

SHIRONAMHIN launches ‘Geetikobita Samagra’ at Ekushey Book Fair

Popular band Shironamhin has launched *Geetikobita Samagra*, a compilation of all its lyrics, at the Amar Ekushey Book Fair. Published by Gatidhara Prokashoni, the book marks the band's 29-year journey, featuring songs from albums including *Abar Hashimukh*, *Bondho Janala*, and *Batighor*.

Announcing the release, the band wrote on Facebook, “For 29 years, listeners have connected emotionally with our lyrics. Now, all released and unreleased songs, including those from *Batighor*, are compiled in one book.” The book is available at Pavilion 17 of Gatidhara Prokashoni.

Meanwhile, Shironamhin has released *Priyotoma*, a Valentine's Day special release, written by Ziaur Rahman. Directed by Kazi Ahmed Shafin, the music video features Sifat Amin Shuvo, Jannatul Ferdous Bismi, and Man Bahadur. The song premiered on the band's YouTube channel on February 15.



Julianne Moore’s children’s book allegedly banned under trump administration

Julianne Moore has alleged that her children's book was prohibited during Donald Trump's administration. The 64-year-old actress expressed her “great shock” on social media after discovering that *Freckleface Strawberry* was reportedly banned in more than 160 schools governed by the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA).

Moore shared her dismay upon learning that her debut book, *Freckleface Strawberry*, had been banned in Department of Defense-run schools under the Trump administration. In a statement posted on Instagram, she conveyed



her disappointment over the decision.

Originally published in 2007 and illustrated by LeUyen Pham, the book was the first in the *Freckleface Strawberry* series—semi-autobiographical stories about a seven-year-old girl learning to embrace her appearance, according to the series' official website.

In her message, Moore highlighted that she wrote the book for her own children and others, aiming to remind them that while everyone faces challenges, a shared sense of humanity and community connects us all.

Zohad Reza Chowdhury reveals wife is cancer-free



Zohad Reza Chowdhury, frontman of the renowned band Nemesis, revealed yesterday that his wife Mahreen is free of cancer. After receiving a confirmed diagnosis from her doctor, he chose to share the encouraging news via

his official Facebook page noting that more treatment is still in store for Mahreen.

He wrote, “I didn't want to share the bad news but instead wanted to share the good news... Mahreen is now free of cancer.”

“Thanks to each and every one of you who have supported us throughout this tough journey!”

For his childhood sweetheart turned wife, Zohad dedicated, “More treatment to come but we're hopeful that the tough bit is over! Mahu, you are an inspiration to us all. You're a champ! The bravest person I know!”

Matt Damon confirmed as Odysseus in Christopher Nolan’s ‘The Odyssey’



Matt Damon will portray Odysseus in Christopher Nolan's upcoming film *The Odyssey*, set for release on July 17, 2026. A photo of Damon in character was unveiled on the film's official social media account. *The Odyssey*, based on Homer's ancient epic, chronicles Odysseus' perilous journey home following the Trojan War.

The star-studded cast includes Tom Holland, Zendaya, Anne Hathaway, Lupita Nyong'o, and Robert Pattinson, among others. Nolan will direct and produce, with Emma Thomas co-producing. Part of the film will be shot in Sicily, with production starting in spring 2025. This will be Damon's third collaboration with Nolan, following *Oppenheimer* and *Interstellar*.

COUNTRYWIDE

Road to bridge collapses a year of construction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Parts of the approach road and guide wall of a bridge constructed last year in Char Montaz union under Rangabali upazila have collapsed at many places, causing troubles to its users.

Local residents alleged that substandard materials were used in the road construction work. They also urged the authorities concerned to repair the damaged portions immediately.

The 66-metre-long bridge, along with a 350-metre approach road, was built over a canal at Uttar Char Montaz village in 2024.

However, within couple of months of its completion, the guide wall and approach road started developing numerous cracks at several spots due to heavy rainfall last year.

Large cracks have also developed at the base of the guide wall, increasing fears that further collapse could put the bridge itself at serious risk.

People, who use the bridge every day, now have to cross the structure with caution.

Moreover, the deteriorating condition of the approach road and guide wall has made vehicular movements much riskier.

“Cracks can be seen all over the guide wall. As a result, the supporting pillars of the bridge

have become unstable. If the entire guide wall collapses, it could severely weaken the bridge,” said local resident Bahadur Islam.

Mohammad Suleman, a battery-run auto-rickshaw driver, said, “The newly-constructed approach road hasn't even lasted a year before parts of it started collapsing. Now, we have to drive with caution amid risk of accidents.”

If repair works are not done immediately, the situation will worsen during the next rainy season, he added.

According to Rangabali Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), the bridge and its approach road were built under the ‘Union-Upazila Connection Road Project’ at a cost of Tk 6.5 crore.

But surprisingly, within a few month of completion, parts of the structure began to develop cracks before finally collapsing at many places.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not reach contractor Jamal Hossain for comments as his mobile phone remained switched off.

Contacted, Rangabali Upazila LGED Engineer Habibur Rahman said they have already discussed the matter with the contractor.

The final payment will be made only after full completion of the work, the engineer added.



The approach road of this bridge at Uttar Char Montaz village in Patuakhali's Rangabali upazila starts collapsing only a year of its construction.

PHOTO: STAR

10th grader takes down Pakistan flag

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on December 21, a meeting of the Primary Teachers' Association of Sarail Police Station proposed that Bangla be made a state language.

In 1948, Mohammad Mohiuddin, Mohammad Faizur Rahman and others played a big hand in propelling the movement throughout throughout the district. However, at that time, the students and locals were not able to fully participate.

In 1952, however, nothing was able to stop everyone's participation, including of the incensed student community, especially after Khwaja Nazimuddin's January 27 announcement of Urdu being the state language of Pakistan.

Ahead of the central day of the movement on

February 21, widespread campaigns were launched across the district. Key figures such as politician Niyaz Mohammad, schoolteacher Mohammad Musa, Abdur Rahman Khan, Rafiqul Islam, AKM Rafiqul Hossain, Tajul Islam, and others were instrumental in pushing the movement forward.

As noted in “Bhasha Andolon er Anchohik Itihash” by Dr Abu Mohammad Delowar Hossain, Brahmanbaria observed a complete hartal on February 21, as per the pre-planned programme.

Around 1:00pm, a grand procession of approximately 4,000 students from various educational institutions paraded through the district town and gathered at Loknath Maidan in the city.

During this time, a 10th-



PHOTO: GAZI SALAHUDDIN

Brahmanbaria Central Shaheed Minar

grader Samiul Ahmed climbed the Court Building and took down the Pakistan flag.

Around 2:00am, a train heading toward Chattogram made a stop in Brahmanbaria, where passengers informed the locals about the students who had been killed in

police firing in Dhaka.

The following morning, the streets of Brahmanbaria were filled with protesters from all walks of life.

Student leader Matiur Rahman was appointed as the convener of the student-formed Bhasha Andolon Parishad. Other key members included Mohiuddin

Ahmed, Samiul Ahmed, Khan Fatik, Lutfor Rahman, Abdur Rahman, Shafiuddin Ahmed, Sagor Ahmed Khan, Zia Uddin, and others.

On February 24, students from Daudpur High School in Bijoynagar organised a procession and a student rally. The next day, a day-long strike was enforced in Akhaura.

On February 26, members of the Brahmanbaria Bar Association called on the High Court judges to conduct a fair investigation into the student killings by police.

Meanwhile, poet Al Mahmud, Mohammad Musa, Tajul Islam, and several other students published a leaflet from the Jubilee Press. Upon its release, an arrest warrant was issued for Al Mahmud, and the press was subsequently sealed off.

Teesta plan with China gains pace

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of Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and was scheduled to be signed in 2011. However, opposition from West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who argued it would negatively impact water availability in her state, led to the deal's collapse.

Frustrated by the continued impasse, Bangladesh signed a non-binding MoU with POWERCHINA in 2016 to explore an alternative approach to managing the river's challenges.

At the time, POWERCHINA proposed a comprehensive river management plan, covering bank erosion control, flood management, disaster reduction, land reclamation, transportation, and ecosystem restoration. The initiative also aims to mitigate social and environmental impacts while fostering economic

development in affected communities.

Key components of the project include dredging 140 million cubic metres of sediment, reclaiming 171 square kilometres of land, repairing 110 kilometres of embankment, constructing 124 kilometres of new embankments, and developing 224 kilometres of roads. The plan also envisions transportation and jetty facilities at 82 locations.

Currently, POWERCHINA is reviewing its original proposal before launching the feasibility study, according to an official at the Ministry of Water Resources.

THE RIVER'S DECLINE

The Teesta originates in Sikkim, India, and enters Bangladesh through Dimla Upazila in Nilphamari, eventually merging with the Brahmaputra River in Gaibandha. Of its 115-kilometre stretch in

Bangladesh, 102 kilometres lie downstream of the Teesta Barrage, a key water control structure.

On November 14, Bangladesh recorded an upstream water flow of 2,800 cubic feet per second (cusecs), prompting the closure of all 44 gates of the barrage to conserve water for irrigation. However, on February 15, India suddenly increased its water release by 800 cusecs, forcing Bangladesh to open six gates to manage the flow.

Teesta water is crucial for farmers in northern Bangladesh, particularly between December and April. The river sustains irrigation for 55,000 hectares of rice fields across six districts: Nilphamari, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Bogura, Joypurhat and Gaibandha.

LOCALS CONTINUE TO SUFFER

Alal Uddin, a 70-year-old farmer from Gaddimari village, five kilometres

downstream of the Teesta Barrage, painted a bleak picture.

“There is some water upstream, but the downstream is completely dry,” he told The Daily Star.

Nur Islam, a boatman from Aditmari Upazila in Lalmonirhat, shared a similar plight.

“I have no livelihood in the dry season because I cannot operate my boat due to the lack of water,” he said.

The situation has deteriorated over the years. With India unilaterally diverting Teesta's waters and constructing multiple upstream projects in Sikkim and West Bengal, Bangladesh has faced worsening seasonal shortages. The riverbed is now filled with sand, making the region more vulnerable to flash floods and severe erosion during the monsoon.

Last week, Adviser Rizwana visited the Teesta

region and held a public hearing in Kaunia, Rangpur.

“The interim government is prioritising the Teesta Mega Plan to address the struggles of riverine communities,” she said. “We have signed an agreement with China, and the project will be implemented with input from the people who live here.”

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physically assaulted before the release. The workers received treatment at the Eidgah Upazila Health Complex, he added.

Abductions for ransom have been reported in the area before. On January 14, three workers were abducted, while on February 1, seven lumberjacks were kidnapped from Lama upazila. In both cases, the victims were released after paying ransom.