

Curtains to rise on the 75th Cannes Film Festival today

While Hollywood stars are already seen making promises to be present, celebrities from all around the world are also seen preparing for their red carpet walk.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Flashing lights, repeated echoes of camera clicks, outfits to die for and a grand majestic red carpet – the Cannes Film Festival arrives every year with gusto. With the last couple of years being different (the festival was cancelled in 2020 and it was scaled back in 2021), the attendees are hoping for the same grandeur that captures the world at the 75th Cannes Film festival.

Although physical contact was strictly forbidden last year, stars are now looking to enjoy this festival, mingling with their colleagues and celebrating their successes together.

Tom Cruise is returning to the French Riviera for the European launch of “Top Gun: Maverick”, the sequel to his megahit



The Cannes Film Festival is considered to be one of the most prestigious in the world.

with “Armageddon Time” featuring Anne Hathaway and Anthony Hopkins in lead, lauded French director Claire Denis pairs up with Robert Pattinson for his thriller “The Stars at Noon”.

A total of 21 films, including the ones stated above are competing for the Palme d’Or. The shortlisted films also include masterpieces from previous winners, including the Dardenne brothers from Belgium, Sweden’s Ruben Ostlund, Japan’s Hirokazu Kore-eda and Romania’s Cristian Mungiu. While Hollywood stars are already seen making promises to be present, celebrities from all around the world are also seen preparing for

Palme d’Or honours recipients.

Meanwhile Oscar, BAFTA and Grammy winning Indian composer A R Rahman is set to unveil his directorial debut production “Le Musk,” at the Cannes Film Market’s Cannes XR programme this year.

Actor-director Ethan Hawke will add to the nostalgia with his series, “The Last Movie Stars”. The film is based on the celebrated Hollywood couple Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward.

Bangladesh will also maintain its representation after Abdullah Mohammad Saad directorial “Rehana Maryam Noor” made headlines being featured at the Un Certain Regard section of the competition last year.

Eminent director Shyam Benegal is looking forward to release the teaser of “Mujib: The Making of a Nation” at Cannes Market. The film, which is Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman’s biopic, features Arifin Shuvo as Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Nusrat Imrose Tisha as Sheikh Fazilatunnessa Mujib, Nusraat Faria Mazhar as Sheikh Hasina, Riaz Ahmed as Tajuuddin Ahmed, and Elina Shammi as Khaleida Zia, among others.

Nuhash Humayun’s horror project “Moshari” has also been selected for Marché du Film - Festival de Cannes & SITGES Festival International de Cinema Fantàstic de Catalunya’s Fantastic 7 section.

The 75th edition of the Cannes Film festival tries its best to keep up with its promise of taking its attendees on a nostalgic ride, revisiting the legacy of cinema worldwide. All the audience can do now is cherish what is to come in the following week.



Posters of ‘Top Gun’ and ‘Broker’.

released in 1986. The festival also rejoices on the comeback “Mad Max” famed director George Miller, as his “Three Thousand Years of Longing”, featuring Idris Elba as a jinni will also be screened at the Cannes this year.

The iteration also has a special segment for music lovers, screening “Elvis”, a biopic on the evergreen rockstar Elvis Presley, crafted by Australian director Baz Luhrmann. New documentaries “Moonage Daydream”, based on David Bowie and “Trouble in Mind” made on rock’n’roller Jerry Lee Lewis made by Ethan Coen are also on the screening schedules.

David Cronenberg will return to spook the viewers this time with his Kristen Stewart, Lea Seydoux, and Viggo Mortensen starrer horror film “Crimes of the Future”. The film, which echoes the essence of his earlier production from 1970 with the same name, is said to “not” be a remake.

While James Gray walks down his memory lane, finding glimpses of his adolescence



A snippet from ‘Crimes of the Future’.

their red carpet walk.

This year, India will make its presence felt as Rajsthani folk singer Mame Khan is said to present a special performance on the opening day. Bollywood star Deepika Padukone has already graced her part by joining the nine-member jury board for selecting this year’s

Safa Kabir’s ‘Happy Birthday’ on Chorki

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Popular actress Safa Kabir is set to star in the Chorki original film, “Happy Birthday”, alongside Allen Shubbro.

Directed by Nishan Mahmud, the film also stars Rosey Siddique, Iqbal Hossain, Abdullah Al Sentu, Preeti Chowdhury, Hussain Jibon, Kazi Abrar Hasan, among others.

In the film, Tiktok celebrity Pinky (Safa Kabir) is known for her quirky content. She strikes a romantic relationship with the local goon Mizan (Allen Shubbro).

However, things take a turn for the worse when she gets kidnapped on her birthday. What will happen to Pinky now? “Happy Birthday” is slated for release on Chorki on May 19 at 8 pm.



Taapsee Pannu set to produce road trip film ‘Dhak Dhak’

Taapsee Pannu’s production house, Outsiders Films, is set to produce the film, “Dhak Dhak”, in association with Viacom18 Studios and BLM Pictures.

Starring Fatima Sana Shaikh, Ratna Pathak Shah, Dia Mirza and Sanjana Sanghi as protagonists, “Dhak Dhak” has Pranjal Khandhdiya and Ayush Maheshwari as co-producers.

The film, co-written by Parijat Joshi and Tarun Dubeja and directed by Tarun Dubeja, revolves around four women’s life-changing journey to the highest motorable pass in the world. It narrates the story of women who realise that freedom has to be owned and never given.

“Dhak Dhak” will hit theatres in 2023.



COUNTRYWIDE



Thanks to the inaction of the concerned authorities, 130 illegal brick kilns have been operating in 14 upazilas of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram. In this photo, a brick kiln is seen emitting fume near a cropland in Mogholhat union of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

A menace that goes unnoticed

130 illegal brick kilns in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A total of 130 brickfields are being operated illegally in 14 upazilas of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram districts thanks to the inaction of the authorities concerned.

Although these illegal brickfields are in operation, no legal action is being taken by the Department of Environment (DoE) and local administration. They have a list of illegal brick kilns but they are in a slumber for reasons unknown.

Locals alleged that the owners of the illegal brickfields are politically and influential and they are running the brickfields ‘managing’ all corners.

These illegal brickfields have been built on agricultural land near residential areas, they said.

Montaz Ali, a farmer from Tentultala village in Ulipur upazila

of Kurigram, said crop production was declining due to the illegal brick kilns and these are also hurting the production of various fruits including mango, blackberry, jackfruit and betel nut. A huge quantity of valuable topsoil is also being burnt in the brick kilns.

The locals do not dare protest the malpractice for fear of repercussions, he said.

Abul Kashem, a farmer from Bhatibari village in Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said over two hundred villagers lodged written complaints against the illegal brick kilns on agricultural land but to no avail. The illegal brick kilns are still in operation.

It is unknown to them why the authorities are not taking any legal action in this regard, he said adding that “Due to the illegal brick kilns, we have been facing various problems including reduction of crop

production on the land nearby.”

Mez Babul-Alam, deputy director of DoE in Rangpur, said 22 out of 119 brickfields in Kurigram have been approved and 18 out of 51 in Lalmonirhat have been approved. The list of illegal brick kilns has been given to the local administration.

“Due to our manpower shortage, it is not possible for us to conduct regular drives,” he said.

Kurigram Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohammad Rezaul Karim said drives against illegal brick kilns were ongoing.

The operation could be expedited if the DoE officials were present, he said.

Lalmonirhat DC Abu Jafor said letters have been sent to all the five upazila administrations to take action against illegal brick kilns.

Immediate action would be taken if the DoE authority demands, he said.

Coal-fired power plants

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The project also contradicts Japan’s 2021 G7 commitment to halt overseas coal financing.

The massive expansion of fossil fuel plants would be predominantly built or financed by foreign companies from Japan and the US.

“Companies such as Mitsubishi, JERA and General Electric are pushing for these projects so that they can profit from the expansion of toxic power plants, with little regard for the cost to Bangladesh and Bangladeshis,” said Sharif Jamil, general secretary of BAPA.

Investors in the companies need to be aware of the fact that Bangladeshis want investment in clean, cost-effective energy and not in polluting, expensive LNG, he added.

“Companies from Japan and the US should stop treating Bangladesh

as one of the last dumping grounds for polluting power technology and instead help it meet its new power needs with clean, affordable and climate-friendly technologies,” said Julien Vincent, executive director of Market Forces, an environmental finance NGO focused on fossil fuel projects in Asia and Australia.

By 2030, subsequent LNG-to-power projects are estimated to cost an average of \$960 million per GW, reaching close to \$18 billion for Chattogram alone, which is six times more than Bangladesh’s 2022 budget to mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, according to the study.

Sumitomo Corporation, a Japanese conglomerate, withdrew from the Matarbari 2 coal plant, said Yuki Tanabe, programme director of Japan Centre for a Sustainable Environment and Society.

Japanese private banks and investors are strengthening their climate policies dramatically. Coal and gas projects will not be financeable soon, even if by Japanese investors,” he added.

Bangladesh already has a significant overcapacity problem, the speakers said. About 60 percent of the installed capacity was not used in fiscal 2020-21.

The gap between power production capacity and actual demand has gradually increased over the last few years, states the report citing the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis (IEEFA).

The government paid \$1.6 billion to companies for underutilised power capacity in 2021.

On the other hand, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) is calling for price hikes to offset the crippling expenses of buying power from independent

power producers, shifting the financial burden of Bangladesh’s overcapacity crisis to electricity users, the report says.

According to IEEFA, Bangladesh’s economy would be exposed to a volatile price market from imported fuel and people would be forced to face financial risks that should have been borne by foreign private enterprises.

“Climate science and energy economists have made it clear: if we are serious about averting the climate catastrophe, we need to stop building new coal, gas, and oil projects,” the report said.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director at the Centre for Policy Dialogue, Sharmeen Murshid, chief executive of Brotee and also a member of the National River Conservation Commission, and Munira Chowdhury, research coordinator of Market Forces, also spoke among others.

Floods worsen in Sylhet

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At the same time, the Kushiara was flowing 126cm above the danger mark at Amolshid point in Zakiganj upazila and above 26cm in Shewla point in Beanibazar upazila. The Sari-Gowain river was flowing 30cm above the danger level in Sarighat point in Jaintiapur upazila, the report read.

Moreover, the Surma is flowing just 1cm below the danger level at Sylhet city point and 14cm below at Sunamganj town point. On Sunday, the Surma was flowing 122cm above the danger level at Kanaighat point, the Kushiara at 96cm at Amolshid point and Sari-Gowain 5cm at Sarighat point.

FFWC has forecast that

the flood situation will worsen in the district in the next 24 hours till today 9:00 as heavy rainfall is forecasted in the region and India’s Meghalaya and Assam provinces.

Asif Ahmed, executive engineer of Bangladesh Water Development Board in Sylhet, said, “Although it is not raining heavily in Sylhet district, the rainfall in [India’s] Meghalaya and Assam states is excessive and the transboundary rivers are swelling. In most areas, the water level has crossed the embankment and is entering the locality and we have nothing to do to stop it.”

Meanwhile in Sunamganj, low-lying areas of Tahirpur and Bishwambharpur upazilas have already been flooded

and, as the Surma is flowing close to the danger level, a flood warning was issued by the local administration.

According to FFWC, water level of the Ganges is stable, but the Brahmaputra, Jamuna, Padma, Dharia, Teesta and Dudhkumar rivers are swelling due to torrential rainfall.

Gazipur jail

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the information requested. As a result, the information commission found him to be violating the law, fined him, and instructed him to provide the information requested in the next seven working days.

Since the law was passed in 2009, around 60 people have been fined on different occasions, said officers within the commission.