

## Actors Equity's president condemns lawsuits and attacks on artistes

Azad Abul Kalam, president of Actors Equity, has expressed grave concern over the recent lawsuits and attacks against artistes.

Following the filing of an attempted murder case implicating 17 actors, including Suborna Mustafa, Apu Biswas, and Nusraat Faria, and the mob assault of actor Siddique, Kalam urged the interim government to act swiftly.

The actor condemned the baseless

accusations, highlighting their damaging impact on artistes' reputations and the social fabric. Stressing the need for social resistance against such practices, he warned that unchecked mob violence could escalate further.

He emphasised that no individual should be criminalised without proof, calling for strict consequences against those filing false cases to preserve societal unity and justice.



## Pritom Hasan and Xefer come together for romantic web-film



Singing sensations Pritom Hasan and Xefer, who have been making their presence felt on OTT platforms through their acting, are set to pair up for the first time in an upcoming romantic web film titled *Tumi Ami Shudhu*. The project is being directed by noted filmmaker Shihab Shaheen, and is expected to premiere soon on an OTT platform.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Shihab Shaheen confirmed the news, saying, "We're scheduled to begin shooting within the next few days. This project was finalised nearly a year and a half ago. Initially, I had planned to launch

Xefer as an actress through this film, but in the meantime, she made her on-screen debut with another project. Now, we're finally moving ahead to complete it."

Without revealing too much, the director shared that the story is a beautiful love story. "I believe audiences will appreciate this fresh new pairing," he added.

Pritom was last seen in the web film *Guumpori*, while Xefer more recently appeared in Shihab Shaheen's *Allen Swapna Season 2*. Meanwhile, Shaheen himself has been earning acclaim both at home and abroad for his Eid release *Daagi*.

## Bangladeshi film 'Not a Fiction' wins top prize at Prague fest

Bangladeshi one-shot film *Not a Fiction*, directed by Shah Newaz Khan Cju, has won Best Super Short Film at the Prague Film Festival 2025.

Selected from 3,266 submissions across 95 countries, it was the only entry from South Asia. A hard-hitting portrayal of extrajudicial killings in Bangladesh over two decades, the film impressed a jury led by Cannes-recognised filmmakers.

Made with a budget of under 100 euros, it outshone a European competitor costing nearly 50,000 euros. Cju, currently based in Berlin, accepted the award in Prague, calling it a proud moment. *Not a Fiction* will be released online within the next month.

Co-producers Sadia Khalid Reeti and Laili Begum, and a strong cast and crew, brought the powerful story to life.



## Jenna Ortega eyes directorial debut with long-nurtured script

Actress Jenna Ortega is gearing up for her directorial debut, revealing plans to bring a personal script to life—one she's been developing since the early days of her acting career.

In an interview with V Magazine, the *Wednesday* star shared, "I've known I was going to make this film for almost 10 years." While she has already executive-produced projects like *Death of a Unicorn* and the upcoming season of *Wednesday*, Ortega says her ultimate ambition is to direct.

She is also producing and starring in the thriller *Hurry Up Tomorrow*, viewing her acting career as a "stepping stone" toward her goal of directing.

### WHAT'S THE HAPS?

#### 'Paal: Moving through Memories, Myths, and Motion'

Under the artistic direction of Bishwajit Goswami, *Paal: Moving through Memories, Myths, and Motion* presents three large sails symbolising land, water, and air.

Created with artists and communities along the Buriganga, the exhibition weaves natural materials, folk poetry, and traditional craft into a powerful metaphor of collective memory and movement.

Date: Today-Friday | May 1-2

Time: 2pm-7pm

Venue: Brihatta Art Foundation, Hazaribagh



## NEWS

### Chinmoy Das granted bail

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before the HC saying that their client is innocent as there is no specific allegation against him.

The police are yet to submit any report in the case against Chinmoy, who is ill. Bhattacharjee said, adding that there was no element of offence brought against him in the first information report.

Meanwhile, Haque vehemently opposed the bail petition as Chinmoy, born Chandan Kumar Dhar, can interfere in the investigation proceedings if released from jail.

There is also a possibility of Chinmoy

fleeing, if released, as he was absconding before arrest, he said.

Additional Attorney General Md Abdul Jabbar Bhuiyan and Deputy Attorney General Farid also appeared for the state during the hearing.

On October 31 last year, Firoz Khan, former general secretary of Chattogram's Mohora ward BNP, filed the case with Kotwali Police Station

accusing Chinmoy and 18 others of disrespecting the national flag during a rally six days earlier in the port city's New Market area.

On November 26 last year, a

Chattogram court sent Chinmoy to jail, rejecting his bail prayer after he was arrested in the capital the previous day.

When Chinmoy was produced before a court that day, a clash ensued between his followers with the police and lawyers and Saiful Islam Alif, a lawyer, was killed in the melee.

On January 12, Bhattacharjee submitted the bail petition on behalf of Chinmoy before the HC.

The HC bench on February 4 issued the rule asking the state to explain in two weeks why the accused should not be granted bail in the case.

On

### Firing, suing of journos worrying

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remains unclear."

The rights body stated, "The beauty of any society lies in the recognition of its citizens' fundamental rights. When those rights are curtailed by law or influence, it is considered persecution."

Citing Article 39 of the Constitution, it said freedom of speech, expression, and the press

must be upheld.

ASK also voiced concern over increasing hostility towards cultural activists. "Filing attempted murder cases against them reflects a hostile, hateful situation, and it is an attempt to instil fear among them," the statement read.

It condemned recent instances of artists being obstructed from attending events, but noted that

no steps were taken against the individuals involved.

It said that such "unlawful mobs" have violated citizens' dignity and freedom of movement.

ASK said that the government's current measures appear inadequate and urged immediate steps to protect media and cultural workers, stating that such incidents are "contrary to good governance and human rights".

### All-round Miraz

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second Test ton and top-scored with a 120 earlier, helping his side boast a 217-run lead.

Zimbabwe then folded for 111, with opener Ben Curran offering some resistance, top-scoring with 46. Craig Ervine (25) and Wellington Masakadza (10) were the only other Zimbabwe batters to reach double digits in the second innings.

As expected, spinners dominated proceedings, accounting for nine wickets. Miraz, who returned figures of 5/32, starred as he picked up his third five of the series. His spin bowling partner Taijul Islam bagged 3/42 and finished with nine wickets in the match.

Miraz completed the double of 2000 runs and 200 wickets in Tests — the second from Bangladesh after Shakib Al Hasan. But the 27-year-old did it in quicker time, taking 53 matches, one less than Shakib.

Courtesy of this win, Bangladesh snapped their six-match losing streak at home. This streak began with a four-wicket defeat to New Zealand in December 2023 in Mirpur. After that, they lost two Tests each against Pakistan and South Africa last year and also the first Test of the Zimbabwe series in Sylhet.

camp in charge of Camps 24, 25, and 27, said there is no space left in those three camps and that the new arrivals are now moving toward the Ukhya camps in search of shelter.

Karim Ullah, a Rohingya man who arrived at Camp 26 with his six-member family on April 11 after a difficult journey from Maungdaw in Rakhine, said there is no space for separate accommodation for his family, so he is currently bunched up with relatives.

A former community leader, Karim said his home was burnt down by the Arakan Army, which is hunting community leaders and educated individuals.

"They are picking up young people to fight on the front line against the junta without proper training. Many have been detained, accused of links to the junta, ARSA, or RSO. Some were tortured, some are missing, and others were killed."

Karim also alleged that the Arakan Army restricts livelihood opportunities and access to food while imposing heavy tolls on everyday activities.

"They are making our lives unbearable so that we leave the country," he said grimly, adding that returning to Rakhine in the current situation is not an option.

### US will get work

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Bangladesh delegation held talks with officials of the US departments of energy, commerce, state, and agriculture over the tariff issue.

At present, the trade balance between the two countries is heavily tilted towards Bangladesh because of the higher shipment of garment items.

For instance, Bangladesh exported goods worth more than \$8 billion last year and imported goods worth \$2 billion from the US.

### Law being drafted to ensure Rab accountability

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recommended disbanding the force, citing serious human rights violations and abuses.

Rab DG Shahidur's presentation at the seminar yesterday primarily focused on the force's reform and success. He said the force is now committed to upholding transparency, accountability, and human rights in its operations.

To ensure internal discipline and address misconduct, the force has recently strengthened its internal investigation cell, he said. A dedicated human rights cell has also been set up to bring transparency across all levels of operation.

The Rab arrested 1,487 suspects in connection with 442 murder cases, and another 154 suspects in sabotage-related cases between August 5, 2024, and April 28, 2025, according to him.

On the second day of Police Week, several other police units, including the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), Police Bureau of Investigation (PBI) and Tourist Police, also delivered presentations before top police officials, including Inspector General Baharul Alam.

A lack of adequate budget for basic operational needs was a common concern raised by nearly all the units, according to meeting sources.

The units said many officers reportedly continue to use personal funds to carry out investigations due to insufficient official allocations. Additionally, there is no separate funding for handling unidentified bodies — an issue police units say has long been a source of frustration.