

## Cate Blanchett plans on retiring from acting soon

Cate Blanchett, the two-time Academy Award winner, has revealed to British media that she plans to step away from acting in the near future.

In a recent interview with Radio Times, the acclaimed actor and producer questioned whether the term “actress” still applied to her, saying, “It’s because I’m quitting... My family always rolls their eyes when I bring it up, but I really mean it. I’m serious about leaving acting behind. There are so many other things I want to pursue in life.”

The Australian performer shared this news ahead of the BBC Radio 4 broadcast of *The Fever by Wallace Shawn* — her debut in radio drama. The play follows a wealthy woman who, after falling ill in a poor country, undergoes a personal reckoning and reflects on her life.



## SOULS to celebrate 50 years with unplugged concert



Marking 50 years of their illustrious journey, legendary Bangladeshi rock band SOULS is set to host an exclusive unplugged concert titled “Mastercard Presents SOULS Unplugged: 50 Years of Timeless Music” on May 2 at Radisson Blu Chattogram Bay View.

Organised by M&M Business Communications, the event will present a rare acoustic rendition of the band’s iconic discography, promising fans an evening steeped in nostalgia and musical intimacy.

Tickets for the concert will go on sale from April 17 through the official ticketing site. Early bird access will be available exclusively for Mastercard cardholders from April 17 to 19, along with a 20% flat discount on all Mastercard Debit, Credit, and Prepaid card purchases.

Physical tickets can also be collected from the Radisson Blu Chattogram reception.

The press conference announcing the event was held on April 16 at Radisson Blu Chattogram. Although lead guitarist and vocalist Partha Barua could not attend due to traffic congestion, fellow SOULS members Meer Masum and Maruf Hasan Real were present.

With this milestone concert, SOULS not only celebrates their own legacy, but also pays tribute to the generations of fans who have supported them throughout their five-decade journey.

## Shakib Khan’s ‘BORBAAD’ now on IMDb’s list of popular movies

The Mehedi Hassan Hridoy directorial *Borbaad* has been screening for 17 days since its release during Eid and continues to draw full houses, with reports of ticket shortages in some locations.

Amid strong audience response, the film has secured a spot on IMDb’s (Internet Movie Database) list of popular movies.

IMDb compiled its recent list of the top 100 popular films based on user interest and activity. *Borbaad* secured the 44th position.

Topping the list is the Hollywood title *A Minecraft Movie*, with other notable entries including *Snow White*, *Anora*, *Superman*, *Mission: Impossible – Final Reckoning*, *Sikandar*, and *Captain America: Brave New World*.

## Tasnia Farin starrer ‘Fatima’ releases in Bongo

Actress Tasnia Farin’s debut feature film *Fatima* premiered on the OTT platform Bongo yesterday.

The emotional and thought-provoking film was previously released in theatres on May 24 last year.

Prior to its theatrical release, *Fatima* had its first official premiere at the 42nd Fajr International Film Festival in Iran, where Farin received the Best Actress Award for her performance.

The story of *Fatima* unfolds as a deeply moving and personal narrative, intricately woven around a woman’s past and present, where dreams and reality gently intertwine.

The film features a talented cast, including Farin in the lead, with notable performances by Yash Rohan, Tariq Anam Khan, Pantha Kanai, Manas Bandyopadhyay, and others.



## Nate Bargatze to host 77th Emmy Awards



American stand-up comedian Nate Bargatze is set to host the 77th Emmy Awards, scheduled to take place on September 14, 2025, at the Peacock Theatre in Los Angeles, according to CBS.

Widely recognised for his observational comedy and multi-generational appeal, Bargatze has become one of today’s most sought-after comics, with three Netflix specials—most recently *Your Friend, Nate Bargatze*—and a guest-hosting stint on *Saturday Night Live*.

In 2024, Bargatze sold over 1.2 million tickets worldwide, earning the title of top-grossing comedian, according to Pollstar.

This marks his first time emceeding a major awards show. Last year’s Emmys, hosted by Eugene and Dan Levy, drew 6.87 million viewers. Television Academy chair Cris Abrego praised Bargatze’s ability to connect with global audiences.

## WHAT’S THE HAPS? Exhibition: ‘KROMOSHO’

The Bengal Arts Programme presents *Kromosho*, a solo visual art exhibition by photographer Munem Wasif, opening today at 6pm.

The collection delves into the shifting soul of Old Dhaka, with opening remarks by Kazi Khaleed Ashraf and Shahidul Alam scheduled for the day.

For over two decades, Munem Wasif has explored the evolving pulse of Old Dhaka, consistently drawn back to its timeless and unshakable soul.

**Date: Friday | April 18**  
**Time: 6pm onwards**  
**Venue: Bengal Shilpalay (Level 1), Bengal Boi, Dhanmondi**



# NEWS

## Govt decides to amend civil procedure code

FROM PAGE 12

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, environment, forest and climate change adviser, at a press conference after the advisory council meeting.

“In Bangladesh, there’s a saying that if you have enmity with someone, file a land case against them, and it won’t be resolved even in three generations. To ensure it doesn’t take three generations but rather one, amendments to the CPC were approved.”

The amendment would reduce the time and cost of litigation, she said.

Previously, after a case verdict, a separate execution petition had to be filed to implement the verdict.

Now, the execution petition will be included with the verdict itself.

Additionally, limits will be set on the number of times extensions can

be requested. The penalty for filing false cases has been increased from Tk 20,000 to Tk 50,000, she said.

Also at the meeting, it was decided to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) 1992, making Bangladesh the first country in Asia to do so.

In managing transboundary watersheds, there are two laws of the United Nations: the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses 1997 and the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) 1992.

Although the Water Convention 1992 was adopted targeting the

countries of the EU, it was made open for all countries in 2016, Rizwana said, adding that 11 countries outside of the EU (mostly African countries) signed the convention so far.

Asked about the National Citizen Party’s request to the Election Commission to extend the deadline for applying for party registration by at least 90 more days, Rizwana said that “it is the party’s political stance”.

Asked whether the deadline extension would affect the interim government’s announcement that the next election would be held between December and June next year, she said: “How the NCP fulfils or resolves its political demand is up to the party. I don’t see any reason for this to conflict with the government’s election-related announcement.”

## Investors not confident

FROM PAGE 12

term, target-oriented policy framework. Now everyone in the private sector is saying that they are uncertain about making investment decisions,” said Debapriya, a distinguished fellow of the Centre for Policy Dialogue.

He was speaking at the 6th Bangladesh Economic Summit at DU.

Debapriya said the panel on the white paper and the task force on re-strategising the economy analysed various aspects of the economy and set benchmarks, but no target has been set for six months or a year, he said.

The interim government is working on the budget given by the previous government, he said.

We have not seen anything based on which we can evaluate the performance of the interim government, he said.

At another session, Hossain Zillur Rahman, chairman of the Power and Participation Research Centre, said that for a long time, infrastructure development has been considered as a growth driver, ignoring the need for increasing skilled and sustainable employment.

“This growth model needs a review,” said the former adviser to a caretaker government.

CPD Distinguished Fellow Prof Mustafizur Rahman, Chairman of Department of Economics at Dhaka University Prof Masuda Yasmeen, and Prof Selim Raihan of economics at Dhaka University also spoke.

## 40 Palestinians killed

FROM PAGE 12

population of Gaza following Israel’s renewed declaration the previous day that no humanitarian aid would be allowed into the Palestinian territory.

“This is a public admission of committing a war crime, including the use of starvation as a weapon and the denial of basic necessities such as food, medicine, water, and fuel to innocent civilians for the seventh consecutive week,” the Palestinian group said in a statement.

## US pledges support

FROM PAGE 12

State Guest House Jamuna.

The US officials expressed deep appreciation for the generosity of Bangladesh in hosting 1.2 million Rohingyas and thanked the leadership of Prof Yunus for making progress over the issue of their rehabilitation.

The chief adviser termed the recent identification of 180,000 Rohingyas by the Myanmar government as fit for return to Rakhine as an important progress in resolving the crisis.

“We appreciate your vision of looking at the Rohingya issue not in isolation but in the context of Myanmar as a whole,” said Chulick.

The US officials also appreciated Prof Yunus’s approach to enhance regional cooperation, connectivity, and people-to-people contacts, according to the press release.

The visit comes amid a significant policy shift in the US under Trump, particularly in foreign aid and trade. The Trump administration had imposed a 37 percent tariff on Bangladeshi exports to the US, but later paused those for ninety days for countries, barring China.

During the meeting, the chief adviser underlined the excellent bilateral relations between the two countries and reaffirmed the commitment of the interim government to work closely with the Trump administration on the entire range of bilateral relations.

He also thanked Trump for resuming aid for the Rohingyas and pausing the tariffs.

“We are continuing our work to support his trade agenda,” Prof Yunus said.

On Wednesday, the US delegation, in its first official visit to Bangladesh after Donald Trump assumed power in the US, interacted with the political parties – BNP, National Citizen Party and Jamaat-e-Islam – in Dhaka. The US officials wanted to know their opinions on issues including reforms, elections, rights of the minorities, women and

Two Hamas officials told AFP yesterday that the group’s discussions on an Israeli truce proposal were nearly complete, with a response expected soon.

“These talks are almost complete, and the group will send its response to the mediators once they finish. It’s expected the talks will wrap up soon – possibly even today,” an official said, with another member of the group confirming his account.

labour and future foreign policy.

Yesterday, the US officials also held separate meetings with National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman, Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain and Foreign Secretary Jashim Uddin.

“We have requested the delegation to revise the US’s funding policy for Bangladesh,” Jashim Uddin told reporters at a media briefing at the foreign ministry.

He said the Bangladesh government is also discussing the tariff issue with various stakeholders and will further discuss how to address the trade issues raised by the US.

During an hour-long meeting with National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman, the US officials discussed key regional peace and security issues, as well as bilateral relations between Bangladesh and the US.

The Rohingya crisis and the situation in Myanmar were also discussed in detail, said the press release, without elaborating.

At the recent BIMSTEC summit in Bangkok, Prof Yunus proposed establishing a humanitarian channel in Rakhine State, which will require the Arakan Army’s cooperation. Analysts say such a channel would depend on a ceasefire between Myanmar’s junta and the Arakan Army, which now controls over 80 percent of Rakhine, as well as a UN Security Council resolution.

When asked whether the humanitarian channel and support for the Arakan Army were discussed, Jashim Uddin stated that these issues were not brought up.

“We focused on bilateral relations, the upcoming elections, and US cooperation. The Rohingya issue was a key topic. We sought continued political and humanitarian support and discussed a planned high-level Rohingya conference in New York this September,” he said.

“We also conveyed concerns over US tariffs and highlighted the reforms Bangladesh has undertaken to reduce the trade imbalance.”

## Strongest evidence yet of life found on alien planet

FROM PAGE 12

however, that they are not announcing the discovery of actual living organisms but rather a possible biosignature – an indicator of a biological process – and that the findings should be viewed cautiously, with more observations needed.

Nonetheless, they voiced excitement. These are the first hints of an alien world that is possibly inhabited, said astrophysicist Nikku Madhusudhan of the University of Cambridge’s Institute of Astronomy, lead author of the study published in the Astrophysical Journal Letters.

K2-18 b is 8.6 times as massive as Earth and has a diameter about 2.6 times as large as our planet.

It orbits in the “habitable zone” – a distance where liquid water, a key ingredient for life, can exist on a planetary surface – around a red dwarf star smaller and less luminous than our sun, located about 124 light-years from Earth in the constellation Leo. A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km). One other planet also has been identified orbiting this star.

## Man beaten to death

FROM PAGE 12

was returning home from private tuition when Nantu verbally harassed her near the Talaimari Shaheed Minar area. After she informed her parents, Akram went and complained to Nantu’s parents.

Around 10:30pm, Nantu and his associates attacked his son Onoto near his house. When Akram rushed to the scene to save his son, the attackers turned on him. One of them struck Akram on the head with a brick.

Critically injured, Akram was rushed to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead, the OC added.

The body was handed over to the family after an autopsy.

“We have launched drives to arrest the culprits,” the OC said.