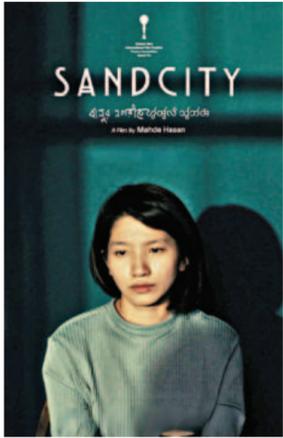


'Sand City' wins award at Cairo International Film Festival

On Friday, the Cairo International Film Festival announced this year's winners and cinematographer Mathieu Giombini won the Henry Barakat Award for Best Artistic Contribution for Bangladeshi film *Sand City*, directed by Mahde Hasan, in the International Competition category.

The film recently had its Africa and Arab premiere at the Grand Hall of the Cairo Opera House. It is produced by Rubaiyat Hossain and Aadnan Imtiaz Ahmed under Khona Talkies, in association with Cinema Cocoon.

It follows two characters bound by their connection to sand. Emma (Victoria Chakma) discovers a severed finger while collecting cat litter, triggering a dark and unsettling obsession. Meanwhile, Hasan (Mostafa Monwar) steals sand from a washing plant to make glass at home, gradually losing himself in a dangerous fantasy of building a glass empire. The film earlier won the Proxima Grand Prix at the 59th Karlovy Vary International Film Festival.



PHOTOS: NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

MINIATURE DHAKA Inside 'City of Memories' by Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed

NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

In the quiet corners of Alliance Française, a small cluster of canvases invites viewers into a Dhaka that no longer exists — or perhaps one that exists only in memory. In *City of Memories*, Kazi Salahuddin Ahmed turns the familiar chaos of our own Old Dhaka into intimate, abstract landscapes, painted to recall the magic of the city.

The exhibition was inaugurated on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at the Alliance Française's Gulshan premises and will continue until November 29. With more than 140 miniature works on display, the opening ceremony—graced by diplomats, artists, and long-time admirers—set the tone for an exploration into Salahuddin's vibrant abstraction of the city.

These small works — some barely six inches across — pull you in with an embrace of nostalgia. Each square seems to hold a neighbourhood, a lane, a rooftop, a young boy's vantage point of Old Dhaka before its colours faded and its rooftops were replaced by concrete towers.

As someone who turns to painting for solace, I was enchanted by how these



miniatures held such big truths about what we are losing with time. The artist avoids literal representation completely; these scenes don't imitate the city so much as remember it. The textures recall broken plaster, eroded walls or old rooftops collapsing into colour—vivid in some places and blurred in others.

Salahuddin considers himself a child raised while being cradled in the arms of Old Dhaka—with all its chaos, heritage and changing rhythm. To portray that, he used multicolor to express the extravagance of festivities such as—Eid, Durga puja or Shakraim. He sounds almost melancholic when he says, "I don't go to my childhood home anymore. I feel like we are inside a well of some sort. It is that dark because of the buildings around." He worries about the rapid, unplanned development swallowing the city and believes decentralisation must enter the national planning conversation.

In a city where heritage is often swallowed whole by development, these tiny works feel like acts of preservation. They are reminders that cities are not built only of concrete and steel, but of textures, sounds, and fleeting images stored in the mind.

More than anything, *City of Memories* reads like a love letter — one written in the language of abstraction. Salahuddin's Dhaka is not perfect, polished or neatly arranged. It is messy, broken, sunlit, rusted and alive. It carries the debris of time and the glow of continuity.

Eddie Murphy to receive AFI life achievement award

The American Film Institute announced Friday that Eddie Murphy will receive its prestigious life achievement award. The comedy legend will be honoured at a special ceremony on April 18 at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Murphy has dominated the entertainment world for almost five decades. He started as a teenage stand-up comedian before joining the cast of *Saturday Night Live*. He then became a box office powerhouse with blockbuster films including *Beverly Hills Cop*, *Coming to America*, *The Nutty Professor* and the *Shrek* franchise.

In 2007, Murphy earned an Oscar nomination for best supporting actor for his role in *Dreamgirls*. He becomes the 51st person to receive the AFI life achievement award since it was first presented to director John Ford in 1973.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Horror Folklore Fest Dhaka 2025'

Horror Folklore Fest Dhaka 2025 brings global horror icons and Bangladeshi ghost stories together in one thrilling event.

From Dracula's immortal menace to Sadako's cursed silence, and *Shakchunni* (witch) from Bengal's village tales, the event transforms the place into an immersive realm of shadows and superstition. It is a fun mix of fear, fantasy, and folklore for anyone who loves spooky stories.

DATE: FRIDAY | NOVEMBER 28, 2025

TIME: 12 PM - 8 PM

VENUE: TOKYO SQUARE CONVENTION CENTER



NEWS

MoUs inked

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trade agreement in 2020.

The visiting Bhutanese PM stressed the need for deeper trade and economic cooperation. "If we have to prosper, we must prosper together," he said.

The two leaders also agreed to establish a joint working group to promote two-way tourism, said a statement of the Chief Adviser's Press Wing.

Bhutan is developing a major economic hub, the Gelephu Mindfulness City, and sought Bangladesh's cooperation, including space in Narayanganj for loading and unloading Bhutanese cargo, Tobgay said.

Bhutan is a key part of Dhaka's vision for a regional trade and economic cooperation, Yunus said, adding that he had instructed officials to clear Bhutanese containers as quickly as possible.

Yunus also invited Bhutanese nationals to avail themselves of healthcare services and medical education at the 1,000-bed hospital and a medical college in the northern district of Nilphamari that is under construction.

Following the formal talks, Bangladesh and Bhutan signed two memoranda of understanding: one on healthcare services and the other on the trade of international internet bandwidth.

Under the internet bandwidth agreement, Bhutan will import bandwidth from Bangladesh.

Yunus expressed hope that more Bangladeshi doctors and healthcare workers will now be able to work in Bhutan, particularly in the upcoming new economic city of Gelephu, now under development in the Himalayan kingdom.

Bangladesh also announced an increased number of seats for Bhutanese students in Bangladesh medical colleges and earmarked seats in BUET.

The two leaders also discussed prospects for Bangladesh to import hydropower from Bhutan, including the possibility of a trilateral agreement involving India to facilitate electricity trade.

Suspect dies

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in Sirajganj, said Shahadat was an asthma patient and fell ill during interrogation. "He was taken to Sirajganj General Hospital, where he unfortunately died."

He added that they have formed a three-member committee to investigate the death and that a departmental inquiry is also underway.

Why rush to hand over terminals to foreign

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The government, shamelessly and with a smiling face, is continuing the initiatives taken by the ousted Sheikh Hasina government related to port, said Muhammad, also former member secretary of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Mineral Resources, Power and Ports.

"Thus, it is pushing Bangladesh into a grave danger."

While the interim government has shown great eagerness in moving forward with this agreement, it has not shown the same level of urgency in addressing other national issues such as shrine vandalism, violence against women or mob attacks, he added.

The recent decision by the interim government to sign long-term port agreements with foreign companies raises serious questions about transparency, accountability and the legal propriety of such actions, said Jyotirmoy Barua, a Supreme Court lawyer.

He expressed concern that the government has proceeded with contracts spanning 30 to 40 years without making the documents fully public, citing legal complexities as justification.

According to him, the argument that pre-contract confidentiality under Section 34 of the Public Private Partnership Act prevents disclosure is misleading.

The section only covers pre-contract activities and clearly states that the provisions of the Right to Information Act 2009 shall prevail, which means the government was supposed to disclose details even at the pre-contract stage.

Moreover, once a contract is executed, it becomes a public document and there is no legal bar to publishing it.

Barua emphasised that the interim government, which has a limited mandate of a few months, has no authority to commit the nation to such long-term obligations that affect the economy and the people for decades.

He warned that rushing the

agreement within a very short timeframe, and on a holiday no less, signals a lack of due diligence and raises suspicions about potential irregularities or conflicts of interest.

Drawing on past experiences with mega-projects, he argued that secrecy often accompanies mismanagement or corruption.

He also called for immediate public disclosure of all contract documents, urging the authorities to upload the agreements online for independent review.

"Transparency is not only a legal requirement but a moral obligation."

Barua stressed that full thorough scrutiny would enable legal and policy experts to assess the agreements, protect national interest and ensure that future contracts follow the principles of accountability, fairness and the public good.

The proposed offshore port project is deeply flawed and poses a serious risk to national maritime infrastructure, said Md Anam Chowdhury, president of the Bangladesh Merchant Marine Officers' Association, at another event organised by Voice for Reform and BRAIN.

He emphasised that the country has historically failed to place qualified personnel in key technical positions, resulting in mismanagement and poorly executed projects.

Non-technical decision-makers should not be in charge of complex port operations and all such projects must be handled by trained professionals, he added.

The Chattogram Port is being managed profitably, said Shams Mahmud, managing director of Shasha Denims, a garment exporter. Therefore, the Mongla and Payra ports should have been handed over to foreign operators first, which could have created a 'win-win' situation for Bangladesh.

However, he expressed hope that the modern technologies the foreign companies bring to port operations will have a positive impact on the country.

Wife claims

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told her to file the case with the court after receiving the autopsy report.

When contacted, Iqbal Hossain, the duty officer who dealt with Mukta, said, "Since Moktar's death occurred in DB custody, outside our jurisdiction, I asked the victim's wife to speak to the OC first."

"After speaking with the OC, she left the station. I don't know what was discussed between them," he added.

Several attempts were made to contact Pallabi police OC Mafizur Rahman over the phone, but he did not answer the calls.

Moktar was arrested in a raid on Thursday. According to police, he was beaten by locals as he tried to flee.

He reportedly fell ill around 1:30am on Friday and was taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital, where he was examined, given medication, and discharged before being brought back to the DB office.

Around 10:00am the same day, Moktar was found unconscious in his cell and was again taken to DMCH, where doctors pronounced him dead, police said.

However, the victim's family dismissed the claim that locals had beaten Moktar and alleged foul play. "My husband died due to torture in DB custody," Mukta told this newspaper on Friday.

4 of a family killed

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minor injuries, told reporters they were heading to Kantajew Temple in Kantanagar for the Rash Mela.

"All of a sudden, the bus hit our easy bike. I am helpless... I don't know what to do..." he said before breaking down in tears.

Obaidul Islam, senior station officer of Dinajpur Fire Service and Civil Defence, said they got the information at 2:22pm and went to the spot. Marjina, Sadia, and Sammi died on the spot while Tanjima succumbed to her injuries at the hospital.

The remaining four, including the easy bike rider Rubel, 25, are undergoing treatment at the hospital with severe injuries, he added.

Dashmile Highway Police Station Sub-Inspector Rejaul Karim said police seized the bus but its driver and helper managed to flee.

He said the process to file a case is underway.

'The better he does

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The meeting in the Oval Office, where Trump has sometimes embarrassed or chastised visiting heads of state, far exceeded Trump's prediction earlier on Friday that it would be "quite cordial."

The men, two different generations of New Yorkers, announced nothing new on policy except what seemed to be the launch of an unexpected, politics-shifting professional friendship.

"What I really appreciate about the president is that the meeting that we had focused not on places of disagreement, which there are many, and also focused on the shared purpose that we have in serving New Yorkers," Mamdani said.

Just 26 percent of Americans say Trump is doing a good job at managing the cost of living, according to a Reuters/Ipsos poll. Meanwhile, Mamdani, promising a freeze on rents and free buses and childcare, was one of a slew of Democratic victors around the country in elections earlier this month. It was among the most deflating nights endured by Republicans this year, and Trump had not been expected to enjoy the reminder through a visit by one of the most prominent Democratic winners.

Yet the president, who found his fame as a New York real estate developer, brightened at Mamdani's call for more housing in the city

Deal reached

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need funds to adapt to impacts that are already hitting, like rising sea levels and worsening heat waves, droughts, floods, and storms.

Avinash Persaud, Special Advisor to the President of the Inter-American Development Bank, a multilateral lender focused on Latin America and the Caribbean, said the accord's focus on finance was important as climate impacts mount.

"But I fear the world still fell short on more rapid-release grants for developing countries responding to loss and damage. That goal is as urgent as it is hard," he said.

The impasse between the European Union and the Arab Group of nations over fossil fuels had pushed the talks past a Friday deadline, triggering all-night negotiations before a compromise could be reached.

Correa do Lago said on Saturday

he will lead from January 1. Trump was cheered to hear a chunk of New Yorkers who voted for him in last year's presidential election had gone on to vote for Mamdani.

"When we spoke to those voters who voted for President Trump, we heard them speak of the cost of living," Mamdani said.

Trump, who says he is paying increasing attention to affordability and inflation, said this made sense to him: "Some of his ideas are the same ideas I have," Trump explained. "The better he does, the happier I am."

As Mamdani surged in the polls to victory on November 4, Trump issued threats to strip federal funding from New York City. Mamdani has regularly criticized Trump's promise to ramp up federal immigration enforcement efforts in a city where four in 10 residents are foreign-born.

In the weeks before they met, Trump had labelled Mamdani a "radical left lunatic," a communist and a "Jew hater."

Mamdani has espoused Nordic-style democratic socialism, not communism. While a staunch critic of Israel, he was endorsed by prominent Jewish politicians, is bringing Jewish staff into his new administration, notably New York Police Commissioner Jessica Tisch, and has repeatedly condemned antisemitism.

morning that the presidency was issuing a side text on fossil fuels - as well as on protecting forests - keeping it out of the main accord because of the lack of consensus.

But he urged countries to keep discussing the issues.

"I know that most of you are tired, but as president of this conference, it is my duty to recognize some very important discussions that took place in Belem and that needs to continue during the Brazilian presidency, until the next COP, even if they are not reflected in this text we just approved," he said.

Saturday's agreement also launches a process for climate bodies to review how to align international trade with climate action, according to the deal text, amid concerns that rising trade barriers are limiting the adoption of clean technology.