



## 'Taandob' to release on both Chorki and Hoichoi

Raihan Rafi's *Taandob* broke major records upon its theatrical release during Eid-ul-Azha. The star-studded film, featuring Shakib Khan, Jaya Ahsan, Sabila Nur, and Afzal Hossain, was widely loved by audiences.

The Shakib Khan-led *Taandob* is now set for a simultaneous release on two local OTT platforms — Chorki and Hoichoi. Both platforms made the announcement on Sunday, July 27. While they haven't revealed an exact release date, they confirmed that the film will premiere in August.

Director Raihan Rafi shared, *Taandob* was a completely different experience for me as a filmmaker. We aimed to bring freshness in every aspect — story, concept, visual style, and philosophy. Now, through OTT, viewers around the world will be able to experience our film."

*Taandob* marks the second collaboration between Shakib Khan and Raihan Rafi. The film also features an ensemble cast including Shahiduzzaman Selim, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Gazi Rakayet, Salahuddin Lavlu, FS Nayem, and Rosey Siddiqui. Tariq Anam Khan appears in a special role.



RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Helping ignite a sense of hatred towards the authoritarian regime among youth with his fiery *Kotha Ko*, rapper Shezan was one of the most crucial cultural voices in the July Revolution.

A year removed, the rapper has now voiced his frustration in an exclusive interview with The Daily Star, about how hip hop artistes are being treated in shows organised in the aftermath of the July movement.

Shezan feels that the same community which helped mobilise a generation is being sidelined.

"I've said in the past that no one should contact me about any July-related shows. I meant it," Shezan said when we reached out to him.

"We follow street culture in our lyrics. We use local, unfiltered language, slangs, and speak out about what's happening around us. That has always led to a kind of bias. People used to assume that because it's raw, it's not 'worthy'.

But after *Kotha Ko* and *Awaaz Utha*, everyone was listening.

Even parents were listening. It changed the way people saw us."

Despite this cultural impact, Shezan maintains that

hip hop artistes are looked at with a biased lens. "We didn't do it for recognition. We did it as Bangladeshi musicians, as part of a larger collective resistance. When people say we used this moment to gain something, they miss the point. We stood up when it mattered, and now that the moment has passed, the very artistes who helped amplify the message are being pushed aside."

In his words, it's not about money. "Respect matters way more. We have been given performance slots just to tick a box. Most of the time it feels like we are being added last minute, only because the audience might want to see us. That's not real inclusion. That's tokenism. And that is painful."

He recalled the concert which was held

just after August 5, titled *Awaaz Uda - Kotha Ko*. Despite being named after their own music, Shezan and Hannan were only able to sing one song each. "We thought we would be given more time. But they blamed time constraints. In one show, I can understand. But when this keeps happening over and over again, it stops being a coincidence. It starts to feel intentional."

According to Shezan, hip hop now has one of the biggest audiences in Bangladesh. "Yet, not a single hip hop-centric concert has happened since the July movement. You could easily build a concert lineup with 20 to 30 hip hop artistes. That would have meant something. That would have motivated everyone. Instead, we're given 10 or 15 minutes, and if we speak up, organisers try to twist our words. They make it sound like we are disrespecting other genres or senior artistes, which is absolutely false.

There's no issue between artistes. The problem lies in the management. The discrimination comes from the way the events are run."



ILLUSTRATION: DOWEL BISWAS

## Mofassal Alif to perform in New York's Battery Dance Festival

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Bangladeshi dancer and choreographer Mofassal Alif is set to make history as the first Bangladeshi artiste to perform at New York City's prestigious Battery Dance Festival. The festival, now in its 44th year, is New York's longest running free public dance festival and will take place from August 12 to 16 at Rockefeller Park in Battery Park City, with a rain date on August 17.

Mofassal Alif will present his solo piece titled *In Search of You (Moner Manusher Khonje)* on August 16 at 7pm EDT. This performance marks a significant milestone not only for Alif but also for Bangladesh's representation on the global dance stage.

"I am the first Bangladeshi to get the invitation to this dance festival, which is in its 44th edition," Alif shared. "I will be performing solo on August 16 at the festival."

The Battery Dance Festival 2025 will feature performances from eight international dance companies alongside eight New York-based groups, celebrating the universal language of dance through live performances, workshops, and immersive experiences for all ages. The free, outdoor event is known for bringing together diverse cultures and artistic expressions in the heart of New York City.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

# NEWS

## Israeli rights groups

FROM PAGE 12

needed to stave off starvation.

With Gaza's population of more than two million facing famine and malnutrition, Israel bowed to international pressure at the weekend and announced a daily "tactical pause" in fighting in some areas.

Egyptian leader Abdel Fattah el-Sisi yesterday publicly called on Donald Trump to use his influence to halt Israel's war on Gaza and ensure the entry of humanitarian aid into the besieged enclave.

In a televised speech, the Egyptian president said, "He is capable of stopping the war."

Trump, currently on a visit to Scotland, has addressed the war in Gaza, saying the time has come to "end it" and a ceasefire is "possible."

"I told Israel, I told Bibi [Netanyahu] that you're going to now maybe have to do it a different way," Trump said. "It's a tragic situation, frankly."

Speaking alongside British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Trump also

## Air base in Dhaka

FROM PAGE 12

The BAF organised the briefing to give updates on its activities following the jet crash at the Milestone School and College campus in Uttara's Diabari on July 21, which left 34 people dead, the majority of them children.

Air Commodore Mizanur Rahman, chief coordinator of the BAF coordination cell, began the briefing by paying tribute to the victims.

"We extend our deepest condolences to the students, teachers, guardians, the pilot, and others who lost their lives. Like the nation, we are shocked and saddened."

He said an emergency coordination cell, headed by an air commodore, has been working from the beginning to provide all kinds of assistance to the victims' families.

Two separate coordination cells were also set up at the National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery and the Combined Military Hospital (CMH), where most of the injured are undergoing treatment.

He said 45 injured are now being treated at different hospitals. Among them, 33 are at the burn institute, 11 at CMH, and one at the mental health institute.

Dr Maruf Islam, joint director

of the burn institute, said three are in critical condition at the intensive care units (ICU), and nine are in high-dependency units (HDU). "We have discharged four patients — two children and two adults. Nineteen others are in stable condition and will likely be released soon," said Maruf, who was also present at the briefing.

He added that experts from Singapore General Hospital, Harbin Medical University in China, and New Delhi have joined the treatment process alongside local experts and the chief adviser's personal physicians.

Air Commodore Mizanur said the BAF would continue support until the last injured student returns home.

He said a temporary medical camp has been set up at Milestone College, where students, teachers, and staff will receive treatment for as long as needed.

He also said a psychologist and a medicine specialist have been deployed at the college to offer counselling.

Captain (retd) Jahangir Khan, principal of Milestone School, present at the briefing, said out of 738 students, around 80 percent were present on the day of the crash.

## No extortionist

FROM PAGE 12

A high-level government team recently visited Cox's Bazar to assess the progress of anti-narcotics operations and observed some positive results, he said.

"The number of drug seizures has increased — we are catching more carriers. But we are not reaching the godfathers yet — that's a serious concern."

Jahangir acknowledged that multiple agencies share responsibility for combating drugs.

"But not all are cooperating. I won't name them for now, but we are not getting support from everyone."

On election preparedness, he said changes to police superintendents and officers-in-charge are underway and will continue.

"Postings and transfers happen all the time. Whether any changes will be made specifically ahead of the election, you will see that in due time."

Police training programmes for election duties will begin in August, with officers rotating in batches until the national polls.

"One batch will go, another will come. This process will continue up to the election."

## Without the uprising

FROM PAGE 12

Bangladesh, he said, adding that the families of those who were martyred do not ask for money but respect.

They want the ideals for which their loved ones sacrificed their lives to be realised, Nahid said.

Welcoming the initiative to form a Police Commission under the National Consensus Commission, he said: "We want a Bangladesh where the police are not politically biased, where the Election Commission is not politicised. We want the police to stand with the people."

A new Bangladesh must be brought forth through reforms, he said, adding that the reforms should be such that no single individual can monopolise absolute power.

The July Charter must be announced by August 5.

"Those who have not yet reached the consensus due to party interests come forward now for the sake of the countrymen."

## News of SAD coordinators' arrest painful

FROM PAGE 12

youth wing, Jubo Dal, at Shabbagh.

Expressing regret, Mirza Fakhrul said even after a year, they still could not confidently say they were prepared to rebuild the country anew.

He added that internal conflicts could create an opportunity for fascism to return.

"It's really unfortunate that today we are arguing over many things and fighting among ourselves. This could hurt Bangladesh's progress. It could create an opportunity for the fascists to take control over Bangladesh."

Fakhrul said that even though senior party leaders were tortured at the DB office in July last year, they did not surrender or sign any undertakings.

"They had their toenails pulled out; their teeth broken. Sadly, while

the DB office incidents are shown in the media, the pictures of our tortured leaders are never published," he said, urging journalists to report such events.

"We don't see any reports or programmes about how Khaleda Zia, a woman who gave everything for democracy, was kept in prison. I urge the media to speak the truth and acknowledge her sacrifice," he added.

The BNP secretary general raised questions as to why the interim government could not fully start the trial of Sheikh Hasina, even though one year had passed.

He alleged that the government is indirectly blaming political parties for not cooperating in reform efforts, despite that "not being true".

Fakhrul said, "Where is Hasina's trial?... those who carried out killings

in broad daylight... BBC reports have exposed audio clips where Hasina is heard instructing to open fire... why have these matters not come up yet?"

"I urge the journalists to highlight these issues. You have done remarkable work. You have stood by the people of Bangladesh in their rightful, democratic struggle," he added.

Fakhrul said that those trying to corner the BNP by creating pressure will not succeed in their efforts.

"The current government is talking about reform every moment. They are indirectly trying to blame political parties, attempting to say that we are not cooperating. We have been constantly cooperating with their reform initiatives. We want to work together with everyone at all times."

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The commission has been empowered to visit any location within Bangladesh and summon and question any individual.

It will carry out its investigation under the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1956 and the office of the divisional commissioner of Dhaka will provide secretarial support to the commission.

secretaries from three ministries, Dhaka divisional commissioner, an urban planner, a professor of Buet's mechanical engineering department, and a lawyer.

The commission will examine the cause of the tragic crash, assess damage, and find out who is responsible, it added.

According to a gazette, it will assess the loss of lives and injuries suffered by students, teachers, and others, and determine the extent of all damage.

Additionally, it will review the construction of Milestone School, other structures near the airport, and

examine the legal and administrative aspects concerning the location and safety of the flying zone.

It will also make suggestions regarding the operation of training aircraft, the construction of buildings in flying zones, and emergency response protocols during terrible incidents.

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"I am staying alone in my house. I have sent the rest of my family to a relative's home."

The Daily Star yesterday spoke to at least six people whose houses were attacked.

Local union parishad member Pares Chandra said the attackers vandalised about 20 houses and looted four cows, six goats, furniture, gold ornaments, and crops.

Contacted, Gangachara Upazila Nirbahi Officer Mahmud Hassan Mridha said 15 houses were attacked. "We, on behalf of the upazila administration, are trying to provide assistance to the victim families."

Asked, the OC Al Emran said police are investigating the incident.

Ranjan's father Suman Roy claimed Ranjan did not upload any such post. "Rather, someone might have done this using a fake ID. It is a conspiracy."

Rabindra Chandra Roy, a resident of the area, said his house was vandalised and looted on Sunday afternoon.

"They took away my two cows and cash; they smashed chairs, tables and other furniture. We are panicking. I have sent two women and three children of my family to my relatives' home."

Subal Chandra Roy, another resident, said, "One of my cows and a goat were taken away. My furniture was broken. Police tried to stop them, but the attackers assaulted them too."

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