



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

AURTHOHIN

The Phoenix still soars

“When we did ‘Guti’, people didn’t understand it. It took a few years for people to catch on. The same happened with ‘Nikkrishto’ and ‘Phoenix 1’. We were ahead of the times, and I can guarantee that the same will happen with ‘Phoenixer Diary 2’ — Bassbaba Sumon

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Walking into a *Cyberpunk 2077*-themed café in Bassbaba Sumon’s residence, it was clear that the SEA legend had ventured into another passion after checking every bucket list item possible for a musician. He started his career in his teens, becoming a cultural icon while revolutionising how the bass, as an instrument, is perceived in Bangladesh, and later collaborating with international musicians like Frank Gambale, Bob Franceschini, and Bubby Lewis.

The conversation with Aurthohin took an instant detour with the mention of me being a fan of *Cyberpunk 2077* as well. “I’ve invested 1,400 hours in the game,” said Bassbaba, who has, by now, become a symbol of resilience. “I have modded the game to oblivion, finished every ending, and used every build humanly possible,” admitted the visibly passionate bassist.

The story writes itself—Bassbaba, who has battled cancer, recovered from a life-threatening accident, and has had 36 surgeries, being fascinated with a game where you undergo surgeries to get “chromed up.”

As we finally managed to steer the conversation back to music, Aurthohin members Shishir Ahmed, Adnan Atique, and Sheikh Reaz chimed in. Shishir was iconic in Aurthohin with both the guitar and keyboard before taking a break. “I think I needed that break, and when Sumon *bhai* wanted me to join again, I was more than glad to get on



board,” he said.

Phoenixer Diary 2, the band’s latest album, has made inroads into the playlists of music lovers everywhere, with tracks like *Phoenix 2*, *Nikkrishto 4*, *Cactus* (featuring Bassbaba’s son, Ahnaf Salehin), and *Shikari*. The band remains adamant about wanting to reinvent their sound on every batch of songs they produce. “When we did *Guti*, people didn’t understand it,” asserted

Sumon. “It took a few years for people to catch on. The same happened with *Nikkrishto* and *Phoenix 1*. We were ahead of the times, and I can guarantee that the same will happen with *Phoenixer Diary 2*.”

Thanks to the wild success of the film *Bonolota Express*, *Chaite Paro 2* is right at the forefront of popular media. “Tanim Noor has done an excellent job in integrating our music into the film. We congratulate him for his deserved success,” says Bassbaba.

As of now, Aurthohin plans to do a solo show in Chittagong. I was, however, curious as to whether there is a chance of a “reunion” concert where the previous members will join. “We did have a plan to do a reunion when Piklu (Minhaz Ahmed Piklu) was still alive.” However, it does not seem imminent. Despite that, Sumon hopes there will be a reunion show sometime in the future.

Fans are, indeed, the lifeblood of Aurthohin. “We’re pushing on for our fans,” says Bassbaba. “Whatever we’re doing is for our *Odbhuts*—and for them, we want to surpass ourselves.”

As we reached the conclusion of the interview, it seemed increasingly apparent that Aurthohin has found new life under this solid lineup, and the phoenix will soar for an unforeseen amount of time.

OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA



‘Printmaking Festival’
May 1–May 23 | 4 pm – 8 pm
Kala Kendra, Lalmatia



‘Harmasis Cleopatra’
May 16 | 5:30 pm and 7:30 pm
May 17 | 7:30 pm
Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA



‘Atmospheres of Time’
May 16–June 7, 2026 | 7 pm onwards
Izakaya, Gulshan

WHAT’S PLAYING

‘Drop Dead’ by OLIVIA RODRIGO

Olivia Rodrigo pivots away from heartbreak on *Drop Dead*, a synth-pop rush built around infatuation, obsession and the dizzy logic of a new crush. Released as the lead single from her upcoming album *You Seem Pretty Sad for a Girl So in Love*, the track trades the sharper pop-rock edges of *Guts* for something brighter and more theatrical, layering pulsing synths with power-pop guitars and string arrangements.

The song quickly became one of Rodrigo’s biggest chart debuts to date, reaching No 1 in the US, UK, Australia and Canada, while dominating streaming platforms within days of release. Its rollout also drew attention for its elaborate visual campaign — pink padlocks scattered across major cities, cryptic teasers online, and a Petra Collins-directed music video filmed at the Palace of Versailles.

More than a comeback single, *Drop Dead* signals a tonal shift for Rodrigo: less consumed by heartbreak, more interested in the chaos and glamour of wanting someone too much.

TV TALKIES

‘POTHER PECHAL’

Gias Uddin Selim’s flash fiction *Pother Pechal* premiered on Chorki on May 7. The story follows Bayezid, an auto-rickshaw driver whose life revolves around his daily work. His life changes when Uma enters unexpectedly. Uma is a young novelist trying to publish her first book. The story develops through their interaction and conversations, as two people from very different social backgrounds come together. Starring Yash Rohan and Bonne Hassan, the project presents a quiet, character-driven story rooted in everyday life.



TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
Berlin and the Lady with an Ermine



Prime Video:
Exam



Hulu:
Lisa Ann Walter: It Was An Accident



Apple TV+:
Maximum Pleasure Guaranteed



Chorki:
Pother Pechal

