



“My long-time dream was to create a song where the whole of Bangladesh could be seen together, with people from the hills, plains, sea, and riverbanks singing and playing in unison.”

PHOTOS:
COURTESY OF RAW
XPOSURE

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

After a long hiatus, *Coke Studio Bangla* has finally returned, and it couldn't have chosen a more fitting comeback than *Baaji*. The release not only marks the revival of the popular platform but also reunites fans with the magical duo of Hashim Mahmud and Emon Chowdhury.

Penned and originally performed by Mahmud, *Baaji* finds new life through Chowdhury's arrangement, molding it into a fresh, soulful texture.

“My long time dream was to create a song where the whole of Bangladesh could be seen together, with people from the hills, plains, sea, and riverbanks singing and playing in unison. In our small country, there is so much diversity that it is almost impossible to bring everyone together in one place, yet I tried to weave everyone into a single thread,” shared Emon.

Baaji speaks of journeys and quietly mirrors the beauty of Bangladesh. “It's a story about love,” Emon explained. “We had this plan since *Kotha Kooyo Na*. With this song, we wanted to create a sequence of moods with *Baaji*.”

Sometimes, passion finds its own way forward. “When you wholeheartedly want to create something beautiful, God somehow connects you to it,” Emon reflected. After *Kotha*

Emon Chowdhury on how he bet on ‘Baaji’

Kooyo Na, his father shared a video with him of a Dhua Gaan troupe performing. “It was unlike anything I had ever seen—a group singing while dancing, moving from place to place with their traditional instruments. Later, I discovered that their team has been performing for more than a hundred years, passing the songs down through generations. It was astonishing that we knew so little about them.”

Later, inspiration struck again when Emon's wife, who attended a

bamboo-stick rhythms and humming parts that added another defining layer to the track. “Most of them were from the Bawm tribe, and their energy added something very raw and authentic,” Emon said. Hashim Mahmud later joined them in the studio, and together with the musicians, they elevated the song further. Still, Emon felt something was missing.

That “X-factor,” as he described it, came through a suggestion by Arnob. He introduced Emon to Mrakoi Ching Marma, fondly called “nani”—she was known for singing the Marma puthi. Her grandson, Kyoprou Marma, a flutist in *Coke Studio Bangla*, helped connect them. “I really requested them to bring her to Dhaka. She had never been here before. We even planned to send someone from our team to pick her up, but the shoot was just two days away. Despite that, she was determined. She wanted the whole world to hear the words of her tribe,” Emon recalled.

With the help of her daughter, Kyoprou's mother, who also had never been to Dhaka, they travelled from Bandarban and finally made it. When Mrakoi Ching Marma sang her part in the studio, Emon felt that the song had finally found its soul. “It felt like *Baaji* was complete.”

Baaji marks the third time he collaborated with Hashim Mahmud. “From the very beginning, I wanted Hashim bhai to be present with us on set. Even if just in a cameo, I wanted him to be part of the song. Our team wanted to honour him, to give him a tribute. It was a challenge, but he embraced it beautifully in the music video. This song is a tribute to Hashim bhai for gifting us such timeless songs.”

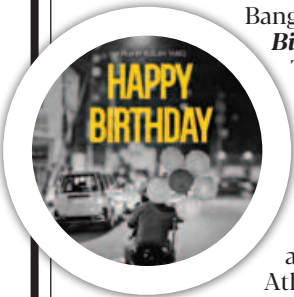
On using his mellifluous voice, he said, “*Coke Studio* and Arnob bhai were adamant that I should take it on as lead singer. *Coke Studio Bangla* always tries to represent a generation, and Arnob bhai felt it should be me and Hashim bhai singing together. Honestly, I had other plans. I wanted other artists to sing it. However, he insisted, and in the end, I did it. To be honest, I enjoy playing instruments and composing far more than singing.”



performance, witnessed a Manipuri troupe dancing to the beat of the *dhol*. She told him about them, and when Emon saw them he couldn't believe that they were from Bangladesh. They were a dance troupe in Sreemangal who practiced the sacred art of the Pung Cholom dance form. “I was fascinated to see them dance with such beauty and power while playing the *dhol*,” he recalled. Their art form, deeply religious, involves praising their deity through music and dance. “When we played the song for them, we asked if they could play without going against their rituals. They agreed, and what they brought us was extraordinary.”

The journey didn't stop there. Emon and his team realised the song also needed the vibrant traditions of the Bawm community and other indigenous groups. A full troupe travelled from Bandarban to Dhaka, bringing

Bangladeshi short ‘Happy Birthday’ earns spot at Anatolia Film Festival



Bangladeshi short film *Happy Birthday*, directed by Ruslan Tareq, has been officially selected for the Anatolia International Film Festival in Turkey. The 19 minute dark comedy marks another breakthrough for the country's independent cinema.

The film has already won an Honourable Mention at the Athens International Monthly Art Film Festival 2025. Its story follows Faysal, a family man grappling with suppressed desires that blur the line between thought, imagination, and reality.

Shot entirely in Dhaka, *Happy Birthday* blends humour and unease while critiquing urban facades. Cinematography and editing are by Nazmul Hassan Shuddho, with Naeemul Haque as executive producer. Monirul Islam Tufan plays the lead role.

‘Nandini’ set for September release

After years of delays, director Shoibur Rahman Russell has announced that his film *Nandini*, starring Indraneil Sengupta and Nazira Ahmed Mou, will finally release in theatres on September 12. The official trailer of the film will be launching today, marking the beginning of its promotional campaign.



Originally slated for August 2023, the film's release was postponed due to the quota reform movement. The production also faced disruptions from scheduling issues and the Covid-19 pandemic. Adapted from Paritosh Barai's novel *Norok Nandini*, it features an ensemble cast including Fazlur Rahman Babu, Irfan Sajjad, Munira Yusuf Memi, Joysree Kar Jaya, and Elora Gohor.

NEWS

President appoints

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Additional Secretary Md Saiful Islam, Joint Secretary SM Saiful Islam, and Solicitor Wing Chief Md Rafizul Islam are among the appointees.

The notification, signed by Sheikh Abu Taher, said the appointments will take effect from the date of oath-taking.

This is the first time HC judges have been appointed under the

Supreme Court Judges' Appointment Ordinance, 2025, SC spokesman Md Muajjem Hussain told The Daily Star. The chief justice is scheduled to administer their oaths today.

SC sources said this is one of the largest single batches of appointments to the HC in recent years, aimed at reducing the backlog of cases and strengthening the judiciary.

Unite to uphold

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chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee of Bangladesh and law minister from 1972 to 1973.

He said that those who hold constitutional office have taken an oath to uphold the constitution. If they “violate” that oath and deviate from their duties, the constitution itself is “undermined,

constitutional governance collapses, and good governance disappears.”

“What follows is what we are already witnessing: widespread corruption, the rise of destructive forces, and activities that steer the country's administration down the wrong path. This is why we are facing crisis after crisis,” he said.

Revised twice, yet errors persist

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37(Ka) in Section 34 and 36 which give employees the right to appeal and seek reviews of the authorities' decisions.

This means, a government employee punished under Section 37 (Ka) may not be able to ask for a review under the two sections.

The ordinance must be revised again, or else employees punished for misconduct will not get a proper opportunity to appeal, said a joint secretary of the public administration ministry, seeking anonymity.

The amended ordinance also introduces a provision for issuing only one show cause notice to the accused employee before imposing punishment. Typically, such a notice asks the accused to explain why the proposed or any other applicable punishment should not be imposed.

However, if the authorities impose a punishment different from the one mentioned in the notice after receiving a reply from the accused, it would violate Article 135(2) of the constitution.

The Article clearly stipulates that no person shall be dismissed, removed, or subjected to any other punishment without being given a reasonable opportunity to show cause against the specific punishment proposed.

There is another inconsistency in the ordinance. It includes the provision already outlined in the existing

“Government Servants (Discipline and Appeal) Rules, 2018.”

Section 37(Ka-1)(a) of the ordinance says disobedience of lawful orders from the authority, or violation of government orders, circulars, and directives, will be considered as misconduct.

However, Rule 2(b) of the Government Servants Rules, 2018 already defines such actions as misconduct.

This means the same offence is covered by two separate legal frameworks, creating a scope for dual punishment.

“This overlap could lead to disparity in punishment for similar offences, effectively introducing a dual penalty system for identical misconduct,” said a former secretary currently on post-retirement leave.

When asked about the discrepancies, Cabinet Secretary Sheikh Abdur Rashid, one of three members of the committee that oversaw the amendment process, said, “Since primary responsibility for the ordinance rests with the public administration ministry, it would be appropriate if they comment on this.”

Contacted, Mokhles Ur Rahman, senior secretary at the public administration ministry, declined to comment.

Seeking anonymity, one of the officials involved in drafting the ordinance said, “It is true that there are

Bleak future for Campaigning starts Rohingya, as Dhaka seeks to tackle crisis

AFP, Dhaka

Both Bangladesh and the UN want to provide stable conditions in Myanmar for the Rohingya to eventually return. That seems unlikely any time soon.

“I consistently hear from Rohingya refugees that they want to return to their homes in Myanmar, but only when it is safe to do so,” Nicholas Koumjian, who heads the UN's Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.

“Ending the violence and atrocities against civilians from all communities in Rakhine is critical for the eventual safe, dignified, voluntary and sustainable return of those that have been displaced.”

Campaigning starts

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enforcement agencies to finalise security measures.

A meeting will be held today with VP, GS, and AGS candidates at the Senate building to discuss the code of conduct, said Prof Zashim, adding that students who want their photographs undisclosed in the final voter list must apply by August 27.

Announced in March, the code of conduct sets strict rules, one of which states that campaigning is allowed only between 10:00am and 11:00pm.

Loudspeakers cannot be used after 10:00pm, while outsiders are barred from taking part in campaigning.

Additionally, campaigning is banned in classrooms, corridors, exam halls, libraries, and religious sites. Parade bands and vehicles such as motorcycles, rickshaws or horse carriages cannot be used for campaigning.

Any rally, procession or meeting must have written approval from the

chief returning officer or hall returning officers at least 24 hours in advance. Each panel may hold one projection meeting in each hall and up to three across the campus. Events must not disrupt classes or block roads.

Microphones may be used only inside auditoriums or on campus grounds till 10:00pm. Disrupting a rival's programme is prohibited.

Only black-and-white posters, leaflets and handbills are allowed, and they may carry only the candidate's photograph. Posters cannot be pasted on walls, trees, poles, fences or vehicles. Defacing opponents' materials or using paint, chalk or chemicals is banned.

Candidates are not allowed to erect gates, arches or use decorative lighting. Temporary pandals, shamianas or stages are allowed but food, drinks or gifts may not be distributed. Fundraising or donations linked to campaigns are also banned. Clothing such as t-shirts, jackets or fatuas with slogans or images is forbidden.

The code further bans offensive, defamatory or provocative speech in person or online. Posts targeting gender, religion, or communities may result in disciplinary action.

Female candidates are allowed to enter male dormitories and vice versa, but only for projection meetings and with prior approval of the hall authorities.

Violations of the code of conduct can lead to fines of up to Tk 20,000, cancellation of candidacy, expulsion from the university, or action under state law.

Meanwhile, students of Jagannath Hall yesterday announced a new panel — “Shaheed Jagat Jyoti Brigade” — named after freedom fighter Shaheed Jagat Jyoti Das, from which Shri Madhusudan Kumar will contest for VP and Bishnu Pandit for GS.

The last Ducusu election was held in 2019 after a 29-year hiatus. This year, there are 39,775 registered voters, including 20,871 males and 18,902 females.

Khamenei calls US issue ‘unsolvable’

REUTERS, Dubai

Iran's supreme leader said the current situation with the United States was “unsolvable”, and that Tehran would never bow to pressure to obey Washington, amid a standoff with Western powers over its nuclear programme, state media reported on Sunday.

The Islamic Republic suspended nuclear negotiations with the United States after the U.S. and Israel bombed its nuclear sites during a 12-day war in June.

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's comments come after Iran and European powers agreed on Friday to resume talks to try to restart full negotiations on curbing Tehran's nuclear enrichment work.

“They want Iran to be obedient to America. The Iranian nation will stand with all of its power against those who have such erroneous expectations,” Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was reported as saying.

“People who ask us not to issue slogans against the U.S. ... to have direct negotiations with the U.S. only see appearances ... This issue is unsolvable”, he added.

place, their operations have stopped, and that is why they carried out the attack.” He also said preparations were underway to file a case with Gajaria Police Station.

Authorities set up the temporary police camp in Jamalpur village on August 22 in a bid to contain such criminal activities.

The OC said police suspect that the firearms used in the attack might have been among the weapons looted from the police stations in Munshiganj last year.

Suspected robbers

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were injured in the attack.

Locals claimed that the suspects were members of the Nayan-Piyas gang, who have long been engaged in extortion, robbery, and sand lifting.

Witnesses said 5-6 trawlers circled the outpost before the attackers lobbed crude bombs and opened fire.

OC Anwar said, “Guagachhia had turned into a safe haven for criminals. They would extort traders and extract sand illegally, earning Tk 50-60 lakh daily. With the camp now in

5 journos killed

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the site of the initial attack.

Masri operated a Reuters live video feed from the hospital, which suddenly shut down at the moment of the initial strike.

Reuters and other news providers often deliver live video feeds to media outlets worldwide during major news events to show the scene from the ground in real time. Reuters had frequently broadcast a feed from Nasser hospital during the Gaza conflict, and for the past several weeks had been delivering daily feeds from the Nasser hospital position that was hit.