

Falgun-Valentine's Day special: Chorki brings 'Tiffin Box'

This Falgun and Valentine's Day, popular OTT platform Chorki will unveil its latest flash fiction content, *Tiffin Box*, for viewers across the country.

The short-length film will be available from midnight on 9 February (10 February Bangladesh time). Written, scripted, and directed by Rakayet Rabby, the film stars Rukaiya Jahan Chamak and Prantar Dashtider.

Apart from Prantar and Chamak, *Tiffin Box* also stars Sharmin Sultana Shormia and Tuntuni Sobhan in important roles. Produced under the Chorki Flash Fiction banner by Alpha-1 and Chorki, the project brings a cinematic glimpse into fleeting yet meaningful moments of life, combining aesthetic storytelling with a "slice of life" approach.



Some stories leave scars, and this film does exactly that: JAYA AHSAN

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Jaya Ahsan continues to command admiration on both sides of the border, with powerful performances that have resonated deeply with audiences in Bangladesh and India alike.

A multiple-time National Film Award winner at home and a frequent recipient of honours in India, Jaya now returns to the big screen with her latest film, *OCD*, set for release on February 6.

The trailer, released recently, has already sparked widespread praise, drawing attention to the film's intense psychological depth and social relevance.

Speaking to The Daily Star from Kolkata, where she is currently busy with promotional activities, the actress opened up about the film, her character, and why *OCD* feels particularly urgent in today's time.

Directed by Soukarya Ghosal, this film marks Jaya's second collaboration with the filmmaker after *Bhootpori*. In the film, she plays Shweta, a character she describes as deeply personal and profoundly meaningful.

"Shweta is a beautiful character—one I truly connected with," she says. "She stands up for children. There is a strong message at the heart of this story, and it's told very powerfully."

A psychological thriller at its core, *OCD* explores the long-term emotional consequences of childhood trauma. Jaya believes the film raises uncomfortable but necessary questions.

"If we fail to give children a healthy childhood, the damage can be immense," she explains. "That's what this film shows—how deeply such experiences can affect someone, even years later. It's a very strong story for this time."



In *OCD*, Ahsan portrays a doctor grappling with unresolved emotional scars of her own. "The audience will slowly discover how layered Shweta's life is," she says. "There are dark clouds in her mind—marks that never quite fade."

The film also stars Fazlur Rahman Babu, whose performance she speaks of warmly. "Babu bhai has acted brilliantly in *OCD*. The Indian actors were equally wonderful. Everyone has done such sincere work, and

the director has handled the story beautifully."

Child artiste Arshiya Mukherjee, popularly known as *Bhootu* from television—plays the younger version of Ahsan's character. "She has performed exceptionally well," Jaya notes.

Reflecting on the trailer's reception, Jaya says she understands why it has struck a chord. "It clearly shows how bitter childhood experiences can shape, or even destroy, a person's future. That emotional impact is right there in the trailer."

Currently in Kolkata, Jaya is fully immersed in promoting the film. "The promotions are in full swing—newspapers, television, everything," she shares. "I truly believe this film will move audiences. I'm very hopeful."

Asked whether she misses Fazlur Rahman Babu during the promotions, she smiles and admits, "Of course, I miss him."

Beyond *OCD*, Jaya recently received another accolade in Kolkata for her performance in *Putulnacher Itikatha*. "Winning the award for the character Kusum means a great deal to me," she says. "Being able to portray such a role itself was special, and being recognised for it feels truly rewarding."

As she wraps up, Ahsan reflects once more on *OCD*—a film she believes will linger in the minds of its viewers.

"This is one of my new films this year," she says. "I hope *OCD* leaves a mark on the audience—something that stays with them."



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Nawba Tahiya bids farewell to showbiz

Bangladeshi actress Nawba Tahiya Hossain has announced her decision to leave the entertainment industry, bringing an unexpected end to a four-year acting career. She shared the news in a Facebook post on Wednesday, February 4, confirming that she will no longer take part in acting or media-related work.

Nawba Tahiya recently appeared in Anonno Proteek Chowdhuri's film *Noya Note* and built a steady presence through television

dramas and digital projects. Her notable works include *Chupi Chupi*, *Mithe Kabber Ful*, *Amar Thikana Tumi*, and Mizanur Rahman Aryan's *Punormilone*.

In her statement, she said she has found peace through faith, learning and self-reflection. She will now focus on her education and personal growth.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Achalayatan'

Prachyanat revives Rabindranath Tagore's *Achalayatan* as a stark, contemporary meditation on obedience, fear, and education's moral cost.

Directed by Azad Abul Kalam, the production strips symbolism to its bones, reimagining the institution as a women's space where ritual clashes with freedom, and conformity meets dissent.

DATE: TODAY (FRIDAY) | FEB 6, 2026
TIME: 7 PM

VENUE: NATIONAL THEATRE HALL, BSA



NEWS

Couple, 2 children found dead

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Masum's younger brother, Md Afroz, said the family had been struggling for some time and added that Masum changed businesses several times, but the hardship did not go away.

"I cannot believe Masum would take his own life along with his family because of financial distress."

Masum's cousin Ansar Ahmed said Masum and Sumi once worked in the Benarasi trade and later married. After the marriage, Sumi became a homemaker and stopped working,

while Masum continued working to support the family but wasn't earning enough.

"Masum later left the Benarasi work and tried different jobs, including selling clothes and vegetables on footpaths, before taking up work as an auto-rickshaw driver. Even then, he struggled to run the household and had been somewhat frustrated."

Ansar also said Masum had borrowed some money from his elder brother's wife and was repaying it in instalments.

According to family members, Masum's sister-in-law went to his room around 11:30am yesterday to collect an instalment when she discovered their bodies.

Locals said Masum was known in the area as a cheerful person, and no one suspected he could do something like this. Many were left shocked, questioning how such a tragedy could occur.

The bodies were sent to the morgue of Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital.

World watches Bangladesh

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A change in Indian policy on Bangladesh is likely to affect Pakistan's influence in Bangladesh after the election, Khan said.

"Pakistan will be comfortable working with either of the parties — BNP or Jamaat," he added.

Beyond the subcontinent, China, Bangladesh's largest trading partner, has maintained the strong relations it harvested with the Hasina regime with the interim government.

The interim government managed Chinese commitment of \$2.1 billion in investments, loans and grants.

Throughout last year, China engaged with all the political parties and arranged visits to China.

"China has always wanted stability and wants the same now for protecting its trade and investments. They know they cannot go for long-term planning and implementation unless there is an elected government," said Kabir, the former ambassador.

The Western world too wants the election to bring stability to the country.

The US is unlikely to take a strong stand on the need for a free, fair, and credible election, even though it may state this publicly, according to Kugelmann.

Its primary concern is overall stability and that the election will be peaceful, and that any election-related violence will be minimised.

"In particular, it seeks to ensure that such violence does not imperil US interests or assets in Bangladesh," he told The Daily Star.

The Trump administration will be perfectly comfortable with whoever leads the next government, so long as

that government is willing to engage with Washington, do business, and — most importantly from Washington's perspective — discuss lowering tariffs and purchasing more American goods, Kugelmann said.

On the perception that the US favours Jamaat for some reason, Kugelmann said the American government does not favour any particular political party.

On US Ambassador Brent Christensen's remarks on reducing Chinese influence, Kugelmann said the US wants Bangladesh to rely less on Chinese capital and infrastructure development.

"This may suggest a willingness to bring US investment, including potentially from DFC, into Bangladesh," he said.

China is a major source of funds for Bangladesh's infrastructure.

If other countries like the US come up with funding, Dhaka will definitely welcome that, Kabir said.

"Bangladesh's imports from the US are already increasing and the defence cooperation can also grow where feasible," he added.

The EU, the largest buyer of Bangladesh's products with annual imports worth \$22 billion, along with the UK, Canada and Australia, have always promoted democracy, human rights, labour rights, gender equality and minority rights in Bangladesh.

"We want a free, fair and credible election and stability in Bangladesh. It has direct implications for Europe," a European diplomat told this correspondent.

He said they need a stable supply chain and prevention of irregular migration, and it will not be possible without stability here.

Even the CEC

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I cannot give any final decision. However, we have two options before us: a person nominated by the president or the CEC if the three-day period lapses," he said.

However, the adviser stressed the government's preference for expedience.

"The problem with waiting for the chief election commissioner is that we would have to wait for three days. We actually do not want to wait. We want to arrange the oath-taking as soon as possible after the election," he said.

Asif Nazrul added that he would review the law and convey his final opinion to Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus.

Ensure safety

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during the election period.

The statement was signed on behalf of the Editors' Council by its President Nurul Kabir, editor of New Age, and General Secretary Dewan Hanif Mahmud, editor and publisher of Bonik Barta.

Transfer of power

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Ordinance, 2026," and "Forest Industry Development Corporation Ordinance, 2026."

The name of the "Bangabandhu National Agriculture Award Trust Act, 2016" was amended to the "National Agriculture Award Trust Ordinance, 2026."

Meanwhile, the Advisory Council approved the formation of the "Urban Safety and Resilience Institute" under the Ministry of Public Works.

Army assures all-out efforts for credible polls

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alongside manning checkpoints, he said.

Explaining field operations, Monzur said the army has been supporting the civil administration in maintaining law and order for the past one and a half years and has had to perform policing tasks during that period.

"That is why we equipped our troops with non-lethal weapons and riot-control equipment," he said.

In the 14 days since January 20, forces recovered around 150 firearms — "most of them locally made and some foreign pistols" — along with ammunition and materials used to make cocktail bombs, he said.

Overall, the army has so far recovered 10,152 firearms and 291,000 rounds of ammunition, and detained 22,282 "identified terrorists and criminals", he added.

For remote and high-risk areas, Monzur said military helicopters and watercraft would be kept ready to transport election officials and materials if required. At risky polling centres, police will use body-worn cameras, while law enforcement agencies will deploy drones and other tools "so any situation can be handled quickly".

"The army is coordinating with district and upazila coordination cells and has set up a round-the-clock monitoring cell at Army Headquarters," he said.

Monzur identified misinformation as a major challenge during the election period, warning that the threat has intensified with advances in artificial intelligence.

"Social media is our biggest challenge

this time," he said.

Asked how long troops would remain deployed after the election, he said it was "the government's decision".

"Just as we were deployed by government decision, our return to cantonments will also be decided by the government," he said.

Warning against mob violence, Monzur said the government, the Election Commission, civil administration, law enforcement agencies and the armed forces were determined to hold a credible election. "We will take every step that is required under the law."

Asked about threats linked to a political party whose activities have been banned and which is not participating in the election, he said he would not comment on political issues. However, he added that the armed forces, particularly the army, had completed preparations to prevent violence or sabotage.

Addressing allegations and doubts raised by rival parties about the election environment, Monzur said complaints among competing parties are common. However, he said the army will not intervene unless there is a risk to lives and property and until the civil administration request military support.

He said the army would operate with "full neutrality", as directed by the army chief, and would follow rules of engagement strictly within the law.

"If force becomes necessary, the army would follow the step-by-step escalation process set out in those rules," he said.

Asked about a recent Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) report

citing more than 600 incidents of violence and over 100 deaths, Monzur said any violence or casualty was "unwanted".

"If we were not there, would it have increased or decreased? We need to understand the realities," he said. "Even after deploying one lakh troops, it is still insufficient in truth. There are remote areas and high-risk centres. We cannot be physically present everywhere. But there has been no lack of effort on our part."

He, however, noted that incidents of violence have declined since the deployment.

Before the briefing, Army Chief General Waker-Uz-Zaman visited the army camp at Dhaka's National Stadium in Gulistan and emphasised neutrality and professionalism in election duties.

According to a statement from the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the army chief also held a meeting at the venue with senior military officials and representatives of the Dhaka Metropolitan, divisional and district administrations, as well as law enforcement agencies.

The meeting focused on inter-agency coordination and overall security management to ensure the elections are conducted in a peaceful, neutral and fair manner.

The ISPR said the army chief has been holding similar coordination meetings since January 22 with senior military officials, civil administration officers from all divisions and districts, and law enforcement representatives. Such meetings have taken place in Dhaka, Chattogram, Cumilla, Rangpur, Bogura, Barishal, Jashore, Cox's Bazar, Sylhet, Ghatail and Savar.

BNP's vision is equal rights

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nation should the BNP win the upcoming election.

He rejected the 80-plus cases previously filed against Tarique as "totally baseless" and "politically motivated", claiming the previous "fascist regime" failed to prove any allegations over 15 years.

Responding to a question on the upcoming election and exclusion of Awami League, Fakhrul said, "Now the question is when a political party or the leader of the political party has killed no less than 2,000 students and the agitators or the people who demonstrate against them... They involved themselves with and used the state apparatus, including the police and others, to kill those people. Naturally, there will be demand for those people to be tried, and so they were tried. It was the Awami League

in general that was involved in these things. All the ministers and all the members of the party were involved."

He, however, expressed his personal opposition to banning political parties, including the Awami League or Jamaat-e-Islami.

"I personally don't support this sort of banning a political party," he said, suggesting that individuals responsible for "genocide" should be tried rather than the entire organisation.

On international ties, Fakhrul said the BNP would "diplomatically try" to repatriate Sheikh Hasina from India to face execution of her convictions.

He expressed hope that relations with New Delhi would improve, describing a recent letter of condolence from Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi following Khaleda Zia's death as a "very good gesture".

Indian forces kill 3 suspected rebels in J&K

AFP, Srinagar

Clashes between security forces and militants in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir killed three suspected rebel fighters on Wednesday, the army said.

An army statement said two fighters were killed following intermittent exchanges of fire with soldiers that began on Tuesday in Basantgarh, in the southern part of the disputed territory.

The militants had hidden inside a natural cave before soldiers used explosives to blow it up, a security official told AFP on condition of anonymity.