



30 bands will play in unique pop-culture expo

Dhaka Summer Con 2023 kicks off today

Organised by MediaQuest Bangladesh, the festival will consecutively run for three days from today (July 13) to July 15, at International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB).

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

One of Bangladesh's biggest pop culture festivals, *Dhaka Summer Con 2023*, will start today in the capital.

Organised by MediaQuest Bangladesh, the festival will consecutively run for three days from today (July 13) to July 15, at International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB).

Over the course of the three-day event, a total of 30 bands, will take center-stage at Dhaka Summer Con 2023. The first day, July 13, will feature performances from eight exclusive bands, including Old Dhaka Diaries,



Artcell

Naive, Encore, Subconscious, Aftermath, Shonar Bangla Circus, Ashes, Brahmaputra, Cryptic Fate, and Artcell. Additionally, a thrilling rap battle will ensue during the programme.

The final day of the festival, July 15, will showcase performances by AK Rahul, Apelkhik, Mechanix, Karnival, Black, Arbovirus, Avoid Rafa, and Warfaze. Attendees can also look forward to mind-blowing hip-hop performances by Black Zang and Shafayat.

The festival boasts an assortment of captivating events, such as the highly anticipated cosplay competition, engaging comic book exhibitions, immersive experience zones, dedicated kids' zones, exceptional performances from hip hop and K-pop artists, thrilling gaming activities, tantalizing food zones, and thought-provoking panel



Owned

discussions.

Tariqul Sumon, the initiator of Summer Con 2023 and co-founder of MediaQuest Bangladesh, told The Daily Star, "A lot of people have asked, why have such a huge-scale concert alongside a convention? First and foremost, we wanted Bangla music to have a platform, shared with the country's biggest Comicon. We wanted to adhere to international standards while organising such a huge festival."

The programme released its official theme song, titled *Escape*. Heavy metal band Mechanix collaborated with stars like Shishir Ahmed, Raef Al Hasan Rafa, and Black Zang to create the memorable pop culture anthem.

Tickets for the second and third day of the festival are available on the website of Get Set Rock.



Salman Khan gives a shoutout to SRK's 'Jawan'

Salman Khan and Shah Rukh Khan have proven they are the best of friends. They broke box office records when Salman made a cameo appearance at SRK's spy thriller *Pathaan*, which became blockbuster worldwide.

While Salman didn't appear in Atlee's *Jawan*, he made sure to post a special shout-out to his dear buddy and longtime co-star SRK on his Facebook post.

"Absolutely loved *Jawan* prevue. Our *Pathaan* has become *Jawan*. Now this is the kind of a movie we should see in theatres only. I will for sure watch the first day screening of the movie. It was superb Shah Rukh Khan," read his post.

Nuhash's 'Foreigners only' captures double at festival



Nuhash Humayun's post-colonial horror film, *Foreigners Only* has managed to captivate audiences of all ages since its release. Recently, the short film managed to capture two awards at the

Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival. The first is the Audience Award for 'Best Short Film' and the second being the Youth Award for 'Best Short Film'.

Joyful at the achievement, Nuhash took to social media to share the news with his fans, writing, "Our post colonial horror film *Foreigners Only* just won Two awards at the same time! The Audience Award for Best Short Film and also The Youth Award for Best Short Film at the Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival. Thank you so much! *Foreigners Only* is historically the first Bangladeshi film commissioned by a US streaming platform."

NEWS

EU team explores elections laws

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and will prepare reports if polls irregularities take place. It will send those to the Election Commission, which will take necessary steps accordingly."

He added that he told them the judicial officials (lower court judges) will be under the EC's jurisdiction during the polls period as per the SC's advice.

The meeting was held in the conference room of the law ministry at the Secretariat.

MEETING WITH INFO MINISTER

At a separate meeting with Information Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday, the mission enquired about the role of his ministry with regard to the functioning of the media in general.

"We said our media is mainly private. Apart from Bangladesh Television, the 35 television channels in operation are private. All the 1,250 daily newspapers, a few thousand online [news portals], FMs and community radio, apart from Bangladesh Betar - all are private," he told reporters at a briefing at the Secretariat.

The minster made the comments after meeting the visiting EU mission members Riccardo Chelleri, Dimitra Ioannou and Christina Dos Ramos Alves, according to a ministry statement.

The EU mission, which arrived in Bangladesh last Saturday, has so

far met foreign diplomats; officials of the ministries of foreign affairs and Chattogram Hill Tracts affairs, police, Human Rights Commission, Election Commission and the Attorney General, on Sunday and Monday.

The mission, which is on a two-week-long visit, will be assessing the election environment, along with rules and regulations. Based on their assessment report, the EU will decide if it would send election observers for the national polls slated to be held in December this year or January next.

Hasan Mahmud also discussed with them the challenges of rumours spread on social media platforms, which also sometimes incite violence.

"Earlier this year, the European Union amended laws to ensure all social media platforms are registered. We asked Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and other platforms to register as per our law, but they are yet to do so."

He added that he told the EU mission that upcoming election will be held under the incumbent government, like it is in European countries.

"I told them the government doesn't have any power other than doing routine work, and that the institutions related to the polls work under the Election Commission [and

not the government]."

The minister also said there was no discussion regarding a caretaker government with the mission as it is not their mandate.

"It [establishing a caretaker government] is only BNP's headache. The EU mission came here to assess if they would send election observers, not to bring the opposition to the election. However, I told them we want all political parties, including the BNP, to participate in the polls."

Checkposts lead to long tailbacks

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to Dhaka Shishu Hospital in the morning.

Activists and supporters of the AL and the BNP took to the streets, slowing down vehicular movement at Kakrail, Bijoy Nagar, Gulistan, Shanti Nagar, Malibagh, Khilgaon, Kamalapur, Arambagh, Dhonia and Demra.

Md Farid, a bus driver of Ajmeri Glory Transport, told this newspaper that it took three hours to reach Kakrail from Mahakhali.

The BNP held the rally at Nayapaltan and the ruling AL near the South Gate of Baitul Mukarram.

(Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to this report.)

Literary giant Milan Kundera no more

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of ideas.

Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala said his works "reached whole generations of readers across all continents" while President Petr Pavel called him a "world-class writer".

"With his fate in life, he symbolised the eventful history of our country in the 20th century," Pavel said. "Kundera's legacy will live on in his works."

French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne said Kundera was "a writer and a voice that we will miss".

"Milan Kundera's work is at the same time a deep, human, intimate and distant exploration," she said.

Kundera was born in Brno in 1929 but emigrated to France in 1975 after being ostracised for criticising the 1968 Soviet invasion of Communist Czechoslovakia that crushed the Prague Spring liberal reform movement.

He rarely gave interviews, believing writers should speak through their work, and lived out of the public eye.

Fellow Czech writer Karel Hvizdala told Czech Television he saw his friend last November and he was already in poor health.

"I remember that on his hospital

bed, which he had at home, he only had one book - 'The Plague' by Albert Camus," he said.

Kundera's first novel, "The Joke", was published in 1967 and offered a scathing portrayal of the Czechoslovak Communist regime and the ruling party of which he was still a member.

He ultimately abandoned hopes that the party could be reformed in a democratic direction, and moved to France. Four years later, he was stripped of his Czechoslovak citizenship.

He told the French daily Le Monde in 1976 that to call his works political was to oversimplify, and therefore obscure their true significance, but his books often took a political tone.

"The Book of Laughter and Forgetting" (1979) was a story written in seven parts that showed the power of totalitarian regimes to erase parts of history and create an alternative past - a work that the New York Times called "genius" in its review.

His best known book, "The Unbearable Lightness of Being" (1984), focused on the Prague Spring and its turbulent demise with Czechs despairing of totalitarianism's grip retreating into obscure private lives

or emigrating to the West.

It was made into a film starring Daniel Day-Lewis and Juliette Binoche and directed by Philip Kaufman in 1988, earning two Academy Award nominations.

Oxford University professor Timothy Garton Ash, author and historian focused on central Europe, said Kundera "did so much to implant the idea and culture of Central Europe into the imagination of the world".

Kundera once told an interviewer he considered himself French rather than an emigre. He wrote later novels in French.

Le Monde called him a "tireless defender of the novel" in reporting his death.

"Undoubtedly the most European of writers, he impersonated the subtle contrasts of our world," Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo said.

After the 1989 Velvet Revolution that peacefully overthrew Czechoslovakia's Communist regime and ushered in pro-Western democracy, Kundera only rarely made public visits home but would quietly visit friends and family.

He regained Czech citizenship in 2019.

Govt shortens window to submit tender

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Also at yesterday's meeting, the proposal to import LNG from Malaysian company Perintis Akal Sdn Bhd under a long-term deal was approved.

Meanwhile, the cabinet committee on government purchase at a meeting yesterday approved the import of two LNG cargo from the spot market.

One cargo of 33.6 lakh Metric Million British Thermal Units (MMBtu) of LNG will be bought from American Excelerate Energy for \$13.35 per MMBtu.

The other cargo will be procured from Singapore-based Vitol for \$12.7 per MMBtu.

The committee also approved the purchase of 15.85 lakh tonnes of

petroleum products through open tender from two Singapore-based companies - Vitol Asia and Unipac - at the price of Tk 12,277 crore.

The government will also import 60,000 tonnes of urea fertiliser from state-owned Qatari company Muntajat.

Of the urea, 30,000 tonnes will be purchased for \$268.33 per tonne while the rest will be purchased at \$298 per tonne.

The government will also purchase another 60,000 tonnes of urea from Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company: 30,000 tonnes will be purchased at \$296 per tonne and the other 30,000 tonnes for \$298.25 per tonne.

Moreover, the government

purchase committee approved a proposal to import 1,00,000 tonnes of Murate of Potash (MOP) from Canadian Commercial Corporation for \$342 per tonne.

Another 30,000 tonnes of MOP will be imported from Russian company JSC Foreign Economic Corporation "Prodintorg" for \$342 per tonne.

Besides, the government will import 40,000 tonnes of DAP fertiliser from Saudi Arabia for \$442.75 per tonne.

Also, the government purchase committee yesterday approved the purchase of four oil tankers from China National Machinery Import and Export Corporation at a cost of Tk 2,486.31 crore.

Exim Bank chairman, 27 others disqualified

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website on Tuesday.

Mazumder, also the chairman of Nassa Group, was nominated by the Association Group, one of the two panels taking part in the country's apex trade body's polls scheduled to take place on July 31.

As many as 27 nominated directors were disqualified for being either tax or loan defaulters or both.

Md Shafiqul Islam Vorosha and Md Abul Hossain from Association Group and Mohammed Riyadh Ali, Mohammad Fayazur Rahman Bhuiyan and Mohammad Nizam Uddin from Chamber Group were disqualified for being both tax and loan defaulters.

Mohammed Khorshed Alam, Khandaker Ruhul Amin and KM Akhtaruzzaman from Association Group and Md Ali Hossain (Shishir) from Chamber Group were disqualified for being loan

defaulters.

Syed Sadat Almas Kabir, Mohammed Monsur, Shahab Uddin Khan, Nizamuddin Rajesh, Md Abdul Hashem, Serajul Islam, Md Rakibul Alam, Salma Hossain Ash, Md Jakir Hossain, Taher Ahmed Siddiqui, Mohammed Abul Basher, Khondaker Enayet Ullah, Md Habib Ullah Dawn, Md Shah Jalal, Mohabbat Ullah, Samiul Haque Safa and Sujib Ranjan Dash were disqualified for being tax defaulters.

Fazlee Shamim Ehsan's nomination was not accepted as his signature did not match his specimen signature in the voter form.

Mousumi Islam's nomination was not accepted as her voter number in the nomination form was penned through. Mohammad Anwar Hossain's nomination was turned down as the name and voter number of the proposer in the nomination

form were penned through.

Decisions on the nominations of Abdul Haque and Enayet Ullah Siddiqui are pending as further clarification is needed from the National Board of Revenue on their tax payment status.

The suspended candidates can petition the appeal board, said A Matin Chowdhury, chairman of the election board. After the appeal board takes its call, the final list of candidates will be published on July 19 as per the schedule of the election.

As per the FBCCI charter, 46 directors (23 from each panel) will be elected and 34 (17 from each panel) will be nominated.

The 80 directors will then elect one president, one senior vice-president and six vice-presidents. There are 2,500 voters this year, according to Chowdhury, a former president of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association.