

CAMEOS GALORE

Dhallywood adopts new trend to elevate storytelling



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This Eid-ul-Azha, Dhallywood fans were in for a double treat, as two major releases—*Taandob* and *Insaaf*—delivered surprise cameos that set social media abuzz. In a move that thrilled audiences, Afran Nisho and Shakib Khan finally buried their hatchet and appeared in *Taandob*, hinting at the birth of a new cinematic universe. It was a moment of reconciliation not just between stars, but between fan camps—where the stars aligned for the greater storytelling.

Meanwhile, *Insaaf* delivered a masterclass in shock value with a secret cameo that audiences didn't see coming. Chanchal Chowdhury—head shaved, violin in one hand, blood-streaked machete in the other—emerged like a ghost in the frame, instantly shifting the film's tone. His eerie, enigmatic

character injected a jolt of dread and intrigue that made the movie significantly special. Social media echoed the sentiment, "Chanchal's brief appearance completely changed the balance of the film," as audiences rushed back to theatres just to witness the moment again.

On the other hand, *Taandob* wasn't done playing its cards. Just when fans thought the cameo streak had peaked, director Raihan Rafi dropped a cinematic bombshell: a crossover between *Surongo* and *Taandob*. At the end of the movie, it's revealed that Mikhail (Shakib Khan) may have stolen money from Masud (Afran Nisho)—the very character he played in *Surongo*. Suddenly, the threads started connecting, and fans now have one more reason to anticipate *Taandob 2*. Could Dhallywood actually be building its own interconnected universe?

Fans certainly think so. Siam Ahmed's cameo further added fuel to the fire. In just under two minutes, he dominated the screen with his vagabond presence — a blind eye, calculated body language, and a growling voice soaked in menace. Viewers were quick to draw comparisons to Suriya's Rolex in *Vikram*, praising Siam for delivering what some are calling "pure cinematic voltage."

Cameos like these have long been a staple of Hollywood—the Marvel Cinematic Universe redefined the model, and Bollywood followed with its own versions like the YRF Spy Universe and Rohit Shetty's Cop Universe. Even Tollywood has made its attempts with *Dawshom Awbotaar*.

A popular Jeet fan page, "Tollywood King Jeet," posted, "What Raihan Rafi did with *Taandob*—it will take Tollywood another 10 years to make a film like that, because it's currently going through a downward spiral. Bravo, Raihan Rafi!"

While Tollywood fans continue to dream of a crossover between Jeet, Dev, and Prosenjit, logistical hurdles—including actors owning competing production houses—have stalled progress. In contrast, Dhallywood's collaborative momentum seems to be just

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getting started.

With *Insaaf* and *Taandob*, Dhallywood has embraced the power of the cameo—not as a gimmick, but as a narrative tool. Whether it's a two-minute showdown or a fleeting frame, one perfectly timed appearance is all it takes



STAR CINEPLEX issues warning to be wary of fraudsters

Star Cineplex has issued a public warning against online ticket fraud following a surge in counterfeit ticket sales during the Eid movie rush. Fraudulent groups have been using fake websites, Facebook pages, and online groups to scam moviegoers, causing many to be denied entry at theatres. Cineplex urged viewers to purchase tickets only via their official website or Messenger link. Senior Manager Mesbah Uddin Ahmed confirmed steps are being taken to prevent such scams but stressed public awareness is crucial. All six Eid releases, including the heavily screened *Taandob*, are now showing at Cineplex branches across the country.



Judge dismisses Justin Baldoni's \$400M lawsuit against Blake Lively

A US federal judge has dismissed Justin Baldoni's \$400 million defamation lawsuit against Blake Lively, Ryan Reynolds, and others, ruling that Lively's sexual harassment claims are legally protected. The judge also found The New York Times' reporting to be covered by fair report privilege. Lively called the lawsuit "retaliatory," expressing gratitude for the court's decision. She pledged continued advocacy for women's rights and shared support resources. Baldoni may refile limited claims related to contract interference. A separate trial on Lively's harassment lawsuit against Baldoni is scheduled for March 2026.

NEWS

Kachharibari of Tagore

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to six people, including staffers, were injured in the attack.

Aslam Ali, officer-in-charge of Shahjadpur Police Station, said they learned that the attack was carried out following a quarrel over parking a motorcycle outside the Kachharibari on Sunday.

No major damage was reported, he said, adding that police were deployed there.

The museum was closed to visitors after the attack. Many travelling from other districts had to return home without visiting the museum.

One of them, Arpan Kumar, had brought his family from Thakurgaon yesterday noon. "We had to return home as the gate of the Kachharibari was closed," he said.

Enamul Haque, another visitor who had also arrived with his family, criticised the attack, saying, "Criminal activities at a historic site like Shahzadpur Rabindra Kachharibari are unacceptable."

Shahzadpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer Md Kamruzzaman described

the attack as a criminal offence. "We have asked the Kachharibari authority to file a case with the police. We have taken necessary steps to keep security in the archaeological site."

Locals said that a man from Rooppur village had a quarrel with Kachharibari security personnel over parking a motorcycle.

When he attacked them, the Kachharibari officials caught him and beat him up, the locals said. A group of people organised a human chain yesterday morning, protesting against the beating of the man, according to the residents of the area. The attack occurred afterwards.

Rabindranath's grandfather Prince Dwarkanath Tagore bought the estate in Shahzadpur from Zamindar Rani Bhabani of Natore in 1840, long before the poet's birth.

After getting the responsibility to maintain the estate, Rabindranath visited Shahjadpur several times and stayed at the mansion of the Kachharibari for years in phases.

Ex-president Abdul Hamid

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He was accompanied by his younger son, Barrister Riyad Ahmed Tushar, and his brother-in-law, ANM Naushad Khan.

Amid criticism, the police formed a three-member inquiry committee, headed by the additional inspector general (administration), to investigate the circumstances surrounding his departure.

Two police officials — Hasan Chowdhury, special superintendent of Kishoreganj police, and Tahsin Arif, additional superintendent of police of the Special Branch's immigration wing — were withdrawn, and two others were suspended for negligence in duty regarding the former president's departure from the country.

The actions followed a warning from Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, who said those who facilitated Hamid's departure would not be spared.

He also said that the investigation committee will thoroughly examine all relevant issues and ensure accountability.

However, on Monday, the adviser appeared to be more measured in his remarks.

Responding to a journalist's question at an event in the capital, he said, "Why would I punish an innocent person without proper evidence? Whoever is guilty will be punished."

Addressing the lack of legal action upon Hamid's return, he added, "Many have raised concerns that some cases have not been properly investigated. Those who were found guilty through investigation have been brought under the law."

"You [journalists] always say the innocent must not be punished under any circumstances. Let us complete the investigation. If anyone is found guilty, no one will be spared — they will be brought to justice," he said.

Abdul Hamid is accused in a case filed with Kishoreganj Sadar Police Station, alongside ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, in connection with an attack on a procession during the July uprising.

10 drown

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village with his daughter for Eid, said Murshedul Alam Bhuiyan, OC of Juri Police Station.

Babul was teaching Halima how to swim when she slipped into deeper water, Murshedul said, adding that Babul tried to rescue her, but they both drowned.

Halima was a student of Viharunnesa Noon School and College and was due to appear in this year's HSC examinations.

In Cox's Bazar, six bodies were recovered from the beach and nearby areas in a span of 16 hours. Among the dead were Shahinur Rahman, 60, and his son Sifat, 20, from Rajshahi.

They drowned while swimming on the beach near Sayeman hotel.

Earlier in the day, the body of local fisherman Nuru Saudagar was recovered from Nazirarek. He had gone missing while fishing near the Shaibal area on Sunday.

Three other bodies were recovered from the sea beach at Pechardwip, Bakkhali estuary, and Diabetes area. One of the victims was identified as Mohammad Rajib of DC Road in Chattogram. He went missing while he was swimming with his friends. Two other victims remained unidentified as of yesterday.

Sea Safe Lifeguard member Saifullah Sifat said, "We rescued six people alive this morning. We are severely short-staffed, only 27 lifeguards are on duty in two shifts. But the beach is vast."

We were kidnapped

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Many Gazans say they have to walk for hours to reach the sites, meaning they have to start travelling well before dawn if they are to stand any chance of receiving food.

While the GHF has said there have been no incidents at its so-called secure distribution sites, Palestinians seeking aid have described disorder, and access routes to the sites have been beset by chaos and deadly violence.

The Israeli military called for residents to evacuate several neighbourhoods in northern Gaza, after it said it had intercepted a projectile fired from the Palestinian territory, reports AFP.

Later yesterday, local health authorities said an Israeli strike on a house in Deir al-Balah in central Gaza Strip killed eight people, taking yesterday's death toll to at least 25.

29 dead, 153 hurt in road crashes

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Nandail, Mymensingh, were killed and three others injured in separate crashes on Friday, police said.

In Melandah, Jamalpur, Fulmoti Begum, 45, was killed after being hit by a motorcycle on Friday afternoon, said Melandah police.

In Munshiganj, Masud Rana, 45, died while his wife and two children were injured in a crash in Sreenagar upazila on Friday afternoon, said firefighters.

In Mymensingh, Parvez Mia, 35, and his son Hasan Mia, 8, were killed and 12 others injured as a bus crashed into a mosque by the Mymensingh-Sherpur road on Friday morning, police said.

Islamist group drives tourists away in Sylhet

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group seen in the video and said the decision to bar tourism was made jointly with local elders before Eid.

The move has been condemned by environmental and rights activists.

Abdul Karim Kim, trustee of the Environment and Heritage Conservation Trust, called it a serious threat to Sylhet's tourism, which supports the local economy and creates jobs.

He also suspected the involvement of illegal stone extractors, saying the action does not reflect the broader interests of the community.

"Authorities must investigate who is behind this."

Contacted, Azizunnahar, upazila nirbahi officer of Companiganj, said a meeting with locals has been scheduled to discuss the incident. However, no specific time for the meeting was given.

Mohammad Bashir Uddin, additional superintendent of the Sylhet Tourist Police, said they were not deployed at the site. "We are investigating the incident."

Meanwhile, in Tangail's Kalihati upazila, the screening of the film "Taandob" was abruptly halted under pressure from Islamist groups. This happened though the organisers had obtained permission from the district council to rent the film for a month.

Kamruzzaman Saiful, head of marketing at Jaaz Multimedia, had rented the Auliabad Auditorium for Tk 10,000 per day and paid five days' rent in advance. However, he was forced to stop the screening due to the pressure.

"The evening before Eid-ul-Azha, local mosques and madrasas used

In Chattogram, three people were killed after a train hit several vehicles on the Kalurghat Bridge Thursday night, said police.

In Jamalpur, a 10-year-old girl was killed and her father injured after a bus rammmed into an auto-rickshaw in Bakshiganj Thursday morning.

The deceased, Anisa Akter, lived in Gazipur, said highway police.

In Jhenaidah, three of a family, including a child, were killed after a truck hit their motorcycle in Shailkupa on Thursday afternoon.

The deceased are Mustafa Hossain, 38, of Mailmari village in Shailkupa, his wife Selina Khatun, 35, and their eight-year-old son Mahin Hossain, said police.

loudspeakers to demand that the screening be stopped," Saiful told The Daily Star.

People identifying themselves as members of "Alem Samaj" and "Ulama Parishad" staged a protest and reportedly tore down posters promoting the film.

Fearing unrest, the turnout on Eid day was low at the auditorium. "We had to cancel the daytime shows and only ran the evening show with 20 to 25 viewers," Saiful said.

The next day, Islamist leaders collected signatures for a petition demanding a complete shutdown of the screening and submitted it to the upazila administration.

Saiful said repeated requests for support from the authorities went unheeded. "We asked for police help before Eid, but got no response. We also contacted the district Special Branch and the superintendent of police's office, but received no help as offices were closed for Eid."

Though he had permission to continue screening Taandob beyond Eid, a local arbitration with the Islamist leaders forced him to stop. "They told me to leave immediately," he wrote in a Facebook post, calling the incident a dangerous precedent for the country's film industry.

Hazrat Ali, a madrasa teacher and vice-president of the local Imam Parishad, said, "Given concerns over obscenity, local religious leaders and residents opposed the screening of the film."

Rights activist Anisur Rahman Shelly called the move "a blow to cultural freedom," noting that the initiative was intended to provide Eid entertainment and support the local

film industry.

Kalihatı UNO Md Khairul Islam, currently on leave, confirmed the organisers had permission to screen the film. He also acknowledged that local Islamic leaders submitted a petition to halt the screening.

"Film screenings are not banned in the country. We will talk to relevant parties and try to find a peaceful solution."

Meanwhile, Kalihatı Police Station Officer-in-Charge Jakir Hossain said police will act based on the upazila administration's decisions.

Man's hacked

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She further alleged that Rakibul was previously attacked with sharp weapons around 10 days before Eid-ul-Azha. "At that time, he received treatment at the Orthopaedic Hospital."

Following the incident, Rozina had submitted a written complaint to Pallabi police. However, the complaint was not registered at that time.

Meanwhile, Rakibul's autopsy at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College's morgue showed an old hack wound on his right forearm. "The stitches from that wound had not yet been removed, meaning the injury could be 10-12 days old."

Demanding justice, Rozina said, "My son was brutally killed. I want justice for his murder."

SI Humayun said, "We are not sure whether the handcuff [put on Rakibul] was looted from a police station or if the criminals bought it from somewhere. We are investigating it."