

# WGA WRITER'S STRIKE

## What is happening in Hollywood?

Industry in shambles as protests cripple production

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MALIHA MASHIAT

Behind the glitz and the glamour of upcoming film promotions, the writers who are responsible for creating your favourite shows in Hollywood, are on strike. Dubbed '2023 Writers Guild of America strike', it has now been joined by The Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA), as actors also joined in on the ongoing Hollywood labour dispute.

A major key point of the dispute, according to Writers Guild America (WGA), Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP) has skimmed the writer's residuals from streaming, compared to 10 years ago.

Another motion of the strike was against the notion of Artificial Intelligent (AI) takeover. The writers want ChatGPT to be only used as a helpful tool in research or structuring scripts,



PHOTOS: REUTERS



- WGA raised concern against the use of AI mimicking their work on film and television shows
- USD 4 billion or more might be lost due to strike
- Industry wide shut-down ensues as fairer pay not ensured
- Actors go on strike, quitting projects
- Ongoing projects get pushed back until further notice

rather than an alternative of human resource.

Around April, a whopping 97% of WGA members voted to go on strike by May if AMPTP did not meet their agreements, which represents major film and TV industries in Hollywood. AMPTP engaged in lengthy talks on behalf of the major studios and streaming platforms, but failed to reach a deal before deadline.

During the strike, WGA has proposed actions that they cannot perform that includes 'writing, revising, pitching, or discussing future projects with companies that are members of the AMPTP.' That entails that these members of the union will not be working with major studios like, Amazon Studios, Netflix, MGM, Apple, NBC Universal, Paramount, Sony Pictures and so on. The repercussions that Hollywood will be facing by not paying writers their dues is already underway.

So far, major studios have pushed back many of their projects due to the lack of writers. The next season of *House of The Dragon* was supposed to drop by next year, but looking at the unforeseeable future of its scripting status, the show's release might be pushed back to 2025. Not only TV shows, but films, podcasts have also been affected by the strike, ones which fall under the guild or

are largely overseen by it. Other projects with completed scripts, have either been postponed or cancelled due to the union's use of 'picket lines' to cause disruption.

Actors have also joined in on the action of demands, as SAG-AFTRA members joined in the picketing in May. A significant number of actors joined in, with Drew Barrymore retracting from hosting the *2023 MTV Movie and TV Awards* in support of strike. Pedro Pascal, Ethan Hawke, Snoop Dogg, Sean Penn and many more have also shown their support through leaving shows, publishing statements or pre-recorded messages and more.

The most recent development so far is by having actors join in on the strike, they will not appear in films, or even promotions during the stoppage. Many major productions like *Avatar* will be affected and postponed indefinitely. How long will the strike last? According to actor Brian Cox, "until the end of the year".

With the stars of *Oppenheimer* walking off the red carpet and Christopher Nolan saying he will not make films during the strike, the future of filming in Hollywood has truly come to a standstill. If projects get pushed back months and then years, there will be dissonance with the audiences, creating a further uncertain environment in the field of scripting.

# NEWS

## Tigers eye Afghan series win

FROM PAGE 12

happens," Shoriful, who hit the winning runs on Friday to seal a two-wicket victory, said.

According to the 22-year-old, the Tigers will once again look to pick up early wickets.

"Definitely it becomes easy to win a game if the bowlers can get rid of the top order. We have been able to do that in the last few games. I hope that the pacers and spinners can do that in the long run," he said.

Afghanistan, meanwhile, will be desperate to save the series and finish their tour on a high.

The passionate Sylhet crowd is expected to arrive in numbers to support the Tigers like the first T20I.

## Japanese firm

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Biman as it earns around Tk 1,500 crore yearly.

Amid widespread dissatisfaction over poor luggage-handling services, CAAB decided to outsource the job to a company that can deliver international standard services and serve passengers in the best possible way.

The construction work of the third terminal is about 77 percent completed, and its partial opening is expected to be in October.

The terminal building is already visible. At the moment, the interior designing and installations of various equipment are going on in the building.

The terminal, the construction of which began in 2019, is expected to be fully functional by 2024.

The construction will cost Tk 21,399 crore, with 70 percent of the funding coming from the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

The three-storey and 2.30 lakh square-metre terminal building will be built by Japan's Mitsubishi and Fujita, and Korea's Samsung.

Around two crore passengers will be able to use the HSIA every year following the construction of the third terminal.

## She didn't know it was his last call

FROM PAGE 1

The other deceased are Md Rubel Hossain, Mohammad Sajedul Islam, Arif and Md Firoz Ali Sardar from Rajshahi; Ramjan and Barek Sardar from Naogaon; Md Zubayet Dhali from Madaripur; and Saiful Islam of Dhaka, according to a press release of the Bangladesh Embassy in Riyadh.

The fire occurred at the factory on Friday at around 4:00pm local time, according to Fakhrul Islam, the first secretary of the Bangladesh embassy's press wing. "The cause of the fire could not be known immediately."

Bangladeshi workers Biplob Hossain and Md Jewel Hossain were rescued from the scene and admitted to the burn unit of King Fahd Hospital, the official said, adding that the bodies were kept at the hospital

pressure and severe fatigue which leaves a patient unable to even walk or stand up.

Additionally, blood in vomit or stool, extreme thirst, and pale and cold skin constitute some other symptoms of severe dengue infection, according to the WHO.

"Often, most importance is given to platelet levels in the blood. But this is not that vital. Rather, declining blood pressure is the most critical symptom of severe dengue," Dr Masum said.

He said, "If there is no fever for two days (48 hours) after the fever dissipates, the danger is gone."

According to Dr Saif Ullah Munshi, a professor of virology at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), the four-five days following the patient's report of "no fever" are crucial.

"This is because patients may go into shock (or may develop severe symptoms) at any time during this period. So taking caution is crucial at this time," Prof Saif Ullah Munshi told The Daily Star.

The dengue test is now cheaper, he said. On Wednesday, the health directorate announced that patients can get dengue tests at Tk 50 instead of Tk 100 in all public hospitals across the country.

If tested positive for dengue, the patient should only take paracetamol but not other painkillers or any antibiotic, he advised, adding that painkillers may be fatal for dengue patients at times.

In Bangladesh, dengue cases start rising from June and peak in November each year. However, the cases started rising a month earlier this year.

Since January this year, a total of 19,454 patients have been hospitalised with dengue infection, including 100 yesterday. Of them, 1,623 have died, including seven yesterday.

Different studies show that most people who are infected with dengue will have mild or no symptoms.

"But for those who do, the most common symptoms are high fever, headache, body ache, nausea and rash. Most will also get better in one-two weeks," Dr Masum said.

According to the WHO, if symptoms occur, they usually begin 4-10 days after infection and last for two-seven days.

Individuals who are infected for the second time are at greater risk of severe dengue.

"There are seven signs of severe dengue infection which often exhibit after the fever has gone away. These can arise between the third and the seventh day from the onset of fever. In such cases, patients must be admitted to the hospital immediately," Dr Masum said.

According to Dr Masum, the seven symptoms of severe dengue are: intolerable abdominal pain, persistent vomiting, breathing difficulty, bleeding gums or nose, slurred speech, declining blood

The workers were sleeping in the upper accommodation of the factory following lunch after Friday prayers.

They suddenly heard screams "fire, fire" from below and they both tried to get down by the stairs.

The entrance was shrouded in darkness with black smoke. They somehow managed to get out of danger, according to the press release.

But their other colleagues died of suffocation. Three workers were not injured as they were outside the factory at the time of the incident, the release added.

The Bangladesh embassy in Riyadh said that they were closely monitoring the situation and a team from the embassy was present at the spot.

Bangladesh Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Mohammad Javed Patwary expressed deep shock over the incident.

Steps will be taken to send the bodies back to Bangladesh immediately after all legal procedures.

[Our *Nature* correspondent also contributed to the report.]

## Unseeded Vondrousova

FROM PAGE 12 title and the first African woman to lift one of the four major trophies. But she was well below her best.

It looked as though Jabeur was getting on top as she won three games in a row, but Vondrousova never panicked.

Showing great court craft and subtle changes of pace she got back to 3-3 and as Jabeur's errors returned she broke serve at 4-4 to stand one game away from the title.

Reaching 40-0, she squandered her first match point with a double fault but put away a volley to claim the title at the second time of asking, appearing in disbelief.

Jabeur responded again to lead 4-2 but then seemed consumed by nerves as mistakes flowed from her racket and she dropped five successive games to lose the opening set.

Vondrousova, sporting tattoos on her arms, led 1-0 and 40-0 in the second set and appeared to be

marching to victory but Jabeur suddenly loosened her shoulders and found her range.

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## OBGYNs to go

FROM PAGE 12 hospitals today.

In the press release, the OGSB said the decision was taken at a meeting at the office of the president of Bangladesh Medical Association (BMA), Dr Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin, yesterday.

Contacted, Mostafa said, "It is their [OGSB] decision, not ours [BMA]. But we have requested everyone concerned to release the two as they were assisting the surgeon. They should not be held responsible for the deaths."

## 4 children

FROM PAGE 12

from them.

Dr Abdullah Shahriar, head of the pediatric cardiology department at the NICVD, performed the PAN procedure on the fourth child.

"This is undoubtedly a big leap towards making treatment for poor children with congenital heart defects accessible in our country," Dr Abdullah Shahriar told The Daily Star.

The Chinese team will come again after six months to train Bangladeshi doctors further, he said.

Earlier in the morning, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the NICVD and the Fu Wai Yunnan Cardiovascular Hospital in China.

NICVD Director Prof Mir Jamal Uddin; Duo Lin, chief of the International Cooperation Office at the Fu Wai Yunnan Cardiovascular Hospital; Dr Mohammad Ataul Huq, professor of the pediatric cardiology at the NICVD; and Dr Nazmun Ummay Zakia, associate professor of the pediatric cardiology at the NICVD, among others, attended the event.

## Ex-JCD leader's

FROM PAGE 12

New York's Jackson Heights on July 12. A video clip of that incident went viral on social media.

Sonaimuri upazila BCL President Arif Hossain denied the allegation of the student body's involvement in the attack. He, however, said BCL men went in front of Badal's home and demanded his punishment.

Sonaimuri Police Station OC Ziaul Haque said police visited Badal's home after the incident but "didn't find any evidence" of attack.

## Get tested for dengue at first sign of fever

FROM PAGE 1

to get tested for dengue as soon as the fever sets in," Dr Forhad Uddin Hasan Chowdhury Maruf, Medicine and Infectious Disease Specialist at Dhaka Medical College Hospital, told The Daily Star.

The dengue test is now cheaper, he said. On Wednesday, the health directorate announced that patients can get dengue tests at Tk 50 instead of Tk 100 in all public hospitals across the country.

If tested positive for dengue, the patient should only take paracetamol but not other painkillers or any antibiotic, he advised, adding that painkillers may be fatal for dengue patients at times.

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"This is because patients may go into shock (or may develop severe symptoms) at any time during this period. So taking caution is crucial at this time," Prof Saif Ullah Munshi told The Daily Star.

According to different studies, the mortality rate among the patients with severe symptoms is one percent if treated. If not treated, the mortality rate is five percent.