

Rihanna returns with new single ‘Friend of Mine’

Pop icon Rihanna is set to make her long-awaited return to music with a new single titled *Friend of Mine*, marking her first release in three years. The track will feature in the upcoming *Smurfs* movie.

The singer recently unveiled the trailer for the animated film, offering fans a brief glimpse of the song. Though the snippet is short, it suggests an Afrobeats-inspired rhythm, with Rihanna singing, “You’re looking like a friend of mine.” The teaser opens with the artiste dancing in the studio while recording the track.

Friend Of Mine will be Rihanna’s first single since *Lift Me Up* (2022), from the *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* soundtrack. Her last full-length album, *Anti*, was released in 2016.



Nine-day theatre festival begins in Chattogram

The Chattogram Group Theatre Forum launches its nine-day festival *Natya Sambhar 2025* on May 16 at the District Shilpakala Academy Auditorium under the themwe “Ekshathe banchi, Ekshathe boli—Mancha Amader Shokti”.

Featuring nine plays by seven troupes, performances begin daily at 7pm. The festival opens with Avant Garde Natyadal’s *Fire* (May 16–17), followed by *Sara Rattir* (Proscenium Natya Dal), *Kobi* (Arindam), and *Asprishyo* (Kothok Theatre).

Theatre Workshop Chattogram presents *Antardaha* and *Ijot*, while Natyadhara performs *Pondit Bihar Bishwabidyalay*.

The event concludes May 24 with *Phool Kumari* by Uttaradhikar Natya Dal. Addressing themes from social injustice to intimate human struggles, the festival promises a vibrant showcase of contemporary Bangladeshi theatre.



Film producers demand fair revenue share from theatres



Several film producers in Dhaka convened at a restaurant in Gulshan-2 on Wednesday, May 14, to demand a fair share of cinema hall revenues. The meeting was prompted by a Prothom Alo report alleging that major theatres—such as Star Cineplex and Blockbuster Cinemas—deduct significant amounts under the pretext of AC maintenance, thereby depriving producers of their rightful earnings.

Calling the deductions “unjust”, producers urged a revision of these charges and pressed for transparent revenue sharing from ticket sales. Producer Shahriar Shakil emphasised the need for unity among producers and called for open dialogue with theatre owners.

The meeting included key figures from the Eid release lineup, including Redoan Rony, Nusrat Imrose Tisha, Raihan Rafi, and others, who echoed the demand for a more equitable and accountable revenue distribution system in the film industry.



TOM CRUISE receives standing ovation for ‘Mission: Impossible’ at Cannes

Hollywood superstar Tom Cruise was moved to tears after *Mission: Impossible – The Final Reckoning* received a five-minute standing ovation following its world premiere at the 2025 Cannes Film Festival.

The film premiered at the Grand Théâtre Lumière on May 14, attended by Cruise, director Christopher McQuarrie, and co-stars including Hayley Atwell, Simon Pegg, and Angela Bassett. Clips on social media showed Cruise expressing gratitude with a hand on his heart.

A 40-piece orchestra opened the screening with the franchise’s theme. Initially titled *Dead Reckoning – Part One*, the eighth instalment marks McQuarrie’s continued directorial run.

The film also features Ving Rhames, Vanessa Kirby, and Henry Czerny, and is set to release in Indian theatres on May 17 in four languages.

WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘Goppo Meets Cinema’

Stamford University will host *Goppo Meets Cinema* on May 17, featuring screenings of *Shunte Ki Pao!* and *Neel Mukut* by acclaimed filmmaker Kamar Ahmad Simon. The event will include a panel discussion on hybrid filmmaking and conclude with a Q&A session with the director, offering insight into his narrative style.

Date: Saturday | May 17, 2025

Time: 2 pm onwards

Venue: Stamford University Bangladesh



Kim Kardashian leads all-female legal drama ‘All’s Fair’



Kim Kardashian steps into her biggest scripted role yet in *All’s Fair*, a new legal drama from renowned producer Ryan Murphy. The series follows a group of formidable female divorce lawyers who leave a male-led firm to start their own.

Described as bold, stylish, and emotionally layered, the show explores high-stakes courtroom battles and personal conflicts. Starring alongside Kardashian are Naomi Watts, Niecy Nash-Betts, Glenn Close, Judith Light, Teyana Taylor, Sarah Paulson, Grace Gummer, and a surprise appearance by Jessica Simpson.

NEWS

Who appoints CEO at Nagad now?

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at Nagad. One major issue was a Tk 600 crore deficit created by issuing e-money without corresponding cash backing, an act considered a serious offence in the financial sector.

In another instance, unauthorised withdrawals totalling Tk 1,711 crore were reportedly made over the years through 41 distribution accounts

meant for government allowances.

The administrator’s team had reported these findings to the director general of the Directorate of Posts.

Contacted, Tanvir Mishuk, former managing director and CEO of Nagad, told The Daily Star that the court’s stay on the activities of the central bank-appointed administrator effectively reinstated the previous

board, which then appointed an interim CEO.

Asked about his role in the appointment, Mishuk said he recommended Shafayet as CEO at the board’s request.

He also claimed that the central bank appointed management board is no longer valid following the court’s stay order.

Israeli strikes kill

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Israel carried out the latest strikes on the day Palestinians commemorate the “Nakba”, or catastrophe, when hundreds of thousands of people fled or were forced to flee their hometowns and villages during the 1948 Middle East war that gave birth to the state of Israel.

With most of the 2.3 million people in Gaza internally displaced, some residents of the tiny enclave say suffering is greater now than at the time of the Nakba.

In the occupied West Bank, Israeli troops killed five Palestinians in the village of Tammun yesterday, the mayor said, in a raid the army described as targeting buildings suspected of being used to plan terror attacks, reports AFP.

Palestinian health officials say the Israeli attacks have escalated since Trump started a visit on Tuesday to the Gulf states of Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates that many Palestinians had hoped he would use to

push for a truce.

The latest strikes follow attacks on Gaza on Wednesday that killed at least 80 people, local health officials said.

Little has come of new indirect ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas led by Trump’s envoys and Qatar and Egyptian mediators in Doha.

Hamas says it is ready to free all the remaining hostages it is holding in Gaza in return for an end to the war, while Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu prefers interim truces, saying the war can only end once Hamas is eradicated.

“At a time when mediators are exerting intensive efforts to put the negotiation back on the right track, the Zionist occupation [Israel] responds to those efforts by military pressure on innocent civilians,” the group said in a statement.

“Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu wants an open-ended war and he doesn’t care about the fate of his hostages,” it said.

7 of a family hurt in ‘teen gang’ attack

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fleeing, they said.

Police suspect the gang had a prior conflict with some of the family members.

No arrests have been made so far, but several suspects from the nearby areas have been identified through CCTV footage, Inspector Hafizur said.

Filing of a case is underway, he added.

Season’s first mangoes

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weather conditions and their situation.”

Sanaul Islam, a mango grower, said, “This year’s yield is not significantly higher than last year. We hope the prices will remain good.”

He said it was important to harvest mangoes at the right time to avoid chemical ripening practices.

Md Liton, another grower from the market, said, “Due to intense heat this year, mangoes ripened faster than usual. There hasn’t been much rain either, so the fruit size is smaller and can’t be left on the trees for too long.”

Trader Mohammad Majel said, “Today’s market looked promising. I sold Gutu mangoes at Tk 1,200 per maund. Since harvesting has just started, the supply is still low, but we expect a surge from tomorrow [Friday].”

No classes in almost 3 months

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asked 37 students to explain their conduct. Yesterday evening, the students submitted a joint response.

The teachers association said it would observe the situation over the weekend, and announce their next course of action on Sunday.

Professor Faruq Hossain, general secretary of the association, said, “The university administration is taking necessary steps. We are ready to return to classes. We hope classes will resume on Sunday. But it is difficult to say what will happen if a new complication arises.”

Bangladeshis in fear amid Tripoli unrest

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Authority militia.

Gunfire and clashes subsequently engulfed several parts of Tripoli on Monday.

Al-Kiklidi was one of the capital’s most influential militia leaders and had recently been involved in disputes with rival armed groups, including factions linked to the city of Misrata.

The Government of National Unity (GNU)’s internal affairs ministry urged residents to stay at home and avoid all movement, warning of further instability. Meanwhile, the education ministry suspended classes across Tripoli from Tuesday.

The GNU is Libya’s provisional government, formed on March 10, 2021, to unify the country after years of political division and conflict.

Early Tuesday, the GNU’s media platform announced that its defence

ministry had taken full control of the city’s Abu Salim neighbourhood.

Speaking to The Daily Star yesterday, Ambassador Khairul Bashar said that while Gheniwa forces had been eliminated, another militia – Rada – had begun fighting with government forces.

On Wednesday, Al Jazeera reported that clashes had broken out between the Rada militia and the 444 Brigade, loyal to Prime Minister Abdul Hamid al-Dbeibah, in key areas of Tripoli, including the port.

The United Nations Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL) on Wednesday warned that the situation could “spiral out of control”.

“UNSMIL reiterates its calls for an immediate, unconditional ceasefire in all areas, allowing safe corridors for the evacuation of civilians trapped in intense conflict zones,” the mission wrote on X (formerly

known as Twitter).

“Attacking and damaging civilian infrastructure, physically harming civilians, and jeopardising the lives and safety of the population may constitute crimes under international law. Those responsible will be held accountable for their actions,” it added.

Asked whether any Bangladeshis had suffered casualties, Ambassador Khairul said there were reports of bullets striking the rooftops of residential buildings where some Bangladeshis live. “However, as of yesterday, there were no casualties or injuries [of Bangladeshis] ... We are hoping for the fighting to stop.”

There are around 20,000 Bangladeshis living in Libya – 10,000 in Tripoli and the rest in Benghazi. Benghazi, however, remains stable, he added.

Merit often took a back seat

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Supreme Judicial Appointment Council; functions of its secretary; powers and functions of the council; and recommendations for appointment of judges of the Appellate Division of the SC respectively.

Earlier on January 21, the law ministry issued the ordinance containing the provision for establishing the seven-member Supreme Judicial Appointment Council led by the chief justice to select suitable persons for appointing judges to the SC’s appellate and HC divisions.

In the full text of the judgment, the HC observed that the Supreme Court Judge Appointment Ordinance, 2025, is desirable for a great interest of the nation.

The court said the president of Bangladesh has promulgated the ordinance to plug the loopholes in the present system with a view to eliminating favouritism or the impact of any political or party consideration in the matter of appointment of judges.

“Article 95 (1) of the constitution stipulates that the chief justice shall be appointed by the president, and the other judges shall be appointed by the president after consultation with the chief justice. Pursuant to the Ordinance, 2025, the Supreme Judicial Appointment Council has been established, consisting of individuals known for their integrity and independence, with a judicial background. The Council aims to ensure

scrutiny in judicial appointments, eliminating the influence of political or other extraneous considerations before recommending candidates to the president.

“Experience tells us that wrong appointments not only affect the image of the courts, they also undermine the confidence in, and respect for, the judiciary amongst the litigants, the members of the Bar and the ordinary people at large,” the HC judges observed in the full text of the verdict.

Writ petitioner lawyer Ajmol, who went through the HC judgment, told The Daily Star that he was yet to decide about moving an appeal before the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court challenging the HC verdict.