

Bangladeshi stars set for back-to-back shows in Saudi Arabia

Following a powerful performance in Dammam on May 2, Bangladeshi rock legend Nagar Baul James is set to take the stage in Jeddah on May 9, as part of Saudi Arabia's *Passport to the World* event series under government patronage.

The Dammam concert at Al Khobar's Al Iskan Park drew an overwhelming crowd of Bangladeshi expatriates, with James energising fans with classics like *Maa, Pagla Hawa*, and *Bhigi Bhigi*.

For the Jeddah show, he will be joined by singers Sadia Mouri and Moumita Barua. Meanwhile, Porshi is slated to perform on May 7, followed by Imran Mahmudul on May 8. The event series is part of Saudi Arabia's *Vision 2030*, fostering global cultural exchange through music and the arts.



Nick & Priyanka Chopra Jonas

Shah Rukh Khan

Rihanna

Stars celebrate Black style and tailored elegance at Met Gala 2025

The 2025 Met Gala dazzled with bold tributes to Black style and tailoring, as stars from music, film, and sports ascended the daffodil accented, rain-soaked blue carpet of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This year's theme, *Tailored for You*, paid homage to the Costume Institute's exhibit *Superfine: Tailoring Black Style*, spotlighting the elegance of the Black dandy aesthetic.

Rihanna stole the spotlight in a corseted striped bodice and wide-brimmed hat, confirming her third pregnancy. Her partner ASAP Rocky arrived earlier, sharing the joyful news. Co-chairs Colman Domingo and Lewis Hamilton led early arrivals—Domingo stunned in a royal blue cloak and



Colman Domingo

jewelled jacket, while Hamilton wore an ivory suit paired with a beret.

Priyanka Chopra Jonas and her husband Nick Jonas arrived in synchronised black and white fits. Notably, designer brand Balmain crafted her polka dot suit dress. Pops

of colour came from gymnast Simone Biles in bright blue, Chappell Roan in hot pink, and Spike Lee in an orange khaki cap and crossbody bag.

Making history, Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan debuted at the Met, becoming the first Indian male actor to walk the carpet. Dressed in a regal black shawl-inspired coat by Sabyasachi, his understated elegance echoed the evening's refined tone. "My little kids were really excited about the Met," SRK shared, crediting them for his appearance.

The event, held in support of the museum's Costume Institute, offered a showcase of sartorial artistry—blending cultural homage, social commentary, and enduring elegance.

Padatik to host four-day festival honouring Syed Badruddin Hossain

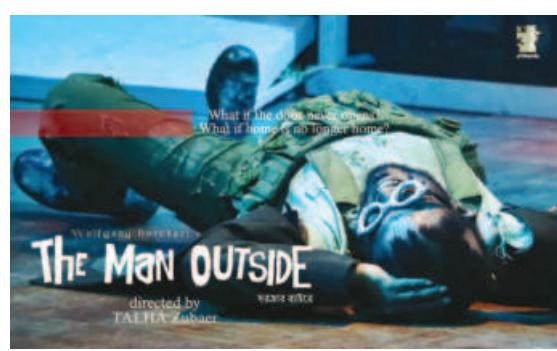
Padatik Natya Sangsads will host the Syed Badruddin Hossain Memorial Theatre Festival from May 8 to May 11 at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy.

Launched in 2010, the festival

commemorates Syed Badruddin Hossain's contributions to theatre, education, and the Language Movement. Each evening at 7pm, a different troupe will stage a play.

The memorial honour will be awarded posthumously to Dr

Afsar Ahmad and Mohammad Saiful Islam. Highlights include Jahangirnagar Theatre's *Dwitiyo Mrityur Agye*, Padatik's Bengali adaptation of *Macbeth*, Actomania's *The Man Outside*, and Natyatirtha's *Dwip*.



NEWS

Every day 30-40 Rohingyas coming

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Border Guard Bangladesh has increased surveillance to prevent infiltration but has failed to stop their arrivals as the Rohingyas are using remote and hard-to-monitor routes. Brokers from Rohingya and Bangladeshi communities are helping them reach refugee camps in Teknaf and Ukhia, said officials.

Rohingya camp leaders expressed concern over a possible fresh influx in the coming days due to increasing oppression by the Arakan Army, which now controls over 80 percent of Rakhine state.

A Rohingya youth from Maungdaw, requesting anonymity, told this correspondent over the phone that many are fleeing from Rakhine to avoid being recruited in the Arakan Army to fight against the Junta military.

"We also want to fight for our country alongside the Arakan Army, but they must first ensure our citizenship rights in Myanmar," he said.

Moreover, members of the Arakan Army frequently raid our homes and detain people on suspicion of their links with Arsa. They also loot valuables."

On Sunday, members of the Arakan Army, an armed group, carried out a raid in Sikdarpara village of northern Maungdaw. They forced villagers into an open field from 8:00am to 2:00pm, searched homes for links with Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army, another armed group, detained 10 people, and burnt five Rohingya houses.

"They are not directly telling us to leave, but their continuous repression is forcing us out of the area," the youth said.

Locals at Shahpori Dwip jetty in Teknaf said smoke from the burning houses was visible from Bangladesh.

MD Mizanur Rahman, refugee relief and repatriation commissioner, said 30 to 40 Rohingyas are entering the camps daily from Myanmar.

"We have already completed biometric registration of 1.18 lakh new arrivals since November 2023. Many are waiting for registration and have been given tokens for food assistance," he said, but declined to share the number of tokens issued, citing concerns over duplication and the inclusion of Bangladeshis.

He added that many Rohingyas have been pushed back recently when they tried to enter Bangladesh illegally.

These new arrivals have joined

the nearly 12 lakh Rohingyas already residing in Bangladesh, majority of whom faced a brutal military crackdown in 2017.

Md Zubair, chairman of Arakan Rohingya Society for Peace and Human Rights, alleged that the Arakan Army is carrying out systemic ethnic cleansing.

"About 3.5 lakh Rohingyas still live in Rakhine and many want to flee. The Arakan Army also extorts money from those trying to escape, for going to fields and doing business."

He warned that another major influx into Bangladesh is likely if the oppression continues.

Lt Col Ashiqur Rahman, commanding officer of BGB Battalion 2 in Teknaf, said that as strict surveillance along the Naf river and Bay of Bengal continues, the Rohingyas are crossing the border through remote hilly areas with the help of traffickers.

The traffickers are changing their strategies to bring Rohingyas into Bangladesh, so BGB is revising its prevention plan frequently, he said.

He added that many Rohingyas have been pushed back recently when they tried to enter Bangladesh illegally.

These new arrivals have joined

UNSC urges

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to simulate protective measures in case of an air attack or disaster, with special focus on safeguarding citizens, reports TOI.

The Indian Air Force will hold large-scale military drills in Rajasthan along the international border with Pakistan—a NOTAM, or Notice to Airmen, issued yesterday evening said. The drills will begin 9:30 pm today and end around November 26 last year.

Meanwhile, India has advanced the start date of four under-construction hydropower projects in the Kashmir region by months after suspending a water-sharing treaty with Pakistan that had slowed progress, according to an industry source and a government document.

The four projects are: Pakal Dul (1,000 MW), Kiru (624 MW), Kwar (540 MW) and Ratu (850 MW). All of them are mainly meant for Pakistan but India is allowed to build run-of-water hydro projects without any significant storage.

Islamabad has said any "attempt to stop or divert the flow of water belonging to Pakistan ... will be considered as an act of war."

"We have witnessed changes in the river (Chenab) which are not natural at all," Kazim Pirzada, irrigation minister for Punjab province, told AFP.

Khaleda comes home, lights up BNP

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Supporters chanted slogans such as "Khaleda Zia bhoy nai, rajpath chhari nai" (Khaleda Zia, fear not, we haven't left the streets), "Khaleda Zia agomon, shubhechcha swagatom" (Welcome, Khaleda Zia), and "Tarique Zia birer besh e, ashbe phire Bangladesh e" (Tarique Zia will return to Bangladesh like a hero).

Khaleda landed at HSIA on a special air ambulance from the UK at 10:42am. Both air ambulances for her flights to and back from London were provided by the Emir of Qatar.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir and members of the standing committee received her at the airport.

"In the current political climate, Khaleda Zia's return is a critical moment. We believe her presence will play a vital role in restoring democracy in the country," Fakhrul told journalists there.

Her motorcade left the airport around 11:20am, but the crowd was so overwhelming that it took 40 minutes to move just half a kilometre to the front of the airport's third terminal.

Despite heavy deployment of police, army and Rab personnel, the law enforcers struggled to contain the crowd and keep them off the highway.

Khaleda's vehicle, flanked by party loyalists, carried only two others: her daughters in law, Zubaida Rahman and Syeda Sharmila Rahman, widow of Arafat Rahman Koko.

The journey to her Gulshan residence "Firoza" took over two hours. For about an hour from 11:00am, the expressway in front of the airport was blocked by security forces, halting traffic on both sides of the road up to Banani.

Near Firoza, more supporters had gathered, showering Khaleda's car with flowers as it entered the gate.

While she typically sits in the rear seat, she was seated in front this time. Zubaida and Sharmila accompanied her in the back. Upon arrival, they helped her into the house.

Before getting off the car, Khaleda waved to her party supporters.

At home, she was welcomed by family members, including her sister Selima Rahman, younger brother Shamim Iskandar, his wife Kaniz Fatema, and Zubaida's elder sister Shahina Zaman.

Earlier in the day, the road in front of Firoza had been closed to vehicular traffic and pedestrian access restricted. A tight security perimeter had been established by law enforcement.

Firoza, surrounded by high walls, features a security room at the entrance manned by police and the Chairperson's Security Force (CSF) on rotation.

As the gate was shut behind her upon entering, Mirza Fakhrul addressed the crowd with a handheld microphone, urging them to leave. "Doctors have advised madam [Khaleda] to take complete rest. She needs at least eight hours of uninterrupted sleep. Please avoid chanting slogans or crowding outside her house."

Her personal physician and BNP Standing Committee member AZM Zahid Hossain, who flew back from London with her, said Khaleda had expressed gratitude to everyone who had sent their well wishes. "After medical treatment, Khaleda Zia is physically well. She is mentally stable."

Despite the request, the street remained crowded for hours with supporters hoping to catch a glimpse of their leader.

Khaleda's return was celebrated within the party as a symbolic resurgence.



BNP Standing Committee Member Salahuddin Ahmed told The Daily Star, "This is a joyous moment for us and the entire nation. Her presence will add strength and courage to the path of democratic advancement. We will receive her direct guidance on the next steps in democratic politics."

Anjuman Banu, a Khulna Mohila Dal leader, said, "I couldn't see her face because of the crowd. It was painful, but also empowering. Her return gives us strength."

Rezaul Karim, who came from Sherpur's Natibari, said, "Her return is a strong message to all those who've spread propaganda against the BNP."

ZUBaida RETURNS AFTER 17YRS While Khaleda's return was momentous for the BNP, Zubaida's was equally significant.

Zubaida, her husband and daughter Zainab Rahman had been in exile in London for 17 years.

Speaking outside Firoza, Zahid Hossain said the party's acting chairman will also return to Bangladesh soon. "Zubaida Rahman has come back today [yesterday]. Zainab Rahman has joined a political programme in America. The day is not far off when our acting chairman will lead the democratic

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'GOPPO, SHOPPO AR GAAN'

Noor's Event is set to host an evening of music and storytelling at Jatra Biroti on May 9, featuring Rezaul Karim Leemon, Angel Noor, and Rayhan Islam Shuro. Blending soulful lyrics with the spirit of tradition and contemporary sounds, the event promises an inspiring celebration of music, memory, and connection.

Date: Friday | May 8-9, 2025

Time: 5:30pm onwards

Venue: Jatra Biroti



NAZRUL AWARD recipients for 2023 and 2024 announced



The Kazi Nazrul Islam Institute has announced the Nazrul Award recipients for 2023 and 2024, honouring exceptional contributions in Nazrul Sangeet, literature, and research.

For 2023, Professor Irshad Ahmed Shaheen of the University of South Asia is recognised for his lifelong work in Nazrul studies, while singer and trainer Rumi Ajnabi is honoured for preserving Nazrul's musical heritage.

The 2024 awardees include Abdul Hye Sikder, editor of Jugantor, for his scholarly work and journalistic promotion of Nazrul's ideals, and Nasim Ahmed, veteran elocutionist and advocate, for his powerful recitations.

Each recipient will receive a silver medal, Tk 200,000, and an honorary crest. The awards will officially be presented on May 25.

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challenging the High Court order.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Additional Attorney General Aneek R Haque said Chimoy's bail would remain stayed until the state files a leave to appeal petition against the HC verdict.

He added that the state would file the petition with the Appellate Division after receiving the full text of the HC judgment.

Lawyers MK Rahman, ZI Khan Panna, Anup Kumar Saha, Bivash Chandra Biswas and Prahlad Debnath represented Chimoy during yesterday's hearing.

On April 30, the High Court granted bail to Chimoy, who has been in custody in the sedition case since November.

On October 31 last year, Firoz Khan, former general secretary of Chattogram's Mohora ward BNP, filed the case with Kotwali Police Station, accusing Chimoy and 18 others of disrespecting the national flag during a rally in the port city's New Market area six days earlier.

Chimoy was arrested in the capital on November 25, and the following day a Chattogram court rejected his bail petition and sent him to jail.

When he was produced before the court that day (November 26), a clash