After Sabre's systems went live in February 2022, the company estimated at least \$1.17 million (over Tk 12.6 crores) in usage fees for boarding passengers.

Its contract with Biman says the base usage cost of boarding one lakh passengers is \$50,000 per month, which amounts to \$6,00,000 in a year.

The contract says for every passenger, in addition to the one lakh a month, Biman would pay \$0.88.

The auditors estimate that Biman boards 18.3 lakh passengers in a year and this costs the carrier a significant amount of money.

The company also charged Biman \$40,000 (Tk 42 lakh) because data migration from SITA's system to Sabre's system overshot the deadline by five days and there was some pending work regarding the e-commerce platform and loyalty programme.

The auditors questioned the clauses of the deal that allowed Sabre to demand such compensation.

The audit also points out that there were only three bidders while the Public Procurement Rules 2008 stated that there must be at least four.

All costs proposed by Sabre were estimated taking into account the minimum number of passengers. Since the company is charging for services either per passenger or as

a percentage of total passengers boarded, these costs ballooned when the system went live.

"Instead of taking the minimum number they should have considered the number of passengers estimated to use the system."

This was also flagged by the tender evaluation committee at three negotiation meetings held in July 2021. The fact that the pricing only takes into account the minimum threshold was a point of discussion. Despite these, the contract was signed with the minimum threshold number.

The contract only states what the booking charge per ticket will be, but it does not mention how many tickets are estimated to be sold throughout the duration of the contract period, and how much the total cost may be.

This leaves financial evaluators in the dark, says the report, adding that over 10 years, the costs could reach an estimated Tk 1,019 crore, a figure that was not presented to the committee.

The audit also flags the fact that Sabre has been providing GDS services and that public procurement rules restrict the firm from bidding for services directly linked to the services it provides.

As auditors explained, the GDS charges Biman every time a booking is made, but it is the PSS that balances out the cost being incurred by keeping a tally of the actual number of passengers being boarded. Therefore, the same entity should not provide the GDS and the PSS services.

Biman Managing Director Shafiul Azim said, "We have not officially received the audit. These are primary observations. These are very simplistic allegations. The figure they say we have misappropriated is not realistic."

"We will analyse and reply to these allegations. Then we will discuss these. And if they are satisfied with our response, the matter will end there. We do not favour anybody..."

Saiful Haque, the CEO and country general manager of Sabre, said his firm was yet to be notified about the audit report.

### Banks now bankrupt

FROM PAGE 12  
are dancing after meeting with some ambassadors.

"Elections in the country will be held in line with the constitution. There will be no caretaker government in the country," he said.

The lawmaker thanked India's Foreign Minister S Jaishankar for saying that Bangladesh elections would not be affected by anyone's interference.

### Budget not for common people

FROM PAGE 12  
amount of money from the Export Development Fund (EDF) was not returned and a section of people siphoned off the money from the EDF, he said.

MA Mannan said if anyone can prove that the Awami League government is doing anything violating laws, they can go to the court. He reiterated that the incumbent government has ensured good governance at all levels.

The proposed budget for the fiscal 2023-24 is unscientific, non-political and bureaucratic as it doesn't reflect people's expectations, said Debapriya.

Such a budget is not expected ahead of the general election, he added.

M Shamsul Alam, energy adviser of the Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), called the economy as a predatory one.

Kazi Nabil Ahmed, MP, member of the parliamentary standing committee on finance ministry; Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of PRI; Shamsul Huq Zahid, editor of The Financial Express; professor Shamsul Alam; Naser Ezaz Bijoy, president of Foreign Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI); Barrister Sameer Sattar, president of DCCI; and Taslima Akter Lima, president of Bangladesh Garments Sramik Sanghati, among others, spoke at the event as panel discussants.