



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Curtains rise on DIFF

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

The 24th *Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF)* officially began yesterday at the main auditorium of the Bangladesh National Museum, marking the start of a ten-day celebration of world cinema under the theme "Nandanik Chalachitra, Mononshil Darshak, Alokiti Shomaj" (Aesthetic Films, Discerning Audience, Enlightened Society).

The opening ceremony brought together filmmakers, diplomats, artistes, and cinephiles, turning the venue into a vibrant hub of cultural exchange. Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Adviser for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Water Resources, and Information and Broadcasting, attended the event as the chief guest. Croatian filmmaker Aleksandra Marković and Li Xiaopeng, Cultural Counselor at the Chinese Embassy in Bangladesh, were among the distinguished international guests. Jalal Ahmed, Executive Member of the Festival Committee, presided over the ceremony.

Speaking at the event, Syeda Rizwana Hasan highlighted the importance of cinema as a space for social interaction in an increasingly demanding life. "Life has become so tough that we hardly find time for social interaction. If I receive the festival schedule, I will definitely try to attend at least one or two screenings," she said.

She also stressed the need for environmental

responsibility, particularly in relation to the festival's special open-air screenings at Cox's Bazar. Emphasising that Laboni Beach is an ecologically fragile area, she urged organisers and audiences to avoid excessive lighting and refrain from using single-use plastic. The adviser further encouraged filmmakers and organisers to prioritise environmental themes.

Li Xiaopeng, Cultural Counselor at the Chinese Embassy, described cinema as a universal language. He praised DIFF for building cultural bridges over the years and expressed satisfaction over the Chinese Film Week, which features 13 Chinese films of diverse themes and styles. "We hope this initiative inspires cooperation, friendship, and meaningful dialogue among filmmakers," he said.

Croatian filmmaker Aleksandra Marković commended Bangladeshi cinema for its strong storytelling tradition and emerging contemporary voices. "Bangladesh cinema has a powerful presence. I am committed to promoting Bangladeshi films and filmmakers internationally and supporting opportunities for global collaboration," she said.

The evening also featured lively cultural performances by Theatrical Company and the Jol Torongo Dance Crew. The festival's first screening began at 5:30 pm with the Chinese film *Wu Jin Zhi Lu* (The Journey to No End), directed by Chen Xiang, followed by the Iranian drama *Without Me* by Mohammad Asadnia at 7 pm.

Film screenings will take place across multiple venues in Dhaka, including the Bangladesh National Museum, Kabi Sufia Kamal Auditorium, National Art Gallery, National Theatre Hall at Shilpkala Academy, Alliance Française de Dhaka, and Stamford University Bangladesh auditoriums.

For the first time, DIFF is also extending its reach to the coast with open-air screenings at Laboni Beach in Cox's Bazar from January 10 to 18, organised by the Bangladesh Tourism Board, allowing audiences to experience world cinema against the backdrop of the sea.

Complementing the film screenings, a visual art exhibition is being held from January 9 to 17 at the 3D Art Gallery of the Bangladesh Military Museum. Curated by Lutfa Mahmuda, the exhibition features work by 10 renowned Bangladeshi artistes and explores the intersection of cinema and visual art.

This year's festival showcases 245 films from 91 countries, including Bangladesh, across a wide range of sections such as Asian Film Competition, Retrospective, Wide Angle, Bangladesh Panorama, Cinema of the World, Children's Film Session, Women Filmmakers, Short and Independent Films, and Spiritual Films.

The 24th *Dhaka International Film Festival* will continue until January 18, offering audiences an expansive and diverse cinematic experience.

literary portraits, each shaped by sensory memory and the ethics of attention. In *Lotus Head*, she returns to a childhood moment of near drowning, a scene of sudden fear and helplessness in deep water. Over time, the water becomes a recurring metaphor, but it transforms.

She has a clear sense of what makes a person feel unmistakably themselves. For her, identity is preserved in the small, faithful details that outlast time. In *Dadu*, it is the cigarette, the newspapers, and the persistent instruction to "read the news". In *Boro Nanu*, it is the nimble hands shaping *pitha* and a sewing machine. In *Ekram Sir*, it is the harmonium. In *Chachi*, it is a packet of Maggi noodles and the unending stack of ungraded copies.

This detail reinforces the

Brushstrokes Across Generations: Inside a father-daughter exhibition



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

FAIZA RAMIM

Brushstrokes Across Generations, a father and daughter painting exhibition, was inaugurated on January 9 at SHALA Neighbourhood Art Space, Aloki. The event was conceived as more than a display of finished works. A projector ran audiovisual material and portfolios created specifically for the occasion, supported by thoughtful food



arrangements and a steady flow of visitors. Afzal Hossain and Hashem Khan attended and delivered speeches that framed the exhibition within a wider conversation about artistic practice, discipline, and sincerity.

At the heart of the exhibition, there are two distinct yet complementary artistic approaches. Noman Anwar's paintings depict places and human habitats with a bright palette and a controlled precision. Working in oil and acrylic, he builds scenes that feel both luminous and exact, with careful strokes that hold detail without losing atmosphere.

Facing Noman's wall is Izma's work, which turns decisively toward the human interior. Her paintings capture people not only as subjects but as presences, shaped by intimacy, memory, and the emotional truths that outlive a moment.

Her artistic statements, in particular, operate like short

exhibition's central idea, that art is not only an outcome but a passage, and that what passes between generations is not a single style but a shared commitment to making. In this room, one wall offers the world as it looks when rendered through light, place, and precision. The other offers the world as it is remembered, felt, and carried. The movement between them makes the title feel accurate, formal, and earned. Visitors can attend the exhibition today and tomorrow from 1 pm to 9 pm.

Popular Bangladeshi band Shonar Bangla Circus has released a new double album titled *Mohashoshan*. The conceptual project features a total of 17 tracks, spread across two discs.

The first disc, *Mohashoshan 1*, includes nine songs, while the second, *Mohashoshan 2*, contains eight songs. The album was released on Thursday evening (January 8) at 8 pm Bangladesh time through the band's official YouTube channel and is now available on Spotify and other major international digital streaming platforms.

According to a press release, Shonar Bangla Circus will launch a solo concert series titled *Mohashoshan Jatra* two months from now, where all the songs from the new album will be performed live for the first time.

The current lineup of the band includes Probar Ripon, Seth Panduranga Blumberg, Shakil Haque, and Saad Chowdhury.



SHONAR BANGLA CIRCUS returns with double album 'Mohashoshan'

TAHSAN confirms separation with ROZA

Popular singer and actor Tahsan Khan surprised everyone early last year by announcing his marriage without any prior hint or rumours. He had embarked on this new chapter of his life with makeup artist Roza Ahmed.

However, reports suggest that the couple's relationship has not been going well for several months, and their marriage is now on the verge of breaking down. In fact, the couple has been living separately for the past few months.

Tahsan Khan confirmed this news to several media outlets, saying, "The news is true. We have been separated and living apart since the end of July. I will share

further details at the appropriate time."

He also mentioned that he was not keen to discuss his personal life publicly at this stage. "I didn't want to speak about my personal life in public. But I saw some false news about our wedding anniversary, which is why I need to clarify that we are no longer together," he added.

Tahsan Khan had married Roza Ahmed on January 4, 2025, after knowing her for just four months. Roza is a professional makeup artist with over a decade of experience in Bangladesh and the United States and runs her own makeup studio in New York.

Ahmed Hasan Sunny and Nusrat Maati host post-wedding reception



In May last year, university lecturer and filmmaker Nusrat Maati and musician-filmmaker Ahmed Hasan Sunny tied the knot in an intimate family ceremony. At the time, the couple had planned to host a post-wedding reception for friends and colleagues at a more convenient time. In line with that plan, they completed their post-marriage formalities on Friday night, in the presence of friends, well-wishers, and acquaintances beyond the immediate family.

Meanwhile, Sunny's film *Ekhane Rajnoitik Alaap Joruri* is set for release on January 16. Ahead of the release, the filmmaker has been busy with promotional activities, with the teaser, trailer and songs already unveiled. Completing the wedding formalities before the film's release has been a source of relief for him.

Before their marriage, Ahmed Hasan Sunny and Nusrat Maati shared a friendship of nearly three years, which eventually blossomed into a marital relationship.

Maati, who studied film in Europe, is currently working as a story and screenplay writer, alongside teaching film studies at a private university.