



## What's the Haps?

**'Oboyaber Protidhwani'** Renowned sculptor Shaymol Chowdhury, celebrated for his *Shontrash Birodhi Raju Sharokh Bhashkorjo*, presents a curated showcase of 45 artworks from his private collection. Handpicked by his daughter, Rupakalpa Chowdhury, the exhibition *Oboyaber Protidhwani* features fiberglass sculptures, Shaymol's student-era sketches, photographs of his sculpting process, and a video presentation, offering an intimate insight into the artist's creative evolution.

**DATE:**  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

**TIME:**  
2PM-7PM

**VENUE:**  
AMBROSIA, ROAD NO-4,  
SHAYMOLI



## Sometimes SHAPLA, sometimes SUMI

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Shahnaz Sumi earned acclaim for her portrayal of Suraiya in the web-series *Mobaroknama*. The actress, who began her journey as a dancer, recently worked in Vicky Zahed's directorial web-film *Ondhokarer Gaan*, on Binge.

**Your first web film, 'Ondhokarer Gaan', has been released. How has the response been?**

The response has exceeded my expectations. For *Mobaroknama*, I received so much love that I wondered whether people would remember me for this new project in the same way. But now *Ondhokarer Gaan* seems to be leaving behind a lasting impression as well.

**You played the character of Shapla. Introduce her to us.**

Shapla is an RMG worker. Belonging to a lower-middle-

class family who tries to find happiness in her circumstances, she is a person that I am proud to have portrayed. Honestly, after the release, many people started calling me Shapla. As an actor, this is a big achievement.

**How was your experience of working with Vicky Zahed?**

**The story itself is so beautiful—truly well-written.**

This was my first time working with him—he has a very structured approach. His work has a unique quality, and audiences enjoy it very much.

This time, my dialogues were limited due to the needs of the story. I was present throughout, but with fewer lines to deliver. The story itself is so beautiful—truly well-written.

**This is the second time you've acted opposite Mosharraf Karim. Was it any different?**

It didn't feel like it had been a year since *Mobaroknama*. It felt like we had just worked together the other day. He is a great actor, but more importantly, he is an extraordinary human being. Despite being such a big star, he remains grounded as a person. As a co-actor, Mosharraf Karim makes work so much easier.

**What are your upcoming projects?**

I'm currently in talks for a web-series and a film. Once everything is finalised, I'll be able to share more.

**What are your plans regarding dance?**

Right now, I am hopeful that I'll be able to perform in some government-organised dance programmes under the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

## BTS member J-Hope announces first solo tour

BTS member J-Hope is set to embark on his debut solo tour next month. His *Hope on the Stage* tour is set to begin on February 28 with a three-night run at the KSPO Dome in Seoul.

He will then visit a series of cities, including Brooklyn, New York; Chicago; Mexico City; San Antonio; Oakland, California; Los Angeles; Manila, Philippines; Saitama, Japan;



Singapore; Jakarta, Indonesia; Bangkok; Macau; Taipei, Taiwan; and Osaka, Japan.

The announcement was posted on J-Hope's social media channels and Weverse, the online fan platform operated by BTS' management company, Hybe.

Weverse shared that details about the North American tour would be released later, citing the "Wildfires in California and their resulting impact on the region."

## Dorod to premiere on OTT ahead of Indian release

Despite initial promises of a simultaneous release in India, Anonno Mamun's *Dorod* remains absent from Indian theatres, months after its Bangladesh premiere on November 15.

Although the film has debuted in over 20 countries, including the USA, Thailand, and Canada, its much-anticipated Indian release continues to face delays.

As per the latest update, Indian audiences will get to watch *Dorod* on OTT before it hits cinemas. The OTT platform iScreen confirmed the film's release by sharing the movie poster on its official Facebook page.

*Dorod* is a Bangladesh-India co-production starring superstar Shakib Khan and Sonal Chauhan, with Payel Sarkar, Rahul Dev, Rajesh Sharma, Safa Marwa, and Imtu Ratish in key roles.



## 'RICKSHAW GIRL' to hit theatres this month

Amitabh Reza Chowdhury's film *Rickshaw Girl* is set for release in theatres on January 24. Based on the novel by Mitali Perkins, the film tells the story of Naïma, a young woman who, after her father falls ill, becomes a rickshaw driver to support her family. Novera Rahman stars as Naïma, with Momena Chowdhury and



Naresh Bhuiyan portraying her parents. The film, initially slated for release in 2020, was delayed due to the pandemic. Following the release of its trailer, anticipation has been building, with the film generating significant buzz. *Rickshaw Girl* marks the first joint production between the United States and Bangladesh.

# COUNTRYWIDE

## PHULBARI GOVT COLLEGE

### A tale of negligence

KONGKON KARMAKER

Phulbari Government College remains neglected for over 32 years since its nationalization in 1992.

Despite the introduction of honours courses in six disciplines, the college continues to struggle due to absence of master's programmes, insufficient classrooms and lack of residential facilities for students.

The college has been struggling significantly since its establishment in 1963, with 26 out of the 52 teaching positions still remain vacant, which includes vital posts like associate professors, assistant professors and librarians.

Female students, in particular, suffer most due to lack of dormitory support and most of them are compelled to reside in rented accommodations far from the institution.

Currently, 1,901 students are enrolled in honours programmes across six departments, while 960 are pursuing degree programmes.

However, lack of master's courses forces many graduates to seek higher education elsewhere.

"Every year, hundreds of honours graduates are left with no option but to move to other institutions to pursue their postgraduate degrees," said Mohammad Ali, a former student of the college.

"If master's courses were available

here, I could stay at home and continue my education," said Sumi Akhter, an honours student.

Like her several other students of the institution said lack of higher education facilities locally disrupts academic progress of many meritorious students.

Moreover, as the lone dormitory for male students can only accommodate 80 to 85 students, many of them are forced to commute long distances to go to and from the institution.

While talking, Professor Altaf Hossain, principal of the college, said introducing master's programmes and building residential facilities for students and teachers will make higher education accessible to the local community.

Established nearly 62 years ago, the college was once a hub of education for students from adjacent upazilas like Nawabganj and Parbatipur.

However, the institution has witnessed a decline in both academic and extracurricular activities since its nationalisation over three decades ago.

Local residents as well as current and former students urge the government to take immediate measures to restore the college's potential.

Contacted, Saiful Islam Jewel, a social worker in Phulbari upazila, said he hope that the government will respond promptly to the plight of the students and the institution, paving the way for a brighter academic future.

## Court freezes his cement company's bank account

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elections, he was accused of amassing huge wealth abroad. After that, he was not seen in the cabinet formed after the elections. Media reported that Javed moved to London with his wife and family members just before the fall of the Awami League government in the student public movement on August 5 last year.

A review of the case documents revealed that when Javed was a minister, his family company Aramit Cement Ltd took a loan from Bank Asia.

After the company defaulted on the loan, seven people including Rukmila and Mohammad Masudul Islam, the first assistant vice president of Bank Asia, filed a case against Aramit Cement on November 11,

2023. However, Javed was not accused in the case.

On November 26 last year, Bank Asia informed the court that their total debt against the loan given to Aramit Cement stood at almost Tk 14.64 crore. The defendants do not have any property mortgage to the bank against this loan. Besides, the defendants left the country after the political changeover on

August 5. They are accused of smuggling a huge amount of money abroad.

Bank Asia also asked the court to attach a bank account of Aramit Cement with the United Commercial Bank Ltd (UCBL), Bahaddarhat branch, for collecting the dues.

The court's bench assistant Rezaul Karim told The Daily Star, "After

a hearing, the court ordered the suspension of all transactions of the company's UCBL bank account. At the same time, it issued the defendants a show-cause notice asking them to explain why all the accounts should not be attached."

"They will have to respond to the show-cause notice by January 20," he added.

## Normalcy to return once elected govt is in place

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important to us. We are neighbours. We have to live together, understand each other, and no kind of animosity is not in each other's interest."

The Indian army chief said he has been in regular contact with his Bangladeshi counterpart, Waker-Uz-Zaman, including during the regime change.

He mentioned a video conference with Waker on November 24 last year and has stayed in touch with him since.

Bangladesh shares a significant border with India, except for a small portion in the southeastern region, and no other country shares such an extensive border with India, he said.

The comments come at a time when relations between the two countries remain strained in the aftermath of the ouster of Sheikh Hasina and her fleeing to India.

The two countries have summoned their envoys in Dhaka and New Delhi amid tensions over border fencing by the Indian Border Security Force.

Although the relationship between the militaries of the two countries remains "perfect", the joint military exercises have been temporarily put on hold due to the current situation in Bangladesh.

The joint military exercises would resume once the situation stabilises.

On military cooperation, he said it is "on the rise again."

Responding to a question about the vulnerability of India's northeastern states following allegations that "anti-India" elements were being allowed free movement near the border, Dwivedi said: "There is no vulnerability from either side."

## JnU students lay siege

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previous notice.

Speaking to The Daily Star, AKM Rakib, a protesting student from the botany department, said, "We received assurances that the project work would be handed over to the army. In addition, the matter of temporary accommodation for students will also be discussed at Wednesday's meeting. Two of our three demands are being accepted. So we are withdrawing from the hunger strike."

"Although we have called off the hunger strike, the campus shutdown will remain in place. The next course of action will be determined based on the decisions at Wednesday's meeting."

Around 3:00pm yesterday, a notice was issued by the ministry that the steering committee for the second JnU campus project would meet on Wednesday to discuss the transfer of the project to the army, and examine the project's progress.

At a press briefing on the campus in the morning, students had threatened to besiege the Secretariat if their demands were not met by the afternoon.

Students were seen locking the main gate of the university around 9:00am. JnU Vice-Chancellor Professor Rezaul Karim said, "The student protest has made our job easier and accelerated its pace. At the meeting [on Wednesday], the project's

current state will be analysed, and a final decision will be made. The other demands will also be discussed at the meeting."

On Sunday at 8:30am, another section of students went on a hunger strike and 12 of them were hospitalised after falling sick. Yesterday, four more protesters fell sick during a hunger strike at the campus.

Despite assurances from the VC, the students earlier refused to end their protest.

Students from various departments joined the shutdown and locked the main gate in solidarity.

The closure of the main gate has restricted vehicle access to the campus, although a smaller pocket gate remains open for pedestrian movement.

## Journo, father beaten up

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indiscriminately, they said. At one stage, he lost consciousness. The locals then took Bachchu and his father to the local upazila health complex.

Bachchu said the attack was led by Jasim and Ali.

The Daily Star failed to contact Ali for comments as his phone was found switched off.

However, Jasim said he went there and saw that Bachchu was being beaten up. When he went to stop the beating, Bachchu attacked him, he claimed.

Contacted, Tariqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Mahipur Police Station, said legal action would be taken if a written complaint is filed in this connection.

## Yunus urges KL

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chief adviser hoped that Malaysia would expedite the process so that the next batch of Bangladeshi workers can plan their migration to Malaysia for work.

Yunus congratulated Malaysia for taking over as the chair of ASEAN from January 1, and also sought the country's support for Bangladesh's bid to become

a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of the ASEAN and, in turn, become a full member.

He also told the High Commissioner that Bangladesh seeks support from the ASEAN in the upcoming International Conference on the Rohingya Crisis, which will be convened by the UN this year in line with the UNGA Resolution 79/182.



The old academic building of Phulbari Government College in Dinajpur's Phulbari upazila.

PHOTO: STAR