

Raw, casual, mesmerising TAALPATAR SHEPAI



PHOTO:
THABIT AL BASHAR

Two goofy boys – Pritam Das and Suman Ghosh – walking down hilly roads, reverberating soulful melodies with a simple four-stringed instrument known as the ukulele – won the hearts of two Bengals with their musical simplicity.

ANTARA RAISA

Taalpatar Shepai, their songs like *Ami Shudhu Khujechi Amay*, *Nakshikanthar Rajar Konna*, *Moddhorate*, and *Moshader Chumu* resonate with listeners, touching their souls.

Recently, they performed in Bangladesh for the first time in *Let's Vibe with Taalpatar Shepai* where they also introduced the live lineup of their band. They also have an exciting upcoming performance on July 6, alongside renowned artistes Anupam Roy, Arnob, and Meghdol in Bangladesh.

How was your visit to Bangladesh?

Although our visit to Bangladesh was brief, it felt like a home away from home. The warmth that we got was one to cherish.

What was the most memorable moment of the concert?

What touched our hearts was along with the overwhelming response, the presence of little children who came with their parents to enjoy the concert. We even called one of our little

fans onto the stage, and to our surprise, she knew some of our songs. It was an incredibly sweet moment.

Tell us about your new lineup for the concert.

People are familiar with us as a two-person band, and we will continue that setup in most of our music videos to maintain our uniqueness. However, we are thrilled to announce the addition of three talented members to our live performances – Neelavo on keyboard, Soumo on bass, and Ahijit on drums.

Your music videos have garnered immense love from the audience. Can you walk us through the thought process behind each video?

Our music videos may appear raw, unplanned, and casual, but they require significant effort to create. We strive to keep them simple, funny, and light-hearted, as we find that such videos resonate most strongly with people. We share a deep interest in filmmaking, and we engage in extensive discussions about scripts and exchange suggestions. This mutual passion

drives us to conceptualise and produce the audiovisual elements of our songs.

What inspired your first original song, 'Ami Shudhu Khujechi Amay'?

As the title suggests, the song revolves around the theme of self-discovery. Each individual has a unique perspective and life journey. It is crucial to embrace one's individuality and prioritise self-understanding rather than solely focusing on understanding others.

We filmed the song in the breathtaking landscapes of Meghalaya. Despite encountering adverse weather conditions during our shoot, we adapted and found unexpected beauty in impromptu locations. For instance, we stumbled upon a picturesque, narrow, and hilly road while our driver was taking us to the wrong location.

We instantly fell in love with the place and decided to shoot our first scene there. These serendipitous moments during filming helped us discover ourselves, adding a touch of magic to the song.

Do you have a favorite song that you have composed?

Our personal favourite is still unreleased—a song titled *Alpin*. We are currently planning



The new line up of the band.

the music video for this track. Another song that holds a special place in our hearts and resonates deeply with our audience is *Shohojpath*, which we performed in one of our live sessions.

A message for your Bangladeshi fans?

Music knows no language or borders, and we are eager to share our songs with anyone who appreciates Bengali music. Your love and encouragement mean the world to us, and we are excited to embark on this musical journey together.



Parthana Fardin Dighi has left audiences in awe with her recent transformation. She also announced her involvement in an upcoming web-film titled, *Murder Nineties*.

Directed by Abu Hayat Mahmud, the web-film is based on true events and is scheduled to be aired on RTV, during this upcoming Eid-ul-Azha. In the project, Dighi will be sharing the screen with Khairul Basar.

Dighi shared her journey of reinvention through two films over the past eight months. She shared, "This journey has been my favorite. I have transformed myself, shedding the weight from 61 to 52 kg in the last eight months."

Her dedication and perseverance are evident, as she overcame various challenges and obstacles along the way, including ups and downs, sleepless nights, heartbreaks, betrayals, insults, and body shaming.

Dighi was last seen in the web-film, *Fera*, opposite Yash Rohan.

Nepal bans Hindi films over 'Adipurush'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Nepal's Kathmandu and Pokhara have imposed a ban on all Hindi films, including *Adipurush*, due to a controversy surrounding certain dialogues in the movie. The decision was prompted by objections raised over dialogues that referred to Sita as "India's daughter".

To enforce the ban, police personnel were stationed at 17 cinema halls in Kathmandu, ensuring that no Hindi films were screened. The focal point of the controversy is *Adipurush*, a retelling of the epic Ramayana directed by Om Raut, featuring Prabhas and Kriti Sanon in the lead roles.

Kathmandu's mayor Balendra Shah declared that no Hindi films would be allowed to be screened in Kathmandu Metropolitan City until the dialogue, "Janaki is a daughter of India" in *Adipurush* is removed.



NEWS

Akhi was swayed by doctor's promo videos

FROM PAGE 12
Sanjukta Saha's assistance," Yakub told The Daily Star.

Yakub took Akhi to the hospital from their home in Cumilla's Titas upazila because of this.

Until Akhi's admission to Central Hospital with labour pains in the wee hours of June 10, she received consultation services from Sanjukta multiple times during her pregnancy.

"I contacted Dr Sanjukta's assistant before coming," Yakub said, adding, "He falsely told us that Sanjukta would be at the hospital. In fact, she left the hospital around two hours before we arrived."

Akhi did not have a normal delivery and the child died hours after the surgery. She died eight days later.

As the news of the deaths spread, several former patients of Sanjukta spoke up and alleged fraud and wrong treatment.

"An unsuccessful surgery by Dr Sanjukta Saha in Central Hospital on June 6 last year put my wife's life at risk, and I suffered a loss of Tk 11 lakh. Although she [Sanjukta] promised to cover half the expenses, she did not do so and behaved poorly with us instead," Md Shahajahan, an employee at icddr,b, told The Daily

Star yesterday.

Several other patients took to social media and also spoke on the record to media outlets bringing allegations of wrong treatment. One spoke to a TV channel where she said her botched delivery by Sanjukta left her with an obstetric fistula.

Asked if such promotional videos were ethical, Sanjukta did not comment.

On whether she was responsible for the deaths of Akhi and her baby, she said, "I was not in the country at that time. I neither provided treatment nor performed the C-section [on Akhi]."

"I would not make any comment without consulting my lawyer. I will talk to you [the media] soon," she said before hanging up.

Meanwhile, the Central Hospital authorities in a notice issued on Sunday instructed all doctors of the hospital not to publish promotional videos on social media.

"The hospital authorities will take action if any physician does this," read the notice signed by hospital Director MAB Siddique.

ATM Nazrul Islam, deputy director of the hospital, said, "She [Sanjukta] left for abroad without informing us.

So, we think she is responsible for the incident."

Meanwhile, Prof Mokhesur Rahman, head of the forensic department at Dhaka Medical College Hospital following an autopsy on Akhi's body, yesterday said she died due to excessive bleeding.

"We will share the final report after the forensic test soon," he told journalist at the hospital.

The bodies of Akhi and her baby were taken to her village home in Cumilla yesterday and laid to rest in their ancestral graveyard.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare formed a seven-member committee to probe the C-section and deaths. "The committee has been asked to submit its report as soon as possible," Health Minister Zahid Maleque told reporters yesterday.

Following the death of the baby, Yakub filed a case with Dhanmondi Police Station in connection with wrong treatment and fraud. Police arrested two doctors who are now in jail.

On June 16, the Directorate General of Health Services shut down the operating theatre and the Intensive Care Unit of the hospital.

N Korea ruling party slams failed satellite launch in key meeting

AFP, Seoul

North Korea's ruling party slammed a recent failed satellite launch in a high-level meeting, state media reported yesterday, "bitterly" criticising the officials responsible.

North Korea attempted to put its first military spy satellite into orbit on May 31, but the projectile and its payload crashed into the sea shortly after launch due to what Pyongyang said was a rocket failure.

In the report from the meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, the ruling party "bitterly criticised the officials who irresponsibly conducted the preparations for satellite launch" and demanded a probe into the "serious" failure, state-run KCNA said.

Eid on 29th, holiday starts on 27th

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh Meteorological Department, and Bangladesh Space Research and Remote Sensing Organisation.

Yesterday, a cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, decided to extend the Eid holidays.

As per the earlier announcement, the Eid holiday was supposed to be from June 28 to 30, subject to the sighting of the moon.

As the Eid-ul-Azha falls on June 29, Eid holidays will be from June 27 to 30.

As June 30 and July 1 is in the weekend, this year's Eid holidays will be for five days.

On June 13, a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Law and Order recommended extending the Eid holidays by a day.

Teesta overflows

FROM PAGE 12

Hatibandha yesterday morning. Besides, the water levels of the Brahmaputra, Dudhkumar and Dharla rivers have been rising in Kurigram.

Shunil Kumar, executive engineer of Water Development Board WDB in Lalmonirhat, said the Teesta was swelling alarmingly because all 44 gates at India's Gazaldoba Barrage had been opened.

Nazrul Islam, 55, a farmer of Sindurna village of Hatibandha, said water started entering his house yesterday morning and he was trying to move to a safer place.

Sadek Ali, 65, a farmer of Bagdora village in Lalmonirhat, said he and his family members took shelter on a road after their house went under water yesterday morning.

Abdullah Al Mamun, executive engineer of WDB in Kurigram, said water levels in the Brahmaputra, Dharla, Dudhkumar, and Gangadhar are rising continuously.

Hold dialogue to resolve differences

FROM PAGE 12

internal political crisis is not overcome through a free and fair election by January next year.

Politicians and civil society members made these observations at a programme organised by the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), with support from the USAID and International Republican Institute, at a city hotel in Gulshan yesterday. It was chaired by former ambassador Sohrab Hossain.

In his keynote speech, BEI President M Humayun Kabir said Bangladesh has made progress on many socio-economic fronts over the past decades, but there has been a slide in good governance and democratic norms, and inequality has evidently widened.

Kabir, also a former ambassador, said people are worried over rising corruption, influence of money and muscle in politics, and a fear of culture.

The major political parties are at loggerheads over the next national election. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party demands an election-time interim government, but the ruling Awami League says that it is not possible as the 15th amendment to the constitution scrapped the caretaker government system in 2011.

Speakers stressed that the elections under a partisan government in 2014 and 2018 were mired in irregularities, and that taking no legal action against the officials involved in rigging the by-election to Gaibandha-5 has eroded public confidence in the Election

Commission.

They also said that the US visa policy – those who will be involved in vote rigging will be denied US visas – has come as an insult to the people of Bangladesh due to the track record of past elections.

Former cabinet secretary Ali Imam Majumder said the ruling party opposes the caretaker government because the constitution does not allow it, but nothing is impossible if the political leadership wants it.

"Today, foreigners are giving guidelines for our elections. If we fix our problems, foreigners will not get a chance to step in," he said.

BNP Vice Chairman Nitai Roy Chowdhury said when a national election is held without dissolving the parliament, it does not create a level-playing field for all political parties.

Awami League leader Nazma Akhter said there can surely be a dialogue over how the election will be held, but the BNP has never come up with a formula.

Many parties claim that the elections in 2014 and 2018 were mired in irregularities but there is no proof, she added.

Bangladesh is facing danger with the political parties having no consensus over the upcoming election and the economic crisis looming large, said Jatiya Party MP Shamim Haider Patwary.

"We don't see the possibility of a caretaker government given the Awami League's majority in the parliament. It is high time for a national dialogue to fix how we will

free from violence.

Asked about PM Sheikh Hasina's likely visit to China, the Momen said it is a wrong statement that PM Hasina is going to China.

He said the Chinese side invited the PM in September, but Bangladesh conveyed that the PM will be occupied in New York at that time.

Asked about any rescheduling of the visit, Momen said, "I don't know anything about rescheduling the visit."

Asked about the recent meeting with his Indian counterpart Dr S Jaishankar, Momen said, "We discussed many issues. I am so happy. We are working at the same level. I am very pleased. They have shown us much respect."