



## Mamunur Rashid's 'Tumba O Protibeshi' to stage this Eid



Theatre legend Mamunur Rashid is set to stage his play *Tumba O Protibeshi* at Riddhi Gallery, Mirpur-II, during Eid. The production, written, directed, and performed by Rashid himself, will be held on Eid day and the following two days. Speaking to Prothom Alo yesterday, Mamunur Rashid shared, "There aren't many cultural activities in the Mirpur area. I want to connect with the audience here, which is why we're staging the play in Mirpur."

Produced by Bangla Theatre, the story revolves around Rahat Chowdhury, a retired man in his sixties, whose unexpected bond with a neighbour's dog, Tumba, leads to emotional upheaval and solitude. Rashid noted the lack of cultural activities in Mirpur as a key reason for choosing the venue. The play's assistant director is Shamima Shawkat, with stage design by Hashim Masud, lighting design by Thandu Raihan, and music direction by Muktaneel. The sound projection is handled by Sourav Roy, costume design by Salma Khan, and voice narration by Arif Hossain, while the publication design is by Apu Mehdi. The venue is easily accessible, located near the Mirpur-II Metro Station.

## SHAKIB KHAN's two films lined up for Eid release

Superstar Shakib Khan is likely to have two of his films—*Borbaad* and *Antaratra*—hit theatres this upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr.

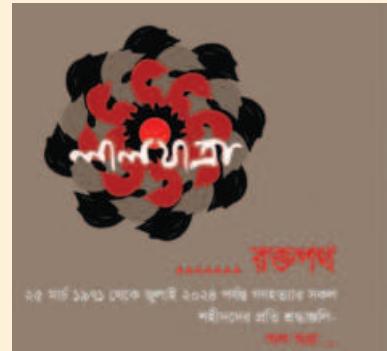
After much delay, *Borbaad* has finally been submitted to the Bangladesh Film Certification Board for approval, confirmed producer Shahreen Akter Sumi.

Meanwhile, *Antaratra*, directed by Wajed Ali Sumon and produced by Sohani Hossain under Taranga Entertainment, has already received censor clearance.

Starring Shakib Khan opposite Darshana Banik, *Antaratra* was initially slated for release in 2021 but got shelved for unknown reasons.

Directed by Mehdi Hassan Hridoy, *Borbaad* features a star-studded cast including Idhika Paul, Jishnu Sengupta, Misha Sawdagar, Shahiduzzaman Selim, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Intekhab Dinar, and Mamunur Rashid, among others.

### WHAT'S THE HAPS?



## 'Lal Jatra'

Pioneering theatre troupe Prachyanat's annual *Lal Jatra* procession will begin from Shoparjito Shadhinota intersection and end at Fuller Road's Smriti Chirontont Chittar. Led by theatre artists and professionals, the procession commemorates the martyrs of March 25, 1971, and protests against genocides worldwide, including in Palestine.

**Date:** Today (Tuesday) | March 25, 2025

**Time:** 4pm onwards

**Venue:** University of Dhaka

## Ed Sheeran urges UK government to invest in music education

Singer-songwriter Ed Sheeran has penned an open letter to the UK government, urging a €250 million investment in music education to counter years of underfunding.

The letter, addressed to Labour leader Keir Starmer, was co-signed by major music icons including Elton John, Coldplay, Central Cee, Harry Styles, Stormzy, and Robert Plant, urging authorities to prioritise the future of British music.

Launched in January, the Ed Sheeran Foundation outlined five key areas requiring government support—school music funding, teacher training, grassroots venue support, music apprenticeships, and a more inclusive curriculum.

Endorsed by hundreds of music industry professionals, the letter also called for a cross-departmental task force to prevent music education from being sidelined, especially in disadvantaged areas.

Sheeran previously criticised the Conservative government for cutting arts funding in schools.



# NEWS

## Hannan Masud

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chased the NCP supporters on the road.

This led to a clash during which brick chunks were thrown. Hannan was hurt along with four others.

Lutfullah Majid Nishan, joint general secretary of Hatiya unit BNP, alleged that Krishak Dal convener Abdur Rob was assaulted earlier in the evening, prompting their protest rally. He claimed that the confrontation was "not intentional".

Despite repeated attempts, Hannan could not be reached for comments.

OC Azmal said it was the weekly bazaar yesterday. The incident disrupted traffic and trade at Jahajmara Bazar.

"At one point, locals asked them to get out of the way. When Hannan and his supporters did not move, BNP leaders and activists gathered people and attacked them..." he said

## Five cops held

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of Police Zedan Al Musa, and Mainul Islam, deputy commissioner (DB) of the RMP.

The arrestees were taken to a Bogura court around 5:30pm and subsequently taken to jail, according to Md Saidul Islam, officer-in-charge of Dhunat police, and Court Inspector Mosaddek Hossain.

According to the law enforcers, the five RMP DB personnel used an unauthorised rented microbus to abduct two men – Rabbi Sheikh and Jahangir – from Dighalkandi village in Dhunat upazila on Sunday night. They took the victims to the Mirzapur area of Sherpur upazila, accusing them of gambling, before demanding a ransom of Tk 12 lakh from the

## Hamza adds spice

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Chhetri from retirement. With six goals in his last five games against Bangladesh, Chhetri's return signals just how seriously India are taking this encounter.

At the pre-match press conference, both head coaches acknowledged their opponent's key player while remaining confident in their own squad's abilities.

"I think it is more exciting having Hamza and having Sunil, but it's really going to be a competitive match, and it's not only about them," said Bangladesh coach Javier Cabrera, determined to make things difficult for their higher-ranked opponents.

India coach Manolo Marquez also weighed in: "I think Hamza is a good player. He played in the Premier League, though he is now playing in the Championship, and his team was promoted. Obviously, he is a good

victims' families.

The families paid Tk 2 lakh in cash and an additional Tk 1.30 lakh through mobile banking apps before the victims were released early yesterday.

Inspector Monowaruzzaman, in charge of Kundarhat Police Station, told The Daily Star, "The victims' families chased after the microbus on motorcycles and informed a patrol team from the Kundarhat Police Outpost in Nandigram upazila. The team

intercepted the accused in the Birgram area of Shajahanpur upazila. During the arrest, Tk 2 lakh in ransom money, a walkie talkie, several sets of DB police jackets, mobile phones, handcuffs, and the microbus were seized."

Contacted, RMP's Deputy Commissioner Mainul Islam said, "SI Shahin Mohammad Anu and the

footballer, and it is good for Asian football."

However, Marquez admitted he was unsure of the impact Hamza would have on the game. At 27, Hamza has played as both a defensive midfielder and right-back for Leicester City and Sheffield United, but Cabrera has kept his exact role for tonight's match under wraps. This tactical mystery only adds to the anticipation.

Bangladesh captain Jamal Bhuiyan is also relishing the challenge, believing his team can go toe-to-toe with India.

"Honestly, we are not thinking about India's ranking. Our focus is to win the match. The coach mentioned that this has been the best squad so far. The inclusion of Hamza is a big boost for us, and our target is to secure three points," said Jamal, adding that the team's mentality has shifted – they now approach games with a renewed level of belief.

four constables were present at the office at 8:00pm last night [Sunday], although they had no scheduled duty. They were supposed to be on duty this morning, but they were absent. I later learned of the incident from Bogura's police superintendent.

"One of the constables, Bashir Ali, was not even assigned to the RMP's Detective Branch. He had been transferred to the Rajshahi University Police Outpost on the 19th of this month."

Asked why they travelled to Bogura from Rajshahi to commit the crimes, he said, "As far as I know, a DB constable from Dhunat upazila, named Wahab, was working with our DB police. They went to Dhunat based on information he provided. Constable Wahab is currently in our custody."

Fasibaad er Oboshan" (Harmony of the New Year, End of Fascism).

Talking to the media, Farooki said, "This year, the festival will be celebrated over two days nationally, including Chaitra Sangkranti with the Mangal Shobhajatra on Pahela Baishakh."

Many cultural organisations representing different ethnicities will participate in the fest, Farooki said, adding, "This time, it will be bigger, better, and more vibrant."

## Helmeted

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Several cases, including for murder, have been filed against them in Chattogram following the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina-led government.

Of them, Firoz, Farid, Helal, and Fazle Karim have already been arrested. But none of the arms used in the attacks could be recovered. Photos show that the arms used include AK-22 rifle, pistols, and shotguns.

An investigator said they found that when AL cadres went on a shooting spree, police abetted them from behind to cover their actions.

He said that they recorded accounts of witnesses. "We visited the sites and found important evidence that will support the trial," he told The Daily Star, wishing anonymity.

This newspaper reported on July 16 that AL leaders Helal led the armed cadres during a clash in the city's Muradpur area. On his instructions, at least five people started shooting on demonstrators, killing three people, including a Chhatra Dal leader. Chhatra League leader Nurulwas also seen alongside him.

On July 18, AL leaders and activists were also seen carrying firearms in the port city's Bahaddarhat area during clashes that killed four people, including a Chittagong University student.

During the violence, police used sound grenades, shotguns, and teargas canisters. As the violence escalated in the afternoon, BGB personnel joined.

In the evening, when a traffic police box in Bahaddarhat was set on fire, live ammunition was used on protesters, resulting in several more deaths. It could not be ascertained whether the casualties were from police firing or the BGB, said the ICT investigators.

Contacted, police claimed they only fired shots from shotguns at that time and denied responsibility for the killings.

On August 4, AL men carried out repeated armed attacks on protesters in the Chattogram's city New Market area.

Saibal Das Suman, then Jamal Khan ward councillor, was seen leading a group of cadres in a show of force at Kazir Dewri. The entire New Market area turned into a battleground that day. Another then councillor Abdus Sabur Liton was seen wielding a shotgun, according to the ICT investigators.

Contacted, police claimed they only

## UK MPs suspect

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could be hindered by an apparent smear campaign against the BB governor, including articles published on a website called International Policy Digest by individuals with no verifiable journalistic background.

The Guardian found that the authors' images were stock photos.

The emails, sent to the 47 strong APPG, by a sender claiming to be a journalist, sent links to a website International Policy Digest, featuring articles about apparent displays of wealth by Mansur's daughter and questioning why she was not being investigated.

Mansur, who previously lived and worked in Washington, said he believed that people under investigation for money laundering were trying to "diminish my reputation and target me in various ways", reported The Guardian.

Mansur dismissed the claims, stating that his daughter, a US citizen, had little connection to Bangladesh, the report said.

One APPG member Rupa Huq received an email from a UK public relations firm, Palatine Communications, also linking to International Policy Digest, it said.

The message suggested that if Mansur was willing to "impugn the integrity of Tulip Siddiqi," he and his family should also be scrutinised.

Mansur said he had never made any comments about Siddiqi.

He is a key figure in the transitional government led by Muhammad Yunus, whose ACC accused Siddiqi, along with her family members, amid an investigation into a 2013 deal with Russia that allegedly overinflated the

price of a nuclear power plant, the report said.

Rupa described the email as "highly unusual" and compared it to previous attempts to intimidate MPs speaking about Bangladesh in parliament. She said both instances appeared to be efforts to "interfere with parliament and MPs' normal work".

APPG members have reportedly referred the emails to parliamentary cyber security advisers and the parliamentary foreign affairs committee.

"If it is the case that this communication is an attempt to mislead UK politicians when it comes to a very serious corruption scandal, then I think we should be very concerned," said APPG member Phil Brickell.

I urge the relevant parliamentary authorities to investigate thoroughly – we must get to the bottom of who paid for this, and why, in order to understand how we can best protect ourselves."

A spokesperson for Palatine Communications said, "Our client instructions are confidential. In sending the email in question, we acted on our own initiative. We have nothing to do with, and know nothing of, the authorship of this article, but nor did we ever claim it represented the gospel truth."

Like numerous articles from many media outlets, it raises legitimate concerns about the current situation in Bangladesh that we believe are worthy of MPs' consideration."

A spokesperson for International Policy Digest said the person who had actually written the articles had "wished to remain anonymous", adding that they were confident that the content was "fairly accurate".

## Declare AL a 'criminal organisation'

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women, youth, minorities, and marginalised communities lead from the front".

Addressing the diplomats, he said, "We believe that South Asia needs relationships built on dignity, justice, mutual respect, and protection of national interests – where no country feels dominated and every nation's sovereignty is respected."

He also said that justice remains a central demand of the party because thousands were killed or permanently maimed by the Sheikh Hasina regime.

Addressing another iftar event in

Narayanganj virtually, Nahid demanded that the Awami League be declared a "criminal organisation" and its registration be cancelled for being responsible for "the killings during the July uprising".

If the trial of Awami fascism is not ensured, there is no guarantee that we will not witness another dictatorship or fascism. We demand a visible trial before the elections."

He also said a conspiracy is underway to rehabilitate AL. "We are seeing various political parties supporting the old arrangements and showing reluctance towards reforms."

## Ethnic groups to feature

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there has been no change in the timing of the Mangal Shobhajatra procession compared to previous years.

"There was no discussion during the meeting about changing the name of the Mangal Shobhajatra," he stated.

DU Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed said, "There will be one central committee for the celebration of Pahela Baishakh. There will also four sub-committees within this central

committee."

DU Pro-VC Sayema Haque Bidisha has been appointed as the convener of this central committee, while Faculty of Fine Arts Dean Azharul Islam Sheikh will serve as the member secretary of the committee, according to Proctor Saifuddin Ahmed.

Bangladesh's national women football team will also join the procession.

This year's theme of Mangal Shobhajatra is "Noboborshor Oikyatan,