

Pedro Pascal condemns Trump-era immigration policy at Cannes

At the Cannes Film Festival, actor Pedro Pascal delivered a strong critique of Donald Trump's immigration policies during a press conference for Ari Aster's pandemic satire *Eddington*.

Speaking alongside co-stars including Emma Stone and Joaquin Phoenix, Pascal stressed the power of storytelling against fear-driven politics, stating, "Fear is the way they win." He reflected on his family's escape from dictatorship in Chile, their asylum in Denmark, and resettlement in the US, reaffirming his support for refugee protections.

The actor's remarks coincided with a new US policy offering undocumented migrants \$1,000 and travel aid for voluntary return, part of Trump's reinstated immigration crackdown. Pascal's statements underscored the link between political narratives and personal histories in today's volatile climate.



Kaaktaal bids farewell after four years of music

Popular Indie band Kaaktaal has officially announced its disbandment, marking the end of a nearly four-year musical journey. Formed in 2021, the band rose to prominence for its evocative lyrics and genre-blending sound.

Over the years, the band carved out a loyal fan base through hits like *Ghum*, *Niruddesh*, *Chena Shohor*, *Abar Dekha Holey*, and *Shobuj Bicycle*—tracks that became staples in Dhaka's underground and indie scenes.

In a farewell statement shared online, Kaaktaal expressed gratitude to fans for a journey that exceeded their imagination. However, they admitted that their decision to conclude came as the journey was "losing its peace," the very essence of why it began.

Lawrence, Pattinson's 'Die, My Love' receives Cannes standing ovation

Jennifer Lawrence and Robert Pattinson's psychological drama *Die, My Love* received a six-minute standing ovation at its world premiere in Cannes. Directed by Scottish filmmaker Lynne Ramsay, the film marks her return to the festival after eight years and is based on Ariana Harwicz's 2017 novel.

Lawrence plays a mother battling postpartum depression, with Pattinson as her husband. Their volatile relationship unfolds in



scenes of self-harm and emotional disintegration. Ramsay, visibly moved, briefly addressed the audience before leaving the venue.

The supporting cast includes LaKeith Stanfield, Sissy Spacek, and Nick Nolte. This marks Lawrence's first Cannes competition entry and her second appearance as a producer. Ramsay's previous Cannes credits include *We Need to Talk About Kevin* and *You Were Never Really Here*.

'Taandob' teaser hints at mayhem with monkey masks

Raihan Rafi unveiled the long-awaited teaser for *Taandob* yesterday, sparking excitement among fans. A mysterious monkey mask appears repeatedly throughout the teaser, worn by Shakib Khan and a group of followers. However, its significance remains a secret, likely to be revealed in the full movie.

The teaser escalates in intensity when Jaya Ahsan is shown pointing a gun at Shakib Khan. Impeccably dressed and radiating suspense with her piercing look, she adds a compelling layer of intrigue to the scene.

So far, it's confirmed that *Taandob* stars Shakib Khan, Jaya Ahsan, and Sabila Nur in key roles. The producers confirmed that the full cast list will be announced soon. Director Raihan Rafi has hinted that even greater surprises lie ahead.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?



'Pakhider Bidhansabha'

Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, University of Dhaka, will stage *Pakhider Bidhansabha* at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's National Theatre Hall.

Adapted from Sheikh Fariduddin Attar's *Mantiq-ut-Tayr*, the play is penned by Dr Shahman Moishan and directed by Dr Ahmedul Kabir. It will be performed by postgraduate students from the department's 2023 cohort.

DATE: THURSDAY | MAY 22
TIME: 7PM ONWARDS
VENUE: BANGLADESH SHILPAKALA ACADEMY



Rihanna returns with new song for 'Smurfs' movie

Rihanna has returned to the music scene with a fresh track for the upcoming summer flick *Smurfs*. Her new single, *Friend of Mine*, marks her first release since 2022's *Lift Me Up*.

Rihanna doesn't just contribute musically — she also voices Smurfette in the animated film, joining a cast that includes John Goodman and Sandra Oh among many others. She's also taken on the role of executive producer. The film is set to hit cinemas on July 18.

Though fans are still eager for an album, Rihanna made it clear during the 2025 Met Gala that her pregnancy isn't getting in the way. "I can still sing!" she proclaimed on the red carpet.

NEWS

Environment not conducive to polls yet

FROM PAGE 12

On the need for consensus in the interest of the nation, he said, "What serves the nation best should be our priority. That's why, based on dialogue, we have supported common ground and changed our position where necessary."

Chaired by NCC Vice President Prof Ali Riaz, the dialogue was also attended by Election Reform Commission Chief Badiul Alam Majumdar and Anti-Corruption Reform Commission Chief Iftekharuzzaman, among others.

In his opening remarks, Ali Riaz said the meeting aimed to conclude the initial phase of discussions with Jamaat.

"We reached consensus on many issues during the first round, though disagreements remain on others."

He added that some unresolved issues would likely carry over into the next phase of discussions.

"We are not expecting to resolve everything today. If that were possible, it would be ideal. The commission is working to move toward a national charter as quickly as possible."

During the first meeting between NCC and Jamaat on April 26, the two sides primarily discussed recommendations of the Constitution Reform Commission.

Jamaat supported the proposal to introduce a bicameral parliament.

However, they suggested that both the upper and lower houses should be elected through a proportional representation system.

The party also agreed in principle to the formation of a National Constitutional Council and endorsed a limit of two terms for any individual to serve as prime minister.

The NCC is engaging with political parties on 166 key recommendations prepared by five of the six reform commissions set up by the interim government last October.

These include proposals on constitutional changes, the electoral system, judiciary, public administration, and anti-corruption measures.

DU students, teachers ramp up protests

FROM PAGE 1

"The real perpetrator must be identified and brought to justice."

Alongside the Dhaka University JCD unit, activists from Jagannath University, Tejgaon College, Dhaka College, Titumir College, and various other educational institutions under Dhaka-based and Dhaka Metropolitan JCD units participated in the demonstration.

Earlier in the day, JCD's DU unit staged a black flag procession and protest rally, demanding the resignation of the vice-chancellor and proctor for their "failure to ensure campus security".

Students and teachers from Dhaka

University's Institute of Education and Research (IER) besieged Shahbagh Police Station for about an hour and a half, demanding the arrest of Shammo's killers.

The demonstration began around 12:20pm. They ended the programme at 1:45pm after assurances from police officials of intensifying investigations.

DU VC Niaz Ahmed Khan and Proctor Prof Saifuddin Ahmed expressed solidarity with the demonstrators.

Meanwhile, teachers from Dhaka University, under the banner of the "White Panel", a pro-BNP teachers' platform, also issued a 48-hour ultimatum to identify and arrest those responsible for the murder

They warned of launching a tougher movement if their demand is not met within the stipulated time, from a human chain held at the foot of Aparajevo Bangla.

"Shammo did not die a natural death—he was brutally murdered. Even after five days, the real perpetrators remain at large. Instead, a token arrest has been made to mislead us, which is unacceptable," said Professor Md Morshed Hasan Khan, convener of the White Panel.

"We urge the university administration and the home ministry to bring the actual killers to justice. Otherwise, we will be compelled to take stern action."

Kuet teachers now suspend

FROM PAGE 12

who assaulted teachers be brought to justice first.

But now, they will also refrain from participating in any administrative functions — except those relating to the disciplinary committee — if no satisfactory progress is made in concluding the investigation into the assault incident by noon today.

Following an investigation by a syndicate-mandated investigation committee, 37 students were shown show-cause notices on May 12. The students did not respond within the deadline and the administration did not take any further action at its own discretion.

The Kuet Teachers' Association said the administration halted the judicial process in violation of university regulations under pressure from "invisible higher authorities" and to

protect the interests of a "select group of students".

"If the administration fails to take satisfactory action by 12:00pm tomorrow [today], we will begin a sit-in protest at the vice-chancellor's office," the association said in the press conference after the meeting.

The show-cause process, initiated as per the 103rd syndicate decision and completed by the disciplinary committee, must now proceed to a final hearing to ensure due process, they said.

"No individual authority can override this standard procedure. The disciplinary process must be concluded by 12:00pm tomorrow to restore the academic environment," they said.

If essential university structures such as disciplinary bodies cannot perform their duties due to persistent threats and interference, and if

teachers continue to face harassment, cyberbullying and public humiliation, then a normal educational environment cannot exist.

The syndicate had previously formed a separate committee to address rising incidents of cyberbullying and social humiliation faced by teachers. But no visible action has been taken so far.

"Despite assurances from the vice-chancellor, many of our colleagues remain victims of cyberbullying," the statement said.

If the crisis persists, the VC would be held solely responsible for any fallout, the association said.

The university has been closed since February 18 over a myriad of protests.

Nusraat Faria

FROM PAGE 12

The list of accused includes Apu Biswas, Nipun Akter, Ashna Habib Bhabna, Zayed Khan, Suborna Mustafa, Rokeya Prachy, Sohana Saba, Meher Afroz Shaon, Jyotika Jyoti, Symon Sadik and Azizul Hakim.

In March, a complaint was submitted to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court of Dhaka, seeking a case against these actors, the ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, and 265 others on charges of attempted murder.

The complainant, one Enamul Haque, claimed he was injured during student protests in Bhatara last year. After recording his statement, the court instructed the officer-in-charge of Bhatara Police Station to register the complaint as a First Information Report. The case was registered on April 29.

Why December

FROM PAGE 2

The BNP leader criticised the government for prioritising other initiatives.

"Why are they wasting time? They are making decisions like handing over the Chattogram port. Who gave them the mandate?"

"We want elections to be held by December. But even that delay is unnecessary. Polls can be held much earlier."

On the question of appointment of BNP leader Ishraque Hossain as mayor of Dhaka South City Corporation, he said, "If there is a court order, why is it not being implemented? Is this not a failure of the rule of law?"