



## Justin Baldoni sues New York Times for \$250m over Blake Lively story

Justin Baldoni has filed a defamation lawsuit against The New York Times, denying sexual harassment allegations made by *It Ends with Us* co-star Blake Lively. Baldoni claims the article, published on December 21, was inaccurate and based on Lively's "one-sided account."

Lively's allegations were first reported in The New York Times, which published an article titled, **'We Can Bury Anyone': Inside a Hollywood Smear Machine**, on December 21.

The 4,000-word article included details from Lively's complaint to the California Civil Rights Department, even though such filings are generally confidential.

He claims Lively fabricated accusations to gain creative control over their film and boost her public image, citing details from her confidential complaint to California's Civil Rights Department.

## Parno Mittra, Mosharraf Karim's 'Beeldakini' to hit theatres this month

After wrapping up production in 2022, the much-anticipated film *Beeldakini* is finally set to hit theatres this month. Despite several announcements of release dates in the past, the film will officially be released nationwide on January 24.

Based on the novel of the same name by renowned author Nuruddin Jahangir, the film was directed by Fazlul Tuhin. It tells a powerful story of female strength and the liberation of motherhood.

The film stars Mosharraf Karim and West Bengal actress Parno Mittra in the lead roles. This is Parno Mittra's second Bangladeshi film following her appearance in Mostofa Sarwar Farooki's *Doob*.



## Sariful Razz and Mim to reunite for new film



Sariful Razz and Bidya Sinha Mim are teaming up once again for a movie. The duo will be seen on-screen in the film *Danob*.

Directed by Anonno Mamun and produced by Action Cut Entertainment, *Danob* is set to begin shooting in the middle of this month in Bangladesh and Thailand.

Multiple sources associated with the production confirmed to The Daily Star that they are aiming for an Eid-ul-Fitr release.

Razz and Mim, loved for their chemistry in *Poran* and *Damal*, faced tensions during *Damal* promotions due to Razz's former wife, leading Mim to profess not to work with Razz.

Fans, however, are thrilled about the latest project announcement.

## Anurag Kashyap lashes out at Bollywood leaders over unreleased films

Filmmaker Anurag Kashyap has expressed his frustration with Bollywood, revealing that five of his films, including *Kennedy*, remain unreleased due to profit-focused individuals in charge.

Despite *Kennedy*'s success at the Cannes Film Festival 2023, there's no certainty of its release in India.

In an interview, Kashyap lashed out at industry leaders, accusing them of not understanding filmmaking and being more concerned with financial returns.

He praised South Indian filmmakers for taking risks and empowering creators, contrasting it with Bollywood's reluctance.

Frustrated with the current state of the industry, Kashyap revealed that he no longer has the energy to continue battling its challenges and expressed his wish to move away from Mumbai.



## Jason Momoa confirms role in 'Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow'



Jason Momoa, known for playing Aquaman in the previous DC cinematic universe, will take on a new role as Lobo in the upcoming film *Supergirl: Woman of Tomorrow*.

Momoa confirmed his involvement via Instagram by sharing part of an interview where he expressed admiration for the role. In his announcement, he wrote, "They called," signaling his enthusiasm for the project.

The film will feature Milly Aleock as Supergirl, centering on the journey of Kara Zor-El, Superman's cousin.

Lobo, a brutal and rebellious anti-hero from DC's world of Czarnia, wiped out his species and debuted in *The Omega Men #3* (1983), created by Roger Slifer and Keith Giffen.

### WHAT'S THE HAPS?

## PAINT & VENT Decode Your Dreams



*Paint & Vent* offers an opportunity for individuals to explore the meaning behind their dreams through the art of painting. Participants are invited to express their most vivid dreams — whether flying over mountains, mysterious symbols, or memorable experiences — and turn them into visual representations. No prior painting experience is needed, just the imagination and a willingness to reflect.

**Date: Saturday, January 4, 2025**  
**Time: 12pm - 3pm**  
**Venue: Dhaka Trade Centre**

# COUNTRYWIDE



Unaware of the harmful effects, a farm worker sprays pesticide at a vegetable field in Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila. Such rampant use of pesticides could put people's health in danger. PHOTO: STAR

## WINTER VEGETABLES IN MOULIVIBAZAR Overuse of pesticides raises health risks

MINTU DESHWARA, Moulvibazar

Farmers in Moulvibazar's Kamalganj upazila are using pesticides in winter vegetable fields twice a week flouting health guidelines.

Experts say overuse of pesticides contaminates the produce and poses serious health risks to humans.

However, the use of pesticides has significantly increased in the cultivation of winter vegetables like tomatoes, beans, cauliflower and cabbage in the upazila, an agricultural hub.

However, many farmers, especially those who cultivate hybrid tomatoes, apply different pesticides in their fields twice a week, exceeding the prescribed amount.

Usually, vegetable growers target to harvest their crops before the regular winter crops hit the markets for better pay.

During a recent visit to Adampur, Madhabpur and Islampur unions, this correspondent saw farmers cultivating winter vegetables like beans, cauliflower, cabbage, brinjal, bitter melon, and hybrid tomatoes on a large scale.

Nurul Muhaimin Milton, general secretary of Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon, Moulvibazar unit, said pesticides should be applied every seven to ten days, but greedy farmers spray the insecticides even twice a week.

He said various companies are selling pesticides and farmers are using those

in their fields to combat fungus or insect attacks without considering the negative impact on public health.

According to Kamalganj Agriculture Office, winter vegetables have been cultivated on a total of 1,717 hectares of land in the upazila.

Of the vegetables, tomatoes alone have been cultivated on 280 hectares in areas including Alinagar, Adampur, Madhabpur, Tilakpur, Jamirkona, Homerjan, Patrakhola, Dhalai Par and Narendrapur.

Farmers Akhtar Mia and Mobasshir Ali said hybrid tomato cultivation needs a high volume of fertilisers and pesticides to combat insect attacks.

Moulvibazar Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Deputy Director Shamsuddin Ahmed said his department regularly advises farmers about the importance of applying fertilisers and fungicides within the prescribed limit.

Pesticides should be used every 15 days or as prescribed by the agriculture officials, he said, adding that they are encouraging farmers to apply organic methods like pheromone traps for pest control and organic manure in the vegetable fields.

Kamalganj Upazila Health and Family Planning Officer Dr Mahbubul Alam said excessive use of pesticides could lead to serious health issues, such as kidney, lung or eye diseases.

## Rappers Hannan, Shezan

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The intro of his song loosely translates to: "Raise your voice, Bangladesh, raise your voice, So much blood on the streets, whose blood is that, raise your voice, Raise your voice, Bangladesh, raise your voice, Who fired the shots on the streets? Raise your voice, Bangladesh..."

The week before, Shezan, another young rap artist, released his song "Kotha Ko" (Speak Up) on July 16. Its strong and thought-provoking lyrics emphasised a call for action and justice.

The intro of this song loosely translates to: "Hey, what's the difference

between '52 and '24? Speak up! The country's supposed to be free, so where's the freedom? Speak up! My brothers and sisters are dying in the streets—what are you doing about it? Speak up! The black snake wrapped around our necks; find the snake's head."

## Jamaat's statement on patriotism 'ridiculous'

FROM PAGE 2  
role of the "Islamist party" during the 1971 Liberation War.

"I want to ask the Islamist party about its role in 1971. In which sector did you fight, under which sector commander? Claiming to be the only patriotic party will make people laugh."

Rizvi made these remarks yesterday while speaking at an event at Humayun Rashid Chattar in Sylhet city.

He also criticised the government for not ensuring justice for BNP leaders and activists who were killed or disappeared.

He highlighted BNP's 15-and-a-half-year struggle for democracy, questioning the interim government's commitment to ensuring justice for victims of political repression.

Commenting on recent amendments to school textbooks, Rizvi praised the inclusion of chapters on

leaders like Sher-e-Bangla AK Fazlul Haque, Maulana Bhashani, and Hossain Shaheed Suhrawardy but expressed disappointment over the exclusion of a dedicated chapter on the Liberation War.

"It is essential to have a complete history of our struggle for freedom," Rizvi said, urging the government to ensure that the Liberation War's legacy is properly documented in school books.

## Israeli airstrikes

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municipality building in the Humanitarian Area".

Israel has killed at least 45,581 Palestinians since the offensive began on October, 2023, according to health officials in the enclave. Most of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been displaced and much of the tiny coastal strip is in ruins.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian Authority (PA) temporarily halted operations of Qatar's Al Jazeera television in the territory including its broadcasts, citing the network's dissemination of "inciting material," the Palestinian news agency WAFA said.

The culture, interior and communications ministers made the decision jointly because the channel broadcast material that was "deceiving and stirring strife," WAFA said without providing details on the subject matter.

The order said the decision was temporary but did not specify an end date.

Later yesterday, separate Israeli airstrikes killed at least four people on Jala Street in downtown Gaza City and two in its Zeitoun district, medics said.

Hamas' smaller ally Islamic Jihad said it fired rockets into the southern Israeli kibbutz of Holit near Gaza yesterday. The Israeli

military said it intercepted one projectile in the area that had crossed from southern Gaza.

## ICT analysing

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and torture in these secret detention facilities.

The ICT on December 18 extended by two months the deadline for completing the investigations into two cases against Hasina.

Alongside her, former roads and bridges minister and Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader, and 44 others are currently facing charges in a case of crimes against humanity and genocide. Hasina is the lone accused in the other case on the same charges.

## Come forward

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and that desire should be awakened.

There is more joy in working for the welfare of others than doing something for oneself, he said speaking at the conference at Manik Mia Avenue adjacent to the National Parliament.

He urged all to develop the habit of working for the greater public good in daily life.

Social Welfare Adviser Sharmeen S Murshid and three student representatives of the Anti-Discrimination Student Movement were also present at the event.

## 227 excluded candidates

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excluded from the recruitment process, leaving 2,064 candidates eligible for appointment, as per the notification issued on October 15, 2024.

To ensure the integrity of the recruitment process, the government ordered a more comprehensive character verification of all 2,163 recommended candidates.

This involved assessments by the National Security Intelligence (NSI) and the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI), it added.

The additional verification identified adverse findings against 227 candidates, deeming them ineligible for appointment pending further investigation.

With the exclusion of these 227 candidates and the earlier 40 who missed the medical examination, a total of 267 candidates were removed from the list.

The final recruitment notification, issued on December 30, 2024, confirmed the appointment of 1,896 candidates.

The excluded candidates protested outside the Secretariat, demanding an explanation for their removal from the final list.

Earlier, on December 30, the government issued a fresh gazette announcing the revised appointments, revoking the October 15

notification.

The 43rd BCS, announced on November 30, 2020, under the Awami League government, received 435,190 applications, the second-highest on record.

The PSC published final results on December 26, 2023, recommending 2,805 candidates for cadre and non-cadre posts, including 2,163 for cadre appointments.

Meanwhile, a group of excluded candidates yesterday demanded a fresh gazette by January 5 to facilitate their joining by January 15.

They made the demands at a press conference held in front of the central library of Dhaka University at 12:30pm.

Speaking on behalf of the candidates, Masuma Akhtar said she worked hard for four years and successfully passed all stages of the 43rd BCS examination with honesty.

She said many resigned from their existing jobs or did not apply for government and private jobs, while some refrained from participating in the 44th BCS examinations after they saw their names in the first gazette.

The candidates urged the government to address the issue promptly to save their careers.