



‘People like him keep music beautiful’: Asif Akbar on Bassbaba Sumon

Popular singer Asif Akbar and rock band Aurthohin shared the stage in Boston on October 25, marking a rare reunion between two icons of Bangladeshi music.

This performance comes as part of several US concert tours by Bangladeshi artistes — Asif’s first in 17 years and Aurthohin’s debut in the country.

From the greenroom, Asif posted a photo with Aurthohin frontman Saidus Salehin Sumon, known as Bassbaba Sumon, expressing admiration for his resilience and legacy.

“It is people like him who make the music industry still feel beautiful,” Asif wrote, calling Sumon a “living legend.”

Fans responded with overwhelming affection, celebrating the powerful moment of camaraderie between two generations of Bangladeshi music.

NUSRAAT FARIA set for musical comeback

Actor-singer Nusraat Faria is set to make her musical comeback with several new releases. Known for balancing her acting and singing careers, Faria debuted as a singer in 2018 with *Pataka* and has since released four tracks.

The actress recently addressed the long delay of her unreleased collaboration with Fuad Almuqtadir, citing her focus on high-quality production and visually rich music videos.

Faria confirmed that multiple new songs are ready for release, including projects with Fuad and Sanjoy. She also expressed interest in collaborating with musicians she admires.

Beyond music, the *Bibaho Obhijaan* star announced she will begin shooting for a new film this month. After a recent performance in Canada, she hinted at another international concert tour planned for November.



‘One Battle After Another’ expected to lose \$100 million



Paul Thomas Anderson’s *One Battle After Another*, starring Leonardo DiCaprio, is projected to lose around \$100 million despite earning \$140 million globally.

Warner Bros spent over \$130 million on production and \$70 million on marketing, while DiCaprio’s first-dollar gross deal further limits studio profits.

The film, hailed as a masterpiece, needs nearly \$300 million to break even. Warner Bros disputed the loss estimates, citing a successful year with hits like *Sinners* and *A Minecraft Movie*.

Meanwhile, other adult-oriented releases such as A24’s *The Smashing Machine* and *Roofman* have also struggled at the box office, underscoring the post-pandemic decline in mid budget, non-franchise films.

Analysts say audiences now wait for streaming releases, challenging studios to make prestige films financially viable again.

Nawshaba returns to TV with ‘Ditiyo Biyer Por’

After a long hiatus from television, actress Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed returns to the small screen in Chayanika Chowdhury’s new drama *Ditiyo Biyer Por*. “I’m acting in a TV drama after years. The story is beautiful, and working with Chayanika *Didi* is always special,” Nawshaba said.

Director Chayanika Chowdhury shared photos from the shoot, noting, “It’s been four years since I last worked with Nawshaba. She’s disciplined, soft-spoken, and deeply committed to her craft.”

The drama also features Irfan Sajjad and Aisha Khan and will soon premiere on the YouTube channel Swapnodhara.

Nawshaba’s recent film *Joto Kando Kolkatatei*, directed by Anik Dutta and co-starring Abir Chatterjee, was released in Kolkata last September.



WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘Macbeth’

Swapnadal will stage the 19th show of its acclaimed mimodrama *Macbeth*, written by William Shakespeare and directed by Zahid Repon. Reimagined by Juana Sobnom, this non-verbal production will blend mime, rhythm, and Bengali performance traditions to explore ambition, guilt, and downfall in a visually arresting retelling of Shakespeare’s tragedy.

Date: Wednesday| Oct 29, 2025
Time: 7pm-8:15pm

Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA



NEWS

Scores injured as DIU

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University campus, leading to chases and counter-chases, and the throwing of brickbats between the two groups.

In the meantime, DIU proctorial team arrived at the scene and informed the City University administration about the matter, urging them to take steps to resolve the issue.

At one point, City University students allegedly beat up a DIU student at a separate location adjacent to their campus. In response, DIU students entered the City University campus and set fire to three university buses and a private car parked there. In addition, a bus, two private cars, a motorcycle, and parts of the administrative building were vandalised.

Members of the police, army and Rab later arrived at the scene and brought the situation under control.

“The situation is now calm. No case has been filed in connection with the incident, and no one has been arrested,” said Helal Uddin, inspector (operations) at Savar Model Police Station.

Meanwhile, Dr Helal Uddin, a medical officer at City University, alleged that law enforcement arrived late despite repeated calls for help.

“City University is a trustee-run institution. We provide education to students at the lowest cost. Thousands of Daffodil students vandalised, set fire to, and looted our campus. They beat our students, burnt our gate

and vehicles, and destroyed all our departments and offices. We called the police, the army, and Rab, but no one came to help us,” he claimed.

However, Arafat Islam, additional superintendent of police (Dhaka District) dismissed the allegation as baseless.

“Police were present at the scene throughout the night and worked to control the situation,” he told The Daily Star.

When asked about police presence during the day, he said, “Although police did not enter the campus, they were stationed outside. Our patrol team is deployed there.”

DIU External Affairs Director Syed Mizanur Rahman said, “The matter [spit incident] was resolved after an apology was offered. But later that night, they [City University students] vandalised the DIU student mess. We’re trying to resolve the matter.”

Some 11 DIU students detained by students of City University during the clash were later handed over to the DIU authorities at around 3:00pm yesterday.

Enam Medical College Hospital Duty Manager Yusuf Ali said 12 students had been admitted to the general ward for treatment.

DIU Proctor Sheikh Muhammad Aliar said more than 150 of their students were injured, while City University Proctor Abu Zayed said at least 50 of their students were hurt.

EC finalises list

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The EC has no information regarding a potential referendum at this time.

Asked whether a referendum might be held alongside the national election and if that would require more booths, he said: “Since it hasn’t been placed before the Election Commission yet, I can’t comment on it.”

Meanwhile, the EC has not provided a legal justification for its decision to deny the Water Lily (Shapla) symbol to the National Citizen Party (NCP).

Asked about the matter, Akhtar refrained from offering a legal explanation but recommended that journalists consult with legal experts for further clarity.

No alternative proposal has been received from the party, so the EC would allocate symbols at its discretion.

“The matter is simple — the ‘Shapla’ symbol is not included in our schedule, so it was not allotted.

We have been saying this all along. The Commission will explain why the symbol was not included in the schedule.”

Asked why the EC was amending the Representation of the People Order (RPO) and the electoral code without dialogue with political parties, Akhtar said the changes were based on discussions held earlier under the National Consensus Commission.

“Any conflicting issues would have been raised and addressed there. So far, no such conflicts have arisen.”

When asked if further amendments might follow upcoming talks with political parties, he said: “It’s better not to speak on assumptions.”

Regarding the BNP’s objection to the RPO amendment, he said: “They raised the issue yesterday. The EC will act to ensure the outcome is acceptable to all.”

20 hurt as protesters hurl stones at train

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while others were halted at nearby stations.

Railway officials confirmed that at least five trains were delayed, including the Karnaphuli Express, Titas Commuter, and Chattala Express. Passengers expressed frustration as the blockade dragged on.

At the railway blockade, speakers including Bhairab unit BNP President Rafiqul Islam, General Secretary Ariful Islam, and student leaders Md Zahidul and Mawlana Shahriar said their patience was running thin.

“We’ve been demonstrating peacefully for 15 days, but the interim government hasn’t responded yet. We blocked the railway for an hour today [Monday] after observing a two-hour road blockade on Sunday. If our demand is ignored, we’ll go for indefinite road, rail, and river blockades,” said one of the speakers.

Responding to the violence, student leader Shahriar claimed, “A vested group tried to sabotage our peaceful movement by throwing stones. We decided to end the programme early, considering the passengers’ suffering.”

Bhairab Railway Police Station Officer-in-Charge Sayeed Ahmed said train operations were restored after discussions with local leaders and higher authorities. “We’re investigating the stone-throwing incident and will identify those responsible.”

The agitation follows weeks of protests after the Reform Commission under the Ministry of Public Administration proposed including Kishoreganj district under the Mymensingh Division on October 11. Many in Bhairab, currently under Kishoreganj, reacted angrily and began demanding district status for the upazila.

Protesters had earlier blocked the Dhaka-Sylhet Highway and the Bhairab-Kishoreganj Regional Highway on Sunday. They also announced plans to enforce a waterway blockade on the Meghna River today.

Bullet took his voice, future

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“The bullet fired by police shattered my life. I have lost my mother and am still giving all my efforts for the treatment of Musa, my only child,” said Mustafizur.

“Musa neither walk nor speak but understands everything. He takes food through a tube,” said the father, his voice trembling.

When The Daily Star gently asked the boy inside the courtroom, “How are you, little one?”, Musa raised his thumb to say okay.

Mustafizur recounted how an ordinary afternoon turned into horror on July 19 last year. Around 3:30pm, he went downstairs from their Rampura home with his mother and son to buy ice cream. “A bullet fired from outside hit my son in the head — it pierced through and came out the other side,” he said.

He rushed Musa to a local hospital and then to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) as gunfire raged outside. Hours later, he learnt that

his mother had died on the way to another hospital.

Mustafizur said he saw Mashiur Rahman, then officer-in-charge of Rampura Police Station, firing during the chaos. “I want justice for those who killed my mother and destroyed my son’s life.”

Musa underwent multiple surgeries at DMCH, Combined Military Hospital, and later in Singapore. Despite months of therapy, he remains paralysed and dependent on others.

During cross-examination by the defence lawyer for the only accused in custody, then Rampura police outpost assistant sub-inspector Chanchal Chandra Sarkar, the witness said no autopsy on his mother’s body was conducted, and her body was released only after police asked the DMCH to do so.

Mustafizur said the police personnel forced his father to take the body to their Tangail home and bury it there. “With my son still in

critical condition, I could not attend my mother’s burial.”

Talking to reporters after the hearing, Mustafizur said, “Musa was at the top of his class ... He had a whole life ahead of him. It has all been snatched away.”

At a press briefing, Md Amir Hossain, state-appointed defence counsel, was asked if he had any doubts about the tribunal delivering proper justice. He responded by saying that there was no lack of transparency at the court and that he did not believe it was a “kangaroo court”.

The lawyer, who is also representing ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina and former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal in an ICT case related to the July uprising, added, “So far, no side has ever exerted any pressure on me or told me what to say or do. Whether this is a kangaroo court or not? I would not answer that. But I don’t think it is.”

Dhaka, Islamabad discuss trade

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Bangladesh’s request to waive existing customs duties and grant duty-free, quota-free (DFQF) access for Bangladesh jute, jute products, and agro-products.

The parties also agreed to explore export opportunities for other Bangladeshi products with high market potential in Pakistan, including pharmaceuticals, tobacco, textiles, clothing accessories, tea, plastics, fruits such as pineapple and lychee, and handicrafts, read the draft meeting minutes.

The JEC also discussed cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, energy, research and higher education, banking, tourism, sports, textiles, and climate change, the Economic Relations Division (ERD) said in a statement.

Both sides expressed interest in enhancing connectivity by establishing direct shipping links, expanding air services, and increasing the use of ports and logistics to reduce costs and improve efficiency in bilateral and regional trade, it added.

On the sidelines, the two nations signed a MoU on halal food trade, under which BSTI-certified halal products will be accepted in Pakistan

without additional inspection, and vice versa for products certified by the Pakistan Halal Authority (PHA).

They also agreed to promote joint-venture investments in the textile sector, noting that many Bangladeshi garment factories import denim and other fabrics from Pakistan. Several global fashion brands sourcing apparel from Bangladesh often nominate Pakistani fabric suppliers for their orders.

“The parties agreed to encourage such nomination-based cooperation to expand export volumes,” the statement read.

To strengthen connectivity, both sides agreed to pursue direct air services and establish a Joint Working Group on Maritime Cooperation between the Bangladesh Shipping Corporation and Pakistan National Shipping Corporation. Pakistan also proposed that Bangladesh use Karachi Port Trust for trade with China and other regional countries.

“The parties agreed to explore direct shipping links between the seaports of Bangladesh and Pakistan to facilitate faster, cost effective, and secure movement of goods,” the statement read.

The meeting further discussed collaboration in IT, renewable energy,

engineering, and cold-chain logistics.

“All issues will be forwarded to the relevant ministries for follow-up discussions,” Salehuddin said, adding that focal-point officials will be appointed to monitor direct flights and shipping.

He emphasised that the push is not limited to one country. “We have started a new beginning and want to continue this process with other South and Southeast Asian countries... We also want to strengthen SAARC,” he said.

Ali Pervaiz Malik noted that bilateral trade remains below \$1 billion but expressed optimism about future growth. “We aim to enhance trade in ways that support each country’s key industries. Jute will remain the mainstay, but we are also exploring cooperation in agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and other sectors,” he told reporters.

Both sides welcomed the Pakistan-Bangladesh Knowledge Corridor, which offers 500 scholarships to Bangladeshi students to promote academic exchange and research collaboration.

The next JEC meeting will be held in Islamabad at a mutually convenient time, the ERD statement added.