

## Exciting lineup of Bengali films on the horizon

**Directed by Raihan Rafi, Noor features Jannatul Ferdous Oishee opposite Arifin Shuvoo.**

ZAHID AKBAR

In marking the occasion of the recently celebrated Eid-ul-Azha, Shakib Khan's latest film *Toofan* has not only broken records but also redefined the look of success in the Bangladeshi film industry. Over the past few years, films starring Shakib Khan have consistently dominated the box office post-release. All things considered, local audiences have undoubtedly and eagerly been embracing this leading star's films.

Shakib's previous film *Priyotoma* set the precedent, delighting audiences with the top star of Dhallywood. Following suit, *Toofan* has shattered records, setting a new benchmark for post-release box office performances.

Over the past few years, the love for

starrer film *Dorod*, directed by Anonno Mamun, has accumulated significant audience approval with its teaser. In the film, the famed star plays a mentally unstable character blending romance and action. The teaser has captivated viewers with its diverse characters and dialogues.

In a significant departure, Bollywood actress Sonal Chauhan plays opposite Shakib Khan in the film, adding international flair to the action-packed film that has audiences thrilled.

Anticipation is also mounting for "Neel Chokro" starring Arifin Shuvoo, fresh from his acclaimed role in the Shyam Benegal directorial biopic *Mujib: The Making of a Nation*. Despite production delays, the film's first-look poster has already piqued audience



In addition to the eagerly awaited *Neel Chokro*, another film starring Arifin Shuvoo, titled *Noor*, is set to be released soon. Although the film was completed some time ago, unforeseen delays have kept it from reaching audiences. However, Shuvoo has already begun promoting the film.

Recently, Arifin Shuvoo attended a special premiere show of Shakib Khan's *Toofan*, wearing a T-shirt with *Noor* emblazoned on it. This subtle promotion suggests that the film's release is imminent.

Directed by Raihan Rafi, *Noor* features Jannatul Ferdous Oishee opposite Arifin Shuvoo.

To add to the list of upcoming film releases, *Jongli* starring Siam Ahmed and Shobnom Bubby, initially scheduled for this Eid release, has postponed its premiere due to various technical reasons. Despite this setback, anticipation remains high among audiences, who eagerly await its release in the coming months.

In *Jongli*, Siam Ahmed stars in the titular role, alongside actresses Bubby and Prarthana Fardin Dighi. The intriguing cast also includes Dilara Zaman, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Arfan Mredha Shibli, and Rashed Mamunur Rahman (Apu), among others. Post-production work is currently underway following the completion of the film shooting.

As the aforementioned upcoming films navigate their way to their respective release dates, viewers are buzzing with excitement, underscoring the growing appeal and diverse offerings of Bengali cinema. The fervour surrounding these releases signifies a potentially recurring vibrant period for the industry, buoyed by star power and compelling storytelling.

## Timeless drama 'Aaj Robibar' director passes away

Monir Hossain Jibon, the director of the renowned BTV drama *Aaj Robibar*, passed away at around 12:53am at the National Institute of Neurosciences Hospital in Dhaka, on Wednesday, June 26.



Apurba Rana, the deputy general secretary of the Directors' Association, confirmed his death to The Daily Star.

The director suffered a brain stroke at night and was hospitalised but tragically passed away despite the doctors' efforts.

His body was placed at the Shilpakala Academy premises for public homage yesterday at 10am, followed by his first Janaza at 11am.

Afterward, his body was taken to Monohardi Upazila, Narsingdi district, for the second Janaza after Asr prayers, followed by his burial in the family graveyard.

## MITHILA'S upcoming film set for release in India

Actress Rafiath Rashid Mithila, celebrated in both Bengals, will star in the upcoming Indian film *Aranyer Prachin Probad*, releasing on July 5.

Directed by debutant Dulal Dey, this highly anticipated film promises an innovative and distinct storyline.

Noting she has great faith in the audience's reception of this film, the actress said, "I constantly seek new stories and different roles to challenge myself. This film is no exception."

In addition to Mithila, Silajit Majumder, and Jeetu Kamal play significant roles in the film.



Bengali cinema among audiences has surged dramatically, with fans flocking to cinemas in groups. So much so that tickets for Bengali films are now a hot commodity in the festive grounds that are the cinemas. Then again, this celebration of cinema isn't just confined to Eid festivities but continues to build anticipation for upcoming Bengali film releases.

For instance, the upcoming Shakib Khan

interest.

Directed by Mithu Khan, *Neel Chokro* features Arifin Shuvoo alongside Mondera Chakroborty, promising a compelling narrative with a stellar ensemble cast, including Fazlur Rahman Babu, Deepanwita Martin, Shahed Ali, Tiger Robi, Monir Ahmed Shakeel, Priyontee Urbee, Masum Rezwan, and numerous others.

## NEWS

### BR investigating

FROM PAGE 2

She is now undergoing treatment at the One-Stop Crisis Centre of Chattogram Medical College Hospital under police custody.

The arrestees are Rasel, 27, Jamal, 27, Sharif, 29, and Rashed, 27.

When they were produced before a court, it sent them to jail after granting a police appeal for a 7-day remand for interrogation, said the OC.

Following the incident, BR suspended Abdur Rahim, a guard of the train, for negligence in duty and also suspended the agreement with SA Corporation.

Speaking to this newspaper, BR General Manager (Eastern Zone) Nazmul Islam, said, "We will take action against persons found responsible in the probe report. Besides, the police are taking action against the people accused in the rape case as per law."

### Two AL leaders

FROM PAGE 12

A witness alleged that some supporters of Ashraf Ali, a former chairman of Ranihati union, carried out the attack.

Speaking on the matter, the Chapinawabganj SP said police were verifying whether Ashraf's men were involved in the attack. "Drives are on to arrest the attackers."

Ashraf Ali could not be contacted over the phone.

### NGANJ AL LEADER KILLED

Another AL leader died yesterday, hours after being hacked by his rivals in Narayanganj's Fatullah.

The deceased, Suruj Mia, 65, was the treasurer of Kashipur union AL. Four others were also injured in the attack. They are his sons Jony Ahmed, 35, and Razu Ahmed, 40, and his associates, Rasel, 32, and Shakil, 30.

Nure Azam, officer-in-charge of Fatullah Model Police Station, said the victim's family said Suruj had a feud with a local sand trader.

His supporters attacked Suruj and his men with lethal weapons on a road at Alipara of Fatullah around 1:30pm, leaving five people injured, said the OC, quoting the family members.

The five were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where Suruj died of his wounds.

### Conduct probe into wealth

FROM PAGE 12

"That's why I have submitted an appeal to the ACC chairman. If no initiative is taken in this regard, we will send a legal notice to the ACC. If it still does nothing, we will take the matter to the High Court," he added.

Asaduzzaman's father, Tofazzal Hossain Mia, was a farmer in Faridpur; he had pieces of land but no business, according to the plea.

But there is an allegation that

### India march into final

FROM PAGE 12

Australia, and Kohli struggled initially to time the ball on a Providence Stadium pitch much slower and lower than the one in St Lucia, where Rohit flayed Australia's attack.

Kohli's miserable tournament with the bat continued on Thursday when, two balls after pulling Reece Topley for six, he was bowled by the left-arm quick.

England had another success when Pant was also out in single figures after chipping Sam Curran to midwicket.

India were 65-2 off eight overs when rain stopped play, with Rohit 37 not out and Suryakumar unbeaten on 13.

When play resumed, Rohit smashed spinner Liam Livingstone for a six and swept Curran for another remarkable six to complete a 36-ball

### N Korea claims successful test to develop multiple warhead missile

AFP, Seoul

North Korea successfully tested its multiple-warhead missile capability, state media said yesterday, as dozens more trash-laden balloons sent by Pyongyang landed in the South.

Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points in years, with Pyongyang ramping up weapons testing while bombarding the South with balloons full of trash it says are in retaliation to similar missiles sent northwards by activists in the South.

The balloons briefly forced Incheon Airport, Seoul's major hub, to close

Asaduzzaman has amassed huge wealth beyond his salary, allowances and other facilities that he got during his service, it said.

Reagan gave details of the assets acquired by Asaduzzaman, his wife, children and some relatives.

"People's trust and confidence in the state's law enforcement agencies have been undermined. So, the ACC can take proper steps on this issue," the plea said.

fifty. But with Rohit threatening to cut loose, Rashid bowled him with a googly that kept low.

Suryakumar then holed out off a slower ball from Jofra Archer into the safe hands of Jordan at long-on.

Jordan removed Pandya and Shivam Dube with successive deliveries but Patel denied him a second hat-trick in consecutive games.

England's chase never got going, with Axar striking thrice in the Powerplay.

England's plight then worsened as Kuldeep then claimed three more wickets in the middle-overs, sealing the match's fate. Pacer Jasprit Bumrah ended the proceedings by trapping Jofra Archer lbw as India reached the final of a T20 World Cup for the first time since 2016.

on Wednesday and, in response to the successive launches, South Korea has fully suspended a tension-reducing military treaty and re-started propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts and live-fire drills near the border.

North Korea claimed it had "successfully conducted the separation and guidance control test of individual mobile warheads", the state-run Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said yesterday.

The "separated mobile warheads were guided correctly to the three coordinate targets" during the test carried out on Wednesday, it said.

### How shutki pizza

FROM PAGE 12

paid off spectacularly, earning it a spot on the New York Times Best Pizzas in the US list.

The story of shutki pizza is one of cultural exchange and culinary innovation, showcasing how traditional flavours can find new expressions and appreciation in diverse contexts. Unlike many naysayers, many expatriate Bangladeshis fell in love with this pizza that offers a comforting taste of home.

More than just a culinary invention, shutki pizza's success is an uplifting story for all aspiring chefs and foodies. It promotes accepting and experimenting with traditional ingredients, demonstrating that even the most conventional components of cuisine can earn attention and admiration when done so with originality and enthusiasm.

Shutki's global popularity creates great opportunities for other Bangladeshi products and recipes to be discovered and appreciated across the world. The tale of shutki pizza is a welcoming reminder that tradition and innovation can live peacefully and produce surprises fostering new cultural ties in a diverse world.

### Arundhati Roy

FROM PAGE 12

"incomprehensible turn" the world is taking.

"I am delighted to accept the PEN Pinter prize. I wish Harold Pinter were with us today to write about the almost incomprehensible turn the world is taking. Since he isn't, some of us must do our utmost to try to fill his shoes," said the 62-year-old Roy.

The renowned author, who won the Booker Prize for her debut novel *The God of Small Things*, was chosen by this year's judges Chair of English PEN Ruth Borthwick; actor and activist Khalid Abdalla; and writer and musician Roger Robinson.

She will receive the award at a ceremony co-hosted by the British Library on October 10, where she will also deliver an address.

"Roy tells urgent stories of injustice with wit and beauty. While India remains an important focus, she is truly an internationalist thinker, and her powerful voice is not to be silenced," said Borthwick.

"Arundhati Roy is a luminous voice of freedom and justice whose words have come with fierce clarity and determination for almost 30 years now," said Abdalla.



Smugglers are seen to the left in Sonora, Mexico as they transport a mother and her daughter from El Salvador past the Border Wall into the United States in Ruby, Arizona, US on Wednesday. PHOTO: REUTERS

### Israel storms Gaza City

FROM PAGE 12

Israeli army spokesperson Avichay Adraee posted on X.

Residents and Hamas media said the tanks had rolled in before the post and that people from the eastern suburb were running westward under fire as Israel had blocked the road south. There was no other immediate comment from the Israeli military.

More than eight months into Israel's offensive in Gaza, aid officials say the enclave remains at high risk of famine, with almost half a million people facing "catastrophic" food insecurity.

"We are being starved in Gaza City, and are being hunted by tanks and planes with no hope that this offensive is ever ending," Jamal said.

### Forex reserves

FROM PAGE 1

the highest in nearly four months.

Last July, the BB began publishing the reserve figures as per the IMF's balance of payments and investment position manual to ensure that the country's dollar stockpile is reported accurately.

The gross reserves stood at \$41.7 billion in August 2021. It has been falling since the second half of 2022 because of higher outflows after the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war sent global commodity prices skyrocketing.

### Court appoints more officials

FROM PAGE 12

land in Rugganj of Narayanganj, three kathas in Dhaka's Gulshan, two flats measuring 3,075 square feet in Badda, six flats in Adabor and 25 acres in Bandarban.

On June 6, the same court appointed administrators to look after some immovable properties of Benazir and his family members.