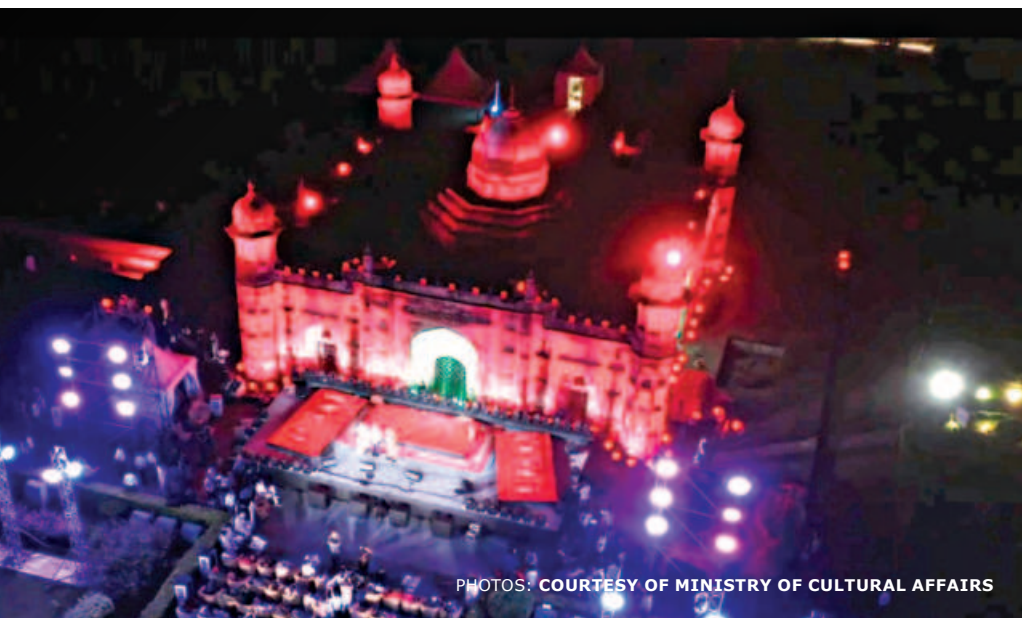


Allauddin Khan's tribute at Lalbagh Fort momentous, inspiring



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MINISTRY OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Among those in attendance were Cultural Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Housing and Public Works Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, and Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The centuries-old ramparts of Lalbagh Fort reverberated with the timeless strains of classical music on Wednesday evening, as the nation commemorated the 163rd birth anniversary of Ustad Allauddin Khan—one of the subcontinent's most revered maestros and a pioneer who elevated South Asian classical music to international prominence.

Organised by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and managed by Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, the event transformed the historic Mughal fort into a confluence of heritage and harmony.

In a video message, Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus inaugurated the evening, calling Allauddin Khan "a legendary figure who brought South Asian classical music to the world stage." He described the setting as

"a fitting tribute—where history itself seems to listen."

Among those in attendance were Cultural Adviser Mostofa Sarwar Farooki, Housing and Public Works Adviser Adilur Rahman Khan, and Environment Adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan.

Speaking to the audience, Farooki reflected, "Ustad Allauddin Khan was not merely a musician—he was a philosophy, a vision that continues to inspire generations."

Both Khan and Hasan also used the occasion to draw attention to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, expressing solidarity with the people of Palestine. Their remarks stirred

the audience, who spontaneously joined in a chorus of "Free, free Palestine!"—a moment of shared conscience amid art and beauty.

The finale of the night belonged to Ustad Allauddin Khan's great-grandson, Siraj Ali Khan—the evening's most anticipated performer. "The sarod I'm playing tonight belonged to my great-grandfather," he shared, holding up the century-and-a-half-old instrument before beginning his set.

The evening was gracefully hosted by legendary actor and director Alzar Hossain and television presenter Maria Fariha Upoma, who guided the audience through the night's performances with warmth and wit.



'Shaaticup' director Touqir Islam to debut in feature film



Filmmaker Mohammad Touqir Islam, acclaimed for his OTT series *Shaaticup* and *Sinpaat*, is set to make his big-screen debut with *Delupi*. The feature explores 'fictional reality', drawing inspiration from the lives, struggles, and relationships of residents in Deluti Union, Paikgacha Upazila, Khulna, while presenting universally relatable human experiences.

Touqir emphasised the film's authenticity: "Every character and every frame in this film reflects real lives and emotions. For me, conveying genuine feelings mattered far more than big budgets or star names."

Produced by Footprint Film Production House, *Delupi* marks their first full-length feature. Announced on social media on October 9, the film was shot entirely in local settings and is expected

'Deshlai' will close out Seattle's film festival



The film *Deshlai* has been selected as the closing feature of the Tasveer International Film Festival in Seattle on October 12. Directed by Indian filmmaker Quashiq Mukherjee, known as Q, the film explores contemporary youth culture in Bangladesh and India, and the pervasive influence of social media.

Deshlai follows Zewel, a young TikToker with 15,000 followers, whose ambitions clash with harsh realities after his brother Jibon is caught dealing drugs. Facing financial hardship, Zewel's journey leads him across the border into India, encountering further tragedy.

Originally titled *Zewel*, the cast includes Sizu Shahriar, Priyam Archi, Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed, and Rahi Abdullah. It is produced by Odd Joint, Chorki, Luminary Pictures, Dreams on Cell, and Platoon Films. Priyam Archi will represent the team at the festival.

Rowan Atkinson's Netflix comedy 'Man vs Baby' set for December release



Netflix will premiere *Man vs Baby*, a four-part comedy series starring Rowan Atkinson, globally on December 11, 2025.

Atkinson reprises his role as Trevor Bingley from *Man vs Bee*, now facing Christmas chaos while caring for a baby in London. Set against the festive backdrop, the series follows Trevor, a school caretaker, who must manage a luxury penthouse and an unattended baby from a nativity play.

Alanah Bloor joins as Maddy, Trevor's daughter, replacing India Fowler. The show reunites Atkinson with co-writer Will Davies and director David Kerr, and is produced by HouseSitter Productions. Netflix calls it "a lighthearted, family-friendly holiday story about responsibility, chaos, and laughter," blending Atkinson's signature slapstick with festive charm.

NEWS

The silent cries while on the job

FROM PAGE 12
"One teammate tried to pull out a body. As he grabbed the hand, it tore away.... We had to stay professional, but later, as ordinary people, the emotions return. Our families suffer too, as they wait in fear until we come home."

By the time the operation ended around 9:00pm, Alam was feverish and nauseated from exhaustion.

Firefighters are trained to stay calm under pressure and support victims — yet they themselves receive none. They rely on grit and each other to survive repeated exposure to death and disaster.

That invisible weight is not unique to them. It grips others at the frontline of tragedy — including journalists.

Print journalist Naima Rahman (not her real name) still remembers writing the caption for the viral photo of July martyr Golam Nafiz — a protester slumped in a rickshaw, flag tied to his head, legs hanging on one side, head on the other. "My fingers trembled as I typed. That image never left me — it shows up in dreams, at the dinner table, in the silence before sleep."

She also spoke with parents of slain children, some showing her bloodstained clothes, schoolbooks, and awards as they spoke.

For female journalists, the strain doesn't end in the field. They face harassment and struggle for recognition in male-dominated newsrooms — then return home to caregiving and unpaid labour. With little workplace support, this double burden steadily chips away at their mental health.

In corporate towers, the pressure takes another shape.

Rafiqul Islam, 36, a relationship manager at a non-bank financial institution, officially works eight hours a day. But his hours often stretch to nearly 12 under relentless monthly targets.

"Every day feels like a race against numbers. If I fall short, scrutiny is immediate. Even when we do well, no one acknowledges our effort. I come back exhausted, snap at my family, and can't sleep."

Workplace stress is not just a personal burden; it carries social and economic costs.

According to a 2024 World Health Organization report, poor working environments — discrimination, inequality, excessive workloads, low job control, and job insecurity — pose serious mental health risks.

Globally, depression and anxiety

cause around 12 billion lost working days each year, costing USD 1 trillion in productivity. In Bangladesh, research on workplace mental health remains scarce.

The crisis is worsened by a shortage of professionals. Bangladesh has only 260 psychiatrists and 565 psychologists — fewer than six per million people, mostly in cities, according to a recent Icdhr report.

With over two decades of experience, Monira Rahman, founder of the Innovation for Wellbeing Foundation and country lead for Mental Health First Aid Bangladesh, said wellbeing is vital across sectors.

"In these fields, employees often face direct or secondary trauma. Without support, how can they keep performing?"

"Wellbeing ensures personal resilience and institutional strength. Leaders must understand that investing in wellbeing is not a luxury; it directly improves performance."

Research shows that "wellbeing inspires well doing": every USD 1 invested in treating depression and anxiety yields a USD 4 return, Monira noted.

Experts cite workplace culture as a key stressor: long hours, rigid supervision, constant availability, bullying, job insecurity, and lack of recognition. Women face a double burden, while social media overuse, sleeplessness, and financial pressure add to the strain.

Clinical psychologist Ismat Jahan, head of the National Trauma Counselling Centre, said stress also stems from office politics, poor communication, and difficulty balancing work and personal life.

"Stress manifests physically as headaches, high blood pressure, or fluctuating blood sugar, while damaging relationships through irritability, anger, burnout, and marital strain."

The toll is visible among community health workers too. A BRAC study published in August 2025 found that overwhelming workloads, irregular pay, poor supervision, and pressure to meet targets caused tension, sleeplessness, and fear of infection.

Despite these symptoms, workers coped silently through prayer, hobbies, or talking to peers.

Stigma remains a barrier, with many fearing that seeking counselling will make others think they are "crazy." "Even in organisations

offering free counselling, employees often hesitate to use it," Monira said.

SMALL STEPS, BIG IMPACT
Ismat Jahan advocates linking organisations with counselling services and offering stress management workshops.

"Simple steps — occasional sessions, counselling access, or partnerships with mental health providers — can reduce anger, improve relationships, and boost productivity. Mentally well employees make better workplaces."

One example is the Wellbeing Ecosystem Bangladesh Network, led by IWF. It brings together leaders from education, health, ecology, and the arts to create stronger workplace support systems.

As the sole license holder of Mental Health First Aid (MFHA) Bangladesh, the network runs awareness campaigns, trains leaders, and helps managers spot early signs of stress, anxiety, or depression.

In several banks, corporations, and development organisations, trained managers identified long-standing depression cases, and staff who sought counselling reported improved wellbeing and performance.

Monira said solutions need not be costly. "Empathetic listening and checking in on employees build trust and gradually shift workplace culture. Even small acts can ripple across an office, creating a healthier, stronger, and more compassionate workforce."

Peacekeeping

FROM PAGE 12
monitoring ceasefires, protection of civilians, working with the humanitarians, or other peacekeeping activities," the official said.

The 25 percent reduction in troops will be spread across nine of the 11 peacekeeping missions, which had already developed contingency plans for potential budget cuts, the official said.

The UN has peacekeepers deployed in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, southern Lebanon, Central African Republic, South Sudan, and Western Sahara, among other places.

The announcement "potentially means a significant reduction in protection for things like humanitarian convoys and the civilians who rely on aid," Louis Charbonneau of Human Rights Watch told AFP.

'Hasina gave the order to kill us'

FROM PAGE 12
Zone DC Humayun Kabir were among those who put pressure on them to call off the movement.

The DB forced the six coordinators of the movement to sign and read out a statement prepared by them, which they recorded on a mobile phone and then circulated to the media.

"While detained at the DB office, we began a hunger strike unto death. After 32 hours, our health deteriorated, and we were released on August 1."

After consulting with fellow coordinators, they immediately declared on social media that the movement would continue.

When tribunal Chairman Justice Md Golam Mortuza Mozumder asked why he held Hasina responsible, Asif said she ordered the use of lethal weapons and firing of tear shells from a helicopter — claims he said

were later corroborated by social media footage and media reports.

The tribunal recorded the statement of Asif, now the adviser for LGRD and Sports and Youth ministries, for around two hours in the case against former Dhaka Metropolitan Police commissioner Habibur Rahman and seven other policemen over the killings of six people in Chankharpool on August 5 last year.

Asif said he was abducted from the Gulshan-Niketan area on July 19 by men who claimed to be DB officers. He was blindfolded, hauled into a microbus, and taken to a detention room.

After the fall of the Hasina regime on August 5, he said he inspected "Aynagar" in Dhaka Cantonment and identified the room where he had been held.

He told the tribunal that during

his detention in Aynagar, he was pressured to record a message calling off the movement.

"When I refused, I was injected [with something] and became unconscious."

After the proceedings, Asif told journalists that doctors at Gonoshasthya Nagar Hospital — where he was admitted with several other coordinators after his release from Aynagar on July 24 last year — had tested his blood and confirmed administration of pethidine, an opioid-type sedative.

Replying to a journalist's query regarding the filing of formal charges against several army officials for their alleged involvement in enforced disappearances, Asif described the development as a milestone.

He urged for following proper procedures and warned against any efforts to shield perpetrators.

Krasznahorkai wins Nobel in Literature

FROM PAGE 12
with one more. "My life is a permanent correction," he said.

Critically difficult and demanding, his style was described once by Krasznahorkai himself as "reality examined to the point of madness".

The settings of his novels move across central Europe's remote villages and towns, from Hungary to Germany, before skipping to the Far East, where his travels to China and Japan left deep-seated impressions on Krasznahorkai.

The Academy highlighted Krasznahorkai's first novel, published in 1985, "Satantango", which brought him to prominence in Hungary and remains his best-known work. The Academy called it "a literary sensation".

The second Hungarian to win the prize, after Imre Kertész in 2002, Krasznahorkai was born in the small town of Gyula in southeast Hungary, near the Romanian border.

"Satantango" is set in a similarly remote rural area.

The novel portrays, in powerfully suggestive terms, a destitute group of residents on an abandoned collective farm in the Hungarian countryside just before the fall of communism," the Academy said.

Across the region, collective farms had been set up when farming land was confiscated at the start of communist rule, and many had

become symbols of mismanagement and poverty by the time it ended in 1989.

"Everyone in the novel is waiting for a miracle to happen, a hope that is from the very outset punctured by the book's introductory (Franz) Kafka motto: 'In that case, I'll miss the thing by waiting for it,'" the Academy said.

Krasznahorkai has repeatedly referenced "The Castle" by Kafka as a key influence.

"When I am not reading Kafka, I am thinking about Kafka. When I am not thinking about Kafka, I miss thinking about him," he told the White Review in 2013.

PIERCE CRITIC HAILED

Hailing the noble laureate, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban wrote in a short message on X: "Laszlo Krasznahorkai, Hungary's Nobel Prize laureate in literature, brings pride to our nation. Congratulations!"

A fierce critic of Orban, Krasznahorkai previously said his government was a "psychiatric case" because of its stance on the Ukraine war. Orban opposes military aid to Kyiv and says Hungary should stay out of the war.

"How can a country be neutral when the Russians invade a neighbouring country?" Krasznahorkai said in an interview with the Yale Review in February.

Much of Krasznahorkai's inspiration comes from experiences in central Europe on the cusp of the fall of communism. In 1987, he moved from communist Hungary to West Berlin, where he said he found "a democratic ambience" he had never experienced before.

"Ever since, I have never forgotten the taste of freedom," he said in an interview on the Friderikusz Podcast in 2023.

LITERARY SENSATION

"It is Laszlo Krasznahorkai's artistic gaze, which is entirely free of illusion and which sees through the fragility of the social order, combined with his unwavering belief in the power of art that has motivated the Academy to award him this prize," Academy member Steve Sem-Sandberg said.

American critic Susan Sontag crowned Krasznahorkai the "master of the apocalypse" after having read his second book, "The Melancholy of Resistance" in 1989, the Academy said.

His "War and War" novel (1999) was described by the New Yorker magazine critic James Wood as "one of the most profoundly unsettling experiences I have ever had as a reader".

He is the second Hungarian to win the prize, after the late Imre Kertész won it in 2002.