

MOSHARRAF KARIM'S 'Chokkor 302' to release in Australia

The Mosharraf Karim starrer film *Chokkor 302*, directed by Saraf Ahmed Zibon, was released last Eid-ul-Fitr. The film is now slated for release in Australia.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the director shared, "Our film releases in Australia on May 25. It's not just good news for Bangladeshi cinema—it's a deeply meaningful moment for me as a filmmaker, because it is my directorial debut."

"*Chokkor 302* is a film made with immense love. An international release means it will now reach a much wider audience across the globe," he added.

Chokkor 302 is a murder mystery, with Mosharraf Karim portraying an investigation officer. The ensemble cast includes Intekhab Dinar, Sumon Anowar, Tareen Jahan, Mousomi Nag, Rawnak Hasan, Shashwa Datta, and Reekita Nondine Shimu, among others.



Hanif Sanket to pursue legal action over AI voice scam

Veteran media personality Hanif Sanket has announced plans for legal action after discovering his voice was imitated using AI in a misleading diabetes advertisement circulating on Facebook and YouTube.

In a statement on his verified

Facebook page, Sanket clarified he has never endorsed any product and warned audiences not to be misled by fabricated content. He emphasised that while the AI voice closely resembles his, it carries detectable flaws and foreign pronunciation.

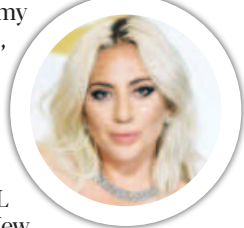
Expressing concern over AI misuse, Sanket noted its potential to deceive and harass. He echoed global calls for updated copyright protections and urged policymakers in Bangladesh to draft strict laws regulating AI to prevent future exploitation and digital fraud.

Lady Gaga wins Emmy, one step away from EGOT glory

Lady Gaga has won a Sports Emmy for Outstanding Music Direction, marking another major milestone in her career and placing her one step away from EGOT status.

The singer received the award for her moving performance of *Hold My Hand* during the NFL tribute on Bourbon Street, New Orleans. The emotional segment featured a liveband, choir, first responders, and a guest appearance by Tom Brady.

With this win, Gaga adds an Emmy to her existing Grammy and Academy Awards. Only a Tony remains for her to join the elite group of 18 EGOT winners, including Audrey Hepburn and Elton John. Other close contenders include Helen Mirren, Hugh Jackman, and Kate Winslet.



Four artistes join forces for Nazrul Jayanti tribute album

Marking Kazi Nazrul Islam's birth anniversary, musician Jahid Nirob presents a tribute EP, *The Nazrul Tapes—Reflected by Jahid Nirob*, reimagining four classic Nazrul songs with modern electronic arrangements.

The album features vocalists Dilshad Nahar Kona (*Mor Ghumo Ghore Ele Monohor*), Masha Islam (*Amar Aponar Cheye*), Shamim Hasan (*Uchaton Mon*), and Jahid Nirob (*Shure O Banir Mala Diye*).

A launch concert will take place on May 24 at Jatra Biroti, Dhaka, with live performances by the contributing artistes. Tickets are priced at Tk 1,000.



Nirob stressed the preservation of original melodies while offering a fresh listening experience. The

EP will soon be released on digital platforms. Advance tickets for the launch are currently available.

WHAT'S THE HAPS?



Art Exhibition: 'Debris'

Alliance Française de Dhaka presents *Debris*, a solo exhibition by acclaimed artist Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed. Showcasing nearly 30 acrylic paintings, the exhibition delves into themes of conflict, memory, and resilience, reflecting on global crises and personal experiences. The exhibition is open to all. DATE: MONDAY - SATURDAY | MAY 17-31 TIME: 3-9PM VENUE: ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE DHAKA, DHANMONDI

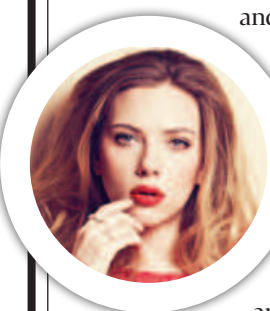
Scarlett Johansson's directorial debut 'Eleanor the Great' wins Cannes ovation

Scarlett Johansson's directorial debut *Eleanor the Great* received a five-minute standing ovation at the 77th Cannes Film Festival, following its premiere under the Un Certain Regard section on May 20.

Starring June Squibb, Chiwetel Ejiofor, and Erin Kellyman, the film follows a 94-year-old woman whose life is reshaped by grief and new friendships. Johansson described bringing the film to Cannes as "a dream come true" and praised the cast for their dedication to the project.

She hailed Squibb's performance as "truly inspiring" and Kellyman as "an absolute revelation." The film was produced by Johansson and a team of collaborators, and co-financed by Wayfarer Studios and others.

Johansson also stars in Wes Anderson's *The Phoenixian Scheme*, also screening at Cannes.



NEWS

CAAB, Biman propose fee cuts

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The suspension, announced on April 8, has posed significant challenges for Bangladesh's garment exporters, who are now struggling to send urgent international shipments without the Indian route.

The route via Kolkata and Delhi airports allowed Bangladeshi exporters to move goods overland to India through the Benapole-Petrapole border and then air-ship them worldwide.

Air transshipment through India became popular during the Covid pandemic, offering faster service and lower costs than the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA).

According to Industry estimates, in a lean season, about 18 percent of Bangladesh's garment air cargo goes through Indian airports.

Bangladesh exported roughly 3,400 tonnes of garments by air in a week, with 600 tonnes flown through Indian airports before the transshipment ban, according to data from the Bangladesh Freight Forwarders Association.

One of the main attractions of Indian air transshipment was the cost.

While sending a kilogram of apparel from HSIA to Europe typically costs \$2.90-\$3.20 during off-peak periods (and up to \$4.50 in peak season),

shipping through India costs about \$2.60 per kg, even after accounting for overland transport to Indian airports, said sources.

Asked about reducing this cost, a top official of Biman said, in the recommendations sent to the ministry, they have proposed reducing the existing cost of sending per kilogram of goods by freighter.

He, however, declined to elaborate.

According to industry insiders, major international buyers like Inditex (Zara's parent company), which maintains a distribution hub in Delhi, prefer the route for speed and efficiency.

Local suppliers relied on it to shorten lead times and optimise delivery schedules.

By contrast, exporters have long complained about bottlenecks at HSIA.

Ground handling inefficiencies and mismanagement have plagued the Dhaka airport for years. Often, shipments are left exposed to the elements.

Another sticking point is the ground handling fees.

Dhaka charges 29 cents per kilogram compared with just five cents at Delhi airport.

Asked, CAAB chairman said ground handling fees will be reduced.

"Different charges imposed by the CAAB for carrying per kg of goods will

be reduced a bit," he said.

He added, "We have also proposed reducing the charge for those who will operate freighter services."

"Those who will operate cargo services from Sylhet Osmani Airport will pay less compared to Dhaka as we want to make the airport more lucrative. It will also be applicable for those who will operate freighters from Chattogram airport when it goes into cargo operation within two months," he added.

Sylhet's Osmani International Airport launched full-scale cargo operations on April 27.

Currently, Biman's passenger aircraft carry about 16 to 17 percent of HSIA's annual cargo load, which totals approximately 175,000 tonnes.

In addition to serving its own fleet, Biman provides ground-handling services for several international airlines, including Emirates, Cathay Pacific, Qatar Airways, Turkish Airlines, and Ethiopian Airlines, all of which operate dedicated cargo flights from Dhaka.

However, exporters have long expressed frustration over logistical inefficiencies.

Limited infrastructure, inadequate storage space, and runway constraints restrict the operation of larger freighter aircraft.

Mob action

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after Abdul Hannan Masud, senior joint chief coordinator of the National Citizen Party, gave an undertaking that the individuals "will not repeat such actions".

The Ramna DC also said no one will be allowed to incite mob violence under the pretext of labelling someone an "Awami League agent".

He suggested that people inform police if they have information about AL leaders who have cases filed against them.

"If everyone starts acting like the police and takes action on their own, it will lead to anarchy. We cannot allow our country to fall into lawlessness," he said.

"Law enforcement is our duty," he said.

Replying to a question, he said no extortion complaint has been filed against the three people involved in Monday's incident.

Referring to the statements made by senior police officials, including the inspector general of police, against mob violence, he said, "Anyone trying to create unrest will face stern action."

Pabna's Edward College

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unacceptable," said Noreesh Chandra Modhu, secretary of the Suchitra Sen Smriti Shangrakhkhan Parishad, Pabna.

Suchitra Sen, originally from Hem Sagore Lane in Pabna town, was an iconic figure in the Bengali film industry.

Though she left Pabna before the Partition in 1947, residents continue to regard her as one of their own.

"The people of Pabna bear her name in their hearts even though it has been erased from an institution. We protest

Banu Mushtaq wins

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"Heart Lamp" gathers 12 stories originally published between 1990 and 2023. They portray everyday life in Muslim communities of southern India, focusing on the experiences of women and girls.

Critics praised the collection for its dry and gentle humour, its witty, colloquial style and its searing commentary on patriarchy, casteism and religious conservatism.

Mushtaq, based in Karnataka state, southwest India, is known for her advocacy in women's rights and her legal work confronting discrimination. The jury hailed her characters—from

this decision and demand her name be reinstated," said ABM Fazlur Rahman, a veteran journalist and noted social worker in Pabna.

Principal Awal, however, denied any political interference behind the renaming.

"The hall was previously named under pressure from political leaders and a neighbouring country's high commission. There are no establishments within educational institutions in the country named after film actors or actresses," he claimed.

spirited grandmothers to bumbling religious clerics — as "astonishing portraits of survival and resilience".

"My stories are about women — how religion, society, and politics demand unquestioning obedience from them, and in doing so, inflict inhumane cruelty upon them, turning them into mere subordinates," she said.

Max Porter, chair of the judges, hailed "Heart Lamp" as "something genuinely new for English readers."

"A radical translation which ruffles language, to create new textures in a plurality of Englishes. It challenges and expands our understanding of translation."

Armed forces more united

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Admiral Hassan said the armed forces have gained recognition globally for their discipline and professionalism, especially in UN peacekeeping missions.

He said the country's security system is based on a unified defence structure, where the three forces complement one another.

"A balanced, skilled and integrated force is essential to face today's multidimensional threats," he said.

Referring to the armed forces' role during the events of July and August 2024, he said personnel had worked with dedication under "Aid to Civil Power" to support the civil administration and maintain national stability.

"Only patriotic members are not our safeguarding sovereignty, but also contributing to internal stability, development, and enhancing the country's image globally," he said.

He expressed confidence that the armed forces would continue to serve with the same dedication in future crises.

Addressing the newly commissioned

officers, the navy chief urged them to honour the legacy of the Liberation War and work unitedly for the country's welfare.

"You must work shoulder to shoulder with the army and navy to uphold the honour of our beloved motherland," he said, urging officers to protect the freedom earned through the sacrifice of millions at any cost.

Admiral Hassan said the government is working to upgrade all three forces.

"Modern equipment alone does not make a capable force," he said, adding, "Strategic thinking, realistic training, and preparedness are just as vital."

He expressed confidence that under the leadership of the current chief of air staff, the air force would soon reach its desired goals.

A total of 45 officer cadets, including one female, were commissioned during the event.

Members of diplomatic mission, serving and retired civil and military high officials, local dignitaries and guardians of the newly commissioned officers were present at the ceremony, among others.

NU VC attacked

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to apply for re-evaluation of their answer sheets, with the results expected later this month.

"Despite these measures, some of the students who failed the exam began demanding auto-passes and suddenly launched this heinous attack on the vice-chancellor," the press release said.

The university reiterated that it will not, under any circumstances, grant auto-passes to any batch and has begun steps to identify those involved in the attack.

Gachha Police Station Officer-in-Charge Ali Mohammad Rashed said, "Legal action will be taken if a complaint is filed."

Ambassador to US

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Until Siam's appointment as foreign secretary, Ruhul Alam Siddique, a secretary to the foreign ministry, will serve as the acting foreign secretary.

Sources said Jashim Uddin will be going on a 45-day leave.

He is stepping down from the post within a day or two of his own accord, and the government is not removing him, the foreign adviser told reporters at the foreign ministry yesterday.

"He [Jashim] wants to leave the post for various reasons on his own. He will leave in a day or two ... He will still very much remain in the job [foreign service]. Just his responsibilities will change."

"It isn't something to explain. Someone can discontinue their duties for various factors ... There might be some factors."

According to foreign ministry officials, the decision to change the foreign secretary was taken early this month. They said Jashim was given several options — including being appointed ambassador to a country of his choice or rector of the Foreign Service Academy.

Following a social media campaign against the foreign secretary, a sense of unease has been prevailing within the ministry, with some officials reportedly also aggrieved by him, ministry sources said.

Meanwhile, the government in April appointed Mohammad Sufiur Rahman, former permanent representative of Bangladesh to the UN offices in Geneva and Ambassador to Switzerland, as special assistant for foreign affairs to Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus, with the rank and status of a state minister.

Asked why he has not yet joined office, Touhid said, "He will join when the government decides ... There are some issues that have come into consideration."