

DIFF Day 3: Mousumi Hamid starrer ‘Noya Manush’ to screen today

The 24th Dhaka International Film Festival (DIFF) continues today with its third day of screenings across multiple venues in Dhaka, bringing together a diverse selection of films from around the world. This year's edition features 245 films from 91 countries, including Bangladesh, showcased across sections such as Asian Film Competition, Bangladesh Panorama, Cinema of the World, Short and Independent Films, Women Filmmakers, Spiritual Films, and Children's Film Session. Among today's highlights from the Bangladesh Panorama Full-Length section is *Noya Manush*, directed by Sohel Rana Boyati and starring Mousumi Hamid. A total of 13 films will be screened today at the Bangladesh National Museum's Main Auditorium and the Sufia Kamal Auditorium in Shahbagh. Seven films are scheduled at the Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy's National Art Gallery Auditorium, while Alliance Française de Dhaka will host four screenings. Another nine films will be shown at Stamford University Bangladesh Auditorium on Siddeswari Road. The festival will continue until January 18, offering audiences a wide-ranging cinematic experience. For the full screening schedule, visit the festival's official website.



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

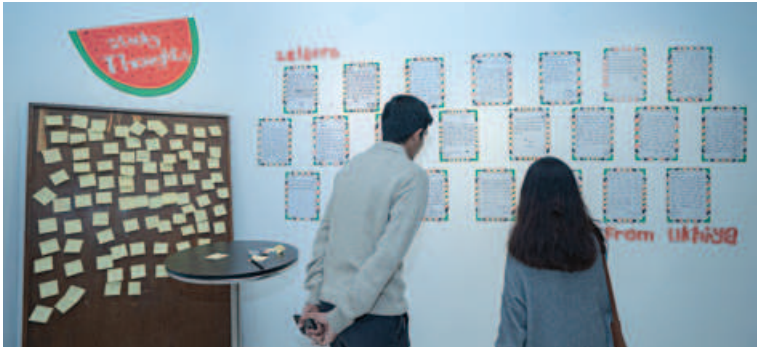
FROM UKHIYA TO GAZA: Children's art of solidarity in Dhaka

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

The healing-centered fundraising exhibition, *Echoes of Hope – Children for Children*, organised by HopeWave Foundation was inaugurated at La Galerie, Alliance Française de Dhaka on January 6. The exhibition brought together drawings, handwritten letters, photographs, and process documentation created by children from Ukhiya, including those from refugee, indigenous, and underserved communities. Displayed across the gallery walls, the works present personal yet collective messages addressed to the children of Palestine, shaped by empathy, resilience, and lived understanding. Through uncomplicated visuals, handwritten words, and candid imagery, the children articulate solidarity that travels across borders, geographies, and circumstances.

Each exhibited work emerged from a three-day psychosocial art campaign conducted with children in Ukhiya. During the campaign, structured creative sessions guided participants through drawing, writing, and visual storytelling as tools for emotional expression. The process created space for children affected by displacement and instability to articulate feelings, reflect on global events, and respond through their own creative language.

Beyond its role as an exhibition, *Echoes of Hope – Children for Children* functions as a fundraising initiative. Organised in partnership with PACSOC, all funds raised through the exhibition will support the Owneh Initiative, which works with children in Gaza. This structure connects creative expression with direct material support, positioning art



as an active contributor to global solidarity rather than a symbolic gesture.

Speaking at the inauguration, Munimah Mahreen, poet, activist, and founder of HopeWave Foundation, described the exhibition as an expression of solidarity rooted in shared humanity. She highlighted the ability of children's art to communicate compassion and collective responsibility in ways

that remain direct and impactful. Curator Mubtasim Alvee noted that the exhibition centers shared empathy, drawing attention to the clarity and sincerity present in the children's work. He emphasised that the absence of overt curatorial intervention allows the expressions to remain unfiltered and authentic. Founded in July 2024, HopeWave Foundation focuses on creating

healing-centered and culturally grounded spaces for mental health recovery, youth engagement, and global solidarity through arts-based and psychosocial initiatives. The organisation began as a community-based effort supporting individuals affected by collective trauma, with an emphasis on resilience and emotional recovery. The exhibition *Echoes of Hope – Children for Children* concluded on January 9.

Bindu denies return rumours linked to Hoichoi series

Actress Afsan Ara Bindu has denied rumours suggesting her return to the screen in an upcoming Hoichoi web series alongside long-time co-actor Ziaul Faruq Apurba. Speculation had circulated on social media claiming the popular duo would reunite in the political thriller *Headline*. However, Hoichoi Bangladesh's Country Director Sakib R Khan dismissed the reports, stating that no such decision has been finalised and calling the claims false. Bindu also rejected the rumours, saying she was unaware of any such project and had nothing to comment on. While she acknowledged speaking to a few directors about potential stories, she clarified that *Headline* was not among them. The duo last appeared together on television in 2016's *Trityojon*.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘Pulsiraat’

Prachyanat stages *Pulsiraat*, a gripping adaptation of Ghassan Kanafani's *Men in the Sun*, tracing three Palestinian refugees' perilous journey toward dreams of prosperity in Kuwait. Through suspense, moral reckoning, and human fragility, the play illuminates displacement, hope, and survival in a world fraught with despair and injustice.

DATE: MONDAY | JANUARY 12, 2026
TIME: 6:30PM ONWARDS
VENUE: EXPERIMENTAL THEATRE HALL, BSA



NEWS

Flee Venezuela ‘immediately’

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Lopez, were also not seen at the demos. Trump has signed an executive order protecting US-held money derived from sales of Venezuelan oil, the White House said on Saturday. In an order signed Friday, Trump – who has made clear that tapping Venezuela's vast oil reserves was a key goal in the US ouster of Maduro – is acting “to advance US foreign policy objectives,” the White House said in a fact sheet accompanying the order. In Caracas, anxious relatives

meanwhile camped outside jails, awaiting the promised release of political prisoners. Prisoners' rights groups and the opposition said only 21 people had been released by Saturday evening, including several prominent opposition figures. Rights groups estimate there are 800 to 1,200 political prisoners in Venezuela. Meanwhile, Maduro claimed he was “doing well” in jail, his son Nicolas Maduro Guerra said in a video released Saturday by his party. Despite the shock of his capture

during deadly nighttime raids on January 3, signs emerged Friday of cooperation with Washington after Trump's claim to be “in charge” of the South American country. Rodriguez said Venezuela would deal with the United States through “the diplomatic route,” and Washington said, US envoys visited Caracas on Friday to discuss reopening their embassy. The Venezuelan government did not respond when asked by AFP whether the US officials had met with Rodriguez.

Girl in ICU after stray bullet from Myanmar

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union, said sporadic gunfire had been heard across the border over the past two to three days, but the situation deteriorated from around 11:00pm on Saturday. “People fled their homes along the border due to the sound of gunfire

and explosions,” he said, adding that the firing continued until around 10:00am. Col Mohiuddin Ahmed, Ramu sector commander in Cox's Bazar, told reporters that 53 Rohingyas were detained after they crossed the border. He added that BGB would take all

necessary measures to ensure the safety of Bangladeshis. Rohingya sources at the Teknaf camp said the Arakan Army used drones to bomb a Rohingya armed group camp at Totar Dwip. Due to the attacks, many Rohingyas fled to Bangladesh.

EC restores candidacy of 58 more

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of Morshadul Islam Asif (Faridpur-3), Habiba Begum (Rajshahi-3), Elias Uddin (Sherpur-1), Taslima Begum (Bhola-2), Jaynul Abedin (Rangpur-4), SM Azmal Hossain (Khulna-4), and Shamsul Islam (Mymensingh-9). Those who regained their candidacy include Gono Forum General Secretary Mizanur Rahman (Magura-1) and three Jamaat-e-Islami candidates: Md Abdul Momin (Chandpur-2), Md Moshleh Uddin

Farid (Jashore-2), and Md Mujibur Rahman Azadi (Jamalpur-3). Among other parties, seven candidates from Khelafat Majlis, six from the Jatiya Party, two from Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis, and two from Islami Andolon Bangladesh were cleared to contest. Ten independents also regained candidacy. Hearings are being held daily from 10:00am to 5:00pm at the EC auditorium in Agargaon, Dhaka. A total of 645 appeals were filed

between January 5 and 9 against returning officers' scrutiny decisions. Hearings began Saturday and will continue until January 18. Of 2,568 nomination papers submitted for the 13th general election, returning officers initially rejected 723 and accepted 1,842 during scrutiny. Candidates may withdraw by January 20, while election symbols will be allotted on January 21, marking the start of campaigning.

Ctg microbus driver

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Police were working to identify and arrest those responsible, the OC said. The other victim, a Pathao motorbike driver, was identified as Aijur Rahman, 36, hailing from Bagerhat district. He lived with his wife in the Dup Pole area under Bandar Police Station. Talking to The Daily Star, Bandar Police Station OC Abdur Rahim said a police patrol found Aijur with a stab wound on his chest on the main road near Bandar Dakhil Madrasa

in the Port Colony area of the Port Connecting Road. They took him to CMCH, where the on-duty doctors declared him dead at around 2:00am. The OC said Aijur, in his dying declaration, told police that he was knifed in the Boropole area. After being stabbed, he managed to flee the scene riding his bike, but collapsed in the Port Colony area. The body was sent to CMCH morgue for autopsy, and police started analysing CCTV footage, the police officer added.

Bomb attacks on Thailand petrol stations injure 4

AFP, Bangkok

Assailants detonated bombs at nearly a dozen petrol stations in Thailand's south early yesterday, injuring four people, the army said, the latest attacks in the insurgency-hit region. A low-level conflict since 2004 has killed thousands of people as rebels in the Muslim-majority region bordering Malaysia battle for greater autonomy.

Top criminal's aide behind killing: DB

FROM PAGE 12

operations in Dhaka, Manikganj, Gazipur, Mymensingh, Netrakona, Bhairab and Kishoreganj, leading to the arrests. Police also recovered the motorcycle used in the killing and seized Tk 6,000 in cash from the arrestees, he said. The DB chief said Bilal was the main planner of the murder. “We have also arrested his brother Abdul Kadir, who assisted the accused in fleeing after the incident,” he said, adding that another alleged shooter, Rahim, who remains at large, is also Bilal's brother. Md Reaz was arrested for “assisting the accused in conducting reconnaissance ahead of the murder,” he added.

Asked about the motive behind the killing, Shafiqul Islam said police are probing all possibilities and that the investigation is still at an initial stage. “We have not yet been able to recover the weapons used in the crime. However, we have arrested the accused and questioned them. During preliminary interrogation, they have admitted their involvement in the killing,” he said. He added that police are trying to identify and arrest anyone else involved behind the scenes. “If anyone else played a role in planning or facilitating the crime, they will be brought to justice,” he said, adding that the motive would be clearer after further investigation.

The DB chief further said the accused previously lived in the Mohakhali area and had links with traders or business establishments in the Karwan Bazar area, where Musabbir also had influence. Police are analysing the call detail records (CDR) of the accused through the Criminal Data Management System (CDMS) to gain a clearer picture, he added.

Police are also examining whether Musabbir's political activities played a role in the murder. Shafiqul Islam said Musabbir was an emerging and increasingly popular political leader who had once contested a ward councillor election. “A few days before the killing, he organised a human chain against extortion. Violence broke out during the programme and a case was later filed. These issues are also being examined,” he said.

Addressing reports that Tk 15 lakh was sent from abroad to finance the murder, the additional commissioner said the matter is under investigation. “There are several aspects we are looking into, and this is one of them,” he added. Musabbir, the former general secretary of the Swachchhasebak Dal's Dhaka North City unit, was shot dead on January 7 in an alley near Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue. DB sources, however, said the assailants had planned to kill him a day earlier and had gone to the same spot, but failed to carry out the attack. According to a DB official, Bilal,

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Ibrahim and Reaz took positions in the alley near the crime scene on January 6 with the intention of carrying out the killing. As per the plan, Reaz was supposed to open fire first, but he did not shoot.

The following day, Reaz was dropped from the plan and Zinnat was hired instead. Zinnat, Bilal and Rahim later carried out the killing.

The official further said Zinnat was promised Tk 3 lakh and a motorcycle for his role. “Immediately after the incident, they rode a motorcycle to Mohakhali's Ghoramath area and handed over the arms used in the killing to Bilal,” he said.

DB sources said Bilal and Zinnat spent that night at a hotel in Sector 9 of Uttara. They later bought new mobile phones and SIM cards, replacing their old ones.

The next morning, they parted ways, with Zinnat returning to his village home in Kolombeshwar, Gazipur, and Bilal heading to Satoria in Manikganj. DB officials said the money used to purchase the new phones and SIM cards after the killing was provided by Bilal's younger brother Abdul Kadir.

A total of Tk 1.80 lakh was sent by Kadir to the accused. The primary investigation suggested that Bilal planned to start a family business with the money promised by Jahidul, an associate of a top criminal in Dhaka's underworld whose name police have not yet revealed.

The ICJ found these declarations admissible. Human Rights Watch in a statement said the Myanmar military has long subjected the Rohingya people to various atrocities, including the ongoing crimes against humanity of apartheid, persecution, and deprivation of liberty.

Since late 2023, Rohingya civilians have been caught in the fighting between the junta and the Arakan Army, an ethnic armed group. Both sides have carried out grave abuses, including extrajudicial killings, widespread arson, and unlawful recruitment. “The Myanmar military's vicious cycles of abuses and impunity need to end,” said Shayna Baugnier, Asia researcher at Human Rights Watch. “This should begin with governments holding the junta to its legal obligation to comply with the ICJ-ordered provisional measures.”

ICJ begins hearings on case today

FROM PAGE 2

Myanmar and restoring our rights,” Nu said. On November 11, 2019, The Gambia filed the Rohingya genocide case against Myanmar with the ICJ. In 2017, about 750,000 Rohingya citizens fled a military crackdown in Myanmar and took shelter in Bangladesh. In its application, The Gambia alleged that Myanmar breached its obligations under the Genocide Convention and that it must cease forthwith any internationally wrongful act and perform the obligations of reparation in the interest of the victims of genocidal acts. As a basis for the ICJ's jurisdiction, the applicant invokes Article IX of the Genocide Convention. The application was accompanied by a request for the indication of provisional measures. On January 23, 2020, the ICJ

made an order indicating a number of provisional measures addressed to Myanmar. Following the filing by The Gambia of its memorial, Myanmar raised preliminary objections to the jurisdiction of the ICJ and to the admissibility of the application. By its judgement of July 22, 2022, the ICJ found that it has jurisdiction, on the basis of Article IX of the Genocide Convention, to entertain The Gambia's application. Subsequently, Myanmar filed its counter-memorial. The Gambia and Myanmar then filed a reply and a rejoinder, respectively. Declarations of intervention under Article 63 of the Statute of the ICJ were filed by Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (jointly), the Maldives, Slovenia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Belgium and Ireland.