

Coppola receives AFI Life Achievement Award, ‘The Godfather’ stars pay tribute

Francis Ford Coppola has been honoured with the prestigious AFI Life Achievement Award, the American Film Institute’s highest accolade. The 86-year-old filmmaker, known for *The Godfather* franchise, *Apocalypse Now* and *Megalopolis*, received the award from Steven Spielberg and George Lucas.

At the ceremony, veteran actors Al Pacino and Robert De Niro paid tribute. Pacino, 85, recalled almost being fired from *The Godfather* before Coppola fought for him, thanking him for believing in him more than he believed in himself. De Niro, 81, said not being cast in the first film allowed him to star in *The Godfather Part II*, changing his career and life.

Spielberg praised *The Godfather* as the “greatest American film ever made”, while Lucas admired Coppola’s fearless spirit.

Celebrities such as Adam Driver, Harrison Ford, Morgan Freeman, Dustin Hoffman, Ron Howard, Spike Lee and Diane Lane also shared their admiration for the filmmaker. Past AFI honourees include Orson Welles, Meryl Streep, and Denzel Washington.



FTII restores and releases Ritwik Ghatak’s film ‘Fear’ in 4K

The Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) has released a newly restored 4K version of *Fear* (1965), a lesser-known short film directed by legendary filmmaker Ritwik Ghatak.

Now available on FTII’s official YouTube channel, this restoration offers cinephiles and students a rare look into Ghatak’s haunting early work.

Originally conceived as a training project for acting students, *Fear* features performances by

Subhash Ghai, Sudha Rani, Urvashi Dutta, Gowardhan Sharma, and Asrani — all of whom later became significant names in Indian cinema.

FTII’s restoration of *Fear* is part of its effort to preserve alumni works through the National Film Heritage Mission, digitising and sharing rare early films on YouTube.

They notably unearthed rare early works featuring talents like Irrfan Khan and Rajkumar Hirani.

Bangladeshi short ‘Another World’ headed to Golden FEMI Film Festival

Bangladeshi short film *Another World*, directed by KM Sohag Rana, has been selected as a finalist for Bulgaria’s prestigious Golden FEMI Film Festival.

The festival’s Artistic Director Elemia Fard confirmed the selection in an official letter on April 19.

The awards ceremony will be held on June 7 at the Royal Hall of the Sofia Balkan Palace Hotel, with Bulgaria’s Vice President Iliana Iotova attending as honorary patron.

Another World tells the story of two orphaned brothers, portrayed by real-life street children from Dhaka’s Uttara area. The film also stars GM Masud and Marzia.

Fuad Bin Alamgir served as the cinematographer for the film, while Mahfuz Leon was responsible for editing and colour grading.



WHAT’S THE HAPS?

Play: ‘Ekti Loukik Athoba Aloukik Steamer’

Dhaka Theatre’s 49th production, *Ekti Loukik Athoba Aloukik Steamer*, written by Anon Zaman and directed by Shahiduzzaman Selim, explores a city gripped by a pandemic. Set at a ferry terminal where a steamer never arrives, the play symbolically unveils fear, corruption, and social decay in a collapsing society.

Date: Today | April 28

Time: 7pm 8:35pm

Venue: National Theatre Hall, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy



‘Neelchokro’ receives ‘U’ certification



A few days ago, through the release of a 19-second video, Arifin Shuvoo subtly hinted that he would appear on the silver screen this Eid-ul-Azha. Although Shuvoo did not explicitly mention a release during Eid in the video clip, it was later understood that the clip was a strategic announcement regarding the release of the film

Neelchokro.

Following the video’s release, the film’s director, Mithu Khan, confirmed that *Neelchokro* has received a ‘U’ (Universal) certificate from the Film Certification Board. This means *Neelchokro* will be suitable for audiences of all ages.

Advances in technology have fuelled new addictions, with many falling into traps set for personal gain—*Neelchokro* explores this very theme.

Apart from Arifin Shuvoo, the film stars Mondera Chakroborty, Fazlur Rahman Babu, Priyontee Urbi, and Shahed Ali, amongst others.

Greta Gerwig’s ‘Narnia’ finds its White Witch in Emma Mackey



Emma Mackey is set to reunite with director Greta Gerwig for Netflix’s upcoming *Narnia* series adaptation, playing the White Witch in *The Magician’s Nephew*.

Mackey, who appeared in Gerwig’s *Barbie*, will portray the iconic villain first brought to life by Tilda Swinton in the 2005 movie *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Gerwig, who is writing and directing the film, will focus on the White Witch’s rise to power.

The movie will have a two-week IMAX release on Thanksgiving 2026 before streaming on Netflix for Christmas.

Netflix has been developing its *Narnia* projects since 2018, officially bringing Gerwig on board in 2020 after her success with *Lady Bird*, *Little Women*, and the billion-dollar hit *Barbie*.

NEWS

Qatar PM

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March, with the two sides unable to agree on the next steps. Israel resumed air and ground attacks across the Gaza Strip on March 18 after earlier halting the entry of aid.

Since then, Israeli strikes across Gaza have killed at least 2,151 people.

Meanwhile, the health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza yesterday announced that the death toll from the war had risen to more than 52,000 people, after hundreds previously listed as missing

were confirmed dead.

“An additional 697 martyrs have been added to the cumulative statistics after their data was completed and verified by the committee monitoring missing persons,” the health ministry said in a statement, giving the overall toll of 52,243.

Gaza’s civil defence agency said Israeli strikes yesterday killed at least eight people, including a 17-year-old who died in an attack on a southern town. Dozens were also injured in the strikes, it added.

Dhaka agrees

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Currently, around 1.2 million Rohingya are living in Bangladesh.

Touhid said while Dhaka cannot officially maintain contact with the Arakan Army, which controls over 80 percent of Rakhine, it “cannot remain detached even if we want to” due to security concerns along the Myanmar border.

Asked about the ongoing tensions between nuclear-armed neighbours India and Pakistan, Touhid said Dhaka seeks a negotiated settlement.

“Our position is very clear. We want peace in South Asia. We are aware of the longstanding rivalry between Pakistan and India. We would expect the two countries to resolve the problem through dialogue,” he said, responding to media queries at the foreign ministry.

“We have good relations with both India and Pakistan,” the adviser added.

India-Pakistan relations deteriorated sharply after a terrorist attack last week killed 26 people and injured 17 in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

India accused Pakistan of supporting “cross-border terrorism,” while Islamabad denied any involvement, calling the allegations “frivolous.”

The Resistance Front (TRF), believed to be an offshoot of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Asked whether Bangladesh would initiate mediation between India and Pakistan, Touhid said some countries had already proposed mediation.

“I don’t think, at this moment, we should try that. If any party wants, then we can go for mediation. We don’t want to do anything on our own.”

“In whatever ways, through mediation or bilateral discussion, we want the tension to diffuse and peace established,” he added.

ARRESTS OF ‘BANGLADESHIS’ IN INDIA

Asked about the reported arrests of suspected undocumented Bangladeshis in India, the adviser said the foreign ministry had not yet received any official communication from New Delhi.

On Saturday, international outlets reported that over a thousand “undocumented Bangladeshis” were arrested in Ahmedabad and Surat in India.

“Even if there is official communication, whether they are Bangladeshis or not is subject to verification. There are also Bangla-speaking people in India. If they are from Bangladesh and that is proven, we will bring them back,” Touhid said.

Although there is no travel advisory against visiting India, he advised Bangladeshis to avoid travelling there unless necessary.

Maiden cargo flight departs Sylhet airport

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Khalil, public relations officer at Ctg airport, told The Daily Star yesterday.

To facilitate cargo flight operations, the airport authority has begun installing scanners, improving infrastructure, constructing cold storage facilities, and recruiting additional manpower, Ibrahim added.

Shakil Meraf, Director (Cargo) of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, told The Daily Star, Biman has already recruited necessary manpower to provide ground handling services on cargo flights.

“The airport is already prepared for exporting cargo items to different

countries except for EU destinations. Now, necessary steps are being taken to export goods to EU countries.”

Welcoming the initiative, Khairul Alam Suzan, vice president of the Bangladesh Freight Forwarders’ Association, told The Daily Star, “The government’s move to start direct cargo flights from Chattogram opens the door to a new opportunity. To fulfil this initiative, all stakeholders, both public and private, must work in unison.”

Several Chattogram-based businesspeople noted that the region is the second-largest hub for

Bangladesh’s ready-made garment industry. Due to the lack of direct cargo flights, exporters from this area previously had to route shipments through Dhaka or third countries, increasing time, cost, and hassle.

Emirates SkyCargo, Etihad, Kuwait Airways, Thai Airways, and SilkAir once operated cargo flights via Shah Amanat International Airport. However, these operations gradually ceased, and the last remaining Emirates SkyCargo flight service was also discontinued in 2022.

[Our Sylhet correspondent contributed to this report.]

Ishraque new DSCC mayor

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previous announcement made by the EC that had declared Awami League’s candidate Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh as the elected mayor.

A notification was issued in this regard today signed by Akhter Ahmed, senior secretary of the Election Commission Secretariat.

According to the notification, following an order issued on March 27, by the Election Tribunal and Dhaka Joint District Sessions Judge 1st Court, the election win of Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, who contested with the “boat” symbol in the mayoral election held on February 1, 2020, has been cancelled.

In his place, Ishraque Hossain, who contested with the “sheaf of paddy” symbol, has been officially declared the

elected mayor.

Earlier, on April 22, the EC had sought the opinion of the law ministry whether a gazette notification should be issued declaring Ishraque as mayor of Dhaka South.

After receiving a positive response from the law ministry, the chief election commissioner held a meeting with other commissioners and officials, during which the decision to issue the amended gazette was finalised later that night.

On March 27, a court verdict annulled the results of the 2020 DSCC election and declared Ishraque Hossain, son of former mayor Sadeque Hossain Khoka, as the new mayor.

The DSCC election was held on February 1, 2020, alongside the Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC)

election.

Taposh secured 424,595 votes while Ishraque received 236,512 votes.

Following allegations of rigging and irregularities, Ishraque filed a case challenging the election results.

The EC published the official gazette for the 2020 election results on February 2 of that year, after which the elected mayors took oath and began their duties.

Following the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government on August 5, last year, the previously elected mayors were removed from office.

Ask Interpol

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On March 25, ACC Assistant Director Afnan Jannat Keya, also the investigation officer in the case, submitted the charge sheet against the 18 accused, showing them as fugitives.

She appealed to the court to issue arrest warrants against them.

According to ACC documents, Hasina, in collusion with senior Rajuk officials, had six plots allotted to herself, her son Sajeeb Wazed Joy, daughter Putul, younger sister Sheikh Rehana, Rehana’s son Radwan Mujib Siddiq Bobby, and Rehana’s daughter Azmina Siddiq, in violation of relevant rules.

The ACC filed six separate cases over alleged irregularities in the allocation of the six plots, each measuring 10 kathas, in the diplomatic zone of Sector-27 in the Purbachal New Town project.

The case against Hasina, Putul and 16 others was filed with the ACC’s Dhaka Integrated District Office on January 12.

India eyes ‘retaliation’

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The Indian military yesterday held naval drills — releasing images of warships firing missiles — while the country’s security forces pressed on with their hunt for those behind the April 22 attack at a tourist hotspot in Pahalgam.

The military also blamed Pakistan for the “unprovoked” firing of small arms along Kashmir’s Line of Control that separates the two countries.

“(Our) own troops responded effectively with appropriate small arms fire,” it said of the latest incident, which has not been reported by Pakistan.

Indian police have issued wanted posters for three men — two Pakistanis and an Indian — who they say are members of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba group, a UN-designated terrorist organisation.

Meanwhile, India’s federal home ministry has handed over the attack probe to the National Investigation Agency, which focuses on counter-terrorism.

India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi yesterday reiterated his pledge that the Pahalgam victims “will get justice”.

Modi, in his monthly radio address to the nation, also said that those behind the terror attack in Pahalgam would face the “harsh response” and that the whole world was standing with India in the fight against terrorism.

On Saturday, Pakistan’s Prime

2025, the outstanding dues, including interest, stand at Tk 2,179.95 crore.

The same branch of the bank on April 20 called for the auction of 11 acres of land, including S Alam Group’s sugar mills, to recover Tk 9,948 crore in unpaid loans.

Repeated attempts to reach Jamal Uddin, manager of Islami Bank’s Khatunganj branch, via mobile phone were unsuccessful.

Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the country was “open to participating in any neutral, transparent and credible investigation” into the attack. However, he warned against any provocations.

Yesterday, Pakistan’s army said its soldiers killed “54 militants” who had tried to enter the country by crossing its northwestern border with Afghanistan.

The “group of jihadists was specifically infiltrating on behalf of their ‘foreign masters’ to undertake high-profile terrorist activities inside Pakistan,” it said, adding that 54 militants had been killed.

“Such actions by (jihadists), at a time when India is levelling baseless accusations against Pakistan, clearly imply on whose cues (the jihadists are) operating,” it said.

Kashmir has been divided between India and Pakistan since their independence in 1947. Both claim the territory in full but govern separate portions of it.

In the aftermath of the attack, New Delhi suspended a water-sharing treaty, announced the closure of the main land border crossing with Pakistan, downgraded diplomatic ties, and withdrew visas for Pakistanis.

In response, Islamabad has ordered the expulsion of Indian diplomats and military advisers, cancelling visas for Indian nationals — with the exception of Sikh pilgrims — and closing the main border crossing from its side.