

# OTT rules internationally: Trending productions of 2023



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PHOTOS: COLLECTED

#### ZAREEN NAWAR

An irrefutable aspect of content is its capability of churning out sub-trends on top of becoming a trend itself. This year, OTT platforms successfully presented a diverse range of content. Whether it be on the charts or social media, this medium has continued to dominate, proving that users have adapted to 'the future' faster than anticipated. Here are the most talked-about western OTT releases of 2023.

#### The Last of Us

The popular video game-turned-series racked up viewers, new and otherwise, with its debut on HBO's streaming platform this year. The debut season, based on the 2013 game, follows Joel (Pedro Pascal), a smuggler escorting immune teenager Ellie (Bella Ramsey) through the post-apocalyptic United States. The upcoming second season

is expected to adopt the 2020 sequel, including elements of Abby's narrative. The series attracted the audience through sentiments presented immaculately. The trending character portrayals even made it to several Comic Cons through cosplayers.

#### The Bear (Season two)

This series highlights the rise of a deserving underdog winning the spotlight by means of sheer storytelling and acting. The seemingly simplistic approach to the making of the series gives it the pizzazz that lured many viewers in. The second season threads together an even better story arrangement compared to its first season by digging deeper into the individual stories of the ensemble characters. The recently unveiled news of the series being renewed for a third season was rejoiced by netizens all around.

#### Queen Charlotte: A Bridgerton Story

This prequel spin-off of Netflix's *Bridgerton* loosely depicts the ascent of Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz to prominence and power in the late 18th century. It was one of those creations that imparted small noteworthy moments throughout social media platforms via the hands of fans themselves. The fan-servicing edits cooked up a storm, lasting several weeks after the season's release. This Netflix production easily falls under the category of a series with ardent followers. The themes and even musical choices surrounding this series made their way to real-life parties, such as bridal showers.

#### Succession (Season four)

This HBO-based dark-humour drama about power and family dynamics between an ageing media mogul and his four adult children unprecedently

took charge of a tidal wave of fans since its inception. It enticed even more fans towards the release of its last season this year. The exacerbated impacts and consequences presented in this story about the modern-day elites wrapped up this year with a bang, leaving behind a never-ending spool of debates online. Particularly about which problematic character amongst the lot should've won it all.

#### One Piece

Netflix's successful live-action adaptation of the 'cult-favourite' *One Piece* ignited hope of anime being triumphantly transitioned into a live-action series for what felt like the first time. The story follows Luffy and his crew as they seek the ultimate treasure to become the next Pirate King in a

fantastical world of boundless oceans and exotic islands. Considering how anime is known for exerting extensive minute details into its storytelling, this live-action adaptation does a wonderful job of incorporating the required elements to execute itself as an endearing story, all while complementing the aptly eccentric VFX contributions.

#### Loki (Season Two)

Disney+ produced an outburst of joyous ripples throughout social media from netizens and specifically the MCU (Marvel Cinematic Universe) fandom with this season, that too only a few weeks ago. The plot of *Loki* claiming his throne, only to find it's not the one he anticipated, could potentially be the last season. In this case, the story can be said to have ended on a high note. In a way, the show also

saved or reinvigorated collective faith in the superhero genre, which seems to have been glaringly declining in recent days.

# NEWS

## 3 AL nominees lose legal battle at HC

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Iqbal Kabir Lytton, upheld the EC's decision that scrapped the candidacy of AL nominee Enamul Haque Babul (Jashore-4) over defaulting on loans.

It rejected the writ petition filed by Enamul challenging the EC's decision.

Meanwhile, the HC yesterday stayed the EC's decision that cancelled the candidacy of AL nominee Maj Gen (retd) MA Salam (Mymensingh-9) over defaulting on loan.

The bench of Justice Abu Taher Md Saifur Rahman and Justice Md Bashir Ullah ordered the EC to allow Salam to contest the polls.

It passed the order following a writ petition filed by Salam challenging the EC's decision. Senior lawyer Probir Neogi appeared for Salam during the hearing on the petition.

The same bench stayed the EC's decision that cancelled the candidacy of independent aspirant Sadiq Abdullah in Barishal-5 over dual citizenship.

## 78 opposition MPs suspended for causing

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K C Venugopal, were suspended for causing similar disruptions.

Leader of House in Rajya Sabha Piyush Goyal said Congress and its allies "insulted" the Lok Sabha Speaker and Rajya Sabha chairperson with their conduct.

After the disruptions, India's Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi moved a motion regarding the suspension of the protesting MPs and it was adopted by a voice vote.

After the motion, the House was adjourned for the day.

Opposition parties have slammed the suspension, noting that no action has been taken against BJP MP Prathap Simha who facilitated the passes of two accused who carried smoke canisters with them in Lok Sabha.

## Tigers look to stay alive

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However, the Tigers then played a couple of ODIs against the Kiwis at the same venue in December 2016, suffering convincing defeats on both occasions.

Najmul Hossain Shanto's team will hope that a return to Nelson will improve their fortunes in the series, which began with a 44-run defeat via DLS method in a rain-curtailed match in Dunedin last Sunday.

In that game, Bangladesh bowlers had done well to keep the Kiwi batters quiet early on after Shoriful Islam rattled them with a couple of strikes in the first over.

But after the third rain interruption in the innings, which turned the match into a 30-over-a-side contest, Will Young and Tom Latham started their assault to set a 245 run target which proved too much for the visitors.

If Bangladesh lose today, the hosts will take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series. A win, however, will end Bangladesh's 17-ODI losing streak against the Kiwis in New Zealand and present them with a chance to clinch a maiden ODI series against the hosts in their backyard.

JP fields 265 candidates

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each from Samyabadi Dal and Bangladesh Muslim League, 45 from Bangladesh Nationalist Front, 63 from Sangskritik Mukti Jote, and 26 from Workers Party of Bangladesh, are participating.

EC data shows that the highest 187 aspirants from Zaker Party, over a dozen from the JP, and about 60 independents have withdrawn their candidacies.

Twelve political parties ran in the 2014 national election which was boycotted by the BNP and most other opposition parties. The election saw 153 candidates elected unopposed.

Although 39 parties took part in the 2018 election, the results were rejected by the BNP and several other parties, citing widespread irregularities.



A pro-Palestinian demonstrator shows a sign during a protest in the Chinatown neighbourhood of Washington, US on Sunday.

## It's his view, not party's

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Not everyone will believe such a bizarre 20,000 number. There is no reason to believe it. Not so many people have been arrested," said Quader.

Meanwhile, Razzaque, also the agriculture minister, yesterday said, "I think, what I said, I did not say anything wrong, not a bit. The statement is correct."

He clarified his statement saying it is not that he would release the BNP leaders. "Arrangements would have been made to free them following legal procedures."

Razzaque made the statement during an interview with Channel 24 aired on Sunday.

Talking to reporters at his Secretariat office yesterday, Razzaque mentioned that the Election Commission talked about the deferment of the polls.

"What does it mean to defer the polls? If the BNP had agreed [to join the polls], the election date would have been deferred."

Stating that the AL always holds the spirit of democratic values, Razzaque said, "We have always wanted all political parties to participate in this election .... Of course, the BNP is a big political party, we tried to bring them to the polls, but we have no scope to go beyond the constitution."

The AL leader alleged that the BNP always wanted to foil the election.

"I said the BNP wants the polls to be foiled, there are cases against Tarique Rahman, he is convicted. He will not be able to take part in the election. His mother is ill and she is also convicted. So, in my opinion, I could be wrong, they don't want to participate in the polls," said Razzaque.

He also commented that the BNP

could have stayed within the electoral system and given advice as to how to make the election neutral, fair and acceptable to all.

"In that case, we could have garnered support from the international community. More and more [election] observers would have come from abroad," he said.

Responding to a question, Razzaque said, "In my speech, I have repeatedly said many things can be done through discussions for the sake of an acceptable election."

Claiming that the government was compelled to arrest the BNP leaders and activists as they had planned and committed crimes, the AL leader said, "I have said several times that will any BNP activist torch a bus without the instructions of the party leadership? Will an activist take risks? Aren't they afraid?"