



## 'Borbaad' leads, 'Daagi' leaves a mark

SHARMIN JOYA

As the film industry gears up for festival seasons, cinema hall owners eagerly anticipate the most hyped time of the year. This Eid-ul-Fitr, six films hit the silver screen: *Borbaad*, *Daagi*, *Jongli*, *Chokkor 302*, *Jinn 3*, and *Antaratma*.

To gauge their performances, The Daily Star reached out to cinema halls nationwide as the four-day screening period continues.

At Star Cineplex, both *Borbaad*, starring Shakib Khan, and *Daagi*, featuring Afran Nisho, received equal screen allocations. Star Cineplex's Senior Manager of Media & Marketing, Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, stated, "It's too early to determine a clear winner as audiences are still on vacation. However, both films have received positive responses. Once the holidays end, we can be sure about it. Also, the word of mouth will significantly impact their success, much like *Toofan* and *Priyotoma*. We're already seeing a buzz around *Borbaad*. The songs and dialogues play a great role as well."

At Jamuna Blockbuster, *Borbaad* leads

with six shows, while *Daagi* follows with four. Md Mahbubur Rahman, Assistant Manager of Marketing, confirmed, "All screenings of *Borbaad* and *Daagi* are running housefull. Additionally, *Jongli*, starring Siam Ahmed, has been well received in daytime slots, though morning shows remain underwhelming."

Meanwhile, *Chokkor 302*, featuring Mosharraf Karim, has only two screenings. *Jinn 3*, initially delayed due to content availability issues, is set to release on Friday, March 4. However, *Antaratma* has struggled due to inadequate promotional efforts, according to Mahbubur.



Screening of "Borbaad" at Grand Sylhet Cineplex.



Afran Nisho graces the screening of "Daagi".



Siam Ahmed at the screening of "Jongli".

Mirza Abdul Khaleque, Managing Director of Lion Cinemas, reported that *Borbaad* currently runs seven shows, with plans to increase by two, while *Daagi* has three, set to rise to four.

"These two films have clearly stood out, while others are performing at an average level. *Jinn 3* attracts its loyal franchise audience, however, *Chokkor 302* has fared poorly, with only two ticket sales for one of its screenings."

Single-screen theatres reflect a similar trend. Modhumita Hall, a long-standing theatre in Dhaka, is exclusively showing *Borbaad* with four housefull screenings daily. Managing Director Iftekhar Uddin Naushad expressed satisfaction, stating, "Shakib Khan's films have a distinct appeal, and *Borbaad* has outshone all other Eid releases. Depending on the demand, we will introduce *Daagi* and other films."

Beyond the capital, Cinemascope in Narayanganj, a 35-seat single-screen hall, is running four housefull shows of *Borbaad* daily. Executive Director Robi affirmed, "The response is excellent. We will continue screening *Borbaad* as long as demand remains before considering other films."

Grand Sylhet Cineplex, located in a five-star hotel in Sylhet, has been screening *Borbaad* three times daily since Eid. Robin Saha from the cineplex said, "Daytime shows are doing well. Given the increasing demand, we plan to add a late-night screening and may also introduce *Daagi* and *Jongli* based on audience preferences."

As the Eid 2025 film season unfolds, *Borbaad* remains the clear frontrunner, while *Daagi* emerges as a strong contender. *Jongli* and *Jinn 3* are performing moderately, whereas *Chokkor 302* and *Antaratma* struggle to compete. The coming weeks will determine how these films sustain their momentum in the ever-competitive box office race.

## Val Kilmer, star of 'Batman' and 'Top Gun', dies



Veteran Hollywood actor Val Kilmer has passed away at 65 after a prolonged battle with throat cancer. The New York Times confirmed his death on Wednesday, April 1.

Kilmer gained fame as Iceman in *Top Gun* (1986) and later played Batman in *Batman Forever* (1995). His acclaimed roles included Jim Morrison in *The Doors*, Doc Holliday in *Tombstone*, and key performances in *Heat* and *The Prince of Egypt*.

His final on-screen appearance was in *Top Gun: Maverick* (2022), which incorporated his illness into the storyline. The 2021 documentary *Val*, narrated by his son, chronicled his life and career. Over the course of his career, Kilmer's films earned more than \$3.5 billion globally.



## Sam Mendes to release four Beatles biopics in 2028

Acclaimed Hollywood director Sam Mendes is set to release four separate Beatles biopics in April 2028, each focusing on a different band member.

Titled *The Beatles – A Four-Film Cinematic Event*, the films will star Paul Mescal as Paul McCartney, Joseph Quinn as George Harrison, Barry Keoghan as Ringo Starr, and Harris Dickinson as John Lennon.

Mendes, calling it the "first binge-able theatrical experience," aims to present the band's story through four unique perspectives. This marks the first narrative film granted full rights to the Beatles' music catalog.

Sony Pictures Chairman Tom Rothman compared the project's scale to *Avatar*, highlighting its cinematic ambition. The year-long production is expected to be one of the industry's most significant undertakings.

## NEWS

### Certain groups misrepresenting BNP's stance on

FROM PAGE 12

"The current demand for reforms was originally put forward by the BNP," he claimed. "The proposals submitted by the reform commissions are not different from the BNP's 31-point outline."

"We have clearly stated our stance on constitutional reforms. There are certain issues that have already been settled, and we do not wish to interfere with them."

The BNP leader also dismissed Indian media reports about minority persecution in Bangladesh, calling them outright falsehoods.

"You all know well that initially, some injustices against minority communities were reported in Thakurgaon. But what has happened in the last few months? Yet, if you look at the Indian media's narrative, you'll see that they portray severe injustices against the minorities in Bangladesh," he said.

On law and order, Fakhru said that the situation across the country remains largely the same.

"A new government came to power after a mass uprising. Under the previous government, the police

administration was completely subservient to the Awami League. They did whatever the ruling party instructed, and as a result, the confidence of the police declined. In many places, they are unable to take necessary actions accordingly," he said.

Regarding actions against party members accused of various crimes, Fakhru asserted that the BNP does not condone such activities.

"Some party members have engaged in wrongdoing, and we have already taken action against them. In some cases, we have dissolved committees and expelled the leaders involved in such incidents," he said.

Fakhru dismissed concerns about the possibility of a conflict between political parties regarding trials of people from the previous regime, reforms, and the election.

"There is no fear of conflict due to differing opinions. The beauty of democracy is the diversity of thought. Where will democracy be if all political parties share the same views? Different parties will have different opinions, and the people will decide which is the best for

them," he said.

Fakhru pointed out the global rise of right-wing movements and their impact on democracy.

"Even the UN secretary-general, during his visit to Bangladesh, stated that democracy is facing a crisis. Right-wing and authoritarian forces are on the rise worldwide, and democracy is in decline. But despite these challenges, democracy remains the best system for governance and good administration," he added.

Addressing concerns over the return of authoritarian rule, Fakhru said, "If that happens, it will create a situation similar to what the Awami League experienced. When a party becomes autocratic, the people ultimately overthrow it. So, it is not democracy that is at fault."

He reiterated BNP's stance on the caretaker government system, saying that it is the best mechanism to conduct elections considering Bangladesh's reality and political culture. "Without this system, authoritarianism and fascism – similar to that under the Awami League – will prevail."

### A different kind of Eid for party leaders

FROM PAGE 12

A BNP policymaker revealed that nationwide iftar gatherings were held during Ramadan to strengthen intra-party ties, anticipating greater political challenges ahead.

Many BNP leaders celebrated Eid in their constituencies, conducted mass outreach, and sent Eid gifts to injured protesters of the uprising, families of those killed, and victims of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings. BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman also distributed gifts through the Ziaur Rahman Foundation.

In Khulna, BNP's Central Student Affairs Secretary and potential Khulna-3 candidate, Rakibul Islam Bakul, distributed Eid gifts to the underprivileged, visited multiple wards, exchanged greetings, and urged supporters to stay active for the

elections.

Jamaat leaders, emerging from nearly 15 years of political exile, were particularly active during the Ramadan and Eid holidays. They conducted regular public interaction events.

Jamaat Ameer Shafiqur Rahman said that the nation was finally free from oppression.

Jamaat seems to be campaigning for polls. It organised iftar gatherings, distributing Eid gifts to poor and underprivileged, and meeting people. Many Jamaat leaders celebrated Eid in their constituencies, while others performed Umrah in Saudi Arabia.

To boost visibility, its potential candidates for the next national polls engaged in public outreach by putting up posters, banners, and festoons. In constituencies where the leaders were less known, they made

extra efforts to connect with the electorate.

Even in constituencies of prominent party leaders, campaign materials such as banners and posters were widely displayed.

Nearly all key leaders of the NCP celebrated Eid in their ancestral home, utilising the holidays to connect with the people.

NCP Chief Organiser (North) Sarjis Alam's grand motorcade entry into Panchagarh on March 24 sparked widespread criticism.

Member Secretary Akhter Hossen led a procession of 200 rickshaw vans in Rangpur on March 27.

The leaders of the newly-formed party also visited families of injured and martyred protesters of the July uprising, distributed gifts, and strengthened grassroots connections in apparent preparation for the upcoming elections.

### 'Made with honest intention'

FROM PAGE 12

"We can bring it to our purpose for setting up factories and so on. From Bangladesh, you can go anywhere you want. The ocean is in our backyard. So, this is the opportunity that you want to take," he said.

A number of Indian leaders, however, reacted sharply to Yunus's comments.

In a statement posted on X on Tuesday, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the remarks by Yunus were "offensive" and highlighted the ongoing vulnerability associated with India's strategic "Chicken's Neck" corridor.

He focused on developing more robust railway and road networks both underneath and around the Chicken's Neck corridor, warning that Yunus's remarks reflected broader geopolitical ambitions that India could not ignore.

Pradyot Manikya, chief of the Tipra Motha Party and titular King from Tripura, urged India to consider securing its access to the sea by pursuing a more forceful approach, controversially suggesting that India contemplate breaking up Bangladesh in order to access the sea directly.

He suggested that the indigenous communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh, including the Tripuri, Garo, Khasi and Chakma people, should be supported in the quest for a strategic sea route for India, reports India TV.

Some Indian scholars said the remarks by Yunus were provocative.

Asked about Bangladesh's position on Indian leaders' reactions, Rahman said Yunus had not made this comment for the first time; he made similar comments in 2012.

He also referred to the then-Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, who in 2023 had spoken of a vision of creating an industrial value chain connecting Bangladesh and Northeast India, which was known as BIG-B or the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt.

"I had earlier said connectivity can unleash the potentials of the region, especially for those who find it difficult to have access to the sea. We will not impose connectivity on anyone. We are not in that position. If anybody accepts, well. What can we do if it is not accepted? We have nothing to do. We can only say that we are willing to provide connectivity for the equitable benefit of all."

### Three killed in mob beatings

FROM PAGE 12

Pallabi Police Station Officer-in-Charge Nazrul Islam said the army handed Riyad over to police around 2:30am after he was beaten on suspicion of being a mugger. "I told them [army members] to file a case, but they did not."

Asked who assaulted Riyad, he said, "The public."

An autopsy conducted at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital revealed numerous marks from his waist to his legs, morgue sources said.

Meanwhile, Pallabi police have filed a case against unidentified individuals.

In Narsingdi, two brothers were killed by a mob beating in the Ghorashal municipal area on Monday night.

The victims were Rakib, 25, and Sakib, 20, from Palash upazila, reports our local correspondent.

According to police and locals, one Himel, 23, was beaten earlier in the day for allegedly attempting to steal an autorickshaw battery in the Kuruitoli area of Bhagdi. He was later released.

In the afternoon, the brothers confronted the autorickshaw drivers for beating Himel, leading to an altercation.

When they returned to the spot in the evening, locals apprehended and beat them up. Their parents were also assaulted when they tried to intervene.

The victims were taken to Narsingdi Sadar Hospital, where doctors declared Sakib dead. Rakib was referred to Dhaka Medical College Hospital for better treatment but died on the way.

The brothers' aunt, Hajera Begum, said, "Some criminals had been trying to extort money from us for a long time. Since we refused to pay, they brutally killed Rakib and Sakib on Eid day. We demand justice."

Sudip Kumar Saha, a physician at the Narsingdi Sadar Hospital's emergency department, said, "The victims sustained severe injuries to their heads and bodies."

Their mother, Rabeya Begum, filed a case with Palash Police Station against 25 individuals yesterday.

So far, police have arrested three people in this connection.

Meanwhile in Shariatpur, a man was allegedly beaten to death in Bhedarganj upazila on Sunday night for asking two youths to stop

smoking in public, reports our local correspondent.

The victim, Roman Howlader, 42, was from the Goidya area of Bhedarganj Municipality. He was assaulted in front of the office of the assistant superintendent of police (Bhedarganj Circle).

He was later taken to Bhedarganj Upazila Health Complex, where doctors declared him dead.

Police have arrested suspects Monir Hossain Mollah, 25, and his brother Kabir Hossain Mollah, 23, residents of Sakhipur upazila.

Bhedarganj Police Station OC Parvez Hasan Selim said Roman was attacked following an altercation.

According to locals, after Roman confronted the two men about smoking in front of the police office, a heated argument ensued, leading to the attack.

Roman's uncle, Shamsul Alam, who was nearby at the time, said, "I heard shouting and rushed over to find Roman lying in a shop. Later, I learnt that he had been beaten. We demand justice and the highest punishment for the culprits."

### 3 murals

FROM PAGE 2

uprising activists and because the murals were deemed "incompatible with the July uprising".

When news of the murals being covered was reported, Transparency International Bangladesh and the Conscious Citizens Committee protested the act. Additionally, the Students Against Discrimination (SAD) and National Citizen Party had scheduled press conferences on March 29 to also protest the covering of the murals.

The NCP's press conference was later postponed.

At SAD's press conference, held at the Liberation War Memorial, Hamidur Rahman, member secretary of the platform's Lalmonirhat unit, stated, "We didn't demand the covering of any mural on Independence Day." However, he then called for the removal of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's murals, arguing, "The murals at the memorial were created with discrimination. There should be no mural of a dictator in this memorial."

The following day, the workers were seen demolishing three murals of Sheikh Mujib. No representatives from the Zila Parishad or SAD were present at the scene.