

## ANGELINA JOLIE makes stunning comeback at Cannes

Angelina Jolie returned to Cannes after almost 14 years, yesterday. She graced the red carpet in a breathtaking strapless gown in shades of white and silver. For the 78th edition of the festival this year, she attended the premiere of Ari Aster's *Eddington*.

The Oscar-winning actress took on the esteemed role of Cannes godmother for the landmark 25th anniversary of the Trophée Chopard—an accolade that celebrates the most promising emerging talents in global cinema.

Angelina Jolie has now become part of a notable lineup of past Trophée Chopard godmothers and godfathers.

Over the years, international icons such as Charlize Theron, Cate Blanchett, Julianne Moore, Zhang Ziyi, Julia Roberts, Robert De Niro, and Sean Penn have been linked to this prestigious honour.



## ‘Fyakra’ was an experience: Nishat Priom

SHARMIN JOYA

The making of the web-series *Fyakra* was nothing short of a battle. Amid political unrest, torrential rain, and unexpected public reactions, the team behind this genre-bending web series had to fight tooth and nail to bring it to life.

Actress Nishat Priom, who plays Annie Rozario, shares an inside look at what went into the making of the project.

“We were filming right in the middle of the July unrest,” she recalls. “There were gunshots, all sorts of chaos and disturbances going on, and yet we continued shooting amidst it all.” At times, the cast and crew had to stay up all night keeping watch for *dakats* (robbers), only to report back on set early the next morning. “Those sleepless nights are moments the entire team will never forget,” she adds.

Directed by Asif Chowdhury and co-written by Neamoth Ullah Masum and Ahammad Saad, *Fyakra* premiered on Bongo on May 8 bringing together



a compelling mix of thriller, romance, horror, and family drama. According to Priom, “This is a multidimensional genre work. It can't be classified under a single

label.” The story revolves primarily around Annie (played by Priom) and Golapi (played by Nidra). Annie is a Christian woman who marries a Muslim man, Ashfaque (played by Shamol Mawla). “Annie sacrifices everything to marry

Ashfaque, including her family,” says Priom.

“So, at any cost, she wants to keep her marriage alive.” But constant emotional distance and unfulfilled expectations weigh heavily on their relationship—until one life-altering incident related to Golapi and Samad (played by Partho Sheikh), turns everything upside down.

The chaos wasn't just limited to on-screen drama. Partho, Mir Rabbi, and Abdullal Al Sentu, dressed in full underworld get-up and carrying prop guns, once caused panic in a neighbourhood after shooting wrapped up. “People thought they were real dacoits and attacked their car with sticks,” Priom laughs. “They had to convince everyone they were just actors. It is one of the instances of such real ‘Fyakra’ the entire team had to go through.”

While the official shoot took 15 days, it took nearly two months to wrap the project. Delays caused by rain were frequent. “There were days when we returned home at 5am with just being able to finish only half of a single scene,” she says.

With a diverse set of six-seven protagonists from all walks of life, *Fyakra* promises relatability for viewers across generations. “The entire team was totally invested—both literally and emotionally,” Priom signs off with a smile.

## Joltorongo’s annual musical programme blooms with literary riches



Cultural organisation Joltorongo hosted its annual musical programme last Friday evening at the Chhayanaut Cultural Centre in Dhanmondi, titled *Bhalo Theko Phool*. The opening line of a poem by renowned writer Dr Humayun Azad inspired the entire

arrangement.

Joltorongo's artists took the stage, after months of preparation, with timeless songs presented in solo, duet, and choral formats, showcasing the best of Bengali lyrical heritage.

This year's event paid homage to the legacy of Bengali songs, featuring lyrics penned by literary icons such as Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam, Jibanananda Das, Shamsur Rahman, Abu Hena Mustafa Kamal and many others.

Melodies by legendary composers were also celebrated, with young sarangi players adding charm to the harmonious affair.

## Paresh Rawal confirms exit from ‘Hera Pheri 3’



Veteran actor Paresh Rawal confirmed he will no longer be part of the highly anticipated film *Hera Pheri 3*, leaving fans of the iconic comedy franchise shocked and disappointed.

Sources close to the production revealed that the decision came after creative differences between the actor and the filmmakers.

The news sparked a strong reaction online, with many fans calling for the film to be scrapped altogether. “No Paresh Rawal, no *Hera Pheri 3*,” read one tweet. Others called on Akshay Kumar to convince Rawal to return.

Rawal previously spoke about the weight of being associated with the Babu Rao character. He felt “suffocated” by the typecasting. “I'm an actor, I don't want to be stuck in that rut,” he admitted.

## Documentaries on July uprising being showcased in London

A powerful documentary series on Bangladesh's July uprising is being screened in London. Cultural Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki posted about these films on Facebook last Friday.

The screenings began on May 16 at SOAS with the international premiere of *Deepak Kumar Goswami Speaking and Jatrabari – Evidence of a Massacre*.

On May 19, Portcullis House, House

of Commons, will host *Deepak Kumar Goswami Speaking* and excerpts from *July Women*, featuring speakers like MP Apsana Begum, and internationally renowned photographer Shahidul Alam among others.

The series concludes on May 20 with the world premiere of *July Women*, spotlighting women's leadership during the uprising, at the Frontline Club.



# NEWS

## 10 ministries brace for budget cuts

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Most of the railway mega projects have already been completed and the projects under Indian line of credits (LOC) are progressing at a snail's pace.

Besides, no mega projects would be initiated by the interim government, which resulted in major cuts in the railway ministry.

The power division's allocation would be downsized 30.5 percent to Tk 20,284 crore, which is the third highest allocation in the upcoming fiscal year's ADP.

Although the local government division is getting less allocation than this year, it is still getting the top share: Tk 36,099 crore.

The local government is not functioning in many places but it is still getting preference as the interim government is looking to increase temporary employment in rural areas, officials said.

The road transport and highway division, which has several ongoing projects, is getting the second-highest allocation: Tk 32,330 crore. This year, the division got Tk 32,043 crore.

The allocation for the primary and mass education ministry will be downsized to Tk 11,399 crore from Tk 16,136 crore but the secondary and higher education division will get Tk 2,000 crore more than this fiscal year. The division is likely to get Tk

13,625 crore in fiscal 2015-26.

The health services division, which spends around half of the health sector allocation, is expected to get Tk 11,618 crore -- Tk 2,000 crore less than this fiscal year.

The science and technology ministry's allocation is likely to be trimmed by about 5.7 percent to Tk 12,155 crore. Of the allocation, a big portion is kept for the Rooppur nuclear power plant, whose first unit is expected to start commercial operation in the upcoming fiscal year.

The total ADP for fiscal 2025-26 is likely to be Tk 230,000 crore, up 6.5 percent from this year's revised ADP.

Of the total allocation, Tk 144,000 crore would come from domestic resources, down 12.7 percent year-on-year. About Tk 86,000 crore would be foreign funds, down 14 percent year-on-year.

Besides, the allocation for the state-owned enterprises would be Tk 8,000 crore, which is nearly half their original allocation this fiscal year.

In the first nine months of this fiscal year, ADP implementation stood at just 36.65 percent, the lowest in at least 15 years.

The proposed ADP will be finalised today at the meeting of the National Economic Council.

The non-development allocations would be finalised later and the budget would be announced on June 2.

## 28 more pushed in from India

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Panchagarh, BGB detained 11 individuals – two men, eight women, and one child -- from Malkadanga and Dhamerghat border areas in Boda upazila early yesterday.

Major Riyadh Morshed, acting commander of Nilphamari BGB 56 Battalion, told this correspondent that during preliminary questioning, the detainees said they had been working in various parts of India for a long time.

They were reportedly detained by Indian police and later handed over to the BSF, who subsequently pushed them into Bangladesh, he added.

The BSF also denied this allegation during a flag meeting with the BGB, he said.

Two cases have been filed with Haripur Police Station in Thakurgaon and Boda Police Station in Panchagarh after the BGB handed over the detainees to police, sources at the stations said.

## Emon's record ton

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looked in with a good chance but once he fell off the second ball of the 19th over, with the hosts still needing 35 runs, their hopes were all but gone.

Eventually Bangladesh's superior experience held sway as Bangladesh's three pacers -- Mustafizur Rahman (2-17), Tanzim Hasan Sakib (2-22) and Hasan Mahmud (3-33) -- helped bundle out the hosts for 164 runs in 20 overs.

Off-spinner Sheikh Mahedi was expensive but took two wickets while left-arm spinner Tanvir Islam took one for the visiting side.

## Police hunt gunmen after 8 killed in South African bar

AFP, Johannesburg

Police in South Africa launched a manhunt on Saturday for gunmen who killed eight customers at a tavern in the southeastern city of Durban.

The attack late on Friday evening was the latest mass shooting in the crime-weary African nation that has one of the world's highest murder rates.

## Follow the protocol, don't push people in

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remain united and cooperative, India will not be able to carry out such push-ins.”

The adviser also said India had recently demolished a Bangalee settlement in Gujarat, where some Rohingya from Bangladesh had also migrated.

“Push-ins increased following the demolition. Among those India has attempted to push into Bangladesh are Rohingya members with UNHCR cards and even some identified as Indian Rohingya.”

## Move to redefine

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Following the meeting, a press release issued by the Cabinet Division stated, “The draft of the ‘National Freedom Fighters Council (Amendment) Ordinance-2025’ has been given final approval, subject to vetting by the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division.”

An organisation named Freedom Fighter Council has congratulated the Liberation War affairs adviser and the Jatiya Muktiyoddha Council (national freedom fighters council or JAMUKA) on the approval of the proposed ordinance.

A press statement, signed by the organisation's Chairman Monowarul Islam and Secretary General Rashid Noman, said, “Although conditionally approved, we hope the ordinance will soon be vetted without any changes by the Legislative and Parliamentary Affairs Division and published in the form of a gazette.”

### PROPOSED DEFINITION

Under the existing law, anyone who contributed to the cause of the war at home or abroad is officially recognised as a “Bir Muktiyoddha” (valiant freedom fighter). This includes elected public representatives and armed fighters who supported the Liberation War, Biranganas (war heroines), members of various forces, professionals, journalists, athletes, artists, cultural activists, employees of the Mujibnagar government, and doctors and nurses of field hospitals.

The ministry's proposed amendment sought to introduce two separate categories: “Bir Muktiyoddha” and “Muktijuddher Shohojogi” (associates of the Liberation War).

Under this classification, those who

He confirmed that Bangladesh has submitted a protest note to India regarding the matter.

When asked by reporters whether Bangladesh is considering a push-back of the 370 individuals already sent in by India, the adviser said, “If they are our citizens, we do not have the right to push them back.”

About the floating border out post, operated by BGB, he said, “The Boyesing Floating BOP is not just an infrastructure project—it is a strategic security measure, reflecting BGB's commitment to peace, stability, and

public safety in border regions.”

The adviser noted that a specialised Riverine Border Guard Battalion under BGB is currently in the works, aimed at establishing effective water-based surveillance.

“This initiative will play a transformative role in future border management,” he said.

Rear Admiral Md Ziaul Hoque, director general of Bangladesh Coast Guard, and Maj Gen Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman Siddiqui, director general of BGB, were present at the event.

## 3 journos assaulted after covering arson attack

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when the journalists were returning after reporting on an arson attack on a house, said Ali Akbar, officer-in-charge of Aditmari Police Station.

The attackers also made off with two cameras worth around Tk 1.05 lakh, the victims said.

Faruk has filed a written complaint, naming 20 individuals, OC Ali Akbar said.

Police are conducting raids to apprehend the suspects.

The house set on fire is of an individual who earlier accused a man named Muhammad Habib of attempted rape, the OC said, adding that the accused had recently been released on bail after spending a month in jail.

He and his associates might have set the house on fire, he added. Faruk told The Daily Star that while returning from the scene, the journalists were assaulted by Habib and his men.

“They beat us mercilessly,” he added.

The woman, who filed the attempted rape case, also said, “Habib had been threatening us ever since he got out of jail on bail. Yesterday, he and his men torched our house. I have filed a complaint with the police.”

Habib has reportedly gone into hiding, and his mobile phone remains switched off.

OC Ali Akbar confirmed receiving the complaint from the woman and said an investigation is underway.

“Legal action will be taken upon completion of the probe,” he added.

