

Apurba–Farin pair up for new Eid drama 'PRIYO PROJAPOTI'



Popular actors Apurba and Tasnia Farin will share the screen this Eid in Jakaria Showkhin's new romantic-comedy drama *Priyo Projapoti*. Inspired by Sadat Hossain's short story *Billboard*, the drama centres on playful office banter and a budding romance between two colleagues.

Director Showkhin describes the project as a feel-good, modern romantic-comedy, expressing confidence in the duo's on-screen chemistry. The drama also features an original song written by lyricist Someshwar Oli, composed and performed by Jahid Nirob, with vocals by Atiya Anisha.

Priyo Projapoti is scheduled to premiere on the Capital Drama YouTube channel during Eid, promising a lighthearted watch for the festive season.



Theatre Artists Association voices concern over FY26 cultural budget

The Theatre Artists Association of Dhaka (TAD) has expressed disappointment over the proposed national budget for the cultural sector in the 2025–26 fiscal year.

While acknowledging a slight increase from last year, TAD president and veteran actor Azad Abul Kalam called the overall allocation "disappointing" last Monday via an official statement. He emphasised that culture is essential for shaping national identity, history, and future, but continues to be neglected.

TAD had previously urged that at least one percent of the total budget be dedicated to culture. The organisation highlighted the

ongoing challenges faced by theatre artistes, musicians, visual artistes, and other cultural workers, who operate with limited resources and infrastructure.

They stressed the need for sustainable financial support, improved infrastructure, and research-based cultural practices. Signed by Azad Abul Kalam and Secretary General Saif Suman, the press release urged the government to recognise culture as a foundational element of national development, not a luxury.

TAD called for a proper and effective budget allocation to support the cultural sector's growth and prevent further setbacks.



'Fête de la Musique 2025'

Alliance Française de Dhaka (AFD) presents *Fête de la Musique 2025*, inviting music lovers to celebrate World Music Day on June 20 at their Dhamondi venue. The event is set up to be an evening of vibrant performances and cultural exchange. Musicians interested in performing can apply by sending their portfolio or YouTube link to AFD.

Open to all, this celebration aims to unite the community through music and rhythm.

DATE: FRIDAY | JUNE 20

TIME: 3PM ONWARDS

VENUE: ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE DHAKA

Taylor Swift's old albums stream double on Spotify after catalogue deal

Taylor Swift's original albums saw a sharp rise in Spotify streams following her announcement of reclaiming ownership of her first six studio albums. On May 30, streams of her *Big Machine* era records more than doubled, with *Speak Now* surging 430 percent, *Taylor Swift* 220 percent, and *Reputation* 175 percent.

Other albums like *Fearless*, *Red*, and *1989* also saw significant increases. The spike follows years of dispute with Scooter Braun, who acquired Swift's masters in 2019. Swift later bought them back from Shamrock Capital.

In a statement, she celebrated regaining her catalogue, saying, "All of the music I've ever made... now belongs... to me." Fans now await potential re-recordings of *Reputation* and *Taylor Swift*, both yet to be re-released.



JAMES CAMERON to co-write fantasy epic 'The Devils'

Acclaimed filmmaker James Cameron is set to co-write the movie adaptation of Joe Abercrombie's best-selling novel *The Devils*. Announcing the news on Facebook, Cameron expressed long-standing admiration for Abercrombie's work, particularly the *First Law* series and *The Age of Madness* trilogy.

The collaboration will begin after Cameron completes *Avatar: Fire and Ash*, the third instalment of the *Avatar* franchise, scheduled for release on December 19.

Set in an alternate medieval Europe threatened by a flesh-eating elvish invasion, *The Devils* will be adapted with a focus on its cinematic storytelling. Abercrombie praised Cameron as the ideal creative partner, lauding his ability to blend action, spectacle, and emotional depth on screen over four decades of filmmaking.



Top bands unite for BTV's Eid-ul-Azha special programme

Bangladesh Television (BTV) has organised a special four-part musical series for Eid-ul-Azha, featuring performances by 13 bands, both established and emerging. On the third day of Eid, popular band Chirkutt will perform at 7pm, directed by Nasir Uddin and hosted by Kazi Momrez Mahmud.

The fourth day will feature performances by emerging bands, including F Minor, Mechanic, Natai, and Torun at 4pm, followed by sets from veteran bands Ark, Symphony, Orbit, and others at 7pm.

Audiences can expect classics like *Sweety Tumi Ar Kedona* and *Ekhon Prithibita Ki Darun Sejchhe*. The final day will feature Bijoy, Bengal Symphony, Shubhajatra, and Avash.

NEWS

Israeli fire kills 27 near Gaza aid point

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killed in fighting in the northern Gaza Strip, as its forces pushed ahead with a months-long offensive against Hamas that has laid waste to much of the enclave.

A spokesperson for the International Committee of the Red Cross told Reuters that its field hospital in Rafah received 184 casualties, adding that 19 of those were declared dead upon arrival, and eight died of their wounds shortly after.

More than 35 patients required immediate intervention, the spokesperson added.

The head of the UN agency, Volker Turk, urged a prompt and impartial investigation into the killings. "Attacks directed against civilians constitute a

grave breach of international law, and a war crime," he said in a statement.

The US-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation said it distributed 21 truckloads of food early yesterday and that the aid operation was "conducted safely and without incident within the site".

However, there have been reports of repeated killings near Rafah as crowds gather to get desperately needed supplies.

On Sunday, Palestinian and international officials reported that at least 31 people were killed and dozens more injured. On Monday, three more Palestinians were reportedly killed by Israeli fire.

The Israeli military has denied targeting civilians gathering for aid and called reports of deaths during

on Sunday's distribution "fabrications" by Hamas.

It issued new evacuation orders to residents of several districts in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip late on Monday, warning that the army would act forcefully against Hamas members operating in those areas.

The military told residents to head west towards the Mawasi humanitarian area.

Palestinian and United Nations officials say there are no safe areas in the enclave, and that most of its 2.3 million population has become internally displaced.

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"That is a blatant lie. We fail to

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On May 29, Yunus told the 30th

Nikkei Forum in Tokyo that only one

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During the meeting, party leaders

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Ahmed's oath-taking issues and

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Regarding Ishraque's issue,

the party is awaiting the Election

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"We understand the government's

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another senior leader.

Regardless of the outcome, the

BNP to avoid showdown

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briefed the meeting about his experience at the gathering of the National Consensus Committee earlier in the day.

The party said they still do not understand why the interim government plans to hold the next national election between December this year and June 2026 despite the party's repeated demand for holding polls in December.

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Regardless of the outcome, the

party's protest will continue until

Ishraque is allowed to take the oath

as the Dhaka South City Corporation mayor.

About the recent protest by

government employees at the secretariat,

the party leaders believe the movement

is a direct result of the interim

government's administrative failures.

"The beneficiaries of the Awami

League remain embedded in

the secretariat and the current

government has failed to contain the

unrest. We are closely monitoring

how the protest unfolds," said another

standing committee member.

Meanwhile, the party is set to

hold a press conference today at the

party chairperson's Gulshan office

to formally respond to the proposed

budget unveiled by the interim

government.

Meanwhile, Border Guard

Bangladesh yesterday detained at

least 59 people who were allegedly

pushed into the country by India's

Border Security Force through border

points in Panchagarh, Thakurgaon,

Mymensingh, and Chapainawabganj.

According to a BGB headquarters

statement, at least 1,278 people have

been pushed into Bangladesh from

India since May 7, through border areas

in 19 districts and the Mandarbaria

region of the Sundarbans. BGB officials

confirmed that all those detained

yesterday are Bangladeshi nationals.

In Panchagarh, 26 people were

detained early yesterday -- 17 near