

## 'The Eternal Journey' to compete at KISFFO 2025 in Greece

The *Eternal Journey* (*Tadattwo Onneshan*), a 17-minute experimental short by Fozle Rabby, has been officially selected for competition at the 3rd Karditsa International Short Film Festival Opseis (KISFFO 2025) in Greece.

Shot in luminous black-and-white, the film follows theatre actor Pankaj Chowdhury Rony's transformation into Kute Kahar, a palanquin bearer, through method acting that blurs performance and reality. Rooted in poetic realism, the film explores themes of identity, memory, and cultural inheritance.

Produced by Shankha Das Gupta, and co-produced by Nimon Morshed and Fazle Hasan Shishir, the film draws inspiration from Nasrin Sultana's story and Arindam Natya Goshthi's production. Its selection at KISFFO highlights the global recognition of Bangladeshi independent cinema.



## SHOUMYA seizes the day

After becoming a landmark in the film industry, *Utshob* premiered on OTT on August 7. Shoumya Joyti, who plays an important role in the film, has been residing in Melbourne, Australia, for a while. He conversed with The Daily Star over the phone about his experience.

**When did you land in Australia? How has the experience been so far with the overseas audience?**

I arrived here on June 29, and the first show was on July 3. Since the majority of the Bengali community lives in Sydney and Melbourne, we had the first screening in Sydney, and then I came to Melbourne, where I am currently staying.

As for the response, it has been quite unbelievable. I witnessed the first phase in Bangladesh, and now here in Australia, it has been absolutely incredible—all the shows here are houseful just like in Bangladesh. It's amazing to see that people have come from far away to watch the movie.

**For the ones who grew up during the '90s, 'Utshob' brings a wave of nostalgia. Surprisingly, Gen Z was also in awe after it hit theatres.**

I think the way the film's narrative is showcased worked all the magic. The script and dialogues deserve great applause because they truly connected with everyone. My mother

often tells me that this generation isn't used to seeing love stories in contemporary films. They rarely get the opportunity to watch a movie with the entire family. *Utshob* was a delightful treat for them.

**You've been part of several projects with period-based timelines—'Maya' (directed by Animesh Aich) and 'Utshob', for instance. Did you make any specific preparations for the roles?**

I had a guest appearance in *Maya*. As for my preparations, I'm grateful to the team who made it easier to step into a different generation. I even learned to ride a bike for the role—and ended up needing 15 stitches, most on my head! (laughs)

Emotionally, I am already connected to the period-based eras. I grew up watching Zahid Hasan's *Kothao Keu Nei* and old Bangla films. I'm also a huge Salman Shah fan—I've seen all his movies. We had a VCR at home too, so I was familiar with many things from that time.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF SHOUMYA JOYTI

**You have announced a year's break from acting. As a rising artiste, don't you think this is your time to seize the spotlight?**

I will be honest, when I received such an overwhelming response for *Utshob*, it made me feel that my responsibilities as a performer have grown to a great extent. Also, people have developed great expectations of me. So, I would never want to let them down. I want to educate myself more as a performer and take acting lessons. I'm also nearing the end of my undergraduate degree in English Literature at NSU. So, I am striving to maybe go abroad for my higher studies.



## Bappa Mazumder reimagines 'Brishti Pore' with AI music video

More than two decades after its original release, Bappa Mazumder has re-envisioned Dalchhut's

classic *Brishti Pore* with a new arrangement and an AI-generated music video.

The original track, a fan favourite from the band's 2000 album

*Hridaypur*, has been updated with a fresh sonic and visual treatment.

Released on August 5, on his YouTube channel, the new version features lyrics by Sheikh Rana and the original melody by Bappa. Ahad Antor designed the AI-powered music video, marking another step in the artiste's embrace of new technology to reduce production costs.

Bappa encouraged listeners to appreciate the new version as a separate expression, stating, "Please don't compare it to the original."

## WHAT'S THE HAPS?

### 'Reimagining Waste'

Urukku Bangladesh, in collaboration with the Goethe-Institut Bangladesh and ULAB, is hosting *Reimagining Waste* today, an exhibition born from a three-month workshop transforming discarded materials into creative works. The event will showcase functional and poetic designs that challenge perceptions of waste, encouraging visitors to rethink consumption. A special cultural ceremony is scheduled for 6pm today.

Date: Friday to Saturday | August 8-9  
Time: 4pm onwards  
Venue: Goethe-Institut Bangladesh



## James Cameron returns to non-Avatar films with Hiroshima project



James Cameron is set to direct his first non-Avatar project in nearly 15 years. Based on Charles Pellegrino's new book, the film will explore the aftermath of the Hiroshima bombing. Cameron announced the project on August 6, the 80th anniversary of the attack.

Cameron, who previously collaborated with Pellegrino on *Titanic*, describes the story as one of the most powerful he has encountered.

While *Avatar: Fire and Ash* is now set for release in December 2025, Cameron insists cinema alone can't fix global issues—but stories like this can inspire reflection and connection to humanity.

## NEWS

### Rights violations persist amid weak law and order

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of the previous regime's repressive tactics. Meanwhile, the deterioration of law and order has left citizens increasingly anxious about their safety.

At the same time, the statement read, mob violence has surged alarmingly across the country. "Whether triggered by political provocation or social unrest, numerous deaths and injuries have resulted from such activities. The law enforcement agencies and other institutions concerned have failed to prevent or address these incidents, which has raised serious concerns about the state of human rights in the country."

ASK further said that another alarming aspect of the current situation is the growing vulnerability and insecurity of religious minorities.

"While the public hoped for an inclusive system that respected human rights, attacks, threats, and persecution against ethnic and religious minorities have only increased.

"Some have even faced organised attacks over allegations of blasphemy,

accompanied by looting and threats to their lives. The absence of visible justice or punishment for perpetrators has deepened the sense of insecurity among minority communities."

Furthermore, it said, even the women who were at the forefront of the movement are now living in a state of insecurity.

Public incidents of assault, harassment, and humiliation of women have risen, while rape, sexual violence, and domestic abuse continue to dominate headlines, the statement read.

"Hate speech targeting women is on the rise, alongside intensified moral policing over their clothing and behaviour. This oppression is no longer limited to individual acts; it has taken the form of structural violence, severely restricting women's social, political, and economic empowerment."

The media has also been subjected to various forms of harassment, ASK noted, adding that hundreds of journalists have had their press accreditation cards revoked, been dismissed through strategic planning, faced false allegations, legal

harassment, arrests, and even attacks on their news offices.

"These developments have raised questions throughout the year about the true state of press freedom and freedom of expression."

Moreover, students' rights in educational institutions have been violated, it added. "Many students face unfair expulsions and revocation of their academic certificates, threatening their right to education, freedom of expression, and democratic values."

Amid these grim realities, one hopeful sign is Bangladesh's signing of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, ASK said.

"The formation of a commission to investigate enforced disappearances under previous governments is a significant step toward accountability and upholding international human rights standards. However, the government's failure to reform the National Human Rights Commission casts doubt on its commitment to protecting human rights."

ASK also welcomed the

announcement of a tentative timeline for the next election by the chief adviser, calling it an important step toward restoring the democratic process. The organisation expressed hope that this would pave the way for a free, fair, impartial, and inclusive election.

The rights body strongly demanded that the government ensure the rule of law and due legal process, and establish an environment that respects human rights.

Among its other demands were effective action against arbitrary arrests, mob violence, and attacks on minorities; a zero-tolerance policy for violence against women; concrete steps to protect freedom of expression and media independence; safeguarding of constitutional rights to assembly and organisation; and full transparency and accountability in investigations of human rights violations.

"The state must now play an effective, responsible, and rights-friendly role to ensure the dream of change achieved through the people's blood and sacrifice does not fail," ASK said.

### 20 hurt in clash at Al-Arafah Bank

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Station confirmed that a clash took place between two groups, but no one has been arrested yet.

After the fall of the previous government regime, various regulatory bodies, including Bangladesh Bank, launched investigations into the recruitment process at Al-Arafah Islami Bank and found several irregularities.

Following directives from the relevant authorities to regularise the situation, the bank conducted an evaluation test for 1,414 identified employees.

Of them, 547 who failed the assessment were terminated, according to bank officials.

According to current bank officials, the terminated employees suddenly gathered at the main entrance of Al-Arafah Islami Bank's head office on the morning of July 28, forming a human barrier and behaving aggressively.

Since then, for the past eight days, they have been blocking the main gate from morning till evening.

### Major Sadikul's wife

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Participants allegedly chanted anti-government slogans and discussed a plan to mobilise supporters from across the country to occupy the Shahbagh intersection in Dhaka upon instruction from ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, said the investigation officer.

The aim, according to police, was to create instability and spread panic to pave the way for Hasina's return to power. The remand was sought to extract "vital information" about the alleged plan, the petition added.

Sumaiya, who was detained from her residence in Mirpur DOHS on Wednesday evening, denied all allegations and claimed she had been

falsely implicated.

In her bail prayer, the defence argued that the accused was not involved in the incident and had left the venue shortly after arriving and noticing a large crowd. Her counsel sought both bail and cancellation of the remand prayer.

After hearing both sides, the magistrate rejected the bail plea and granted the five-day remand.

Major Sadikul is currently in military custody over alleged involvement in the same incident.

At least 28 people have so far been arrested in the case filed with Bhatara Police Station on July 13 over what police described as a "secret training session".

### 525 high-rises illegally built

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Mahmood said. The issue of unauthorised high-rise buildings near Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport (HSIA) and the old airport in Tejgaon has come into focus following the July 21 plane crash at Milestone School & College in the Diabari area.

The Bangladesh Air Force training jet crashed into the school's compound, killing at least 35 people and injuring scores of others. Most of the victims were schoolchildren.

At the media briefing, Caab officials clarified that there are no unauthorised high-rise buildings surrounding the Milestone compound.

Group Captain Md Noor-e-Alam, member (Air Traffic Management) of CAAB, explained that the permitted height for buildings in that area is maximum 150 feet, and the tallest

building surrounding the Milestone school camps is currently 135 feet high.

About aviation experts' views that training of fighter jets should not be carried out over the sky of densely populated Dhaka, the CAAB chief said fighter jets use HSIA runway just for taking off and landing.

"But the training area and training path are different, it's not in the Dhaka sky," the CAAB chairman added.

Regarding the inauguration of the Terminal 3 at the HSIA, CAAB Chairman Mostafa did not provide a specific date.

However, he mentioned that efforts were underway to make the terminal fully operational very soon.

He also said discussions were ongoing with a Japanese consortium regarding the operation of the terminal, and a formal agreement would be signed once both parties reach an understanding.

### Formal charges against ex-DMP

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murder, conspiracy, complicity, facilitation, abetment, incitement, failure to prevent or punish crimes, and command responsibility—all under the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973.

According to the prosecution, the case was filed over the killing of two people and the shooting of two others during the movement in Rampura.

On July 19, six-year-old Musa was shot and critically injured during police action. The same bullet fatally struck his grandmother, Ayesha Begum, after passing through the child's body. Musa survived after treatment, but his grandmother died.

Another victim, Md Nadim, was also shot dead during the same incident.

In a separate incident that day, a video went viral on social media showing a young man, later identified as 18-year-old Amir Hossain, hanging from the ledge of an under-construction building. The video appeared to show two policemen shooting at him at close range while he clung to the edge, desperately trying to save himself.

ICT Prosecutor Faruk Ahmed shared these details with journalists after submitting the formal charges to the registrar of ICT-1. The charges are expected to be formally placed before the tribunal soon, according to ICT sources.

On Wednesday, prosecutor Mizanul Islam told reporters ICT's probe agency submitted its investigation report to the prosecution on July 31.

### Went to the sea to contemplate, reflect

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privately about the future direction of politics. Sitting by the sea, I deeply reflected on the mass uprising, the Citizens' Committee, the structure of the Citizen Party, the future constituent assembly, and the outline of a new democratic constitution," he wrote. "I don't see this as a crime. It was a responsible and thoughtful exercise for a political activist."

He stated that Hasnat had informed him on the night of August 4, using a colleague's phone, that he planned a short trip with friends. Nasiruddin said he advised him to inform the party convener. Later that night, Nasiruddin met with Convener Nahid and spoke to Member Secretary Akhter, who confirmed that three other leaders would be present at the July Declaration event and that Nasiruddin had not been assigned any role.

"So I decided to go on the trip," Nasiruddin wrote.

Those who accompanied him included NCP Chief Organiser (North) Sarjis Alam and his wife; Senior Joint

Member Secretary Tasnim Jara and her husband Joint Convener Khaled Saifullah.

Nasiruddin also addressed rumours of a secret meeting with former US Ambassador Peter Haas. "I immediately told the media this was false. The hotel confirmed he was not staying there, and later sources confirmed he was in Washington at the time," he wrote. "My trip was transparent, lawful, and intended for personal thinking. Still, I am replying with respect to party discipline. Let me be clear: travelling is not a crime. History is not only made in meetings—sometimes it begins in solitude, even by the sea."

Hasnat, in his statement, criticised the July Declaration for "prioritising the views of a few individuals" instead of reflecting unity or the voices of those injured or martyred in the July Uprising.

"On August 5, I left Dhaka as a quiet protest against an incomplete July Declaration," he wrote. "The event, which should have honoured unity, instead promoted division.

When the voices of a handful take precedence over those injured or martyred in the movement, I saw no reason to attend."

He said he had initially tried to reach Convener Nahid and later informed Nasiruddin of his plans.

Hasnat also alleged that their movements were tracked by intelligence agencies, and that their photos and videos were shared with the media. "In collusion with some media and intelligence agencies, our actions were portrayed as suspicious," he wrote.

He further condemned what he called a "slandering and misogynistic attack" on Tasnim Jara. "I believe this vile attack aimed to discourage women from participating in politics," he wrote.

Hasnat concluded that the show-cause notice made no mention of any breach of party rules. "There is no such mention in the notice I received, because I did not break any," he wrote. "Instead, the language of the notice fuelled conspiracy theories."