

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

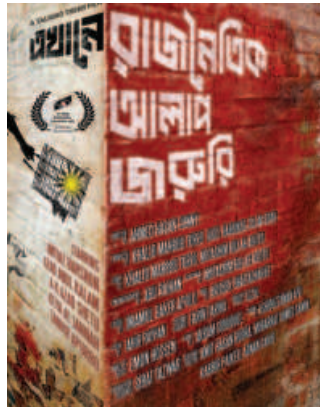
‘Ekhan Rajnoitik Alap Joruri’: Sunny’s bold political statement

DOWEL BISWAS

Ahmed Hasan Sunny built his reputation through music — with tracks like *Shohoror Duita Gaan*, *Amra Hoyto*, *Manush Keno Erokam*, and *Kemne Ki* — but he has always insisted cinema was his first language.

This December, he steps into public view as a filmmaker with his debut feature, *Ekhan Rajnoitik Alap Joruri*, releasing on December 26. The film unfolds against the tremors of the 2024 student-public uprising, stretching across multiple generations of political unrest.

Sunny traces the impulse back to a much earlier moment: watching *Ora II Jon*. Long before his songs found an audience, he was making short films and commercials, learning by trial and repetition. A feature, he says, demanded a different posture. “A feature film is a whole other responsibility,” he reflects. “I wanted to make it in silence. Maybe I got things wrong, maybe I



got things right — but I tried to do it my way.”

The cast includes Imtiaz Barshon, Keya Al Jannah, Azad Abul Kalam, A K Azad Shetu and Tanvir Apurbo. Yet the film’s core tension is carried by two brothers caught in the emotional drift of political upheaval — a mirror, Sunny says, of the psychological descent he witnessed across the country.

He pushes back against the idea that the film has been years in the

making. “I’ve imagined fifteen different films, and this wasn’t one of them. It came suddenly. The shifting political climate made it feel like the right time.” The July Movement, he insists, is not the centrepiece but a pressure point: a way of exploring how ordinary people absorb political shock.

For Sunny, the film is not “urgent” — a word he resists — but it offers a revision of political history told through lived experience rather than rhetoric. “We’ve been mistreated by the British, by India, by Pakistan, by our own governments. These layers flow through the film. If it does anything, it helps us see where we stand politically, socially, and economically.”

The film also pushes back against recent attempts to diminish the Liberation War. One character — a Hindu survivor of 1971 who returns to agricultural life — anchors the story’s historical weight and its contrast between urban detachment and rural political consciousness.



Raihan Khan’s ‘Tribunal’ aiming for Eid release

Raihan Khan’s upcoming film *Tribunal*, a courtroom drama rooted in a case under the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, 2001, is moving toward completion.

The film delves into the fraught interplay of justice, morality and political influence. The team introduced the project at a press conference in Dhaka on Tuesday, December 9. Khan said the film is being made “in a completely different approach” and is being prepared for an Eid release.

Nusraat Faria stars as a barrister, alongside Mousumi Hamid, Tania Brishty, Saira Akhter Jahan, Ador Azad and others. Inspired by true events, *Tribunal* features 26 witnesses and an eyewitness, played by Mousumi Hamid.

Over 50 artistes to honour Zakir Hussain on first death anniversary



More than 50 acclaimed artistes from India and around the world will gather at Mumbai’s National Centre for Performing Arts (NCPA) for *Maestro Forever*, a two-day tribute marking the first death anniversary of legendary tabla maestro Zakir Hussain.

The event, scheduled for December 14 and 15, will bring together globally renowned musicians including John McLaughlin, Louis Banks, Dave Holland, Ganesh Rajagopalan, Ranjit Barot, V Selvaganesh, Shankar Mahadevan, Chris Potter, Sanjay Divecha, Gino Banks, Ajay Chakrabarty, Amjad Ali Khan, and Niladri Kumar. Many of these artistes had long shared the stage and a deep musical camaraderie with Hussain.

Hussain’s wife Antonia, daughters Anisa and Isabella, and his brothers will also be present in the event.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘Guardians of the Gods’

Prachyanat and Sweden’s Unga Klara unite for a rare global project exploring childhood under the rule of adults. Drawn from interviews across 11 countries, the play captures the quiet bravery of children who see through power, offering a tender, radical portrait of youth demanding to be heard.

DATE: SATURDAY | DECEMBER 13, 2025

TIME: 6PM AND 7:30PM ONWARDS

VENUE: STUDIO THEATER HALL, BSA



NEWS

Govt to go tough on disruptive activities

FROM PAGE 12
mode. After the announcement of the schedule, any protest or movement on the streets will be handled very strictly. We are preparing for a good election.”

There have been 2,000 protests in the last 16 months.

The new government decided to deal with these protests peacefully. Except for a few incidents of baton charge, nothing else happened. The law enforcement agencies have shown a great level of patience, which is rare in Bangladesh’s history,” he said.

Also at the meeting, the advisory council exempted the value-added tax (VAT) on metro rail tickets.

Though the government would

get about Tk 40 crore per year, the government exempted the VAT considering that the metro rail is playing an important role in the transportation of the city dwellers, Shafiqul said.

The government also reduced the tax incidence on dates to 40 percent from the existing 52 percent to facilitate the consumers in the upcoming holy month of Ramadan.

Three ordinances were also approved: the Commercial Court Ordinance 2025, the National Legal Aid (Second Amendment) Ordinance 2025, and the Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2025.

However, the drafts of the Telecommunication Ordinance,

the SME Policy, and the National Qualifications Framework Policy were placed before the advisory council but did not receive approval, Shafiqul said.

The meeting also adopted a thanksgiving motion for the two outgoing advisers.

Environment, Forest and Climate Change Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan moved the motion highlighting the biography of outgoing advisers Mahfuj Alam and Asif Mahmud Shojib Bhuyain and their contributions to the 2018 anti-quota movement and the 2024 July Uprising.

Yunus also hosted a luncheon in their honour after the meeting of the advisory council at his office.

Burn mark, past thefts

FROM PAGE 12
A Dhaka court yesterday placed Ayesha on a six-day remand and Rabbi on a three-day remand in the case filed over the murders.

At a press briefing at the DMP Media Centre, Nazrul Islam said Ayesha had joined the household only four days before the killings.

She stole Tk 2,000 on her second day at work and when Laila questioned her the next day, an altercation broke out, with Ayesha denying to have taken the money.

Last Tuesday, the fourth day, Ayesha reportedly arrived with a switchgear knife, Nazrul said.

“As Laila was preparing to call her husband about the missing money, Ayesha attacked her to stop the call,” he said.

Hearing her mother’s screams, Nafisa ran out of her room. “Ayesha then stabbed the teenager multiple times,” the police officer said.

Nafisa attempted to call the building’s security guard through the intercom, but the main cable had allegedly been torn out.

Both mother and daughter died of excessive blood loss, Nazrul said.

Ayesha also injured her own hand during the attack.

Afterwards, she went to the bathroom, changed out of her bloodstained clothes, and put on Nafisa’s school uniform to disguise herself.

She washed the two knives — the one she brought and another she allegedly picked up from the kitchen — and left them in a bucket before fleeing the flat with a laptop, a mobile phone, and other valuables stuffed in a backpack.

According to police, she later changed clothes again at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital, then headed toward Savar.

On the way, she allegedly dumped the stolen phone and her bloodstained garments into the river from Singair Bridge to destroy evidence.

“She had a history of theft. Her mother confirmed that Ayesha had allegedly stolen Tk 2 lakh and four bhoris of gold jewellery from her sister’s home,” Nazrul said.

Because she wore a burqa when entering and leaving the home, CCTV footage did not clearly capture her face, and the family had no accurate address for her.

The burn mark on her neck became the key to identifying her, the police officer said.

Investigators reviewed house-help theft cases reported to Mohammadpur Police Station over the past year and found similarities with a July 2025 incident on Humayun Road, where Tk 8,000 and a gold ring were stolen.

The suspect in that case was also named Ayesha and also had a burn injury on her neck.

Police said they collected a phone number Ayesha had used from the victims’ family, which led them to Hemayetpur in Savar, where she and her husband had rented a flat.

Information from Ayesha’s mother and technological surveillance then helped the law enforcers track Ayesha to Rabbi’s parental home in Charkaya village, Jhalakathi, where she was arrested.

Regarding the burn injury, Nazrul Islam said investigators received conflicting accounts. “One version is that Ayesha, being short tempered, set fire to herself after an argument with her mother. Another claim is that she was burned while working at someone’s home. We are verifying the information.”

Khaleda Zia

FROM PAGE 12
On Wednesday night, Khaleda’s personal physician Dr Zahid Hossain said she is receiving treatment in ICU.

The BNP chief has long been battling multiple complications, including liver cirrhosis, arthritis, diabetes, and chronic issues affecting her kidneys, lungs, heart, and eyes.

“Due to the increase in her breathing difficulty, the decrease in oxygen levels in the blood, and the rise in carbon dioxide levels, she is being treated with a high-flow nasal cannula and a BIPAP machine,” the statement read.

“However, as her condition did not improve, she has been placed on elective ventilator support to rest her lungs and other organs,” it added.

Elective ventilator support is a planned medical decision, rather than an emergency intervention.

Moreover, due to gastrointestinal bleeding and disseminated intravascular coagulation, Khaleda is receiving blood and blood product transfusions.

“Despite all the treatment, as her fever did not go down, and during the regular echocardiography, as some problems were found in the aortic valve, a transoesophageal echo was done, and infective endocarditis was diagnosed,” said Shahabuddin.

Following the advice of local and foreign doctors, treatment according to standard guidelines for the disease was started immediately, he added.

Urging people not to spread misinformation, the doctors requested everyone to pray for Khaleda’s speedy recovery. Though BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman who has been in exile in Britain for 17 years, has not yet visited her, Dr Zubaida Rahman, wife of Tarique, arrived in Dhaka on December 5 to look after her treatment.

Demand for 20% allowance ‘unjustified’

FROM PAGE 12
200 non-cadre staffers demanded that the government issue a gazette immediately to address their demand.

After the incident, Salehuddin did not appear at the Secretariat yesterday, while police and Rab members were seen deployed in the area.

Law enforcers also detained five individuals for demonstration inside the Secretariat, a Key Point Installation (KPI) where processions and gatherings are prohibited.

“They violated the rule and are now being interrogated over the motive behind the demonstration,” said Mainul Islam Pulok, sub-inspector of Shahbagh Police Station, adding that the decision on whether a case would be filed has not been made yet.

When approached, experts said that demanding a special allowance while a new pay scale is being prepared raises questions of justification.

Sheikh Yusuf Harun, former public administration secretary, told The Daily Star that when the government is working to implement a new pay scale, it is natural for questions to arise over the justification of demanding a special allowance for the Secretariat staffers.

“The government has already met many demands, including promotions

and pay hikes at different levels. If all the revenue is spent on salaries, how will development work continue?” he asked, adding that such tactics to force the government into a corner in its final days are “not acceptable.”

MK Muzeri, former director general of the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), said the timing of the pay commission was problematic as the country’s financial situation is already strained.

“Implementing the pay commission now will be very difficult for the current government due to the financial challenges.”

With the national election nearing, he warned that any rise in allowances could set off a chain reaction of demands across various sectors.

“This situation has become volatile, and now, every part of the government workforce expects similar allowances,” he added.

A former cabinet secretary, speaking on condition of anonymity, said if the Secretariat employees are given the 20 percent special allowance, then field-level administration employees should be given 40 percent.

According to him, Secretariat staffers, being close to policymakers, often try to get additional benefits for them. He

cautioned that meeting their demand could prompt government employees nationwide to initiate protests that the administration may struggle to control.

A senior finance ministry official told this newspaper that no directive has been received from the government regarding any initiative to address the demand of the Secretariat employees.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Sarkari Karmochari Dabi Adai Oikyo Parishad wrote to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus yesterday, urging the issuance of the 9th Pay Scale gazette for all government employees by December 15, instead of granting a 20 percent allowance to the Secretariat employees.

The letter also criticised a small group of Secretariat employees who, bypassing the pay scale process, confined the finance adviser to realise their demand.

It also added that granting the demand for an increase in allowance without implementing the 9th Pay Scale would deepen discrimination among government employees.

Ronaldo investing

FROM PAGE 12
Ronaldo, writing on X, framed his involvement as rooted in a mindset that has guided his career. “Curiosity is a requirement for greatness... You win when you keep asking new questions every day.”

At the centre of the company’s strategy is Ronaldo’s global reach. His CR7 brand, which appears on products ranging from fragrances to hotels and fitness centres, functions as a commercial identity with an audience comparable to major media organisations. For Perplexity, access to hundreds of millions of followers across Latin America, the Middle East and Asia offers a route into regions where it faces strong competition and long-established search habits. The partnership signals a shift in how AI search tools are promoted, with companies increasingly seeking broad cultural visibility rather than focusing solely on technical communities or enterprise clients.

Donald Trump

FROM PAGE 12
“apply now” button, allows interested applicants to pay a \$15,000 fee to the Department of Homeland Security for speedy processing.

After going through a background check or vetting process, applicants must then make a “contribution” — the website also calls it a “gift” — of \$1 million to get the visa, similar to a “Green Card,” which allows them to live and work in the United States.