



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Masud Rana's international allies land in Dhaka

'MR-9: Do or Die' hits theatres on August 25

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RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Bangladesh's iconic spy Masud Rana (played by ABM Sumon) is on a mission, and his trusted alliance finally landed in Dhaka this Sunday. The audience eagerly waits to witness how they help him fight terrorists as *MR-9: Do or Die* hits theatres on August 25.

The Daily Star caught up with the core team, consisting of the ship's captain Asif Akbar, along with the international cast—Niko Foster, Zhang Xueli Snow, and action director Philip Tan at Channel i's office, where they reflected upon the film, their experience in Bangladesh, and more.

"Upon our arrival in Dhaka, police officials immediately recognised us at the airport. We spent about an hour having casual conversations with them," shared Niko Foster, who is also the co-producer of the project.

"They were ecstatic to meet us and this boosted our spirit as we looked forward to promoting our film in Bangladesh," shared the actor.

MR-9: Do or Die is a visual adaptation of *Dhongscho Pahar*, first edition of the popular

spy series Masud Rana, authored by eminent writer Qazi Anwar Husain.

"I believe we have successfully adapted Husain's work into a cinematic version that resonates with the modern audience," shared the director who had concerns regarding the challenges of book-to-film adaptation.

"Masud Rana captivated South Asian readers, and we've sought to create a similar connection with a wider audience through the film. While staying true to the essence of the story, we've made necessary adjustments to suit the preferences of contemporary global viewers," he further added.

While the movie focuses on a Bangladeshi spy, its core background is set in Las Vegas, which gives it a Hollywood flair.

Jaaz Multimedia claims that the project is the highest-budgeted Bangladeshi movie, crafted spending Tk 83 crores. They have also made assumptions that the film will earn Tk 700 crores worldwide.

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Philip Tan, producer and action choreographer of the film, detailed the toughest action sequence in the movie.

"The most challenging scenes were the opening and ending sequences, which required grandeur. We featured the scenes with around 100 stunt performers, complex hand-to-hand combat, and martial arts choreography. Time and budget constraints were a huge concern," said Philip.

Both Foster and Tan expressed their admiration for ABM Sumon's selection in the film. "We've come across many good-looking Bangladeshi actors, but Sumon stood out," said Philip, adding, "His excellent fitness level was the icing on the cake."

"I've had around 15-20 years of training in Kung Fu in the Shaolin Temple. I landed the role by impressing Asif with my swordsmanship skills during the audition," said Zhang Xueli Snow, portraying Kong, an MSS agent in the film.

Most of the promotional efforts are geared towards the worldwide premiere on August 24 at SKS Tower. The creators have also received an invitation to showcase their film in China.

Nostalgic reunion: Kanak Chapa and Shabnur meet in Australia

In a heartwarming event that harks back to the golden days of Dhallywood, the evergreen singer Kanak Chapa and the once-beloved heroine Shabnur have rekindled their beautiful bond in Australia.

A recent trip to Australia, where Kanak Chapa attended a concert, turned into a heartwarming reunion. The singer found herself as a guest in the house of her beloved friend and co-star, Shabnur.

Kanak Chapa took to her social media account to commemorate the moment. Alongside the image, she wrote, "Dui Deho Ek Pran" (two bodies one soul), encapsulating the depth of their connection.

They also went live from their Facebook pages, where Kanak Chapa and Shabnur took a delightful trip down the memory lane. Kanak Chapa reminisced about the days when Shabnur's performances breathed life into her soul-stirring melodies on the big screen.

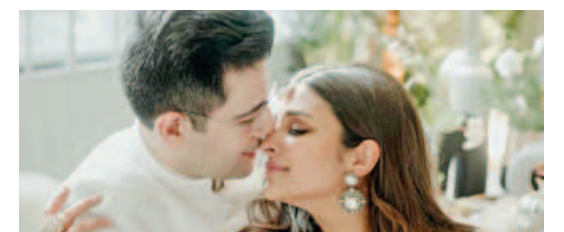


Parineeti Chopra, AAP Leader Raghav Chadha lock wedding date

The highly anticipated wedding of Bollywood actress Parineeti Chopra and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha has been finalised.

According to a report of The Times of India, Parineeti and Raghav are all set to exchange vows on September 25 in a lavish ceremony set amidst the majestic landscapes of Rajasthan.

The event is anticipated to be a grand affair, attended by their close friends and family members.



COUNTRYWIDE



An excavator dismantles an illegal structure along the Mashkanda Canal in Mymensingh city. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MD AMINUL ISLAM

MYMENSINGH CITY

Drive to free canals, drains continue

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Mymensingh City Corporation (MCC) authorities have removed over a hundred illegal structures in the last couple of weeks as part of an ongoing eviction drive to free the city canals and drains from illegal encroachment.

MCC authorities will continue the drive for an indefinite period to free all the city drains and canals from illegal encroachment in a bid to keep those free flowing and protect the city from waterlogging.

The drive that began on July 5 would continue for an indefinite period.

Mohabbat Ali, conservation inspector at MCC, said one of the major reasons behind the waterlogging is clogging caused by plastic bottles and polythene that hampers the drainage systems.

Apart from evicting the illegal structures, cleaning of drains is also going on side by side, he said.

While talking, Advocate Nazrul Islam Chunnun, convener of Jonoudiyag Mymensingh, a citizens' forum, said not only drains, the city ponds, which disappeared in the last 40 years, should also be recovered to improve the city environment.

Chunnun also suggested the authorities concerned to construct walkways alongside the drains and canals to protect those from further grabbing.

Nurul Amin Kalam, secretary of Mymensingh Nagarik Andolon, said the city's population has increased many folds since its upgradation as Mymensingh City Corporation in 2018.

As the city drains are not cleaned up regularly, it leads to serious waterlogging even after a moderate rainfall, alleged Anwar Ahmed, a resident of the city's Mashkanda area.

According to sources at MCC, currently around six hundred workers are involved in cleaning and waste management activities in 33 wards of the city, but the number is not sufficient.

Contacted, MCC Mayor Ekramul Haque said they are conducting the drives to free the city drains and canals from illegal encroachment. The drive started last month and will continue till all the grabbed lands are recovered, he added.

DNCC

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breaching the contract.

The corporation has also formed a three-member committee, led by Additional Chief Engineer Sharif Uddin, to investigate the incident.

It has emerged that Marshal Agrovet did not import the BTI pesticide from Singaporean company Best Chemical Co (S) Pte Ltd (Bestchem).

Last week, Best Chemical went on Facebook to refute Marshal's claim that the product was bought from it.

The supplier imported the product from Chinese company Shandong Ganon Agrochemical, according to customs documents.

Tender documents clearly say the BTI must be imported either from the US, EU countries, Singapore, India, and Malaysia.

AL leader

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Saif's brother Mohi Uddin said he might have been killed over political rivalry, but they did not know who are behind the killing.

Mahfuzul Islam, superintendent of Cox's Bazar police, told the media that the body bore stab injuries.

Hotel Manager Rezaul Karim said Saif booked a room around 4:00pm on Sunday and stayed there overnight.

In the morning, one of his friends came looking for him. The friend and a hotel staffer went to Saif's room and found his body, he said.

Mahbubur Rahman, mayor of Cox's Bazar municipality, said rampant crimes make the beach town unsafe both for its dwellers and tourists.

Victim's father Abul Bashar, a retired Ansar commander, demanded justice.

It's a crime not to speak out

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suo motu rule and probe order.

Deputy Attorney General Saifuddin Khaled and S Alam Group's lawyer Ahsanul Karim strongly opposed making Suman a party to the rule.

The bench asked lawyer Karim the reason for his opposition and he said, "If confusing statements are made about S Alam Group to the media while this matter is pending with the court, it will impact the company financially."

The bench then said, "It is a crime not to speak out. It is unacceptable if everyone stays quiet. One should not knowingly stay quiet."

The HC also said it holds accountable those spreading false news to denigrate any individual or organisation.

The bench also said, "Can we stand in front of

the mirror and say whether we truly act according to what we say? Whether we truly do at home what we publicly declare? Had we done that, would the state of the country come down to this? How many buildings are needed for an individual?"

The bench went on to add, "How much money does an individual need to survive? Why constantly run after money?"

The bench did not decline Suman's petition. It kept it in the records and told him that the court would ask for him if need be.

Meanwhile, S Alam Group owner and his wife Farzana Parveen submitted a petition before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday seeking a stay on the HC rule ordering the probe.

Karim, lawyer Ajmalul Hossain appeared for S

Alam Group while Mintu Kumar Mondal stood for the Anti-Corruption Commission during yesterday's proceedings.

Justice M Enayetur Rahim, chamber judge of the Appellate Division, yesterday fixed tomorrow (Wednesday) for a hearing on the petition, Muhammad Saifullah Mamun, a lawyer for the petitioners, told The Daily Star.

In the rule, the HC had ordered the Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) and the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) of police to conduct an enquiry into the allegations disclosed in The Daily Star report and submit their reports to the HC as early as possible, preferably in two months.

The governor of Bangladesh Bank was directed to provide all sorts of cooperation

and assistance to the respondents concerned if required and asked for.

The HC asked the BB governor and head of the BFIU to come up with a report clarifying whether or not any permission and approval from the BB has been given to S Alam Group to take the money in question to the foreign countries from Bangladesh.

In the rule, it asked them to explain as to why they shall not be directed to enquire into the allegations as alleged and disclosed in the The Daily Star report and why they shall not be directed to take appropriate legal steps and actions against the entities and persons who are involved in the financial scam leading to misappropriation/embezzlement of a huge amount of money and money laundering through suspicious transactions.

For the highway expansion project, the authorities have to review the previous detail design, which may lead to more delays, and the RHD could end up starting the project in 2024, an RHD engineer said wishing not to be named.

Asked about the matter, Azad, also the additional chief engineer (Barishal zone) of RHD, said the delay in land acquisition would not hamper the main project.

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Land acquisition cost

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the road has been reduced by 4km in a revised proposal.

It said the explanation should be sent to the Project Evaluation Committee that would have a meeting on August 30, according to documents.

The commission also wanted to know if any new feasibility study is the basis of the costs and time escalation.

Contacted, Project Director AKM Azad

Rahman said as per the original development project proposal (DPP), the width of the service line was supposed to be 3.7 metres, but following a new decision, the width of the service lanes will be 5.5 metres.

This is the reason for the need to acquire more land, he told this correspondent yesterday.

Azad said 16km of the highway near Barishal city has been moved following the demand

of locals and ground reality and this requires acquisition of more land.

Asked about the slow progress, he mentioned that almost half the work was done and that land acquisition is complicated and involves the local administration.

RHD sources said the highway from Faridpur to Kuakata would be expanded under SASEC Dhaka-South Corridor Improvement Project with a loan from the ADB.

Shahed jailed for three years

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After an investigation, the ACC pressed charges on February 2.

The court framed charges on April 17 last year.

Shahed was arrested on July 15, 2020, at Debhata in Satkhira while he was trying to flee the country.

Later, over 36 cases, including an arms case,

were filed against him with police stations across the country.

On September 28, 2020, Shahed was handed a life sentence in the arms case.