



END OF AN ERA: MTV to pull the plug on music channels

Paramount Global has announced that all of MTV's music-focused channels — including MTV 80s, MTV 90s, MTV Music, Club MTV, and MTV Live — will cease broadcasting worldwide by December 31, 2025. The flagship MTV HD channel will continue but will focus solely on reality programming, marking a decisive shift from the network's music video origins. Launched in 1981, MTV transformed pop culture with music videos, iconic VJs, Live Aid broadcasts, and the MTV Video Music Awards. Expansion followed with MTV Europe in 1987 and a UK-specific channel in 1997. The announcement has triggered nostalgia and criticism on social media, with former VJ Simone Angel lamenting the loss of support for artistes and the network's musical legacy.

Stepped away for the lack of good scripts: Safa Kabir

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

"I am grateful to Tareq Rahman for being so considerate on my first fiction," said Safa Kabir on a television interview. Of course, she was referring to MD Habibur Rahman Tareq from Runout Films. Immediately, the internet was quick to misread the statement.

"I was so naive when I was about to do my first project," said Safa Kabir, who has meanwhile completed a decade in the entertainment industry. "I said to him over the phone that I'll think about it. He was incredibly kind and gave me time. Honestly, without the team of Runout, mainly Adnan Al Rajeev, there would have been no such thing as a media career for me," said the reflective actress.

Even though Safa boasts an amazing career, she has also had a fair share of disappointments. "I have worked so hard, irrespective of if it was day or night, for every project that I've been in. However, I feel extremely disappointed when I'm overlooked in award programmes, especially in nominations. It's particularly unfair when your fictions boast so much popularity, but organisers overlook you.

Despite that, the actress soldiers on. She now refuses to partake in sub-par scripts. "I used to say yes to whichever script was handed to me at one point, but I won't do that anymore," says a stern Safa Kabir.

The actress, who debuted aged 18 years, has clearly shifted her vision to doing more quality projects. "I'm set to star in two OTT projects, which will be announced soon. However, she maintains that it will take strong scripts to bring her back to the television screen. "I've done so many television projects that every other new one seems like a repetition or a continuation of a previous one. I'm waiting for something new, that can pull me back to television. In all honesty, I stepped away for the lack of it."

Safa Kabir's recent works, *Love Buzz* and *Keno Ei Shongota*, has earned praise from the audience, earning an accumulated 30 million views.



PHOTO: COURTESY



HBO Max launches in Bangladesh

HBO Max, the flagship streaming platform from Warner Bros Discovery, is now officially available in Bangladesh. Alongside 14 other new markets, including Cambodia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Ukraine, the service launched today, bringing a vast library of premium entertainment to local audiences.

Subscribers can now enjoy hit series such as *Game of Thrones*, *House of the Dragon*, *The Last of Us*, and *The Penguin*, as well as blockbuster films like *Superman*, *A Minecraft Movie*, and the complete *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* collections. Bangladeshi subscribers can choose between two plans: the Standard package (\$4.99/month) and Premium (\$7.49/month), offering Full HD and 4K streaming options. Subscriptions are available via www.hbomax.com, Apple App Store, and Google Play Store.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?



‘Buddhijibir Bashay Shoitan’

Theatre troupe Anuswar returns to the stage with its twelfth production, *Buddhijibir Bashay Shoitan*, a sharp, satirical exploration of power, war, and truth. Co-written by Mohammad Bari and Saif Suman and directed by Bari, the play reimagines ideas from Tawfiq al-Hakim and Kahlil Gibran with biting humour and contemporary relevance.

Date: Friday | Oct 17-18, 2025

Time: 5 pm and 7:30pm

Venue: Anuswar Studio, Segunbagicha

NEWS

Truce called after clashes kill dozens

FROM PAGE 12

of black smoke were seen rising above Kabul after the two blasts in the Afghan capital yesterday evening, AFP reporters said.

Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said an oil tanker and a generator had exploded, sparking fires, although he did not explicitly link the blasts to the clashes with Pakistan.

However, a Pakistani security source told AFP that Islamabad had carried out "precision strikes" in the Afghan capital.

Ambulances raced through Kabul and shattered glass from damaged buildings littered the streets, AFP saw. Taliban forces also cordoned off some city streets.

The ceasefire was announced by Islamabad barely an hour later. Taliban authorities in Kabul ordered the army to respect the ceasefire.

Pakistan's military earlier accused the Afghan Taliban of attacking two major border posts in the southwest and northwest.

It said both assaults were repelled, with about 20 Taliban fighters killed in attacks launched near Spin Boldak on the Afghan side of the frontier in southern Kandahar province early yesterday.

"Unfortunately the attack was orchestrated through divided villages in the area, with no regard for the civil population," the military said in a statement.

It also said about 30 more were thought to have been killed in overnight clashes along Pakistan's northwest border.

The Afghan Taliban said 15 civilians were killed and dozens wounded in the clashes near Spin Boldak and that "two to three" of its fighters were also killed.

Taliban spokesman Mujahid said in an earlier statement that 100 civilians were also wounded around Spin Boldak, adding that calm had returned after Pakistani soldiers were killed and weapons seized.

The Pakistan military said these were "outrageous and blatant lies".

Pakistan did not give a toll for its losses in the latest clashes but said last week 23 of its troops had been killed in the opening skirmishes.

Sadiq, a resident of Spin Boldak who gave only his first name, said fighting broke out at around 4:00am (2330 GMT Tuesday).

"Houses were fired upon, including my cousin's. His son and wife were killed, and four of his children were wounded," he told AFP.

All businesses in the area were

closed and many residents have fled, an AFP correspondent reported.

In Chaman on the Pakistani side of the border, one resident described the pre-dawn clashes as "total chaos".

"Our children and women were terrified and began screaming," Raaz Muhammad, 51, told AFP by phone.

In a separate incident, a senior security official in Peshawar in Pakistan's northwest said seven frontier troops had been killed in an attack on a checkpoint.

The relatively new Ittehad-ul-Mujahideen armed group claimed responsibility for the attack.

Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif told parliament last week that several attempts to convince the Afghan Taliban to stop supporting the TTP had failed.

Islamabad accuses the TTP — which was combat-trained in Afghanistan and claims to share the ideology of the Taliban there — of killing hundreds of Pakistani soldiers since the Taliban returned to power in Kabul in 2021.

Clashes erupted on Saturday evening when Kabul launched an operation in at least five provinces along the border, two days after the initial blasts.

Bangladesh 100th out of 106

FROM PAGE 12

by South Korea with 190. At the other end, Afghanistan remains the lowest-ranked passport at 106th, with visa-free access to only 24 destinations, while Syria (105th) and Iraq (104th) sit just above it.

For the first time in the 20-year history of the Henley Passport Index, the US has dropped out of the world's top 10 most powerful passports. Once ranked No. 1 in 2014, the US passport has now fallen to 12th place — sharing

the spot with Malaysia — and offers visa-free access to just 180 of 227 global destinations. The UK has also seen a decline, slipping to its lowest-ever ranking. Once the world leader in 2015, the UK passport has fallen from sixth to eighth place since July.

Brazil and Argentina jointly hold the 19th spot with visa-free access to 169 countries, while Israel ranks 20th with 165. Myanmar and Lebanon are placed at 96th, each offering visa-free access to 44 destinations.

The Henley Passport Index compares 199 passports across 227 travel destinations, assigning one point for each destination that can be entered without a visa, or with visa-on-arrival, a visitor's permit, or an electronic travel authority (ETA). Where a visa or pre-departure government approval is required, a score of zero is assigned. A passport's total score represents the number of destinations accessible without prior visa requirements.

The man behind ‘Tin Goyenda’ passes away

FROM PAGE 12

Jame Mosque. He was later laid to rest at Shahjahanpur graveyard, close to his residence in Basabo.

He leaves behind a legacy cherished by countless readers across generations who grew up with his books. As news of his passing spread through social media and literary circles, it stirred a profound sense of loss.

Rakib Hasan was born on December 12, 1950, in Cumilla. But because of his father's job, he spent much of his childhood in Feni. He completed his schooling there and later enrolled at

Comilla Victoria Government College. After finishing his studies, he took up various jobs, but the rigid routine of office life never really appealed to him. Eventually, he decided to pursue a career in writing.

Rakib's literary journey began at Sheba Prokashoni, the publishing house that would go on to shape a new era in Bangladeshi popular fiction. His earliest works were translations of world classics by renowned authors such as Bram Stoker, Jules Verne, Erich von Däniken, Farley Mowat, and Gerald Durrell. He later went on to author

over 400 books, including the Tarzan adventures, the Detective Raju series, and the Reza Suja stories.

But it was the Tin Goyenda series, first published in 1985, that truly defined his legacy. Adapted from Robert Arthur's "Three Investigators", the series took on a life of its own under Rakib's pen. He reshaped the stories into something unmistakably Bangladeshi, filling them with our humour, our fears, and the experiences of our youth.

For many, Rakib was not just a writer — he was a cherished part of our childhood and adolescence.

‘Hasina had clear intent to kill protesters’

FROM PAGE 12

ASM Maksud Kamal, the chief prosecutor said the recordings revealed her "clear intention to kill" the protesters.

Tajul told the tribunal that the call records were collected from the National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre (NTMC) and authenticated through forensic tests by the Criminal Investigation Department.

He added that the BBC and Al Jazeera independently verified that the voices in the calls were of Hasina, Taposh, Inu, and Maksud.

According to the prosecution, the tapes capture Hasina instructing law enforcement agencies, including police, Rab, and BGB, to use lethal weapons on protesters, identify gatherings through drones, and fire from helicopters.

Tajul alleged that in a conversation with Inu, Hasina even discussed deploying paratroopers in Narayanganj and carrying out aerial bombings. The prosecution said these exchanges proved the

attacks were systematic and carried out under direct command from the highest level of government.

The prosecutor further argued that after receiving Hasina's orders, then home minister Kamal conveyed them to IGP Mamun, who passed them on to field-level commanders.

According to Mamun's confessional statement, moments after Mamun received the order from the home minister, additional DIG Proloy Kumar Joarder, who was at the then IGP's office room, disseminated the directives, following which then Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman instructed unit commanders over wireless to "open fire from kneeling positions".

The prosecution presented bullets retrieved from victims' bodies at various hospitals, along with ballistic and forensic evidence linking them to the weapons used. Flight logs, helicopter manifests, names of pilots, and people onboard, and weapon inventories, including SMGs, rifles, shotguns, and light machine guns, were submitted to demonstrate the

chain of command and use of force.

Tajul told the tribunal, "We have received information about more bullets than the Rab reported to us. They sourced bullets from elsewhere and manipulated the records."

Several video clips were also screened at the tribunal, which shows police firing indiscriminately at unarmed protesters in Dhaka's Chankharupul area on August 5, killing at least six people, the prosecution said.

According to the prosecution, another six victims were set on fire in Ashulia the same day, one of them who was alive then, to substantiate two charges for the killings in Chankharupul and Ashulia against the three accused.

"It is crystal clear from the video clips that the then prime minister Sheikh Hasina authorised the use of lethal weapons," Tajul said.

He argued that Hasina, as the prime minister and president of the Awami League, exercised command and control over all state and party organs. The armed AL members also attacked the protesters.

Aid trucks roll into Gaza

FROM PAGE 12

meant to find them.

The deal also requires Israel to return the bodies of 360 Palestinians. The first group of 45 was handed over on Tuesday and the bodies were being identified, said Palestinian health authorities.

The war has caused a humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, with nearly all inhabitants driven from their homes, a global hunger monitor saying famine was present in the enclave and health authorities overwhelmed.

Reuters video showed a first group of trucks moving from the Egyptian side of the border into the Rafah crossing at dawn yesterday, some tankers carrying fuel and others loaded with pallets of aid.

However, it was not clear if that convoy would complete its crossing into Gaza as part of the 600 trucks that were due to enter the enclave

yesterday — the full daily complement required under the ceasefire plan. Aid trucks entered Gaza through other crossings.

Underscoring the political challenges facing the truce, Israel's far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, an opponent of the ceasefire plan, said on X that the aid delivery was a "disgrace".

Meanwhile, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was back in a Tel Aviv court yesterday for the latest hearing in his long-running corruption trial.

It comes after US President Donald Trump suggested on Monday that the Israeli premier should be pardoned in his three separate corruption cases.

Rafah is due to be opened to Palestinian inhabitants of Gaza either entering or exiting the enclave. But those awaiting medical evacuation

told Reuters they had not yet received notification to prepare for travel.

The Palestinian Authority, which governs in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, is preparing to operate the Rafah crossing into Egypt, which it previously did with EU assistance. Israel closed the crossing in 2007 after Hamas took over the enclave, but later allowed some movement through it under an agreement with Egypt.

VIOLENCE IN GAZA

Several other Palestinian factions present in Gaza have backed the days-long Hamas security crackdown as it battles local clans that had tried to take over areas of the territory during the conflict.

The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, one of the groups backing the Hamas crackdown, described the clans being targeted as "hubs of crime".