

## First Mro-language film set to premiere at Matribhasha Chalachitra Utsab

The first Mro-language film, *Klo-bong Mla (Girikusum)*, will be screened at the *Matribhasha Chalachitra Utsab 2025* on February 23 in Dhaka. Directed by Pradip Ghosh, the 18 minute film portrays the struggles within familial bonds of the Mro community family. Produced by Dr Mong Usha Thoyai, a prominent advocate for indigenous representation in cinema, the film is a significant cultural milestone. Based on a Mro folk tale, the script was written by renowned Mro-language author Younguang Mro, who also played a key role in ensuring the film's authenticity. Shot in Bandarban, the film involved 15 members of the Mro community, marking their acting debut.



## A busy Valentine's for KEYA PAYEL

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Having gained popularity through several renowned television dramas, Keya Payel is now knee-deep in work, shooting for Valentine's Day and Eid projects.

At the time of speaking, Keya was filming an Eid drama directed by Rafat Majumder Rinku. She will star opposite Farhan Ahmed Jovan in the drama. "I am incredibly busy shooting for projects. However, I relish the opportunity to work consistently."

She continued, "Who isn't excited to see special Eid dramas? I am too, and that is why I am taking this work very seriously."

Speaking more on production surrounding special occasions, the young actress stated, "From the very beginning, I've given priority to special dramas, because the production quality is usually very high on those, added to the larger audience."

Payel is also busy filming for *Baji*, which will air on Valentine's Day. Filmed in Kishoreganj, it tells a story set in a small town with a 'large' canvas narrative. The rising star further mentioned that she shot for this drama for seven days.

Another drama, *Prothom Prothom Prem*, will air on the same day. This drama was filmed at Rajshahi University campus, and on the banks of the Padma River. She stars opposite Tawsif Mahbub in this project.

"The night lights of Rajshahi city are incredibly beautiful. I really enjoyed shooting there," said an excited Keya Payel, for whom Tawsif is an exemplary actor.

## Together We Can stages 'Humane Dog Squad' to promote animal empathy

Theatre group Together We Can recently staged their silent performance, *Humane Dog Squad*, at Rangpur Shilpakala Academy during the Rangpur Padatik Theatre Festival. Previously performed in Dhaka, the act promotes empathy towards animals through artistic expression.

Actress and activist Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed, founder of Together We Can, shared the event's success on social media, expressing gratitude for Rangpur's support. She reaffirmed the group's mission to spread awareness of animal



welfare across the country.

With a longstanding commitment to humane treatment of animals, Together We Can aims to reach a

wider audience with more performances, encouraging society to reflect on its relationship with animals and fostering a culture of compassion.

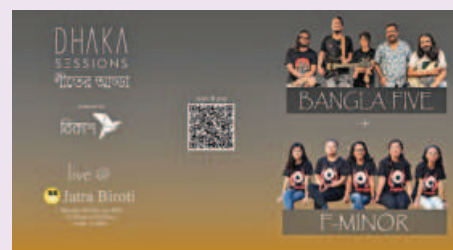
## Juliette Binoche elected president of 2025 Cannes jury

French actor Juliette Binoche has been appointed president of the International Jury for the 78th Cannes Film Festival, set for May 13 to 24, 2025. Binoche, who won the Best Actress Award at Cannes in 2010, succeeds *Barbie* director Greta Gerwig. Reflecting on her Cannes journey, she expressed gratitude for the role, calling it both a privilege and a responsibility. Binoche's acclaimed career includes collaborations with directors like Michael Haneke, David Cronenberg, and Krzysztof Kieslowski. Notably, she has won Best Actress at Cannes, Venice, and Berlin film festivals, a rare achievement. Recently, she starred as Coco Chanel in Apple TV's *The New Look* and took on a lead role in *The Return*.



### WHAT'S THE HAPS?

## Dhaka Sessions' 'Sheeter Adda'



*Dhaka Sessions*, in collaboration with Jatra Biroti, presents an unforgettable evening today featuring renowned musical bands Bangla Five and F-Minor.

**Date:** Thursday | February 6

**Time:** 7pm onwards

**Venue:** Jatra Biroti

# NEWS

## Language Movement in Rangpur

FROM PAGE 12

On March 11, 1948, following a central programme, students in Rangpur organised a strike, held a rally, boycotted classes, and marched in a procession.

Students from district-level schools also joined the procession and gathered at the Rangpur Public Library grounds for a meeting.

On March 24, when Muhammad Ali Jinnah declared Urdu as the state language, students from Carmichael College staged protests similar to those in Dhaka.

The college principal Debendra Prasad Ghosh played a crucial role in the movement in support of the students' demands for Bangla to be the official language. However, under pressure from the administration, he voluntarily resigned from his position and moved to India.

Syed Shahabuddin, a non-Bangalee, then became the new principal. From the very start, he took a tough stance against the movement.

Student leader Nurul Islam was even expelled from the college for his involvement in the protests.

According to Ahmad Rafiq's "Bhasha Andolon Teknaf Theke Tentulia", in 1951, under the leadership of Mili Chowdhury, a student procession marched to the Rangpur District Court to demand that Bangla be the state language.

At one point, Mili stepped out of the procession, went up to the court bench, took a pen from the district

judge, and asked, "Why are you writing in English?" She then immediately broke the pen and returned to the procession.

At that time, Rangpur's intelligence officers suggested the district judge file a case. He, however, chose to advise the police against using harsh measures on the students. He recommended waiting for the situation to calm down.



Rangpur Central Shaheed Minar

Among those conspiring to undermine the Language Movement in Rangpur were leaders of the pro-Pakistan Muslim League – Masur Rahman Jadu Mia, Bodiruddin, and Mohammad Waris. They organised a public meeting, but when East Pakistan Chief Minister Nurul Amin and Muslim League leader Shah Aziz attempted to speak, they were forced to leave due to protests from the crowd.

Protests also erupted on the streets of Rangpur during the 1952 Language Movement. At the beginning of February, an all-party struggle committee was formed with

Abul Hossain as the convener. Other members included Monikrishna Sena, Jitendranath Dutta, Shankar Basu, Shibend Mukhopadhyay, Darajuddin Mondal, and Moyeruddin, among others.

As soon as the news of police shooting and killing students on February 21 reached Rangpur, students and the public organised a protest march.

Slogans such as "We want justice for student killings; we want Bangla as the state language" were chanted.

In his book "Bhasha Andolon Teknaf Theke Tentulia", Ahmad Rafiq writes that at this time, three students were injured in East Pakistan Rifles baton charge and police arrested several student leaders and a professor from Carmichael College.

The language movement spread beyond the city to the remote areas of Rangpur as well. Members of the local Communist Party and its affiliate organisations played a key role in spreading the movement across the district.

On March 8, in an effort to assist protesting students, police arrested Jamir Uddin, a teacher of the Bangla department, and Golam Azam, a professor of the political science department of Police College.

At the same time, police issued a warrant for the arrest of Kalim Uddin Mondal from the philosophy department. However, he was able to evade arrest as he was at his village at the time.

## New political party by end of this month

FROM PAGE 12

posers five key questions to the public, including: Which three actions do you think would change the country? What personal issues do you expect the new party to address? What do you expect from the new party? What should the party be named? What should its symbol be?

"We are not just launching a party – we are launching a movement where every citizen, from a garment worker to a university professor, has a say in shaping the policies that affect their lives," said Nasiruddin.

Nasiruddin, convener of Nagorik Committee, said they aim to reach more than 1 lakh people offline from all walks of life, including rickshaw pullers, shopkeepers, labourers, house helps, teachers, and sweepers, to gather

their inputs on the new party's future direction.

In response to a journalist's query, he said the government has no involvement in forming this political party.

He alleged that some political parties might be afraid of the formation of their new party and are attempting to mislead the people.

"We don't want to engage in such irrational arguments. The concepts of a 'King's Party' or a government-backed party come from those who may have experience with such practices."

Responding to a question, Hasnat stated, "After August 5, Sheikh Hasina and the Chhatra League are no longer relevant. If they were, they wouldn't have had to flee on August 5."

Addressing the media, he said,

"Even now, we see hesitation in naming the real perpetrators. Some media still refer to her as a former prime minister, but is she just a former leader, or is she the 'butcher of this motherland'?"

He said, "She killed 2,000 people to cling on to power. Yet, the media does not call her a fascist killer. If you fail to do so, you are still upholding the same pro-Awami media structure."

"If any media outlet broadcasts Hasina's speech, it will be assumed that they are still facilitating her agenda and have taken a stance against the aspirations of the people."

Akhtar Hossain, member secretary of Nagorik Committee, Samantha Sharmin, its spokesperson, and other key members of the two platforms were present at the briefing.

## Govt aiming

FROM PAGE 12

yesterday after an inter-ministerial meeting.

Zero load shedding does not mean there will be uninterrupted power supply over the country, he said.

"We will not cut power in Ramadan due to the fuel shortage."

But there may be power cuts due to other technical issues in transmission or distribution points.

After Ramadan, there may be load shedding of up to 1,400MW, he said.

According to the PDB's plan, gas supply to power plants will increase to 1,200 million cubic feet a day (mmcf) during summer.

With that amount of gas, the PDB will be able to produce up to 6,200MW of electricity against the capacity of 11,677MW of the gas-fired power plant.

LNG imports will be ramped up in the summer months: at least four cargoes will be brought in a month, up from the usual 2-3 cargoes, he said.

"We don't want to reduce power supply to irrigation but we want to reduce the 'cooling load', which is about one-third the total power demand."

The air coolers consume about 6,000MW of total power generation during summer.

"We can't tell people not to turn on their air conditioners. But we can ask them not to keep their AC temperature at 18 degrees but at 25-26 degrees. We will engage Imams of mosques, business leaders and shop owners in this regard."

## Accept reports

FROM PAGE 2

Addressing the occasion Prof Yunus said, "We have many bitter experiences of harassment, humiliation and insult. We have experience of forgetting about our demands and rights."

He said it is a matter of hope that the reform reports submitted would pave the way of making the people free and get back their rights.

The chief adviser said the reports of the reform commissions would be shared with citizens, political parties and civil society members so that they all can reach a consensus to this end.

The reports are the remarkable documents in the history of Bangladesh, he said expressing gratitude to the chairmen of the commissions and all members for the efforts to prepare the report.

The chief adviser observed that the reports of the commission will contribute to the whole world, not only to Bangladesh.

Addressing the nation on September 11, 2024, the chief adviser announced the formation of six commissions.

If the cooling load can be reduced, the power demand would be reduced by another 2,000MW to 3,000MW, he said.

Recently, the PDB asked for \$4 billion from the finance division to keep the power supply stable during summer and the finance division has assured of providing the amount, Kabir said.

"They are overburdened too – all the ministries sought money from them. But we discussed it with them and the higher-ups of banks as well. We can arrange the money so that the power producers do not shut the power supply."

The finance division will be prioritising funds to fertiliser, food, power and energy sectors accordingly.

If the load shedding worsens, the meeting discussed that a few steps could be taken such as instructing the use of irrigation pumps between 11:00pm and 9:00am, bringing forward the closing time of shopping centres, reducing the use of excessive lighting and motivating people to rein in on excessive power usage.

The power purchase agreement of the Matarbari coal-fired power plant will be finalised, he said.

The price of electricity may be Tk 8.40 per unit, much cheaper than the existing power plants like Payra, Rampal and Adani.

"We will set the benchmark pricing for gas-fired power plants too and then start renegotiating [with others] to bring down the tariffs. We don't want to take any arbitrary decisions."

Four other reform commissions – Electoral System Reform Commission, Police Administration Reform Commission, Anti Corruption Commission Reform Commission, and the Constitution Reform Commission – submitted their reports to the chief adviser on January 15.

## 3 journos attacked

FROM PAGE 12

Shimul Biswas intervened.

Javed, also president of the Law Reporters Forum, was taken to Islami Bank Hospital for treatment.

The forum condemned the attack and demanded punishment for the perpetrators.

In protest, journalists boycotted a scheduled briefing and staged a sit-in.

The High Court acquitted all 47 accused in the train attack case.

Meanwhile, BNP's Media Cell, in a statement, said BNP's acting chairman Tarique Rahman condemned the incident and instructed party officials to support the injured journalists.

## Marvel unveils 'The Fantastic Four: First Steps' teaser



Marvel Entertainment has released the official teaser of *The Fantastic Four: First Steps*, offering a glimpse of the superhero team's debut in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU).

The teaser opens inside the Baxter Building, featuring Pedro Pascal as Mister Fantastic and Vanessa Kirby as Susan Storm. It introduces key characters, including Joseph Quinn as the Human Torch and Ebon Moss-Bachrach as the Thing, alongside supporting cast members Ralph Ineson, Julia Garner, and John Malkovich. A glimpse of the villain, Galactus, especially has fans excited.

The film is scheduled for release on July 25. Netizens have persistently praised the character designs and comic accuracy of Marvel's upcoming film.