



Pictures from previous iterations of the festival.



PHOTOS: STAR AND COLLECTED

12 days of theatrical bliss

Ganga Jamuna festival to kick off today

A total of 145 teams from Bangladesh and India will participate, including children and young performers.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The curtain will rise on one of Bangladesh's grandest theatre festivals, today. The 12-day-long Ganga Jamuna Cultural Festival at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy and Mohila Samity will feature a variety of plays, recitals, musical and dance acts, and street theater.

The cultural festivity will bring together the union of two neighbouring countries, India and Bangladesh, as they celebrate the amalgamation of two rich cultures and perform the stories which celebrates nature and human being.



A total of 145 teams from Bangladesh and India will participate, including children and young performers. Organised by Ganga



Jamuna Shangskritik Porshod, the event will run at the National Theatre Hall, Experimental Theatre Hall and Studio Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA), and Dr Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium of Mohila Samity. The inaugural ceremony will take place at the National Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy today. Eminent cultural personality Ramendu Majumdar will inaugurate the event at the National Theatre Hall of BSA. Additionally, around 4000 artistes will attend the event this year.

State Minister of Cultural Affairs K M Khalid will grace the occasion as the chief guest, while eminent cultural personalities, including Asaduzzaman Noor, Mamunur Rashid, and Liakat Ali Lucky, will be present as the speakers of the inaugural ceremony.

The welcome address will be delivered by the Secretary of the Festival Committee Akhtaruzzaman, and the event will be

moderated by the convener of the Festival Committee, Ghulam Kuddus.

The first day of the festival will feature *Meraz Fokirer Maa* by the troupe Theatre, written and directed by Abdullah Al Mamun. Another play, *Bhogoban Paliye Gecche* by the troupe Batighar, written and directed by Muktonil.

Under the direction of Manas Koiri, the play *1971*, based on Humayun Ahmed's play, will be staged at the Studio Theatre Hall.

Some other notable plays that will follow in the later dates are Aranyak Natyadal's *Nankar Pala* at Experimental Theatre Hall on October 7, Dhaka Theatre's *Ponchonari Akhan* on October 11 at Experimental Theatre Hall in BSA. Nagorik Natya Sampradaya's *Antarey Bahirey Chitrangada* on October 13 at Nilima Ibrahim Auditorium of Mohila Samity.

Besides some troupes including Mohakal Natya Shamproday, Prachyanat, Faridpur-Bagerhat Theatre, Theatre troupe Batighar, Dhaka Padatik, amongst others, would be performing as well.

From the Indian plays, theatre enthusiasts can watch *Odhora Madhuri* by Ajker Projonmo at Experimental Theatre Hall on October 10. Onik projajona's *Bhalobasha* will be staged at Studio Theatre Hall on October 14.

The daily cultural segment on the open stage is scheduled from 4 pm to 6:30 pm, followed by theater performances starting at 7 pm. Tickets for the theater shows can be obtained via the BD Tickets website or purchased directly from the venue's counter starting at 4 pm. The festival will run until October 17.

BTS' Jungkook to release first solo album 'Golden'



Jungkook, is set to release his debut solo album titled *Golden* next month, as announced by his group's agency, BigHit Music.

Scheduled to hit the music scene on November 3, *Golden* will comprise 11 tracks, each reflecting Jungkook's "golden moments" as an individual artiste. The album's title is a nod to his widely recognised nickname, "golden maknae", which translates to "golden youngest". This moniker was affectionately given by fans to acknowledge Jungkook's exceptional talent and versatility as the youngest member of BTS.

The agency emphasised that through this upcoming album, Jungkook aims to express his unique identity and artistic style without any reservations.



Arijit-Salman make up after 9 years

Salman Khan and Arijit Singh, two prominent figures in the Bollywood industry, seem to have finally buried the hatchet, marking the end of a bitter feud that spanned 9 years.

This reconciliation came to light when a video surfaced on Wednesday, showing Arijit Singh leaving Salman Khan's Mumbai residence. The intriguing aspect of this development has ignited speculation among fans about a potential collaboration between these two titans of the Indian entertainment industry.

The feud between Salman Khan and Arijit Singh has its roots in a rather public spat that occurred during an award ceremony in 2014. Following this incident, Arijit Singh found his songs systematically removed from Salman Khan's film projects.

NEWS

BNP unveils fresh programmes

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is listening to her, he added. "In such a situation, the premier should step down from office and hand over power to a non-party neutral government to pave the way for a credible general election."

Fakhrul alleged the government was trying to hold another one-sided election by force to cling on to power. "But the people will not let that happen ... Our leaders and activists will not leave the roads until democracy is re-established in the country."

He said, "This road march is the last one outside the capital. After this, everything will be organised in Dhaka ... Dhaka must be toppled."

"I am urging the law enforcement to not open fire illegally and to not file false cases or torture people ... [The government must] resign peacefully as there is still time. There will be no election under Sheikh Hasina's government or the existing election commission. It will have to be under an impartial caretaker government."

"We haven't declared any tough political programme due to Durga Puja being observed this month. After that, however, the people will decide your [the government's] fate."

The road march, which was from Cumilla to Chattogram via Noakhali and Feni, started at the Kala Kachua Khandkar Food Gallery ground in Cumilla's Burichong upazila around 10:30am and ended in Chattogram around 9:45pm.

ATTACK

At least 10 vehicles of the BNP leaders and activists were vandalised by AL men on the Cox's Bazar-Chattogram Highway in the port city's Chandanaish upazila.

The attack took place in front of Gachbaria College gate when the BNP activists from Bandarban, Cox's bazar, Satkania, and Lohagara were heading to Chattogram for the road march.

Confirming the attack, Anwar Hossain, officer-in-charge of Chandanaish Police Station, said, "Local miscreants attacked the motorcade at 3:00pm. On information police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control."

He, however, refused to make any comment on the attackers' identities.

Local sources said Alamgir Islam, president of Chandanaish upazila BCL, and its General Secretary Marzadul Islam led the attack.

Contacted, Alamgir said they did not attack the motorcade and instead the BNP activists attacked general students of Gachbaria Government College.

"They were returning from college after giving exams and the BNP people thought they were Chhatra League activists as a Chhatra League banner was at the main entrance [of the college]..."

"On information, Chhatra League activists rushed to the spot to save the students," he said, adding, "We even saw BNP members smashing public vehicles ... so we obstructed them."

At least 10 people were injured after the motorcade of Hasna Jasim Uddin Moudud, wife of late BNP leader Barrister Moudud Ahmed, was attacked allegedly by ruling party activists in Noakhali's Companiganj upazila.

Abdul Quader, president of Companiganj upazila AL, and its General Secretary Mizanur Rahman Badal could not be reached for comments despite repeated attempts.

Pranab Chowdhury, officer-in-charge of Companiganj Police Station, said, "If any complaint is filed regarding the attack, we will take legal action after investigation."

Norwegian author

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he said in a statement.

Fosse has spoken extensively of his recovery from alcoholism and a struggle to overcome social anxiety, and the role played by religious faith.

"It's possible to free oneself from alcoholism, but it's hard to transition from a life governed by addiction to one led by something other than alcohol," Fosse said in a Norwegian Salvation Army interview in 2021.

"My conversion (to Catholicism) and the fact that I am a practicing Catholic, has helped me," Fosse said at the time.

The 64-year-old is the fourth Norwegian and the first since 1928 to

win the Nobel Prize for literature, this year worth 11 million Swedish crowns (about \$1 million).

"I was surprised but at the same time, in a sense, I wasn't," he told Swedish public broadcaster SVT yesterday. "I've been part of the discussion for ten years and have more or less carefully prepared myself for ten years that it could happen."

Past winners of the literature prize include Colombia's Gabriel Garcia Marquez and American John Steinbeck, alongside singer songwriter Bob Dylan and Britain's Second World War prime minister Winston Churchill.

Quader finds nothing wrong

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Referring to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's recent meeting with US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan in Washington DC, Quader said, "Don't you [journalists] understand what I said? No one knew for a week about the meeting with the US security adviser. So, I wasn't wrong when I said a lot has been happening behind the scenes."

"There were some talks when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her daughter took a selfie with Joe Biden. That did not happen publicly. Reaching an understanding behind the scenes means bilateral relations between the two countries is improving or is in good state. That's what I meant," the AL leader said.

Regarding the negative comments

made by some people about the expression -- "behind the scenes", Quader said if anyone wanted to take it negatively, it was up to them.

"People at public rallies like these expressions... that's why some expressions like 'toley toley', 'khela hobe' are used."

About Bangladesh's relationship with China, the AL general secretary said, China has a role to play in Bangladesh's development activities. "We can't deny this. We are taking their help."

The minister said rumours and propaganda has become rampant. "According to rumours, the US-Bangladesh relationship has deteriorated. Such rumours and misinformation have spread widely," he added.

Rain triggers traffic chaos

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[today]. Rain may decrease from Saturday and the situation may improve by Sunday and Monday," meteorologist Bazlur Rashid told The Daily Star.

Traffic jams were reported at Farmgate, Panthapath, Bijoy Sarani, Banani, Mohakhali, Karwan Bazar, Banglamotor, Shahbagh, Shyamoli, and Dhanmondi.

Vehicles were seen stuck at the Farmgate exit ramp of the Dhaka Elevated Expressway. A correspondent of this newspaper

boarded a BRTC double-decker in airport area around 5:30pm. It took the bus only 12 minutes to reach the Farmgate exit ramp, but it got stuck there for over an hour. Angry passengers got off and started walking.

City dwellers said CNG-run auto-rickshaws charged passengers exuberantly. In many areas, vehicles and rickshaws went against traffic creating further congestion.

In Mymensingh city, many areas went under knee- to waist-deep water.

Flash floods hit 3 northern dists

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The water level however quickly fell below danger marks later in the afternoon, said Lalmonirhat WDB Executive Engineer Shunil Kumar.

"Waters may rise again tonight [Thursday]. But there is no possibility of severe flood in this region this time," Shunil told The Daily Star yesterday.

Badiar Rahman, 65, a farmer from Gokunda area of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila, said, "A flash flood suddenly hit the area and deluged our homes Wednesday afternoon. Our houses are still 2-3 feet underwater."

A large amount of standing paddy and vegetable crops in Teesta char areas have been submerged.

If the floodwater does not recede within the next 2-3 days, the crops will get damaged, said Biplab Kumar

Mohant, a local agriculture officer.

In Rangpur, houses, livestock, plants, and agricultural lands were inundated after a flood protection embankment collapsed in Gangachara upazila early yesterday.

"My home has been washed away as soon as there was a breach in the embankment. We demand immediate repair of the embankment. Otherwise, several thousand people in our area will become homeless," said Masud Miah of Ichli Char area under the upazila.

Although the Teesta was flowing below the danger level, locals feared that the flood situation may worsen in case of further torrential rainfall and an onrush of water from upstream.

Teesta was rising till early

yesterday but started receding hours later, said locals.

All 44 gates of Teesta barrage have been opened to deal with the excessive rush of water from upstream, said Rabiul Islam, executive engineer of WDB in Rangpur.

WDB officials and local people's representatives were seen evacuating people living on the riverbanks on Wednesday.

"I've cultivated paddies on around 10 bighas. My crops have almost ripened. But all of my paddies will go underwater if water rises again," said Abdul Alim, a farmer of Bagerhat village under Rangpur's Gangachara upazila.

[Our correspondents from Lalmonirhat and Dinajpur contributed to this report.]