

Moina-Masud come together in 'Shurongo'

To promote the film, the dynamic duo has been tirelessly visiting television and newspaper offices, leaving no stone unturned.

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

"Ask him who his favourite actress is," smiled Tama Mirza, as she teasingly pointed towards a wry-smiling Afran Nisho. The chemistry between the two shone through, as the two visited The Daily Star premises to promote *Shurongo*, Nisho's momentous first film.

"Of course, it is Moina", laughed Nisho, indicating towards the moniker of Tama Mirza in the film.

Shurongo, with its presentation, item song and overall intrigue, looks to be a treat for film lovers.

"I invested a great deal of effort and dedication into bringing the character of Masud to life", claimed Nisho. Similarly, Tama Mirza, with an unannounced aura of confidence, said, "Just as the name Moina exudes beauty, I believe my character embodies the same charm. I hope the audiences will find my character as captivating as Masud."

Nisho expressed his gratitude for the overwhelming

response, acknowledging that he didn't anticipate it at all. Tama, too, echoed the sentiment, emphasising that "Shurongo" is sure to bring delightful surprises, that viewers can look forward to experiencing firsthand.

To promote the film, the dynamic duo has been tirelessly visiting television and newspaper offices, leaving no stone unturned. Despite the competition from other Eid releases, including Shakib Khan's film, Nisho remains unfazed.

"It may be my debut on the screen, but I am not new to acting. Good storytelling

is the key to winning the audience's hearts, and our film offers a great story to the viewers. So, I am not feeling scared or anxious at all," said Nisho.

During the shoots, the two actors bonded, exiting the sets permanently as good friends.

"Nisho bhai, I have a question for you", a mischievous Tama Mirza emerged from her initially meek appearance. "How much did you like being in an item song?"

Afran Nisho, enjoying the back-and-forth, confessed, "I am not a good dancer at all! I just went with the flow, I made to dance actually!"

Tama butted in, "The dance was completely warranted, if you go and see the film. It was a natural sequence, as proved by his organic dance".

When asked about the target audience for *Shurongo*, Nisho firmly stated that it is a film for the people. "Shurongo" is a movie made with the viewers in mind, catering to everyone's tastes and interests," Nisho said. Tama added, "The audience is the heart of any film."

As the release of the film on Eid draws near, Afran Nisho and Tama Mirza couldn't contain their excitement and happiness. They eagerly await the audience's response and plan to engage with fans during the Eid holidays, visiting different halls to witness the audience's reactions.

The duo urged the audience to come and watch their film in theatres with friends and family, this Eid.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED



Coke Studio's 'Pasoori' to be remade in Bollywood

Kartik Aaryan and Kiara Advani starrer Bollywood film, *Satya Prem Ki Katha* will apparently remake Coke Studio Pakistan's *Pasoori*.

However, Pakistani fans were not happy with the decision. They have slammed Bollywood for even thinking about remaking the song. Angry fans have taken to social media to demand that this should be stopped and that *Pasoori* needs to be saved from Bollywood. The remake will be released soon as the film is set to hit theaters on June 29.



Mithila's 'Mayaa' to hit West Bengal theatres on July 7

After a considerable wait, Raajhorshee De's movie *Mayaa* is finally preparing for release in theatres. The film, which draws inspiration from William Shakespeare's play *Macbeth*, is scheduled to begin screening from July 7.

Rafiath Rashid Mithila took to her official Facebook account to share the news of the project's release in West Bengal. *Mayaa* will feature an ensemble cast including Rafiath Rashid Mithila, Tnusree C, Richa Sharma, Koenecia Banerjee, Sudipta Chakraborty and more.

NEWS

Bangladesh go down fighting

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Tariq Raihan Kazi and debutant Isa Faysal made two costly errors to shatter Bangladesh's dream of snatching a point from the Middle-Eastern nation, who are 93 places ahead of Bangladesh in the FIFA Rankings.

Cabrera pinned his hopes on the same eleven that he fielded during the two preparation matches against Tiffy Army FC and Cambodia, making only two changes in defence by integrating fit-again centre-back Tapu Barman and left-back Faysal.

Bangladesh initially struggled against their physically and technically superior opponents in front of largely empty stands as Ali Al Haj and Karim Darwich threatened within the first 20 minutes.

However, as the match progressed they played better compared to their performance against Cambodia. Jamal and Co attacked from the right flank, with one chance leading to Fahim darting into the box and seeing his low shot saved at the near post by goalkeeper Ali Sabeh.

After resumption, Lebanon sent on three pairs of fresh legs and put Bangladesh under huge pressure, but Anisur Rahman Zico held firm despite two close calls.

Bangladesh came close to breaking the deadlock in the 60th minute as Fahim raced into the box completely unchallenged, only to drive a low shot straight at Sabeh and waste the best chance of the match.

Old habits then came to the fore as Bangladesh's defenders made basic errors which cost them the game. Tariq's attempt to dribble out of pressure despite being the last defender cost the team dearly in the 80th minute, as Karim Darwich stole the ball and marched on goal before squaring it to Maatouk for a simple tap in.

Bangladesh came close to equalising in stoppage time, but substitute Rafiqul Islam failed to capitalise on a cut-back from Rakib Hossain before Lebanon launched a counter attack which sealed the match after Faysal's half-hearted attempt to clear the ball was pounced upon.

All five in Titan

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Tuesday and Wednesday using sonar buoys dropped from Canadian aircraft had temporarily offered hope that the people on board the submersible were alive and trying to communicate by banging on the hull.

But officials warned that analysis of the sound was inconclusive and that the noises might not have emanated from the Titan at all.

Even if the Titan has survived, the air supply on board was estimated at 96 hours when it entered the water on Sunday around 8:00am (1200 GMT), meaning that the occupants likely would have run out of oxygen by yesterday morning.

The Titanic, which sank in 1912 on its maiden voyage after hitting an iceberg, killing more than 1,500 people, lies about 900 miles (1,450 km) east of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, and 400 miles (640 km) south of St. John's, Newfoundland.

The expedition to the wreck, which OceanGate has been operating since 2021, cost \$250,000 per person, according to OceanGate's website.

Their deposits

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The lion's share of the reported customer deposits is likely to have taken place through illegal means like trade-based money laundering through mis-invoicing, hundi, etc. as there is no legal means through which anything more than the \$12,000 annually can be taken out of the country, said Iftekharuzzaman, executive director of Transparency International Bangladesh.

One reason for such a high increase may be partially related to perceived political uncertainty centring on the national polls due to take place in January next year and the ongoing economic crisis driving a bigger appetite for deposits in foreign currency, he said.

"But more importantly, the lack of examples that money laundering is detected and such stolen money and assets are repatriated is the main reason. Any crime that remains uncontrolled is bound to increase unabated."

There are national and international legal instruments to successfully prevent and repatriate laundered money, and the roadmap for this is not unknown to relevant institutions that are mandated to do so, Iftekharuzzaman added.

In a discussion organised by the Diplomatic Correspondents Association Bangladesh on August 10 last year, Nathalie Chuard, the ambassador of Switzerland to Bangladesh then, said the Bangladesh government never sought information on its citizens' money parked in Swiss banks.

"The Swiss government does not want any corruption or laundered money to be deposited in Swiss banks. Governments of the two countries can

discuss the issues raised regarding Bangladeshis keeping money in Swiss banks," she said.

This prompted the High Court to order the government to explain why it had not done so.

In response, Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen said Chuard's statement was not true, going so far as to claim non-cooperation of the Swiss authorities to the BB's request for information.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit, the central bank wing responsible for investigating money laundering, suspicious transactions and cash transaction reports, said it sought information on 67 persons and organisations who have allegedly deposited money to banks in Switzerland.

But the Switzerland Financial Intelligence Unit conveyed that they have information on just one.

Not only Bangladesh, deposits from India and Pakistan with Swiss banks also dropped in 2022.

Deposits from India dropped 11.2 percent year-on-year to CHF 3.4 billion in 2021. From Pakistan, deposits shrunk 44.9 percent to CHF 388.7 million.

However, deposits from the crisis-hit Sri Lanka increased 18.8 percent to CHF 66.5 million last year.

Deposits from Nepal soared 61.9 percent year-on-year to CHF 482.5 million.

Switzerland has long been a preferred destination for the wealthy from all over the world to park their funds for tax evasion purposes, thanks to the high level of confidentiality protections the country's banking law allows.

Two suspects

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allegedly by supporters of Babu.

Two days later, Nadim's widow Monira Begum filed a case with Bakshiganj Police Station against 22 named and 20-25 unnamed people.

Meanwhile, 11 member countries of the Media Freedom Coalition expressed concern over the attack on Nadim.

"We offer our sincerest condolences to his family and friends. We are encouraged to learn that the authorities have taken action by arresting the suspected perpetrators of the killing and by initiating legal proceedings," they said in a statement yesterday.

The coalition said journalists play a vital role in asking difficult questions, reporting facts, and promoting the free flow of ideas.

"The Media Freedom Coalition calls on all in positions of influence in Bangladeshi society to speak up for press freedom, the right of journalists to work without fear of retribution or harm, and the need to hold to account those responsible for attacks on journalists."

4,000-yr-old

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including animal skeletons, human skulls and valuable items such as a bronze spearhead, at the spots where the sun shone through the openings, according to a statement from the municipality of Tiel, a town around 70 km (45 miles) east of Rotterdam where the site was excavated.

"The largest mound served as a sun calendar, similar to the famous stones of Stonehenge in England," said the statement.

"This sanctuary must have been a highly significant place where people kept track of special days in the year, performed rituals and buried their dead. Rows of poles stood along pathways used for processions."

While excavating the site in 2017, archaeologists also discovered several graves. One grave was of a woman buried with a glass bead from Mesopotamia, present day Iraq.

It's the oldest bead ever found in the Netherlands and researchers said it proved people of this area were in contact with people almost 5,000 km away.

The archaeologists took six years to research more than a million excavated objects dating from the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Roman Empire and the Middle Ages.

It's eating up maximum power subsidy: CPD

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loss stood at Tk 27,477 crore in contrast to Tk 6,200 crore in fiscal 2017-18 due to escalating capacity payments to the privately owned power plants.

"PDB is slowly becoming a white elephant," said Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director of the CPD, while presenting the keynote paper at a dialogue styled "Addressing Power and Energy related Challenges: Proposed Measures in the National Budget FY 2023-24".

The government is increasing the electricity generation capacity without any proper planning, he said. In the absence of a corresponding increase in distribution capacity, as much as 50 percent of the generation capacity is sitting idle and raking in capacity payments along the way.

At present, the generation capacity is 24,143MW but the highest production yet was 15,648 MW.

"The government did not take lessons from the ongoing crisis and is moving in the wrong direction," Moazzem said, citing the ongoing plan of setting up 6,218MW new power generation capacity by 2025 to further his point.

The proposed budget is hardly addressing the major challenges; rather, it is a business-as-usual budget

for the power and energy sector, he said.

"The IMF (International Monetary Fund) conditionality for subsidy management only through price adjustment faultily passes the burden to the consumers. This subsidy management needs to be done through a gradual phasing out of capacity payment," Moazzem added.

The ongoing crisis is the crisis of energy or fuel, said Ijaz Hossain, a former professor at Buet's department of chemical engineering.

And yet the government is increasing allocation in the power sector, which is only expanding the capacity.

"The private power plants are getting a sovereign guarantee from the government to get the capacity payments even if they don't buy electricity from that power plant. Then why would an investor not invest to build a plant?" he asked.

Power plants are being built without any guarantee of supply of fuel or gas from state-owned companies.

Some plants have finished construction but they are yet to get a gas connection, so are sitting idle.

"Such decisions might be illegal," he added.

Due to the price hike of electricity, fuel and gas, inflation is spiralling,

said M Shamsul Alam, vice-president of the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh.

"All such predatory expenses are being taken from the people."

The country has also become an "import market" for energy products, said Alam, also the dean of Daffodil International University's faculty of engineering.

He cited the electricity import from India's Adani Power, the transboundary transmission line, and the liquefied natural gas and coal imports at a high cost.

"This is putting the burden at the consumers' end," he added.

The gas crisis is manmade and intentional, said Badrul Imam, honorary professor at the University of Dhaka's department of geology.

"It is created to increase the LNG import and earn some money illegally," he added.

Many industries are facing acute gas shortages now, said Mostafa Azad Chowdhury, vice-president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

"We have contacted the authority. They said they are rationing gas for the power sector, which is the main reason for the shortage experienced by industries."