



Alka Yagnik suffering from hearing loss



Popular playback singer Alka Yagnik has recently announced on her Instagram account that she has been diagnosed with a rare hearing disorder.

"To all my dear fans, friends, followers, and well-wishers: A few weeks ago, as I stepped off a flight, I abruptly found myself unable to hear. It took some time to gather the courage, but I now want to address my absence for those who've been wondering," read her post.

"My doctors have identified it as a rare sensorineural hearing loss brought on by a viral infection," she shared in her post.

Alka Yagnik, the iconic voice behind several Bollywood hits, shared a cautionary note with her followers. "To my fans and younger peers, I urge you to be mindful of exposing yourselves to very loud music and frequent use of headphones," she wrote.

EID BLOCKBUSTERS

Top films, songs, and OTT hits steal the show

ZAHID AKBAR

Several movies, songs, and OTT content have hit the screens and digital platforms during Eid ul-Azha, garnering significant attention and applause from audiences. Among them, the spotlight has prominently shone on the movie *Toofan*, directed by Raihan Rafi.

Since its release on Eid day, *Toofan* has premiered in approximately 123 theatres across the country. Post-release, Star Cineplex has expanded its showings from 21 to 47 daily screenings, while Jamuna Blockbuster is screening the film 14 times a day, a record for any Bengali film prior to this Eid.

Shakib Khan starrer *Toofan* also includes Tollywood's Mimi Chakraborty, Masuma Rahman Nabila, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Gazi Rakayet, Misa Sawdagar, Salahuddin Luvlu, and Chanchal Chowdhury, among others. The production companies behind *Toofan* are Alpha-i Studios and Chorki.

The film's title song, *Laage Ura Dhura*, composed by Pritom Hasan

with vocals by Pritom Hasan and Debosrie Antara, has particularly caught fire, trending on YouTube and further fueling interest in the movie. The song's chorus is derived from the late musician Rajjak Dewan's renowned piece *Morar Kokiley*, blending nostalgic appeal with contemporary flair. The first part of this specific version is penned by Shorif Uddin, while Rasel Mahmud wrote the rest.

Additionally, the title song from *Toofan*,



composed, arranged, and programmed by Naved Parvez, with vocals by Arif Rahman Joy, lyrics by Tahsan Shuvo, and rap by Rapsta Dadu, is also a favourite among listeners.

Apart from *Toofan*, other Eid releases include *Agantuk*, *Dark World*, *Moyurakkhi*, and *Revenge*, offering diverse choices for cinema enthusiasts during the festive season.

In addition to cinemas, several

OTT platforms have also debuted a variety of content. Notable mentions include web series like *Golam Mamun*, *Female 4*, *Baaji*, and *Poison*.

Golam Mamun, featuring Ziaul Faruq Apurba in a new avatar and directed by Shihab Shaheen, has garnered praise for its storyline, acting, and action sequences, receiving positive reviews across social media. Apurba's performance, appearance, and action scenes have been particularly appreciated by audiences both domestically and internationally.

Female 4, directed by Bachelor Point famed director Kajal Arefin Ome and produced by Bongo, has also captured audience interest. The series saw over 200,000 subscribers paying to watch it within 24 hours of its release, accumulating 15 million minutes of paid watch time from over 100 countries.

The cast of *Female 4* includes Ziaul Hoque Polash, Marzuk Russell, Saraf Ahmed Zibon, Pavel, Shimul, Sumon Patwary, Shiblu Mridha, Iresh Zaker, and Neelanjona Neela, among others.



Ben Affleck, Matt Damon to reunite for crime thriller

Ben Affleck and Matt Damon are set to share screen again with a crime thriller called *RIP*. Affleck and Damon will also produce the film through their Artists Equity banner.

The duo recently produced and starred in the Air Jordan movie *Air*, which Affleck also directed. Artists Equity recently struck a deal with Lionsgate to distribute the drama *Small Things Like These*, starring Cillian Murphy, which premiered at the Berlin Film Festival.

Matt Damon and Ben Affleck have been close friends since childhood and founded Artists Equity in 2022, promising to focus on smaller dramas rather than the "assembly line process" of filmmaking used by corporations like Netflix.

COUNTRYWIDE

Rescue boat in dire need of rescue

MINTU DESHWARA

At a time when a life-saving equipment is so much in need, a rescue boat worth several lakhs has just been lying neglected in Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila for nearly two years.

Local people, however, pointed to a lack of monitoring to the vehicle by the authorities concerned.

Aiming to deploy in the remote areas where rapid relief is crucial, two rescue boats, including Tangua-Sunamganj-1, was handed over to Sunamganj district in 2022.

But sadly, one of those vital resources Tangua-Sunamganj-1 is currently facing destruction due to mishandling of the authorities concerned.

In 2021, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief built 60 such rescue boats for haor areas and different coastal districts.

Of those, eight boats were handed over to different districts the same year.

The following year, the other 52 rescue boats were handed over to different upazila and district headquarters, including two in Sunamganj Sadar and Tahirpur upazila.

During the flood in 2022, rescue boat Tangua-Sunamganj-1 was used for various purposes like distributing public and private relief among the flood affected and displaced people.

But since the recession of the flood water, the important life-saving

equipment has been left abandoned in utter neglect.

While talking, a number of locals said after the flood in 2022 the boat was first anchored in the Boulai river in front of Shah Arefin Auto Rice Mill for a few days and then shifted to opposite to Tahirpur Police Station.

The rescue boat, which remained abandoned at the same place since then, went under water after the recent rainfalls.

The huge canopy of the 54-feet-long and 12.5-feet-wide boat has been torn down, while most part of its body, including the engine, is submerged under water.

Moreover, rusts have covered various metal parts of the boat due to prolonged exposure under the open sky.

One of the local residents Sadikur Rahman said though bought at a significant cost rescue boat Tangua-Sunamganj-1 is being destroyed due to the carelessness of the authorities concerned.

Tahirpur Sadar Union Parishad Chairman Junab Ali said during the flood in 2022 the rescue boat was used to send relief materials to thousands of flood-affected people in haor areas.

But it is so sad that such an important state resource is being squandered due to carelessness of the concerned people. Tahirpur Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Muhibur Rahman said maintenance work of the rescue boat will be very done soon.

Impactful Sakib needs

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according to ESPNcricinfo.

Be it through words or his actions, Sakib has not made a secret of how he wants to operate in this tournament.

"I just want to be aggressive and execute my plans," Sakib had said after the Nepal win -- a game in which the right-arm quick was rewarded with the player of the match award for his career best figures of four for seven and was also levied a 15 percent fine for code of conduct violation, relating to the confrontation he had with Nepal skipper Rohit Paudel during a fiery opening spell.

Interestingly, the inclusion of Sakib, who has now turned into one of the main heroes behind the Tigers' progression to Super Eight, was the major talking point following the T20 World Cup squad announcement. He was left out of the main 15 in the initial squad submitted to ICC, but a bold call from

the Gazi Ashraf Hossain-led selection panel saw him make the cut ahead of Mohammad Saifuddin.

And even though he has not been majorly used in the death overs -- a phase where the selectors had predicted Sakib to be much more effective than Saifuddin -- the youngster rose to the task of accepting the challenge of bowling with the new ball, something he has not done very often in white-ball cricket.

Generally, a skiddy customer for his slightly slinging action, Sakib has made use of the slow and turning surfaces in the Caribbean and the USA during this World Cup. The way he had two of the Nepal batters caught at point, and castled Quinton de Kock after trapping South Africa opener Reeza Hendricks in front of his stumps showed how his skiddy deliveries, getting slightly lower-than-usual bounce off the surface, can be a lethal weapon for

the Tigers throughout the tournament.

Sakib was made to bowl four overs at a stretch against Nepal, and he ended up bowling 21 dots -- the highest number of dots in a T20 World Cup game till that point -- while giving away just one extra to give Bangladesh exactly the type of start they desperately needed in a game where they had to defend a paltry 106-run total.

What augurs well for Bangladesh is that Sakib is not having to do it all on his own -- with Mustafizur Rahman doing his job of bowling miserly at the death while also taking crucial wickets, Taskin Ahmed living up to his reputation, and young leggie Rishad Hossain setting the stage alight with his turn and control. And Bangladesh will hope for it to be the case for the remainder of the tournament, starting with the encounter against title contenders Australia in Antigua tomorrow.

EPIC Group

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and enhancing resource efficiency. Together with IFC, we are paving the way for a more resilient textile sector."

The partnership between IFC and EPIC Group will help the latter reduce its environmental footprint significantly, targeting a 65 percent reduction in GHG emission per garment produced by 2030 compared to the 2019 benchmark.

The textile sector contributes around 6-8 percent of total carbon emissions annually, out of which Asia accounts for about 60 percent.

At the same time, the sector is a critical source of growth in

Bangladesh, generating around 85 percent of its export earnings, and is the second-largest employment generator in India, accounting for approximately 18 percent of the manufacturing jobs.

In addition to financing, IFC is providing EPIC Group with advisory support to help the company develop its environmental, social, and corporate governance capacity, as well as to meet its gender targets.

"IFC is committed to supporting a robust textile and apparel value chain across Asia," said Riccardo Puliti, IFC vice president for Asia and the Pacific.

The investment announced on June 17

builds on IFC's existing relationship with EPIC Group. IFC previously supported EPIC Group with advisory services on greener production and decarbonisation through the Global Trade Supplier Finance programme.

EPIC Group has been a pivotal force in the apparel industry with facilities in Bangladesh, Jordan, Ethiopia, Vietnam, and soon India, IFC said in the statement.

Established in 1985, EPIC Group is a trusted manufacturer and supplier to global retailers, offering advanced manufacturing, design, creativity, replenishment, and inventory management solutions.

Nvidia eclipses

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Nasdaq to record highs, some investors worry that unbridled optimism about AI could evaporate if signs emerge of a slowdown in spending on the technology.

"It's Nvidia's market; we're all just trading in it," said Steve Sosnick, chief market strategist at Interactive Brokers.

Nvidia has also become by far the most traded company on Wall Street, with daily turnover recently averaging \$50 billion, compared to around \$10 billion each for Apple, Microsoft and Tesla, according to LSEG data. The chipmaker now accounts for about 16 percent of all trading in S&P 500 companies.

Nvidia's stock has nearly tripled so far this year, compared with a rise of about 19 percent in Microsoft shares, with demand for its top-of-the-line processors outpacing supply.

Tech giants Microsoft, Meta Platforms and Google-owner Alphabet are competing to build out their AI computing capabilities and add the technology to their products and services.

An insatiable appetite for Nvidia's AI processors, viewed as far superior to competitors' offerings, has left them in tight supply, and many investors view Nvidia as the greatest winner to date from surging AI development.

Israel may have violated

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Witnesses and the civil defence agency in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip reported Israeli bombardment in western Rafah, where medics said drone strikes and shelling killed at least seven people, reports AFP.

The Israeli military has announced a daily humanitarian "pause" in fighting on a key road in eastern Rafah, but a UN spokesman said days later that "this has yet to translate into more aid reaching people in need".

The Rafah border crossing between Gaza and Egypt has been shut since Israeli troops seized its Palestinian side in early May, while nearby Kerem Shalom on the Israeli border "is operating with limited functionality, including because of fighting in the area", said UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq.

"Fighting is not the only reason for being unable to pick up aid ... The lack of

any police or rule of law in the area makes it very dangerous to move goods there," he said.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said yesterday that at least 37,396 people have been killed in the territory during more than eight months of offensive. The toll includes at least 24 deaths in the past 24 hours, a ministry statement said.

The offensive has sent tensions soaring across the region, with violence involving Iran-backed Hamas allies, reports Reuters.

The Israeli military, which has traded nearly daily cross-border fire with Lebanon's Hezbollah since October, said late Monday that "operational plans for an offensive in Lebanon were approved and validated".

Yesterday, the military said its warplanes had struck Hezbollah sites in southern Lebanon overnight, while reporting a drone had infiltrated near the border town of Metula.



This life-saving equipment is on the verge of ruin, thanks to the negligence of the authorities concerned. The photo was taken from in front of Sunamganj's Tahirpur Police Station.

PHOTO: STAR