



Arnob brings out a special surprise

Shayan Chowdhury Arnob — best known as a musician penning lyrics, composing music, and performing songs — is embarking on a new creative journey by stepping into the realm of literature. For the first time, he will appear as an author at this year's Ekushey Boi Mela

The book he authored is titled after one of his popular songs, *Hok Kolorob*, and has been published by Legend Publication. The cover has been illustrated by Arnob's father, artist Swapan Chowdhury.

The book includes songs composed by Arnob with the stories behind their creation. For international audiences, each song is accompanied with its English translation alongside the original Bangla lyrics.

SIAM

credits 'Jongli' as a transformative journey

Siam Ahmed, known for his breakout roles in *'Damal'* and *'Poramon 2'*, is all set to return to the silver screen with his highly anticipated film, *'Jongli'*. Directed by M Raahim, the film is scheduled for release this Eid-ul-Fitr.



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Siam, who has won two Bangladesh National Film Awards for Best Actor, opened up about his journey and dedication to *Jongli* in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star yesterday, on the occasion of the film's official motion poster release.

"I'm thrilled to mark my silver screen return with *Jongli* as it has proved to be a transformative journey in my career. The film's strong story is likely to win over the audience," he said, expressing full confidence in its success.

The actor then mentioned that he had to maintain the same shaggy look for seven

months by avoiding fake hair or beards to ensure realism in his role. "I didn't see it as a sacrifice. It was my dedication to the craft," Siam noted.

Hinting at major surprises, Siam assured, "Everyone will see a new side of me in *Jongli*. Moreover, the film has unexpected twists that viewers will enjoy."

As excitement builds for his return to the big screen, Siam praised the cast and director for their hard work, stating, "Our ensemble cast delivered outstanding performances. Now, we simply await Eid."

With *Jongli*, Siam is all set to once again captivate audiences and bring something fresh to the table, the actor affirmed.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Dhyan'

Shohojia's inaugural solo concert, *Dhyan*, is set to offer an intimate journey through the band's evolving soundscape today. Audiences will be able to immerse themselves in a dynamic mix of the band's past hits and the debut of its new track, *Abhinoy*. With Eventholic on board as the organiser, it will be a night of powerful music and emotion. Tickets are available at Acoustica and Get Set Rock.

DATE:
Friday, January 10, 2025

TIME:
6pm onwards

VENUE:
Bangladesh Shishu Academy

FDC FILM DIRECTORS' ELECTION

today amidst no festivities



The Bangladesh Film Directors' Association election for the 2025-26 term is set to take place today at FDC, but the usual pre-election festivities has been absent.

Initially scheduled for December 28, it was postponed a day before voting and later rescheduled for January 10 after discussions with the election commission and both panels.

The election contest is between two panels: the Mushfiqur Rahman Gulzar-Shafi Uddin Shafi panel and the Shahin Shumon-Kabir Tutul panel. Abdul Latif Bachchu is set to serve as the chief election commissioner, with AJ Rana and BH Nishan as assistants.

Assistant Commissioner AJ Rana confirmed to The Daily Star that the decision was made in consultation with all stakeholders.

'Saba' continues festival run, headed to Sweden



The Mehazabien Chowdhury starrer much-anticipated film *Saba* is set to have its European premiere at the 48th Göteborg International Film Festival in Sweden.

Following its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), the Maksud Hossain directorial debut made its Asian debut at Busan International Film Festival and was also selected for Saudi Arabia's Red Sea International Film Festival.

The Göteborg International Film Festival, which is set to commence on January 24, will feature *Saba* in its Voices section, a category dedicated to honouring the works of emerging filmmakers.

The film depicts the aftermath of a tragic accident two decades ago, leaving a 12-year-old girl with psychological trauma and her mother wheelchair-bound.

NEWS

Rohingya crisis, trade gap

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in Beijing on January 21.

Additionally, official sources have indicated that Touhid will also engage with senior officials of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and is likely to visit Shanghai as part of the trip.

During the bilateral meetings, key issues such as agriculture, education, trade, and the progress of the Rohingya issue will be discussed prominently.

Highlighting the economic aspect of the visit, Alam noted that trade between Bangladesh and China currently stands at USD 25 billion, though the balance heavily favours China.

"The adviser's trip aims to address trade imbalances and explore avenues for increased Chinese investment in

Bangladesh," he said, adding that the full agenda for the visit is still being finalised.

Alam said the relationship between Bangladesh and China has evolved into a "Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership," reflecting its multifaceted nature.

"This upcoming visit, as the first bilateral trip by the adviser following the formation of Bangladesh's interim government in August, presents a valuable opportunity to further strengthen and deepen the bilateral ties between the two nations," said the spokesperson.

Bangladesh and China are set to celebrate the golden jubilee of their diplomatic relations in 2025, and both

countries have undertaken various programs to mark the milestone.

"The visit will also provide an opportunity to outline the future roadmap for Bangladesh-China bilateral relations, focusing on enhancing economic cooperation, expanding trade and investment, and reviewing progress in ongoing collaborations," he added.

The foreign adviser is also expected to deliver speeches at the "China Institute of International Studies" and the "Shanghai Institute of International Studies" during the visit.

Besides, he will meet business representatives in Shanghai to encourage increased Chinese investments in Bangladesh, Alam said.

Unhealthy competition

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in the "false" Zia Orphanage Trust case against her, was unveiled at the event.

Fakhrul further said, "Some individuals seem to have become very desperate to divide the nation and the people. They're making various statements to incite others. I request all political leaders and activists, 'please don't create divisions.'"

He stressed the need for collective efforts to restore democracy and save the country.

"We deeply respect the students and are grateful to them and the young persons who sacrificed their lives during the movement. But let us not engage in the politics of division."

He added that reforms are certainly needed, but they must be backed by an elected parliament and government. "Otherwise, we cannot legitimise the reforms."

Recalling the contributions of BNP founder Ziaur Rahman, the party's secretary general said Zia was the first person to introduce state reforms by

dismantling the one-party rule and establishing a multi-party democratic system.

"Those who are considered highly intelligent, who engage in intellectual practices, and make various comments, they never bring these things to light, because they have not been able to connect with the grassroots people."

Fakhrul also mentioned that the party's acting chairman Tarique Rahman would return to the country soon.

"Our acting chairman Tarique Rahman will soon be completely free from all charges ... He'll also be with us again, Insha'Allah.

"The sacrifices made by us, our leaders, activists, students, youth, and women, have not gone in vain, will never go in vain."

He also expressed gratitude to the Emir of Qatar and the British government for facilitating the party chief's medical trip to London. "Khaleda Zia went abroad with state honours and faced no obstacles anywhere.

ACC sues Nixon

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transactions of Tk 1,402.51 crore through 55 bank accounts under his name and various affiliated organisations.

The transactions were made to launder illegal funds and conceal their sources, the statement said.

In the second case, Nixon's wife Tarin Hossain was named as the primary accused, while Nixon

Chowdhury was an accomplice.

With her husband's direct assistance, Tarin acquired Tk 8.05 crore beyond her known sources of income, the statement said.

She also conducted suspicious transactions worth Tk 1,760.34 crore via 17 bank accounts linked to her and affiliated entities.

The accounts were allegedly used to transfer, shift, and conceal

illegal funds, according to the statement of the case filed by ACC Assistant Director Mohammad Shihab Salam.

Earlier, a three-member team, led by ACC Deputy Director Md Salahuddin, investigated the allegations against Nixon. On October 23, following an ACC request, a court imposed a travel ban on Nixon and his wife.

BNP files two ICT complaints

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According to Salaudhin, among the 153 individuals who were subjected to enforced disappearance, the notables include former BNP leaders Ilias Ali and Chowdhury Alam.

Many of the victims of enforced disappearance were killed, Salaudhin said. The BNP attached a 20-page list to the complaint over enforced disappearance.

The other complaint over the killings had a 245-page list of victims, their addresses, and short details of the incidents.

"On the orders of the head of Awami League government, Awami League-affiliated criminals and certain overzealous members of law enforcement agencies carried out heinous murders under the guise of crossfire," reads the complaint over the killings.

It alleges that the killings of the BNP leaders and activists were part of an attempt to eliminate the party by forcing its members and supporters to flee the country and instilling widespread fear to deter public support and participation in BNP activities.

Faisal Mahmud, son of local BNP leader Mahbub Alam, told The Daily Star his father's killing took away all the joy the family had. He alleged

the Rapid Action Battalion killed his father in a so-called crossfire incident.

"Our life was once filled with joy, living in Laxmipur with three brothers and our parents. But everything changed in 2013 when my father was killed," he said.

He said his mother, who was then in her 30s, had to move to Chattogram, seeking work in a garment factory to earn a living. Due to financial hardship, Mahbub's three sons aged seven to 15 at the time dropped out of school, Faisal added.

He said they had thought they would never get justice, but the ouster of the Hasina government and the lodging of the complaint with the ICT ignited their hope for justice.

Mahbub's killing is among 88 incidents listed by the BNP in the complaint. Cox's Bazar topped the list with 200 killings, followed by 104 in Chattogram, 88 in Jashore and 73 in Cumilla.

Dhaka city saw 52 such killings, Kushtia 62, Jhenidah 59, Mymensingh, Noakhali and Khulna 54 each, Feni 57, Satkhira 51, Pabna 44, Rajshahi city 43, and Sirajganj 42.

The incidents of killing mentioned by the BNP on the list also included 15 in Narayanganj, 21 in Gazipur, eight in Dhaka district, 11 in Narsingdi, 15 in Tangail, 26 in Munshiganj, 27

in Faridpur, five in Netrakona, 11 in Jamalpur, eight in Shariatpur, seven in Kishoreganj, 11 in Rajbari, 16 in Chuadanga, 37 in Meherpur, 11 in Magura, eight in Narail, 28 in Bagerhat, 21 in Natore, 33 in Rajshahi, 26 in Joypurhat, 29 in Chapainawabganj, 17 in Bogura, 19 in Chattogram city, five in Khagrachhari, seven in Rangamati, 38 in Chandpur, 26 in Rangpur, 18 in Dinajpur, 28 in Gaibandha, nine in Nilphamari, 10 in Lalmonirhat, 17 in Thakurgaon, six in Kurigram, 11 in Sylhet, four in Sunamganj, six in Habiganj, five in Moulvibazar, nine in Patuakhali, 12 in Bhola, eight in Barguna, 11 in Barishal, 28 in Brahmanbaria, two in Jhalakathi, six in Madaripur and one in Sherpur.

According to a report by rights body Ain O Salish Kendra (ASK), 1,952 people died by crossfire involving law enforcement agencies from 2009 to June 2024.

Among these deaths, 705 were attributed to the Rab, 913 to the police, 40 to joint operations by the Rab and police, and 294 to other law enforcement agencies.

The ASK report also shed light on enforced disappearances, with a total of 608 individuals having gone missing between 2010 and 2023, and 365 of them remained missing as of 2023.

Intel reports

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even though it was stated that negative remarks had been received about them from intelligence agencies.

In a recent explanation provided by the ministry, it was stated that the Public Service Commission (PSC) had initially recommended 2,163 candidates for various cadres under the 43rd BCS. Following the publication of the notification on October 15, questions were raised regarding the transparency and credibility of this recruitment process.

To ensure that only candidates with a "clean image" are selected and to restore trust and confidence in the government recruitment process, a decision was made to conduct further extensive background verification of the recommended candidates. This verification was carried out by the National Security Intelligence (NSI) and the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI).

No room

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is no reason to fear and favouring anyone. In the past, you faced trouble if you did not favour any particular party. But the situation has changed. Now, your job will be at risk if you favour anyone. You will have to remain firm and strict in discharging duties neutrally."

Committees

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member body has been formed to advise on the transfer of divisional commissioners, deputy commissioners, joint secretaries and above.

Finance Adviser Salehuddin Ahmed will chair the committee and Information Adviser Nahid Islam will be the member secretary.

The other members are Power and Energy Adviser Fawzul Kabir Khan, Environment Affairs Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan, cabinet secretary and

public administration secretary.

The committee on home ministry will be headed by Home Adviser Jahangir Alam Chowdhury and Shipping Adviser M Sakawat Hossain will be the member secretary. Other members include Law Adviser Asif Nazrul and Local Government Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan.

Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain has been made the chairman of the committee on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its member secretary will be Adviser Mahfuj Alam.