

THE UNFULFILLED
POTENTIAL OF
‘ROCKSTAR’:
A rock musician’s
perspective



A lot of media attention is currently fixated on my recent comments regarding the Eid release *Rockstar*, specifically where I noted that the film could have been “a lot better.” Some outlets have laser-focused on my anecdote about Shakib Khan—undoubtedly a superstar of our industry—visiting my home to pay respects to my late father (mega-star Jashim), and taking a photo with my brothers and me. While that was a gracious gesture, I want to move past the tabloid headlines and look at why this film left me reflecting on what could have been.

Ever since groundbreaking films like *Toofan* and *Borbaad*, my expectations for new Shakib Khan releases have naturally heightened. Intrigued by the hype, I didn’t hesitate to buy tickets for this Azman Rusho directorial to see it for myself.

Before diving into the critiques,

the film deserves applause where it is due. The cinematography is truly breathtaking, framing the visuals with immense polish. Performance-wise, there isn’t much to critique Shakib Khan on; he holds the screen well, and Sabila Nur delivers a solid performance as the female lead.

However, as a musician, the first red flag raised itself the moment I stepped out of the theatre: not a single song from the soundtrack stuck with me. It isn’t that the tracks were poorly made—in fact, some were objectively great—but they failed to leave a lasting impression. The rock songs that were made for this film did not sound ‘big’ for

the theatre, rather, the romantic songs in the films managed to do so. This was especially surprising given that the musicians attached to the project are top-notch professionals with stellar track records.

The root of the problem lies in the film’s setting and historical disconnect.

Portraying Shakib Khan as “Agun”—a rich kid with attachment issues—felt like a missed opportunity. If you are going to make a definitive Bangladeshi rock film, why not tap into the golden eras of the ‘80s and ‘90s? This was the legendary period when icons like Ayub Bachchu and James hit

their stride and thrived. Rooting the narrative in that era would have been the perfect vehicle to showcase the rich history of our local rock music.

In the story, Agun and his band suddenly get a life-changing opportunity to open for Warfaze—

yet Warfaze never actually appears on screen. Having a monumental name dropped without the payoff feels like a tease. The presence of actual scene veterans would have given the film massive gravity. Even I was called to audition for the film, but that is the story for another day!

Yet, these are minor nitpicks compared to the core issue plaguing *Rockstar*: a

fundamental misunderstanding of the local musician’s journey.

When portraying the struggle of a rock artiste in Bangladesh, you have to view it through a Bangladeshi lens, not the romanticised western myths of Led Zeppelin or Slayer. Our musicians didn’t just fight inner demons; they fought the reality of the local industry. They survived the infamous “push-sell” era. They are the ones who get up on stage, tuned and ready, only to be told by organisers, “You can only play one song, the headliners need to go up now.” These are localised, unique struggles, and our scene has countless stories like them. By ignoring these realities, the film misses its emotional anchor.

Ultimately, none of this is to say that *Rockstar* is a bad film. If you walk into the theatre looking for pure, uncomplicated entertainment, it delivers exactly that. But given the immense groundwork already laid by generations of Bangladeshi musicians and the film’s director himself, it had the potential to be a definitive cultural moment. It settled for just being an entertaining movie.

A K Rahul is a musician and media personality based in Dhaka.

‘Ityadi’ heads to
Narsingdi for
new episode

The popular entertainment programme *Ityadi* will air its latest episode from Narsingdi on Friday, June 5 on Bangladesh Television (BTV), following the 8:00pm Bangla news bulletin. The programme was filmed in front of the Bir Sreshtho Flight Lieutenant Matiur Rahman Library and Memorial Museum in Ramnagar, Raipura.

Written, directed, and hosted by Hanif Sanket, the programme will feature a folk-fusion performance by Emon Chowdhury and his band Bengal Symphony, alongside a musical tribute to Narsingdi’s history and culture. It will highlight the archaeological site of Wari-Bateshwar, the district’s handloom industry, Baburhat, and GI-recognised products such as Amritsagar bananas, lotkon, and Colombo lemons.

The programme will also feature human-interest, educational, and international reports, alongside comedy sketches, dramatic segments, and audience participation features.



WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘Kinu Kahar er Thetar’

Prachyanat revives Manoj Mitra’s celebrated satire *Kinu Kahar er Thetar*, directed by Kazi Toufikul Islam Emon. Through biting humour and absurd twists, the play exposes a world where power, justice, and accountability are easily bought and sold. Decades after its writing, its political sharpness remains strikingly relevant.

DATE: THURSDAY | JUNE 4, 2026
TIME: 7 PM ONWARDS
VENUE: NATIONAL THEATRE HALL, BSA

NEWS

Relief for fans as WC broadcast

FROM PAGE 12

development said the parties were close to finalising the agreement and were working to ensure a mutually beneficial outcome.

“In two days, the deal is expected to be finalised. It is almost done,” said the official, requesting anonymity.

However, the official admitted that the broadcasters were under pressure due to the limited time available for commercial preparations.

“If the deal had been concluded two months ago, it would have been ideal for everyone. Now we are having to make last-minute preparations. The cost has been minimised, but our marketing window is very short,” he added.

Earlier in March, Singapore-based Springbok Pte Ltd acquired Bangladesh’s media rights package from FIFA for USD 7.211 million (approx. Tk 88 crore). The package included television, radio, mobile and internet broadcasting rights.

When approached by BTV, however, the company reportedly

demanding USD 12.30 million (approx. Tk 151 crore), excluding applicable taxes, advance income tax and VAT. Factoring in taxes and VAT, the total cost would have approached Tk 200 crore. Springbok also sought significantly higher satellite rights fees than in previous editions.

The high asking price became a major obstacle for local broadcasters, particularly given the tournament’s match timings in Bangladesh.

Initially, T Sports, Star News and an event management company expressed interest in broadcasting the tournament at a substantially lower price, but Springbok was unwilling to reduce its demands.

As a result, Bangladeshi broadcasters remained reluctant to commit to a deal. However, Springbok eventually surrendered the rights last month after failing to sell them, paving the way for local broadcasters to negotiate directly with FIFA at a significantly lower cost.

Following lengthy negotiations, an agreement is now expected to be finalised, bringing huge relief to millions of football fans in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh was not the only country facing uncertainty over World Cup coverage. Millions of football fans in India and China also faced concerns over access to the tournament due to unresolved broadcast rights negotiations, although those issues were resolved in recent weeks.

FIFA has since confirmed a broadcast agreement with China Media Group (CMG) covering the 2026 and 2030 FIFA World Cups, as well as the 2027 and 2031 FIFA Women’s World Cups.

The world governing body has also reached an agreement with Zee Entertainment to broadcast the 2026 World Cup in India. The deal, announced on Monday, covers 39 FIFA events over an eight-year period through to 2034, including the 2027 FIFA Women’s World Cup, according to a joint statement issued by FIFA and Zee.

Tofail Ahmed

FROM PAGE 2

Following the namaz-e-janaza in Bhola town, his body was taken to Koralia village under South Dighaldi union, where a final janaza was held. Relatives, villagers and admirers joined the prayer.

Many mourners described him as a “leader of the soil and the people” and recalled his lifelong dedication to the development of Bhola. Several attendees were seen in tears as they paid their final respects.

Security personnel, along with activists from various political organisations, were seen stationed at different points during the funeral proceedings.

Tofail Ahmed passed away at around 3:30pm on Monday while undergoing treatment at Square Hospital in Dhaka. His first funeral prayer was held after Maghrib prayers at Takwa Mosque in Dhanmondi.

Iran studying deal

FROM PAGE 12

Iran’s military and operational capabilities have increased during the ceasefire period, General Sarder Mohebi, IRGC spokesperson, said.

He added that one of the key takeaways from the US-Israel war on Iran “is the increase in the operational knowledge of the armed forces about the enemy”.

Iran threatened on Monday to expand its blockade to the Bab El Mandeb Strait, another chokepoint at the mouth of the Red Sea, if Israel resumed strikes on Beirut.

Yesterday, Israel kept up strikes in southern Lebanon, Lebanese security sources said, a day after US mediation appeared to have averted any further escalation of that war.

A partial ceasefire announced by Lebanon on Monday would entail Israel refraining from strikes on Beirut and Hezbollah-controlled suburbs of the Lebanese capital, while the Iran-aligned group would halt its attacks on Israel.

Lebanon said it would seek to expand the ceasefire in talks with Israel in Washington that began yesterday.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is facing criticism domestically over any agreement to hold back from further attacks on Beirut, ahead of an election later this year that he is projected to lose.

Set aside 10% beds

FROM PAGE 12

dengue vaccination programme immediately without consulting international organisations and experts,” he said, adding that discussions would be held with the World Health Organization, Unicef and other relevant bodies before any decision is taken in this regard.

The minister also sought cooperation from the media and private hospitals in raising public awareness about dengue prevention.

He urged television channels to broadcast dengue awareness messages during programme breaks and asked city corporations to intensify drives to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds in abandoned toilets and other places where water accumulates.

Punitive measures, including mobile court actions, would be taken against individuals who fail to maintain cleanliness and allow mosquito breeding, he warned.

“Dengue prevention is not the responsibility of the government alone; it is a collective responsibility.

Like the Covid-19 pandemic, everyone must work together to tackle the challenge,” said the minister.

Besides, coordinated efforts involving doctors, nurses, hospital owners, media outlets and local administrations would be crucial to keeping the dengue situation under control, he added.

The minister also said the government would directly contact patients to monitor whether hospitals are providing the announced facilities and services.

A nationwide awareness campaign will be launched, and rallies will be held simultaneously at 10:00am on Saturday in Dhaka North City Corporation, Dhaka South City Corporation, all divisional headquarters and district towns, he said.

The campaign, which will continue for three months, will include public announcements, media advertisements, community meetings and courtyard gatherings aimed at mobilising public participation in dengue prevention, he added.

Body of 75-yr-old recovered from Mirpur

FROM PAGE 12

have surfaced across the media.

Sub-Inspector Shamsur Rahman of the police station said that Fatima’s husband, who was also a university teacher, passed away seven to eight years ago. She has no children of her own.

When police and locals visited, the apartment, particularly the victim’s room, was found in an extremely squalid and unhygienic condition.

The incident has sparked outrage among neighbours.

Around 10 to 12 locals were seen protesting in front of the building yesterday, demanding a thorough investigation and punishment for the deceased’s children.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Syed Mohammad Hasan Palash, a neighbour and local mosque committee leader, said some youths went to the local mosque to fetch a funeral bier after Maghrib prayers on Sunday.

When asked who had passed away, they evaded the question, prompting Palash and a few others to follow them to the apartment.

“We had to force our way in.”

Describing the scene, Palash said the woman’s room was reeking of a foul odour, completely dark, and littered with garbage. A video recorded by him showed the floor blackened with accumulated dirt and waste scattered all around.

He alleged that the body appeared to have been decomposing for over a week and that the elderly woman had apparently been starved and deprived of basic medical treatment.

The OC, however, said the daughter claimed her mother died on Sunday and that she had given her a packet of food just the day before.

Following an autopsy at Shaheed Suhrawardy Medical College Hospital on Monday, morgue sources corroborated the daughter’s timeline. They told this newspaper that the body was relatively fresh and had not undergone significant decomposition.

Morgue sources suspect a localised decay occurred because the bedridden woman had been lying on the same side for a prolonged period.

Deaths from border crime

FROM PAGE 12

another country, how their border force addresses it depends on their domestic laws. It would not be correct to call that a border killing.”

He made the remarks ahead of the upcoming director general-level meeting between the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) and India’s Border Security Force (BSF), which he described as a routine annual meeting held alternately in the two countries.

Salahuddin said the meeting will address border concerns from both sides and raise all relevant matters.

Asked about reports in Indian media of large numbers of alleged Bangladeshis gathering near the border in West Bengal, he said, “We’re aware of such reports. BGB is on alert at the border. We oppose any kind of illegal push-in or pushback.”

The minister added that if Bangladeshi citizens are found in another country, their identities should be verified against our national records. Once the government of that country sends a verified list to Bangladesh’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, repatriation can proceed in line with the law.

On the surge of battery-run autorickshaws in the capital, the minister said they had appeared on the roads overnight and noted that

previous efforts to tackle the issue were complicated by unemployment concerns.

“If we make thousands jobless overnight without rehabilitation, that will create another problem. We’re working on alternative arrangements outside the metropolitan area so that unemployment does not rise and traffic congestion is eased.”

Salahuddin said the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in traffic management would bring a “revolutionary change” to easing congestion in Dhaka.

He said AI-based traffic control has already been introduced, and the public has started benefiting from automated traffic management.

On Jungle Salimpur, the minister assured that residents on government khas land would not be evicted without rehabilitation. “However, we will not allow any terrorist hideouts there,” he warned.

“The government is also focusing on Mohammadpur to curb crime and drug prevalence, with plans underway to reform drug control laws to prevent criminals from securing easy bail.”

Responding to a question about the case filed over the deaths of six newborns at Ad-din Hospital, he said the absence of post-mortem examinations could create complications in the legal process.