



Jaya Ahsan



Chanchal Chowdhury



Tareen Jahan



Shakib Khan

PHOTOS: COLLECTED

## A CULTURAL EXCHANGE

# Dhaka's finest actors thrive in Kolkata's film scene

**Bangladeshi stars Shakib Khan and Chanchal Chowdhury are also currently on set in Kolkata, engrossed in shooting their highly anticipated collaboration, 'Toofan'.**

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Kolkata and Bangladesh have a long cultural lineage, with artists of both countries sharing screens together transnationally. In recent times, several Bangladeshi artists have been dominating the screens of Kolkata with their rising popularity in the cultural hub with their own merits.

Continuing this trend, numerous stars from Dhaka have ventured into Kolkata's film industry, enjoying remarkable success. Presently, four esteemed Bangladeshi artists, namely Jaya Ahsan, Shakib Khan, Chanchal Chowdhury, and Tareen Jahan, are based in Kolkata for the shooting of their individual projects. Let's delve into the details of their ongoing endeavours in Kolkata.

Currently, prominent actress Jaya Ahsan is in Kolkata for the shooting of a new film, *Dear Ma*, directed by acclaimed Indian filmmaker Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury.

Jaya has given many great films to Kolkata audiences over the past decade. Last year, her film *Bhoot Pori* was released, and received much critical praise. Last year, she was also in the discussion for her brilliant portrayal in Kaushik Ganguly's directorial film *Ardhangini*.

The actress is soon to start shooting for the film *Dear Ma*, where she will play the lead role. Rehearsals are underway before shooting and it will be exciting and intense for the actress, she shared with The Daily Star.

Regarding the film, Jaya Ahsan

said, "We will have to shoot the film amidst this intense heat. I will be acting in a new type of character for the first time in my career. Preparations for the final shooting are underway. I am rehearsing. I hope something good will happen."

Another prominent Bangladeshi television actress, Tareen Jahan, is also spending busy time there with a new movie. It is the first time for the acclaimed artiste, who is all set to make her debut in Indian Bengali cinema with the film *Eta Amader Golpo*.

The Manasi Sinha directorial film will feature her as one of the protagonists. Regarding her time in Kolkata, Tareen said, "I am having a great time in Kolkata. Spending beautiful time with the audience and artistes. The story of

the film is extraordinary and those who have seen it are praising it."

The actress, who has just been to the premiere show, said she is busy participating in promotional activities for her film in Kolkata.

Moreover, the immensely popular Bangladeshi stars Shakib Khan and Chanchal Chowdhury are also currently on set. They have been engrossed in shooting their highly anticipated collaboration, *Toofan*, for the past four days.

Directed by Raihan Rafi, this film promises to showcase the two stars in a fresh light, sparking excitement and speculation amongst their fans about their joint venture.

The audience will be able to witness Shakib-Chanchal's storm in the upcoming Eid-ul-Azha.

## Cannes reveals full jury list for the 77th edition

The prestigious Cannes Film Festival has announced its complete jury line-up for its 77th edition, with a star-studded cast of international filmmakers set to join jury president Grete Gerwig in selecting the winners of this year.

Amongst the esteemed jurors are Oscar-nominated actors Lily Gladstone, Omar Sy, and Eva Green, alongside Italian actor Pierfrancesco Favino. They will be joined by a trio of acclaimed directors - Nadine Labaki from Lebanon, Juan Antonio Bayona from Spain, and Kore-eda Hirokazu from Japan. Rounding out the panel is Turkish screenwriter and photographer Ebru Ceylan.

The 77th Cannes Film Festival is scheduled to run from May 14 to May 25.



## 'Khowab': Bangladeshi Jamdani weaving tale invited to Short Shorts Film Festival in Japan

Bangladeshi short film *Khowab: Castle in the Air* has been invited to the Short Shorts Film Festival & Asia 2024, which will run from June 4 to June 17 in Tokyo, Japan.

The tale of *Khowab* revolves around the life of Jamdani weaving and a weaver named Kanchan, from a remote village called Kanchan Nagar, who aspires

to preserve his family's traditional handloom despite facing economic hardships.

Over 200 films from various countries will be screened at this competition. *Khowab* will be showcased in the Live Action Competition category.



## NEWS

### Man secures bail

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On Sunday, the court sent him to jail after Bhederganj police produced him before it, following complaints that his Facebook post "hurt religious sentiments".

According to police, Sanjoy was arrested under section 54 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which allows police to arrest, without a warrant, someone they suspect to be linked to an offence.

On Saturday, Sanjoy, a local goldsmith, posted two lines from Lalon's song "Sab Loke Koy Lalan Ki Jaat Ei Sansare."

The post went viral and caused an uproar in the local Muslim community.

A crowd soon gathered near Sanjoy's house and locals informed police, who went to the spot and brought him to the police station.

Mintu Mondol, officer-in-charge of Bhederganj Police Station, said, "To avoid social unrest, we arrested him and brought him to the station after locals verbally complained of having their religious sentiments hurt through his post. He was later produced before the court, which sent him to jail."

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Sanjoy's brother Sujit Rakshit said, "I won't talk about this matter. We're very worried."

### Nine AL activists among 33 charged

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Seven people, including two top-listed criminals Zeesan Ahmed alias Montu and Jafar Ahmed Manik alias Freedom Manik, were indicted in their absence as they are absconding.

Before the charge-framing, the judge dismissed the petitions for 26 people to be cleared of the charges.

The court also fixed May 21 for starting trial of the case.

DB Inspector Md Yasin Sikder, also the investigation officer of the case, submitted the charge sheet to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka on June 5 last year.

On March 24, 2022, Tipu, 55, former general secretary of Motijheel AL, was returning home in his microbus from his restaurant in Motijheel AGB Colony area. The vehicle was at a traffic light in Shahjahanpur when attackers arrived at the scene on a motorcycle and opened fire.

### More than 900 students

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UCLA's vice chancellor for strategic communications.

People from both sides then pushed and shoved each other, shouting slogans and insults and in some cases trading punches. Campus police armed with batons eventually separated the sparring groups.

Osako said the university was "heartbroken" about the violence and had introduced additional security measures.

While the Los Angeles police were not called in at UCLA and no arrests were made, officers in other parts of the country were deployed to campuses on Saturday, with some using chemical irritants and Tasers to disperse the students, as the protests spread.

In Boston, police detained about 100 people while clearing a protest camp at Northeastern University, with social media posts showing security forces in riot gear and officers loading tents onto the back of a truck.

In a statement on X, Northeastern said the area on campus where the protests were held was now "fully secured" and "all campus operations have returned to normal".

The university said its move came after "what began as a student demonstration two days ago was infiltrated by professional organisers with no affiliation to Northeastern". It added that detained individuals who produced a valid student ID were released and will face disciplinary proceedings, not legal action.

Northeastern said that "Kill the Jews" had been heard at the protests, and that such chants "crossed the line", making it necessary to clear what it said was an "unauthorised encampment" that had been "infiltrated" by professional organisers with no affiliation to the university.

However, members of the pro-Palestinian protest movement at the university rejected those claims.

Video posted from the site appeared to show that people holding Israeli flags were the ones using the slur.

In Bloomington in the Midwest, the Indiana University Police Department arrested 23 people as they cleared a campus protest camp, the Indiana Daily Student newspaper reported.

On the opposite side of the

country, the Arizona State University Police Department arrested 69 people for trespassing after the group set up an "unauthorised encampment" on campus.

Meanwhile, at Washington University in St Louis, at least 80 people were arrested, including US presidential candidate Jill Stein and her campaign manager.

The protesters have demanded amnesty for students and faculty members disciplined or fired for protesting. About a week ago at Columbia University in New York, more than 100 pro-Palestinian activists were arrested.

What started at the Columbia campus has turned into a nationwide showdown between students and administrators over pro-Palestine protests and the restrictions on free speech.

In the past 10 days, hundreds of students have been arrested, suspended, put on probation and, in rare cases, expelled from colleges, including Yale University, the University of Southern California, Vanderbilt University and the University of Minnesota.

A few universities have had to cancel graduation ceremonies, while others have seen their buildings occupied by the protesters.

Meanwhile, college protests against the "genocide" of the Palestinians in Gaza have also spread to universities in Canada, Europe and Australia.

Canada's first campus protest camp for Gaza appeared at McGill University in Montreal on Saturday.

Broadcaster CBC reported protesters were demanding McGill and Concordia universities "divest from funds implicated in the Zionist state as well as [cut] ties with Zionist academic institutions".

Tents were also set up on the front lawn of the University of Sydney last week.

### Raise age

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limit for job applications to 35 years.

In 2018, the Awami League election manifesto acknowledged the issue and stated that the government would take realistic and justified measures to increase the age limit for entering government jobs, considering merit and skill.

### Govt in a bind over school closure

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Even the High Court stepped in, directing the authorities concerned to shut all primary and secondary schools and madrasas until Thursday.

The HC bench of Justice KM Kamrul Quader and Justice Khizir Hayat Lizu passed the order yesterday in a suo motu (voluntary) rule.

Hours after the order, the primary education ministry announced closure of all public primary schools until May 2 and the education ministry shut, for today, all secondary schools, madrasas, and technical education institutions in Khulna and Rajshahi divisions, and Dhaka, Tangail, Narayanganj, Munshiganj, Manikganj, Gazipur, Kurigram, Dinajpur, and Patuakhali districts.

Education Minister Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury, however, said his ministry would appeal against the HC order.

"According to the constitution, the education ministry has the jurisdiction to decide when the educational institutions would be closed and how they would be run. The rules of business gave the education ministry the jurisdiction to do so," he told reporters in Dhaka in response to a question about the HC order.

Mohibul, however, said the HC has the authority to issue directives or orders on some issues, which is also constitutional.

"But if any decision comes on a particular matter on which the education ministry already has the constitutional jurisdiction, then we will definitely put the matter before the Appellate Division.

"We believe that it is in the best interests of all that each institution of the state exercises its own authority," the minister said.

According to the Met office, 33

districts experienced temperatures exceeding 36 degrees Celsius yesterday. Temperature crossed 42 degrees Celsius in Rajshahi, Jashore, and Ishwardi of Pabna.

The day's highest temperature of 43°C was recorded in Chuadanga which was also the highest temperature recorded this year.

**STUDENTS BECOMING SICK**  
Yesterday, at least 12 students in Narail, seven in Cumilla, four each in Noakhali and Barguna, and two each in Barishal and Patuakhali became sick during school hours. Some of them even lost consciousness.

Asked about the students becoming sick, the education minister said, "We will also have to look into whether the students are becoming sick in or outside schools."

"Where do the students stay when they are not in schools? We have seen at the grassroots level that students work in the fields and help their parents in their work which is more dangerous for them. They are not exposed to danger if they attend schools," Mohibul said.

Many parents who expressed concern over the resumption of in-person classes amid the heatwave do not buy the minister's logic.

They argued the students need to travel to and from schools amid the searing heat.

"Though the morning temperature is somewhat bearable, it becomes almost intolerable around midday when we take our kids back to home," said Shimul Parvez, father of a first grader in Dhaka.

"Things get worse if we get stuck in traffic. My daughter becomes exhausted after returning home," he said.

The situation in rural areas is tougher as many schools are located far away. This exposes learners,

particularly those who walk to schools, parents said.

"Many schools don't have ceiling fans. We often experience power cuts which makes the condition inside classrooms unbearable for children. We have to remember that they are children," said Sabrin Jahan, mother of a class-IV student.

The parents this paper spoke to suggested that the government rearrange the academic calendar judiciously and fix the holidays so that the students do not have to suffer during the extreme weather conditions.

**MINISTER'S COMMENTS**  
Education Minister Mohibul said, "Students will be affected if educational institutions are closed in those districts where the temperature is not reaching 39-40 degrees Celsius."

"However, our decision is that there is no justification for closing educational institutions in those areas which are experiencing rainfall and low temperatures. This is our position."

Referring to Sunday's rain in Sylhet, he said, "Why should the schools in Sylhet be closed? Why should the students there be deprived of education?"

"We have a mentality that everything is Dhaka-centric. We see in the media that if the temperature rises in Dhaka, then a measure should be taken all over the country," he said.

Referring to the HC order, Mohibul said, "Since this is a matter of the court, I don't want to comment on it. However, our stance [on closure of schools] remains the same.

"We will try to settle it in court whether someone can suddenly impose a decision on the executive branch [of the state]," he said.

### Farmer killed

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gang. So it's assumed that he was killed by the indiscriminate firing of the gang members."

The abductee Masud was rescued while Farhad was arrested in an injured state during the drive, he said.

He claimed that a Rab personnel was also hurt.

Lt Col Sazzad said Farhad is

accused in at least seven cases.

Karim Ullah, a brother of the deceased, blamed the Farhad-Mostaq gang for the murder.

"Farhad's gang has established a reign of terror in our area. Whenever they come to the local bazar, they order everyone to turn off the video camera of their mobile phones," Karim said.

On December 10, 2021, the US Treasury Department imposed sanctions on Rab as well as seven of its current and former officers due to human rights violations.

Since then, deaths of people in incidents of crossfires and shootouts involving law enforcers reduced significantly.