

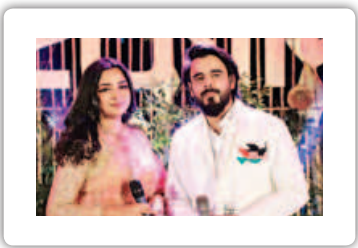
Siam and Heme team up for ‘Ityadi’s’ Eid special song

Filmstar Siam Ahmed and TV actress Jannatul Sumaiya Heme teamed up for a romantic duet in the special Eid-ul-Fitr episode of ***Ityadi*** this year. This is their first collaboration, though it is in the form of music rather than acting.

The song's lyrics have been penned by Kabir Bakul, with composition and music arrangement credited to Imran Mahmudul.

Last year, ***Ityadi*** introduced Tasnia Farin as a singer in a duet with Tahsan. Following that success, production house Fagun Audio Vision expects this new track to resonate with audiences.

As per tradition, Hanif Sanket's Eid special ***Ityadi*** will air on Bangladesh Television (BTV) the night after Eid day, following the 8pm news.



Blackpink members surpass BTS on Billboard charts with solo hits

Blackpink members have outpaced BTS on the Billboard charts with a series of record-breaking solo releases. Jennie's ***Like Jennie*** recently debuted at No 3 on the Billboard Global Excl US chart and No 5 on the Billboard Global 200, marking a major milestone.

Lisa followed with ***FXCK Up the World***, debuting at No 14, while Jennie's ***Extral***, featuring Doechii, landed at No 13 and 18. Jisoo's ***Earthquake*** reached No 22, and Lisa's ***Born Again***, featuring Doja Cat and RAYE, debuted at No 12.

For five consecutive weeks, Blackpink soloists have dominated the global charts. Their ongoing success fuels anticipation for the ***Blackpink 2025 World Tour***, set to begin on July 5, covering Asia, Europe, and North America.



A stacked Eid for KEYA PAYEL

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Keya Payel, a rising star in Bangladesh's showbiz industry, is proving herself to be a versatile talent, balancing both modelling and acting with ease. Over the years, she has built a reputation for capturing the audience's attention, quickly solidifying her place among the newer generation of actors.

This year, Keya has taken on an intense schedule, fully immersed in back-to-back shoots for multiple Eid dramas. With numerous projects set to air this festive season, her workload has become almost rigorous. "I'm constantly in front of the camera, taking on new roles, working with new stories. It's a challenge, one I enjoy thoroughly," Keya shared with The Daily Star in between takes on one of her current film sets.

One of the anticipated dramas for this Eid is ***Hello Guys***, directed by Mohiuddin Mahim. "The title might change," she noted, highlighting the fluid nature of the production process. Musfiq R Farhan, a frequent collaborator of hers, is another leading star in this project rooted in contemporary issues, making it relatable for today's audience.

Her previous projects, particularly those aired during Valentine's Day, were met with critical acclaim. It was the success of those performances that led to her booking an almost continuous flow of Eid projects.

Valentine's Day, my filming schedule filled up quickly, but this is what I love," she explained.

Keya has already completed filming for another drama, ***Tumi Jake Bhalobasho***, alongside Farhan Ahmed Jovan. The duo will also appear together in ***Bantir Biye***, a drama where Keya explores a unique character.

However, the highlight of her Eid projects might be ***Baji***, a big-budget production where she stars, once again, opposite Musfiq R Farhan. "The storyline of ***Baji*** is remarkable. It's different, and I'm confident that the audience will be captivated," Keya shared.



When asked about the appeal of this year's projects, Keya reflected, "The scripts this Eid have been really strong, and the characters I play are well-developed. I've been able to work on some truly interesting dramas."

A versatile performer, Keya's strength lies in her ability to mould herself into the wide array of characters that come her way. "I love acting. It's not just work for me—it's a passion. Every character brings something new, and that's what keeps it exciting," she expressed.

On the question of having a preferred co-star, Keya dismisses any notion of favouritism. "There's no specific actor I prefer working with. We're all part of the same family, and each collaboration brings something unique to the table," she said.

"Everyone in this industry is giving their best. We share a sense of commitment to the work, and that's what makes the productions stand out," she noted.

Regarding her long-term aspirations, Keya's vision is clear. "I want to create characters that the audience will remember. The love and recognition from fans is something I cherish, and I want to keep growing as an actor," she said.

During Eid this year, Keya will dedicate time to her family in Dhaka. "I'm usually busy throughout the year with shoots, but Eid gives me a few days off. I'll spend that time with my family," she shared.

Besides her on-screen work, Keya enjoys travelling whenever she finds the time. "I love to explore new places. I always plan my trips meticulously," she said, highlighting the rare moments when she can step away from the hustle of her acting career.

As the conversation turned back to Eid dramas, Keya reflected on the anticipation that surrounds projects coming out during this time of year.

"There's something special about Eid dramas. The audience looks forward to them, and I feel a responsibility to give them my best," she concluded.

Srijit Mukherji's upcoming film takes cues from Angelina Jolie's life



Filmmaker Srijit Mukherji has confirmed that his upcoming Bengali film, ***Killbill Society***, is inspired by the life of Hollywood actress Angelina Jolie.

According to Telegraph India, Jolie once revealed that, at 22, she had considered hiring a hitman to take her life, fearing the impact of suicide on her loved ones. However, the hired killer convinced her to rethink her decision.

Srijit took to X to confirm that interview inspired him. He said, "This real-life incident is the inspiration behind ***Killbill Society***."

Killbill Society, the sequel to ***Hemlock Society*** (2012), hits theatres on April 11. Parambrata Chattopadhyay, Mrityunjoy, alongside Koushani Mukherjee as Poorna.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘Macbeth’ (Mime Adaptation)

To mark the 102nd birth anniversary of legendary French mime artist Marcel Marceau and World Mime Day 2025, Swapnadal is all set to present a special performance of ***Macbeth***.

This pioneering production, directed by Zahid Repon and adapted by Juyena Shabnam, merges Shakespeare's tragedy with Bengali mime traditions, offering a groundbreaking interpretation of the literary classic.

Date: Saturday | March 22, 2025
Time: 7:30pm
Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA)



NEWS

ACC sues Saima Wazed

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East Asia Regional Office.

She is also accused of coercing member banks of the Bangladesh Association of Banks into depositing Tk 33.05 crore into the accounts of Shuchona Foundation.

ACC Deputy Director Tahasin Munabil Haque filed the cases at the ACC's Integrated District Office-1 in Dhaka.

Saima is the lone accused in one of the cases, while the other also implicates former BAB Chairman Nazrul Islam Mazumder.

WHO APPOINTMENT

According to the statement of the case related to Saima's appointment to WHO's regional office, Saima allegedly fabricated credentials in her application for the post in 2023.

The ACC alleges that she falsely claimed to be engaged in teaching and reviewing educational manuals at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU), currently Bangladesh Medical University, despite having no such involvement.

In her application, Wazed reportedly listed her position at the medical university, saying she was an "Honorary Specialist/Expert at BSMMU (2022-Present), providing technical expertise on autism spectrum disorder and mental health, and reviewing manuals for the care and management of developmental disorders".

However, upon investigation, BSMMU authorities confirmed that she never held such a position or participated in any academic or research activities related to manual development.

The ACC has charged her under sections 420, 468, and 471 of the Penal Code, along with section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act of 1947, for allegedly misrepresenting her qualifications to secure the WHO role.

SHUCHONA FOUNDATION

The second case alleges that Saima and Nazrul Islam Mazumder colluded to misuse their power and exert undue influence over member banks of BAB, compelling them to contribute Tk

33.05 crore from their corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds to Shuchona Foundation, where Saima was the chairperson.

In May 2017, 17 banks were forced to donate Tk 21 crore from their CSR funds, according to the charges. A total of 20 banks ultimately contributed the Tk 33.05 crore.

Further inquiries into the foundation's records show that no documentation was available regarding how the collected funds were spent.

The statement of the case, filed under section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act and section 109 of the Penal Code, says that no physical office of Shuchona Foundation was found during an enforcement operation conducted by the ACC headquarters on January 29.

Since the organisation had no physical existence, the ACC suspects that the money was embezzled through forged records, which will be thoroughly examined during the investigation.

Four children raped in 3 days

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22-year-old woman to an OCC after she filed a case accusing a man of raping her, said Muhammad Raju, officer-in-charge of Hatirjheel Police Station.

The complainant alleged the man raped her several times last year, promising to marry her, the OC said, adding that police were looking for the accused.

In Bandarban, four men were sent to jail yesterday on charges of forcing an 8th grader to a tobacco farm in Alikadam and gang-raping her on March 14 when the girl was returning home.

The perpetrators also allegedly filmed the incident.

The victim filed a case on Wednesday and police arrested the four accused the same day, said Alikadam Police Station Officer-in-Charge Mirza Zahir Uddin.

In Patuakhali, a suspect in a gang-rape case was sent to jail on charges of raping a college student. The accused, Sakib Munshi, 19, is the son of Mamun Munshi, former president of Pangashia Union BNP under

Dumki upazila, police said.

The other accused, Sifat Munshi, 20, and Imran Munshi, 19, were still on the run as of last night.

The 17-year-old victim is the daughter of a man killed in police firing during the July uprising.

Sakib, Sifat and Imran forcibly took her to a secluded place near the Munshibari area when the girl was on her way to her maternal grandparents' house after visiting her father's grave on Tuesday.

Then, Sakib and Sifat allegedly took turns in raping her, while Imran filmed the scene, according to a case filed by the victim on Wednesday evening. Police arrested Sakib on the same night and produced him before a court that sent him to jail yesterday.

Meanwhile, BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman yesterday talked to the victim over the phone and promised her all sorts of support when a BNP delegation visited her at a hospital yesterday.

[Our correspondents from Gazipur, Bandarban, and Patuakhali contributed to the report]

Scuffle breaks out at NCP event

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leave. Protesters surrounded him, forcing him back inside the auditorium, where the heated exchanges continued.

The chaos persisted for 30 to 40 minutes before Nahid made another attempt to leave. Protesters then blocked his vehicle, chanting "bhua" (fake).

Eventually, local NCP leaders managed to escort him into his car, and he departed for Dhaka.

Local NCP and SAD leaders declined to comment.

Before the scuffle, Nahid had called for fundamental and qualitative reforms before forming a constituent assembly and holding national elections.

He said the trials of those responsible for killings during the July uprising should be ensured within the government's set election timeline.

He urged vigilance against opportunists infiltrating the party, asserting that there would be no place for extortionists or land grabbers in the NCP.

Trump Organization announces new India office project

AFP, Mumbai

The Trump Organization and its local real estate partners have announced a new commercial tower project in India as the US president's family business seeks to tap demand in the world's most populous country.

India is already home to four Trump-branded residential complexes, making it the largest market outside America for his family business, with more projects on the slate.

Indian partner Tribeca Developers announced on Wednesday that it would develop a new "Trump World Center" in the western Indian city of Pune in partnership with real estate firm Kundan Spaces.

The project, expected to generate sales exceeding \$289.6 million, will span more than 1.6 million square feet and feature "two iconic glass towers with over 27 floors of office space", a statement said.

"This new development marks The Trump Organization's first foray into commercial real estate in India and will join the extensive portfolio of Trump residential properties in the

region," it said.

Eric Trump, executive vice president of the Trump Organization and the US president's second son, said in the statement that India had "embraced the Trump brand" with "remarkable enthusiasm".

"After our successful collaboration on several iconic residential projects, we are proud to launch our first commercial development in India," he said.

The US president is not involved in managing the family company but the Trump Organization's foreign business dealings have prompted criticism of possible conflicts of interest.

Eldest son Donald Trump Junior visited India in 2018, when the Trump Organization's local partners promised dinner with him to anyone who bought into a luxury development outside the capital New Delhi.

India's office market saw robust growth in 2024, with leasing activity across the top seven cities seeing a nearly 23 percent year-on-year increase, according to estimates by real estate management firm JLL.

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Tarique, seven others cleared

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Sobhan Sanvir and Sadaat Sobhan, Tarique's personal secretary Mia Nur Uddin Apu, former BNP lawmaker Qazi Saleemul Huq Kamal, and East-West Property Development Ltd Director Abu Sufian.

Judge Mohammad Abu Taher of the Special Judge's Court-3 of Dhaka passed the order in presence of two accused -- Saleemul Huq and Abu Sufian -- at the courtroom, said a court staffer.

In the judgment, the judge wrote that the prosecutors failed to prove

the charges of bribery against the accused.

On October 4, 2007, the Anti-Corruption Commission Deputy Assistant Director Abul Kashem filed the bribery case.

However, Tarique and Saleemul Huq were later accused in the case.

The ACC said the eight men accused in the case were involved in receiving and giving bribes so that Sanvir did not face charges for killing Humayun Kabir Sabbir whose body was found outside a building in Bashundhara residential area on July 5, 2006.

Greenpeace hit with \$660m in damages in US pipeline suit

AFP, Washington

A jury in North Dakota on Wednesday ordered Greenpeace to pay hundreds of millions of dollars in damages in a closely watched lawsuit brought by a US pipeline operator, raising serious free speech concerns.

The verdict delivers a stunning legal blow to the environmental advocacy group, which Energy Transfer (ET) accused of orchestrating violence and defamation during the controversial construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline nearly a decade ago.

ET, which denies any intent to stifle speech, celebrated the verdict. The jury awarded more than \$660 million in damages across three Greenpeace entities, citing charges including trespass, nuisance, conspiracy, and deprivation of property access.

"We would like to thank the judge and the jury for the incredible amount of time and effort they dedicated to this trial," the company said.

Bangladesh slips

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Nordic countries all remained among the top 10 happiest, with Denmark, Iceland, and Sweden trailing Finland, which slightly extended its lead over runner-up Denmark.

Meanwhile, Costa Rica and Mexico entered the top 10 for the first time, ranking sixth and tenth, respectively.

This year, the authors of the happiness report highlighted new evidence indicating that engaging in acts of generosity and believing in the kindness of others are significant predictors of happiness—more so than earning a higher salary.

They also noted that, in general, "people are too pessimistic about the kindness of their communities," and that "the return rate of lost wallets is much higher than people expect."

US welcomes

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"We condemn any instances of violence or intolerance directed toward members of minority communities in any country," Tammy Bruce said.

She added that the US is closely monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and emphasised that Washington has taken note of the interim government's efforts to maintain stability.

"That's what we're watching. That's what we expect. And that will be what continues," she added.