



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

'840' stars Nasir Uddin Khan, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Bijori Barkatullah, Marzuk Russell, Shahriar Nazim Joy, Zayed Khan, Nader Chowdhury, and Zakia Bari Mamo, amongst others. While the performances are commendable, the film does harbour some technical constraints, understandable since it was supposed to release as a web series.

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ
Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's political satire **840** is, for the most part, an ambitious and risky project—one that would certainly never see the light of release if the previous Awami-backed government were in power. As the current adviser of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, the internationally renowned director battles pressure and criticism from many fronts, with a film with an eerily undeniable relevance to the July Uprising.
Dropping by The Daily Star's **36 Days of July: Saluting the Bravehearts** exhibition, Nusrat Imrose Tisha, the co-producer of **840**, and Marzuk Russell, the iconic poet-turned-actor who helmed an important role in the film, talked about their uphill battle to release the film. "Look, I don't want to talk about the negativity that some have spewed regarding me, Farooki, or the film," insisted Tisha. "We just tried to portray what was really going on in the country, and apart from one small scene, we finished

shooting everything by 2023."
Tisha, who posted on social media on behalf of the students when violence erupted in July, has no qualms about being unfairly judged on the network. "I was in Australia when the violence erupted. I got to know that there were law enforcement forces stationed outside my house. I never want to bring these up in interviews, because the sacrifices that our people made are much greater than anyone can even decipher," she said.
840 stars Nasir Uddin Khan, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Bijori Barkatullah, Marzuk Russell, Shahriar Nazim Joy, Zayed Khan, Nader Chowdhury, and Zakia Bari Mamo, amongst others. While the performances are commendable, the film does harbour some technical constraints, understandable since it was supposed to release as a web series. The transition to a feature film needed a bit more time to cook. "We did rush the release a little bit, because we felt that it

was the right time to release it. I personally think that we could have used a bit more time to market it, but the response from the audience tells me that we made the right decision."
The film also tends to err dangerously on the side of caution, which is unforeseen from the director who made **Made In Bangladesh**. Pragmatic dialogues soon find their way to becoming coarse, but are convincing when put in the context of a ruthless empire built by a network of criminals.
"Of course, there's nothing I could want more than to speak my mind, but we do have to remember that the film is for mass consumption," said Marzuk Russell. "That being said, we did take many liberties while choosing to use some of the words in our film. For example, the word 'motherboard' was not made by us—it was made by the people on social media! We simply surrogated this and removed a much direr word from the

conversation." Tisha, who was in shambles laughing at this point, restrained herself and said, "We should not forget that we too have some limitations as well, and we tried our best to work within that."
Given the long list of memorable characters that **840** has presented to the audience, does it need a sequel? "We marketed the film as a spiritual successor to **420** and not a sequel—I think many misunderstood that," said Tisha. "However, given the response that our audience has shown, I can't put a sequel out of the realm of possibility. I guess we all have to stay tuned!"
"Before we sign off, I would love to thank The Daily Star," Marzuk surprised our interview team with his statement. "When boss (Farooki) released **Bachelor**, most wannabe critics and newspapers were out to get us, blaming us for 'destroying the soulful language' of Bangla films. It was only in The Daily Star that we found constructive criticism and fair coverage. For that, I thank you."

Out and About in Dhaka



Christmas Groove
December 24 | 5pm-7pm
EMK Centre, Gulshan



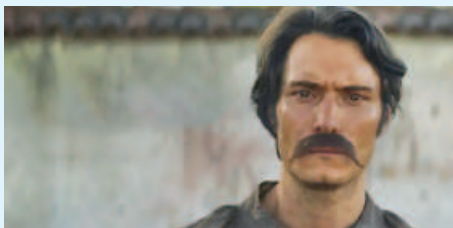
Saturday Night Fever Comedy Show
December 28 | 7pm-8:30pm
Naveed's Comedy Club, Baridhara



Monday Open Mic
December 30 | 7:30pm
Attention Network, Dhaka Trade Centre

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
One Hundred Years of Solitude: Part 1



Disney+
What If...?



Prime Video
Juror #2



HBO Max
Creature Commandos



Chorki
Dui Shaw



1-MINUTE REVIEW

CARRY-ON
Netflix's riveting airport thriller

Netflix has recently delivered an unexpected gift with this surprisingly engaging airport thriller, amidst the usual sweet sentimentality and festive clichés. Helmed by Jaume Collet-Serra, **Carry-On** unfolds its tense narrative on a bustling Christmas Eve at LAX airport.

TSA officer Ethan Kopek (Taron Egerton) takes his airport job mainly to win over his now-girlfriend Nora (Sofia Carson). With a baby on the way and limited options, he feels the pressure to turn his life around. Motivated by impending fatherhood, he confronts his grumpy boss (played by Dean Norris) to request a chance at a more serious role: operating the airport's x-ray machines.

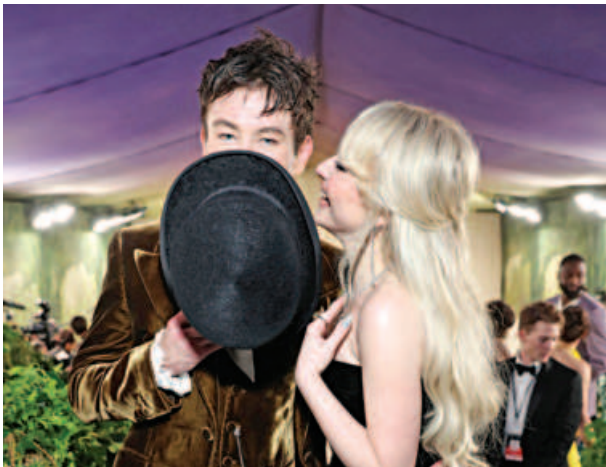
Unfortunately for Ethan, his ambition coincides with the arrival of a mysterious traveller (Jason



Bateman) carrying a bag that must bypass security scrutiny. Communicating with Ethan through an earpiece, he lays out in chilling detail the consequences Nora will face if anyone interferes

with the bag's journey.

What follows is a gripping battle of wits, as Ethan tries to disrupt the traveller's scheme but finds himself outmanoeuvred at every step, making for a stellar watch.



Showbiz Whispers

SABRINA AND BARRY

Whispers have it, Sabrina Carpenter might be singing solo both on and off the stage. Recent Hollywood reports suggest Sabrina and Barry Keoghan have "decided to take a break" from their romance.

Insiders suggest the split was mutual as "they had a little bit of a break a few months ago but this break was very recent."

The insider adds that the twosome's friends don't believe "they're getting back together."

While both parties have kept things under wraps, Sabrina's bop might just be the most emotionally charged brunch anthem yet.



Mr Brightside

Mr Brightside by The Killers is an electrifying anthem that transcends generational boundaries, capturing the raw emotion of heartbreak with unparalleled intensity. This musical masterpiece combines a razor-sharp guitar riff with Brandon Flowers' visceral lyrics about jealousy and betrayal, such as "Now they're going to bed, and my stomach is sick," striking a deeply personal yet widely relatable chord.

The track's genius lies in its simplicity—a single verse and chorus repeated with increasing emotional urgency, creating an irresistible sing-along experience that has dominated dance floors for two decades.

Mr Brightside's ability to transform pain into an explosive, cathartic celebration makes it more than just a song—rather, a timeless classic that continues to resonate with listeners across generations.

STYLE STATEMENT
TABU

The stunning Tabu made an appearance as Sister Francesca in the second-to-last episode of **Dune Prophecy**. Known for her timeless elegance, she effortlessly exudes confidence and charm in every look she dons.

In a recent photoshoot, she dazzled in a sleek black dress that highlighted her curves. Complementing the outfit, she wore elegant golden earrings and opted for glossy nude lips and subtle nude makeup. Her natural wavy hair added a touch of classic sophistication, perfectly capturing her essence as a true diva.

