

'LIVING ROOM SESSION 2' Pavel aims to go global from London

Musician Pavel Areen has expanded his *Living Room Session* project with a multi-season partnership with Creative Event and Management Ltd, a new production and events company based in London.

The first season, blending local talent with international production values, in a unique 'living room' setting, garnered widespread praise from both industry professionals and the public.

The partnership was formalised at a signing ceremony held at the prestigious restaurant The Ivy Tower Bridge, on January 11, attended by key figures including Pavel Areen, Md Imtiaz Ahmed Zimi, Chairman Mohammad Rahat Amin of Creative Event and Management Ltd, and Shah Mohammad Farhad, the organisation's executive director.

This collaboration marks a significant step towards elevating Bengali music onto the global stage. Md Rahat Amin, who migrated to



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHE

the UK in 2008 and has successfully established multiple businesses, expressed that this partnership fulfills a long-held vision of supporting the creative industry in Bangladesh.

Pavel Areen echoed this emphasis on the project's ambition, "We aim to take Bengali music to unprecedented heights, uniting people worldwide through the magic of music."

The upcoming season of *Living Room Session* is tentatively scheduled for release during Eidul Azha 2025, and pre-production along with contract signings are already underway. Several prominent artists have confirmed their participation.

This collaboration aims to rejuvenate Bengali music, captivating local and global audiences. Pavel hopes to attain global recognition from established international platforms with this move.

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Indigenous group attacked

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The indigenous group first announced to hold their programme in front of the NCTB office.

In response, the Students for Sovereignty also decided to lay siege to the office at the same time.

HOW IT HAPPENED?

According to witnesses, the indigenous group went to the NCTB office around noon.

Meanwhile, members of the Students for Sovereignty, carrying cricket stumps with national flags tied to them, had already taken position in front of the office. At one point, they swooped on the indigenous group, leaving over a dozen injured.

Rahee Nayab, one of the injured, alleged that the attackers chanted slogans like "Tumi ke, ami ke? Bangalee, Bangalee" (Who are you, who am I? Bangalee, Bangalee) and "Naraye Takbeer, Allahu Akbar" during the assault.

Shaily, another injured, said the attackers particularly targeted women.

Witnesses corroborate these accounts, saying the violence could have been avoided had law enforcers acted decisively.

Alik Mree, one of the organisers of the Aggrieved Indigenous Student-Masses, alleged, "We were leading a peaceful march when the Students for Sovereignty group attacked us in front of the police."

Yaqub Mazumder, joint convener of Students for Sovereignty, denied the allegations. "We were inside the NCTB office when the incident began. When we came out, we found our activists injured. We immediately calmed the situation," he claimed.

However, Shahadat Hossain Kifat, a journalist present at the spot, said, "They put bandages on their bare heads and applied violin (ointment) over them to make it appear as blood."

When asked, Yaqub denied the allegations.

Md Shahriar Ali, deputy commissioner (Motijheel division) of police, said law enforcers present there intervened when one group suddenly attacked the other.

Sub-inspector Alimul Islam of Motijheel Police Station told The Daily Star last night that two people have been taken into custody for interrogation. They are being questioned now.

No case has been filed as of yet, he said.

Meanwhile, Aggrieved Indigenous Student-Masses announced to lay

NCTB office.

An hour before the attack, the group shared a Facebook live stream showing several individuals with cricket stumps and national flags taking positions in front of the NCTB office.

All these posts were deleted following the attack.

In previous posts, PCCS claimed that recognising the ethnic communities in the CHT as "indigenous" would lead to the separation of the CHT from Bangladesh.

Notably, Md Abu Shadik, the former president of the Chhatra Shibir's DU wing, was also a former president of "Parbatya Chattogram Chhatra Sangsad" before revealing his affiliation with Shibir.

Similarly, SM Farhad, the current president of the DU Shibir wing, previously held a leadership role in "Parbatya Chattogram Chhatra Sangsad".

These associations have led many to allege that Shibir activists are running both the organisations.

Armanul Hoque, president of the Chhatra Federation's DU wing, said after the attack, "Shibir, under the guise of 'Students for Sovereignty,' attacked the students today."

In a Facebook post, Shadik denied the allegations against Shibir.

"We demand immediate punishment for the attackers," he added.

On the other hand, Shahadat Farazi Sakib, a leader of Nagorik Committee's Dhamondi wing, is the founding president of Parbatya Chattogram Chhatra Parishad.

On Tuesday, he shared the NCTB siege programme of 'Students For Sovereignty' on his Facebook wall, and urged his followers to join.

Many of the victims have said that he was present at the time of the attack.

The Daily Star could not reach him as his phone was switched off.

However, he posted on Facebook, "At least 14 general students were injured when Upojati miscreants and leftists attacked us when we were protesting inclusion of the controversial and anti-national word 'Advisi' on textbooks. Some of them have been admitted to Pan Pacific Hospital in critical conditions."

Contacted, Samanta Shermin, spokesperson of Jatiya Nagorik Committee, said, "We have received allegations against Sakib. We would form a probe body. If allegations are true, we will take necessary actions as per protocol."

Dhaka to urge Beijing

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some Chinese industries, including electric vehicle and food processing plants.

Bangladesh will also renew a memorandum of understanding on the provision of hydrological information on the Brahmaputra/Yalunzangbu river in flood season by China. The MoU was signed in 2008.

Hossain, however, was elusive when asked if Bangladesh would revisit discussions about the Teesta river development project.

He will also seek Chinese support for creating a conducive environment in Rakhine for Rohingya repatriation.

"China has a strong influence on Myanmar. So, they can help. Given the security situation in Myanmar, repatriation may not start now, but we should continue to work."

On Bangladesh's joining the Chinese Global Development Initiative, he said Dhaka looks at it positively. "This is a continuous process."

On the recent tension over India's border fencing at some points along the border, he said Bangladesh will resolve the issues when there are some problems. "We cannot solve those overnight."

India says it was building barbed wire fencing based on mutual understanding.

Asked about this, Hossain said the general understanding is that no country will do fencing within 150 yards of the international border.

"In some cases, consciously we have made some exceptions where necessary. This is possible. So, when we said the fencing was done beyond our understanding, we are aware of the issue and will talk about it with them."

The US, China and India are very important, so Bangladesh will maintain balanced relations with all of them for national interest, Hossain added.

UK PM grilled

FROM PAGE 2

door remains open for you going forward".

Referring to the controversy surrounding Tulip, Kemi Badenoch questioned PM's handling of the issue.

"At a time when the market is in turmoil, the prime minister has lost focus on the issue because of the crisis surrounding the former city minister," Beidnock said.

"He (prime minister) said yesterday that he is deeply saddened by the resignation of her close friend (Tulip Siddiq). What does this tell us about his decision? And the fact was that the minister in charge of anti-corruption was being investigated for corruption," she said.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

Joler Gaan Live

Musical platform Dhaka Sessions' *Sheeter Adda* (Winter Conversations) is all set to present captivating performances by the renowned band Joler Gaan – known for their storytelling prowess with the use of music. The event will be held at Raaga Art Cafe, Uttara, offering an evening of enchanting music followed by an exquisite buffet dinner.

DATE: SATURDAY, JANUARY 25
TIME: 7:30PM-10PM
VENUE: RAAGA ART CAFE

Apex court clears Khaleda, Tarique

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"Accordingly, the judgements of both the High Court Division and the trial court are, hereby, set aside. Consequently, all the appellants having not been found guilty of the charges levelled against them, stand fully acquitted".

"The proceedings constituting the subject matter of these appeals are found to manifest contrived misapplication of the law as tantamount to malicious prosecution," a five member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Syed Refaat Ahmed observed.

The verdict, read out by the chief justice, added, "This judgement shall also extend to other convicted persons who, however, did not prefer any appeal. This decision shall, resultantly restore the appellants' and all other convicts' dignity, reaffirm their innocence, and thereby, put an

end to the unwarranted proceedings initiated against them".

"All appellants on bail shall necessarily stand discharged from their respective bail bonds," the apex court said, ordering authorities concerned to communicate and send down the records immediately.

Detailed observations will be available when the complete verdict is released.

The top court delivered the judgement after holding hearings on two appeals filed by Khaleda and one each by Saleemul Huq alias Kazi Kamal and businessman Sharafuddin Ahmed challenging the HC verdict.

"There was no merit in the case. Sadly, the High Court Division had extended Khaleda Zia's five year jail sentence to 10 years. ... The High Court verdict was given on the fascist government's instructions," Khaleda and Tarique's lawyer Zainul Abedin said.

The court fixed January 19 for a hearing on a seven-day remand prayer sought for questioning Laila.

ACC Assistant Director Md Ismail, the investigation officer of the case, produced Laila before the court.

The case was filed against Laila, former chairman of Narsingdi's Raipura Upazila Parishad, on January 12 on charges of acquiring illegal wealth of over Tk 13 crore and concealing information about her assets worth over Tk 1.53 crore to the ACC.

Four other graft cases were filed

against Matiur, Laila, their son Ahmed Taufiqur Rahman, daughter Farzana Rahman Ipsita, and Matiur's second wife Shammi Akhter Shewly.

Matiur's other son, Musfiqur Rahman Ifat, gained widespread attention last year after a viral video showed him purchasing a goat for Tk 15 lakh, sparking public interest in the family's extravagant lifestyle, including expensive cars, properties, and resorts.

Later on June 23, 2024, the ACC began an investigation against Matiur. A court then issued a travel ban on Matiur and two of his family members.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit ordered the seizure of bank accounts, mobile financial services (MFS) accounts, and stock market beneficial owners (BO) accounts in the names of Matiur and his family members at that time.

Matiur was also removed from the NBR and added to the Internal Revenue Service. He was removed from the government-nominated director position at state-owned Sonali Bank as well.

On July 11 last year, the court ordered the attachment of all moveable and immovable properties of Matiur and his family members.

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The US, China and India are very important, so Bangladesh will maintain balanced relations with all of them for national interest, Hossain added.

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