

The audience is in for a lot of surprises in ‘Jinn 3’: SHAJAL NOOR

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

After filming for 25 days across various locations, including Dhaka and several spots beyond the capital, Shajal Noor headed to Khulna on March 4 to wrap up the final phase of *Jinn 3*. The actor shared that he had been suffering from a high fever, yet he joined the team because the film needs to be completed soon. “The shoot needs to be finished on time since our team is dedicated to getting the film released this upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr.” This Kamruzzaman Roman directorial project is the third instalment in the *Jinn* franchise, produced by Jaaz Multimedia. Although Shajal Noor appeared in the first film of the franchise, he did not appear in the second film. However, the actor will be seen leading this third instalment. “I can assure the audience that they will be amazed by the film. It may primarily belong to the horror genre, but it is absolutely entertaining. This time

around, the story also includes a blend of action and romance,” he added. Shajal, moreover, explained that during their 25-day shoot schedule, every member of the unit began working at six in the morning and continued working long hours. “Everyone is putting a lot of effort into this project for long hours, but we are thoroughly enjoying it,” shared the actor. Commenting on his role in *Jinn 3*, Shajal said, “Portraying this character has been quite demanding, particularly during the horror sequences, which proved to be especially difficult to shoot. Having said that, the audience will be in for a lot of surprises in this film.” Nusraat Faria will star opposite Shajal in this film. Speaking about his co-star, he stated, “I am truly stunned by her commitment and perseverance in this project. She is a highly supportive co-star.”



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘Late Night Comedy Show 5’

Get ready for a night of laughter as Naveed’s Comedy Club presents *Late Night Comedy Show 5*. Featuring some of Dhaka’s finest comedians—Shawon Mujumdar, Tareq Mahmud, Riaz Uddin, Bipro, Tahsin Khan, Yamin Khan, Alamin, and Tonoy—this special late-night show promises non-stop hilarity. Audiences can enjoy a stand-up comedy experience like no other, with food and soft beverages available on-site.

DATE: THURSDAY | MARCH 20
TIME: 11:59PM

VENUE: NAVEED’S COMEDY CLUB,
HOUSE 2, ROAD 90, GULSHAN-2



Nidra and Prantar to reunite on screen with ‘Opekkha’



Following a significant break from collaborating, Nidra Neha and Prantar Dastidar are set to share the screen once again in *Opekkha*, a drama directed by Preeti Dutta. The film is set to premiere on March 26 on the Purnota E-Tainment YouTube channel. The duo first garnered attention with Goutam Koiri’s *Antonagar*, a Chorki original that marked their acting debuts and sparked a real-life connection. Just months after the series premiered in June 2023, the duo tied the knot. Since then, they’ve worked on ads but not in dramas or series. *Opekkha* marks their on-screen reunion. In *Opekkha*, Prantar portrays a first-year university student who is exceptionally compassionate to others. In the process of helping someone, he encounters a girl, and their connection gradually strengthens.

Allen Swapan to return in new season



Shihab Shaheen’s much-awaited series *Myself Allen Swapan 2* will be releasing this Eid-ul-Fitr on Chorki. The announcement video shows Allen Swapan in his signature safari suit, smiling amid scattered cash. Referring to the Tk 400 crore mystery from the first season, a voice in the Chittagonian dialect then demands, “Where is my 400 crore taka?” to which he replies, “Because of you all, I had to come out. I am Shamsur Rahman Swapan, aka Allen Swapan.” The first season of *Myself Allen Swapan* revolves around Swapan’s transformation from a drug dealer in Chattogram to a key figure in money laundering. In the upcoming season, his operations are likely to expand, and his methods may evolve as well.

Alia Bhatt to make her Cannes debut this year



Alia Bhatt has attained global attention with her striking appearances at the Met Gala. In 2024, she made her first-ever appearance at Paris Fashion Week. Now, the actress is set to debut at another prestigious event—the Cannes Film Festival. During a recent press conference, Alia said she would attend the Cannes Film Festival this year and shared her excitement. However, she kept her response brief, stating, “I am looking forward to it.” The 78th Cannes International Film Festival is scheduled to be held from May 13 to 24, 2025. Notable Indian celebrities who have been regular attendees include Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Sonam Kapoor, and Deepika Padukone.

NEWS

HELP app to fight

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“I strongly dislike the word ‘rape’. I request you not to use it. Instead, use ‘violence against women’ or ‘repression of women’. Even the law is called the ‘Women and Children Repression [Prevention] Act’. Let’s avoid words that sound unpleasant,” he said. He also urged the media to broadcast such incidents in a ‘reasonable’ way and refrain from repeatedly highlighting these to avoid creating panic or fear among the public. Sajjat expressed concern over the rising incidents of harassment against women in the country. “However, the number of cases reported in the media is only a fraction of what actually happens. Many cases go unreported due to social and familial pressures,” he said. “Domestic workers also face various forms of abuse, but 95 percent of these incidents go unreported,” he added. He suggested that if the app could directly report incidents to police stations, it could serve as a First Information Report (FIR), enabling law enforcement to take legal action and initiate investigations. Sajjat also stressed the need to expand the initiative beyond the capital, assuring the project of DMP’s support if required. Speaking at the launch, Fawzia

Moslem, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, emphasised the need to highlight gender discrimination and harassment issues. “To eliminate rape and violence, community involvement is essential. This app can play a significant role, and Mahila Parishad will extend its support,” she said. “In the media, women should be portrayed as human beings, not just as only women or victims,” she added. Mainul Ahsan Faisal, executive director of Switch Bangladesh, said that community awareness is a key part of the initiative, with school and college students being engaged to support the cause. As part of the project, QR codes will be installed in buses on the Mohammadpur-Sayedabad route, allowing women to quickly access help. Discussions with transport owners are also underway to ensure the app’s effectiveness. BJC Member Secretary Elias Hossain said, “The alarming rise in sexual harassment incidents is concerning. Besides voicing protests, we have sought to offer a solution through the HELP app.” The event was presided over by BJC Chairman Rezwanaul Haque and moderated by BJC Executive Coordinator Shahnaz Sharmeen.

CPB raises black flag

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The activists gathered near Central Shaheed Minar in the morning and were about to begin the march. Around the same time, activists of Inquilab Mancha, an organisation formed after the fall of Sheikh Hasina regime, gathered near Shahbagh and began marching towards Shaheed Minar, but were stopped by police. Eventually both parties relented. The leftist student organisations held a brief rally at the Shaheed Minar. Raihan Uddin, general secretary of Bangladesh Samajtantrik Chhatra Front, demanded removal of the home adviser, justice for the July-August killings, and punishment to people who attacked mosques, temples, and shrines. Mahir Shahhriar Reza, president of a faction of Chhatra Union, said, “Although we gathered here for a pre-

announced programme, we decided to call it off considering the law and order situation We faced threats, attacks, and abductions in the last 16 years. We are not afraid of threats. We cancelled our event because many of the groups that collaborated with the Awami League are now trying to deteriorate the law and order situation.” On the other hand, Sharif Osman Bin Hadi, convener of Inquilab Mancha, said, “It is evident that the [other] gathering is part of a conspiracy.” Abdullah Al Jaber, member secretary of Inquilab Mancha, said, “Those who gathered at the Shaheed Minar today had not done so in the last 16 years.” In the name of demonstrations against rape, they intend to undermine Bangladesh’s image at a time when the UN secretary-general is in town, he told The Daily Star.

4 more land in jail

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Mahbubur Rahman, inspector (investigation) of Kahaloo Police Station. Police are trying to arrest the accused, who went into hiding after the incident. The girls are now undergoing treatment at a hospital. In a separate incident, a court in Bogura sent a 33-year-old man to jail on Friday in a case filed over the rape of his 28-year-old niece at Shahjahanpur upazila, said Shajahanpur Police Station OC Wadud Alam. The victim, who is mentally challenged, is undergoing treatment at a hospital. In Munshiganj, a man was sent to jail yesterday for stabbing a woman after failing to rape her. The accused, Lyon Fakir, a resident of Sreenagar upazila, forcibly entered into the victim’s house at around 8:30pm on Friday night and tried to rape her. As the victim started shouting, Lyon stabbed and fled the scene. Later, police arrested Lyon on the same night following a case filed by the victim, said Sreenagar Police Station OC Shakil Ahmed. The accused was produced before a court yesterday that sent him to jail, the OC added. In Feni, a 55-year-old man was sent to jail yesterday for attempting to rape an 11-year-old child. The accused is Kamal Uddin, a grocery shop owner at Sonagazi upazila, said Sonagazi Police Station OC Byazid Akan. In Jamalpur, a 50-year-old man was sued yesterday over attempting to rape a mentally challenged teenage girl. The accused is Lal Miah, a rickshaw puller of Jamalpur Sadar upazila, said Jamalpur Sadar Police Station OC Abu Faisal Md Atiq. In Barguna, a man was arrested early yesterday for attempting to rape a 10-year-old girl. The accused is Moslem, 50, a street vendor in the district town, said Md Abdul Halim, additional superintendent of police in Barguna. In Jashore, a man was sent to jail yesterday for attempting to rape a woman.

The accused is Alauddin Sardar, 50, of Jhikargachha upazila, said Jhikargachha Police Station OC Bablur Rahman Khan. [Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report.]

Putin will have to ‘come to table’

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accept the proposal for a ceasefire, and stop making statements aimed at “delaying the process”. The French president also demanded that Moscow stop its “acts of violence” in Ukraine. Germany on Friday likewise criticised Putin’s response to the US-proposed ceasefire in Ukraine as “at best a delaying tactic”. US Secretary of State Marco

Rubio said Friday he was “cautiously optimistic” about reaching a truce, but acknowledged there was “a lot of work that remains to be done”. Starmer has said he welcomes any offer of support for the coalition, raising the prospect that some countries could contribute logistics or surveillance. But Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni reiterated after the call, which she joined, that Italy’s “participation in a possible military force on the

ground is not envisaged”. British Commonwealth partners Canada, Australia and New Zealand have been involved in early talks and dialled into the summit. Nato chief Mark Rutte and European Union chiefs von der Leyen and Antonio Costa also took part, along with the leaders of Germany, Spain, Portugal, Latvia, Romania, Turkey and the Czech Republic among others.

Shady firm took Tk 950cr from Islami Bank

FROM PAGE 1
office. When approached, he refused to provide any details about the company’s operations or how it had managed to secure such a large loan. Aminul denied any connection with Market Master Analyzer, saying if any of Nabil Group’s 13,000 employees or one of his relatives takes a loan, it is not his responsibility. He asked the reporter to speak to the bank about the matter. **BANK OFFICIALS’ ROLES** Islami Bank has become a glaring example of how a once-reputed financial institution was systematically exploited by influential groups. A recent central bank inspection report reveals that S Alam Group and its close business associate, Nabil Group, took out a staggering 87 percent of the total loans from Islami Bank. Most of these funds were allegedly siphoned through more than 100 shadow companies. Central bank officials said if proper due diligence had been conducted, Market Master Analyzer would never have qualified for such a loan. Mohammad Mozahidul Islam, the executive vice president of Islami Bank, was heading the Gulshan-1 branch when the loans were disbursed. He has since been transferred to the Foreign Exchange Corporate Branch in Dilkusha.

When contacted, he said he had just followed the bank management’s instructions and declined to comment further. Three senior Islami Bank officials agreed to speak to The Daily Star on the condition of anonymity. They said Islami Bank’s managing director, Mohammed Monirul Molla, personally instructed the branch manager over the phone to approve the loan immediately. As a result, the loan was processed hastily, bypassing standard verification procedures. The Daily Star attempted to contact Monirul multiple times via phone and WhatsApp messages, but he did not respond. This correspondent also visited Islami Bank’s head office in Motijheel several times over the past month to meet Monirul but was unsuccessful. Nazrul Islam, head of brand and communication at Islami Bank, was asked to facilitate an appointment with the managing director for comment. The spokesman said the managing director had not met with the media since the political changeover in August last year. Monirul was among 58 people prosecuted by the Anti-Corruption Commission in December last year for allegedly embezzling Tk 1,092 crore through fraudulent loan schemes. The other accused included former Islami Bank chairman

Ahsanul Alam and members of the S Alam family. Meanwhile, Nabil Group is among 10 leading business groups under investigation by a joint task force. The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit has frozen the bank accounts of Nabil Group’s Aminul and his family members as part of the investigation. **Hours after detention** FROM PAGE 12 handed him over to us on March 11 as his name was found in a murder case. We produced him before the court the same day, but he got bail.” The suspect was undergoing treatment at a hospital, from where a DB team detained him, he told this paper. Contacted, the Inter Services Public Relations Directorate (ISPR) said, “It is not our issue as he was detained by an army team a long time ago, handed over to the police, and subsequently granted bail.” A local trader from Mohammadpur area said Ezaz was a close associate of top criminal Emon and was involved in different criminal activities. Victim’s father, Shah Alam, refuted this. “My son completed O-level and A-level and also completed LLB. He was supposed to go to the UK for higher studies after Eid, but now everything is finished.”