

PHOTO: COLLECTED

MOSHARRAF KARIM reminisces a life gone by

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

For Mosharraf Karim, some of the most precious chapters of his life have little to do with fame. They belong to a time when long conversations stretched late into the day, when theatre rehearsals were reached on foot, when friends gathered simply to talk, and when the value of an evening was measured not by productivity but by the people sitting beside you.

Today, Mosharraf Karim is one of the busiest and most popular actors in television drama. For years, he has remained at the top of the industry, while his acclaimed performances on OTT platforms and in films have further cemented his reputation as one of the country's most versatile actors. His popularity has also travelled beyond Bangladesh, particularly to Kolkata, where he has built a strong following and appeared in Indian Bengali films.

Yet, during an informal conversation at The Daily Star office recently, it was not his fame or achievements that occupied his thoughts. Instead, he found himself returning to the past – to friendships, theatre, adda and the people who made those years special.

"I love hanging out and having conversations. I really enjoy adda," Mosharraf Karim said.

During the early years of his theatre career, adda was an important part of his life. Hours would disappear in conversation, surrounded by friends and fellow artistes.

"I spent a lot of time in adda during the early days of my theatre career. I still make time for it whenever I can. But the adda doesn't have the same life in it anymore. I don't think I will ever get those beautiful moments back," he said.

"Whenever I look back on my past, I remember those golden days. I think I will never get that life back. It feels like that was what life was truly meant to be,"

When Mosharraf Karim thinks about those days, one name inevitably comes to mind – the late popular rhymester Obaidul Gani Chandon.

"Whenever I think about the memories of those adda sessions, I remember Chandon. I miss him," he said. "Chandon was the one who kept our adda lively. We have hundreds of memories from those gatherings and from the journey we shared together."

Those gatherings also brought together actor Fazlul Kabir Tuhin, lyricist and rhymester Bakiul Alam, Obaidul Gani Chandon and Mosharraf Karim.

As he speaks about those years, there is a distinct sense of longing in his voice. "Whenever I look back on my past, I remember those golden days. I think I will never get that life back. It feels like that was what life was truly meant to be," he shared.

Before television and OTT made him a household name, Mosharraf Karim was a theatre actor committed to the craft. He remains one of the prominent members of Natyakendra, the theatre troupe founded three decades ago under the leadership of Tariq Anam Khan.

Away from the stage and screen, Mosharraf Karim finds another kind of escape in books. He reads extensively, particularly fiction and novels, and occasionally writes poetry himself. He said, "I love reading poetry. I also love stories and novels. I try to make time for reading. Right now, I am reading Mihir Sengupta's ***Siddhiganjer Mokam***. I am really enjoying it."

Perhaps one of the most unusual memories Mosharraf Karim carries from his career came not from an acting performance, but from poetry.

Several years ago, renowned Indian poet Joy Goswami wrote a poem about him. The poem was later published in a prominent newspaper in Bangladesh. For Mosharraf Karim, the memory remains special.

"Joy Goswami is one of my favourite poets. I am a great admirer of his poetry," he said. "When a poet of his stature wrote a poem about me, I was both surprised and deeply moved. It was a great honour for me."

Taylor Swift's 'Patient Zero' debuts at No 1 on Billboard global charts



Taylor Swift has debuted at No 1 on both Billboard global song charts with ***Patient Zero***, marking another major chart milestone. The track becomes her eighth Global 200 chart-topper, tying BTS for the most No 1s since the chart launched in 2020. It also gives Swift her fifth No 1 on the Global Excl. US chart, the most among solo artistes.

Patient Zero is one of four new tracks from the deluxe album ***The Life of a Showgirl: The Encore***. ***Cleveland!***, ***Babylon*** and ***Pink Clouding*** also entered the top 10 of both global charts. Swift now has a record 47 Global 200 top-10 entries, surpassing Drake's previous mark of 45, while extending her Global Excl. US record to 34.

EVENTS

'Tobuo Prem Ashe'

Hunt Theatre is set to stage its new play ***Tobuo Prem Ashe***, following the warm response to its debut production ***Café de Volte***. Written and directed by Diana Meriline, the play explores love and the relationship between two mature individuals who become each other's comfort, refuge and source of trust. It looks at love beyond expectations and calculations, presenting it as a natural part of everyday life. The cast includes Sarah Jabin Aditi, Supti Das Chaity, Diana Meriline, Neon Ahsan, Saim Bin Mujib and Jerome Progga Modhu.

Date: Today | October 7
Time: 6:00pm & 7:30pm
Venue: Studio Theatre Hall, BSA



NEWS

RU keeps failing to stop campus violence

FROM PAGE 12

allegedly pushed past him and beat the students.

Mahin was attacked again as Assistant Proctor Prof Gias Uddin and senior teachers were taking him to hospital. He was pulled from an ambulance and beaten before police intervened.

On June 18, journalists Maruf Hossain Mishon, Zubair Jisan and Abu Bakar Anik, along with Rucsu leaders SM Salman Sabbir and Imran Laskar, were assaulted near Rabindranath Tagore Academic Building for filming alleged ragging.

Prof Mahbubur and Marketing Department Chairman Prof Md Borak Ali went to the scene to mediate, but the group was assaulted on the way to the proctor's office.

On May 27, 2025, members of the Anti-Shahbagh Union, described in reports as mostly RU Shibir members, clashed with left-leaning activists at Paribahan Chattar while proctorial officials were present.

Assistant Proctor Prof Nasir Uddin later said, "The proctorial body tried to control the situation, but it got out of hand."

On November 18, 2024, students of the Law and Marketing departments clashed after a football match, leaving at least 30 injured, including teacher Mahfuzur Rahman and journalist Abu Saleh Shoaib.

Shoaib alleged that Marketing Department students beat him while he was filming. University officials and teachers tried to intervene, but the clashes continued until police and army personnel were deployed.

The RU incidents come amid a broader rise in political violence and attacks on journalists nationwide.

The Human Rights Support Society recorded 830 incidents of political violence from January to June, up from 529 in the same period a year earlier. It also documented 200 incidents involving 383 journalists, compared with 152 incidents involving 257 journalists in the same period last year.

NO ACCOUNTABILITY

Shamin Tripura, a member of the RU unit of the Democratic Students' Alliance, said students had expected a democratic environment after 2024, but the administration had failed to tackle violence effectively.

"Since those involved are repeatedly getting away without facing consequences, no effective action is being taken. That is why we are seeing attacks on political activists and journalists."

Shah Poran, a journalism student at RU, said, "If the administration had ensured punishment for those responsible, these incidents would not have been repeated. From that perspective, the administration and the proctorial body have completely failed."

Prof A Al Mamun of the Mass Communication and Journalism Department alleged that some university administrations and right-wing teachers were complicit in allowing student organisations to act with impunity. He also said political allegiance in proctorial appointments could lead to bias.

"There should be no political blindness. We need to move away from the culture of political allegiance and nepotism that has been practised for a long time."

Several university inquiries have faced lengthy delays. As of August 1, three committees formed to investigate separate incidents involving Rucsu GS Salahuddin Ammar had yet to submit reports, although two had been formed more than a year earlier. University authorities attributed the delays to procedural reasons.

Contacted for comment, RU Pro-Vice Chancellor (Administration) Prof Md Abdul Alim declined to comment.

The Daily Star also tried to reach RU Vice-Chancellor Prof Md Faridul Islam by phone, but he did not respond. This newspaper also visited his office but could not meet him.

Flees from court, gets arrested, then does it again

FROM PAGE 12

same charge of allegedly resisting lawful apprehension.

"Shariful was produced before the court for a hearing in the case filed over his earlier escape. He was standing inside the dock after Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate Md Jamshed Alam concluded the hearing," said Md Morshed Alam, in-charge of the lockup at the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court.

The accused loosened his handcuffs while in the dock and fled the scene around 12:30pm, said Mohiuddin Mahmud Sohel, deputy commissioner of the Prosecution Division of the Dhaka Metropolitan Police.

Police constable Abdul Alim was suspended over the incident and a three-member committee has been formed to investigate the matte.

The committee has been asked to submit the report in three days, Sohel said.

Toyota wants to build cars

FROM PAGE 2

He also highlighted the potential of waste-to-energy and renewable energy in Bangladesh, saying the government will provide necessary support if Toyota Tsusho is interested in investing in these sectors.

The delegation said its plan to expand Toyota Bangladesh's distribution network to all divisional cities is already underway.

The expansion is aimed at making Toyota's services and operations more accessible across the country.

The company also informed the prime minister that Toyota Bangladesh will begin work in 2027 to establish a Hybrid Electric Vehicle (HEV) manufacturing industry in an economic zone under the development vision of "With Bangladesh, for Bangladesh", with full-scale production targeted for 2029.

Toyota also expressed interest in contributing to human resources development in Bangladesh, particularly by creating technical and vocational training opportunities for young people, enhancing their skills and developing a workforce suited to future industries.

Commerce Minister Khandakar Abdul Muktadir, Prime Minister's Adviser on Finance and Planning Dr Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir, Prime Minister's Adviser on Science and Technology Rehan Asif Asad and Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Overseas Employment Affairs in the Asia-Pacific Region Dr Md Shakirul Islam Khan, among others, attended the meeting.

Toyota Tsusho Mobility Division CEO Shigeru Harada, President of Toyota Bangladesh Ltd Premmit Singh and other senior officials of the company were also present.

Russia downplays plague reports

FROM PAGE 2

plague from a broken test tube.

Other media reported a possible link between her death and a lab accident at the facility.

The People of Baikal outlet also said up to 200 people with whom she may have had contact were under quarantine.

But Russian officials said postmortem tests had not detected the disease.

Time for urgent, bold reforms

FROM PAGE 1

While other reforms remain important, advancing these priorities would address some of the most binding constraints to growth and development at present.

The financial sector vulnerabilities have intensified and pose growing systemic risks.

Greater disclosure and closer alignment of regulatory policies on loan classification, provisioning and governance with international standards have revealed previously underreported defaulted loans and significant undercapitalisation across the banking sector, particularly among state-owned and Islamic banks.

Yet, the progress on financial sector reforms remains slow, the WB said.

Restoring banking sector stability requires swift and decisive action.

Specifically, completing asset quality reviews, enforcing time-bound bank restructuring based on viability and burden sharing, and strengthening governance and transparency through legal and regulatory reforms.

The Bangladesh Bank completed asset quality reviews of six Islamic banks, but additional reviews are progressing slowly.

Phasing out regulatory forbearance and improving the framework for resolving default loans are equally critical.

Clarifying how the deposit protection fund can be used and establishing a formal emergency liquidity assistance framework are essential to rebuilding confidence and safeguarding financial stability.

Finally, removing policy distortions that limit banks' ability to lend effectively, including the cap on lending spreads, would allow credit to be allocated more efficiently across the economy.

The reinstatement of a 4 percent ceiling on banks' intermediation spread in June 2026 also marks a reversal of the market-based interest rate framework introduced in May 2024.

Meanwhile, reforms to strengthen revenue mobilisation have been limited in fiscal 2025-26, including the separation of tax policy formulation from tax administration.

Separation of tax policymaking from tax administration is a key priority to enable tax policies that are designed more strategically and implemented more effectively, the WB said.

Revenue collection can be strengthened by modernising tax administration through greater digitalisation, integrated taxpayer databases and better use of data to improve compliance.

At the same time, the government should review and gradually phase out poorly targeted tax exemptions and incentives that reduce revenues without delivering sufficient economic benefits.

Simplifying the VAT system through a more uniform structure, broader coverage, and modern digital filing and invoicing systems would improve both efficiency and compliance.

Strengthening the administration of income, corporate, and property taxes would broaden the tax base, reduce informality, and help increase revenues without relying on higher tax rates.

Progress in implementing the Tax Expenditure Management Policy Framework was also limited, with no comprehensive tax expenditure report published last fiscal year as required by the policy.

Mandatory electronic filing of tax returns and compulsory use of the A Challan system to streamline revenue payments are notable developments.

Addressing Bangladesh's energy challenges requires a combination of measures to improve energy security, strengthen sector governance and reduce the economy's exposure to costly fuel imports.

Expanding domestic gas production, improving LNG infrastructure and diversifying fuel sources would help reduce supply risks and strengthen energy security.

At the same time, increasing investment in transmission and distribution networks is critical to reduce bottlenecks, improve the reliability of electricity supply and lower system losses.

Over the medium term, Bangladesh can lower its dependence on imported fuels by promoting renewable energy, energy storage and energy efficiency investments through transparent and competitive procurement processes.

Expanding regional power trade and encouraging greater private sector participation would further improve efficiency and attract investment.

Sustaining these improvements will require stronger sector governance, including greater regulatory independence, improved utility performance, integrated planning and a transparent pricing framework that gradually aligns energy prices with actual costs.

ASI withdrawn after 'remarks on taking bribes'

FROM PAGE 12

circulated on social media.

In the nearly one-minute video, Ilias is purportedly heard saying, "There is no smoke without fire, you know? Do you get what I mean?

"If I claimed that I was a police officer who did not take bribes, or that I was the imam of Baitul Mukarram, would anyone believe me?"

He reportedly said, "I bought this uniform with bribe money, specifically to take bribes."

The remarks have drawn criticism on social media, with viewers questioning corruption within the police force.

Mohammad Saiful Islam, officer-in-charge of Chunarughat Police Station, said he had seen the video clip and that the authorities were verifying the incident.

Contacted, ASI Ilias refused to comment on the video.

ASP Rafiur Rahman, who has been tasked with probing the incident, said he was working on it and would provide details later.

Biman-Airbus deal likely today

FROM PAGE 12

attend the event.

During yesterday's meeting, Millat said Lufthansa could also work with Biman to develop skilled human resources in Bangladesh.

The minister also sought Germany's cooperation in removing the European Union's High Risk Cargo and Mail status on cargo originating from Bangladesh, which has remained in place since 2017.

He said the government had taken measures to address security concerns and referred to a recent security audit in which Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport and Sylhet's Osmani International Airport scored more than 90 percent.

The two sides also discussed air connectivity between Bangladesh and Germany, Biman's development, and cooperation in the tourism sector.

Both sides expressed interest in expanding bilateral cooperation in aviation and tourism, said the release.

The 10 Airbus planes are four A350-900 wide-body aircraft and six A321neo narrow-body jets, said officials familiar with the development.

Biman earlier signed deals with Boeing to procure 25 aircraft from the US company.