

'Rakkhosh' releases in Rome, expands international run

Eid-ul-Fitr release *Rakkhosh* has expanded its reach internationally, premiering in Rome, Italy, on April 6. The film received a positive response from audiences on its opening day, according to the production house.

Director Mehedi Hassan Hridoy said the film has already performed well in both multiplexes and single screen theatres across Bangladesh, paving the way for its global rollout. Following its Italy release, the team remains optimistic about its international reception.

The film is now set to release in the United States on April 17, with distribution handled by Galaxy Media. Screenings will take place across multiple cities, with plans also underway for a Canadian release.

Produced by Real Energy Production, the film stars Siam Ahmed and Susmita Chatterjee.



In honour of Nazrul, inspired from Tagore CHHAYANAUT HOSTS 'BOSHONTO'

NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

In the Bangla cultural calendar, spring often arrives not only in colour, but in melody. This season, that arrival takes shape in *Boshonto*, a lyrical play dedicated to poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, while drawing from the timeless world of Rabindranath Tagore.

Organised by the Dhaka metropolitan branch of Jatiya Rabindra Sangeet Sammilan Parishad, the production was staged on April 7 at 6:30 pm at Chhayanaut Sanskriti-Bhaban in Dhanmondi.

At its heart, *Boshonto* appears to be more than a seasonal musical. It is built on an evocative dramatic premise: in a kingdom burdened by emptiness and anxiety, the poet becomes the one who restores feeling, colour and liveliness. Spring is not treated merely as a backdrop, but as a living force — embodied through poetry, music, dance and a cast of floral characters who together transform the stage into a garden.

The production tributes Tagore's dedication of the play to Nazrul during the latter's imprisonment, creating a bridge between two towering poetic spirits of Bengal. In that sense, *Boshonto* becomes both



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

homage and celebration — one poet remembered through the artistic universe of another.

The production brings together a wide range of characters drawn from nature: Bonobhumi, Amrakunjo, Korobi, Bokul, Dipshikha, Madhabi, Malati, Shalbithika, Nodi, Dokhin Hawa, Rituraj, Jhumkolota, Akash, Dhutura, and others. Rather than appearing as fixed dramatic roles, they seem to function as seasonal presences — each helping shape the emotional texture of the play.

The song selection reflected the

mood of renewal and blossoming, with familiar Rabindra Sangeet pieces on spring, longing, beauty and movement woven into the production alongside ensemble dance performances. Students and teachers performed together, with participants including Lily Islam, Suma Ray, Sharmin Sathi Islam, Sharmila Bandyopadhyay, Tania Mannan and others.

Boshonto is a play that takes audiences back to their roots. In a land of six seasons, spring is often seen as their king — a time when branches are colourful in new leaves and nature begins to dress with renewed life. As the season prepares to welcome Pohela Boishakh, *Boshonto* evokes a sense of rebirth and hope. This is not the story of a single protagonist, but an ensemble offering in which flowers, wind, sky, river and human emotion share the same stage. The production ultimately imagines spring as a state of awakening.

For audiences who return to Tagore every spring, *Boshonto* will likely offer something familiar and warm. And for those drawn to productions that mix literature, music and dance, it may be one of those evenings where the spirit of the season feels most alive under stage lights.

Actors Equity Bangladesh holds memorial for Shams Suman

Actors Equity Bangladesh has announced a memorial event to honour National Film Award-winning actor Shams Suman, whose death last month left a deep impact on the country's cultural community.

The programme, titled *Shams Suman... Smritite Amlan*, is scheduled to take place today (April 9) at 6 pm at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy in Dhaka.

In a statement, the organisation said the event honours Suman, a vice-president of its executive committee and a respected colleague. Actors, admirers, and well-wishers are invited to attend.

Suman passed away on March 17 after a long career in theatre, television, and film.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?

'Khona'

Bot Tala's *Khona*, a seminal exploration of gender, class, and rural wisdom, reaches its 100th performance at the Central Shaheed Minar. Through song, ritual, and evocative storytelling, the production fuses history with contemporary relevance, inviting audiences into a rich, immersive reflection on Bangladesh's social and cultural heritage.

DATE: FRIDAY-SATURDAY | APRIL 10-11, 2026
TIME: 7 PM ONWARDS
VENUE: CENTRAL SHAHEED MINAR



NEWS

Consumers weighed down by runaway LPG prices

FROM PAGE 1
"Customers know prices have gone up by Tk 300, but they don't understand why — it's creating tension."

Sales have dropped as many are switching to electric or wood-fired stoves, he said.

Operating under official pricing has become nearly impossible, said a trader in Kochukhet, who bought cylinders from dealers at around Tk 1,850.

"In this area, many customers are from law enforcement or administration, so charging higher prices is difficult. Honestly, I feel like shutting down for a few days just to avoid the constant pressure," he said.

Retailers in Mirpur's Kafur area echoed similar concerns.

The official rate does not reflect actual costs, said Nurun Nabi, manager of a dealership.

"On paper, we are supposed to sell at Tk 1,633 or Tk 1,728 depending on the batch. But in reality, we procure at around Tk 1,775. With transport costs of about Tk 30 per cylinder and operational expenses, selling at the fixed rate is not viable."

He insisted there is no shortage in supply.

"Gas is available in abundance. Any quantity can be supplied. The issue is pricing, not availability," he added.

Across outlets, prices differed by brand: Jamuna cylinders were selling at around Tk 1,900; Fresh, Omera and Bashundhara at Tk 2,000; and Beximco as high as Tk 2,100.

The private operators have imported about 1.86 lakh tonnes of LPG to supply in April while the monthly demand is around 1.5 lakh tonnes, according to data from the National Board of Revenue.

For low-income families, the price surge is forcing a shift back to traditional fuels.

Aklima Begum, a resident of the Korail slum in Banani, said her five-member family now relies more on wood-fired cooking.

"We use LPG only when we need to cook quickly in the morning. The rest of the time, we use a clay stove," she said.

A cylinder lasts the household about two months, while wood costs about Tk 800 per month.

"Earlier, we bought a cylinder for Tk 1,680. If it goes to Tk 2,000, we

simply cannot afford regular use. We are already struggling to manage expenses with a monthly income of Tk 18,000 to Tk 20,000."

Increased reliance on firewood has its own costs: it takes more time, produces smoke and causes eye irritation.

"But what choice do we have?" she said.

Firewood is currently selling at around Tk 20-25 per kg in local markets.

The impact is also severe on small businesses dependent on LPG.

Fuel costs are eating into already thin margins, said Dulal Hossain, who runs a tea stall in Mirpur-13.

He sells tea for Tk 5 to Tk 8. If gas prices go up, he has to raise prices to Tk 10 to Tk 12.

"Customers won't accept it," he said.

A cylinder lasts him less than a week despite operating 12 hours a day.

"With Tk 300 extra per cylinder, it's becoming difficult to survive," he added.

At a roadside eatery in Bhasantek, the owner said monthly fuel costs have surged beyond staff wages.

The eatery's monthly losses due to higher fuel costs exceed Tk 20,000. Daily fuel expenses are around Tk 3,000, which is more than the staff salaries.

But raising food prices is not an option.

"If we increase prices, customers leave. But without increasing, we incur losses," he said.

The latest price hike by BERC raised the cost of a 12kg cylinder by Tk 387 to Tk 1,728, one of the steepest increases since the regulator began monthly adjustments in April 2021.

The hike followed a nearly 45 percent surge in global LPG benchmark prices, along with higher freight and shipment costs linked to disruptions amid the ongoing US-Israel war on Iran.

However, industry players argue that the regulator's pricing does not reflect actual import costs.

Import premiums, estimated by BERC at \$120 per tonne, have surged to between \$300 and \$350, according to operators.

Before the prices were set last

week, some operators placed a note of dissent saying that the prices do not reflect the actual cost of import.

Following it, the BERC held another meeting with the operators.

BERC Chairman Jalal Ahmed yesterday told The Daily Star that the regulator does not consider forward-looking freight costs while setting LPG prices, citing a lack of verifiable data from traders.

"We do not fix prices based on projected freight costs. Traders claim they are unable to book new cargo due to higher freight charges, but without concrete documents, we cannot take a forward-looking approach."

He also questioned the credibility of the cost data submitted by operators with the note of dissent.

"They claimed freight costs of around \$350, but the documents showed about \$150, which was later manually altered. Without clear and reliable information, it is very difficult to make decisions."

The regulator is open to revisiting prices more frequently if justified by evidence.

"We have told traders that prices can be reviewed every 10 days if needed. If actual cargo arrives and verified freight costs — say \$150 — are established, adjustments can be made within five days."

No final decision has been taken yet, he said, adding that the issue will be discussed again early next week.

If the war situation eases, freight costs may also decline.

Adherence to the BERC's fixed price is mandatory, and the regulator will seek stronger monitoring through district administrations, Ahmed added.

In a statement yesterday, LPG Operators' Association of Bangladesh acknowledged reports that LPG is being sold at prices above the government-fixed rates in various parts of the country.

It said bottling companies are supplying cylinders at regulated rates and urged distributors and retailers to comply.

The Department of National Consumer Rights Protection and deputy commissioners have already been instructed to take action against irregularities, according to the statement.

World breathes a sigh of relief

FROM PAGE 1
"Bangladesh hopes that all parties involved will respect the ceasefire and utilise this opportunity constructively to work towards a durable and sustainable resolution and restore lasting peace and stability across the region," said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a statement yesterday.

"Bangladesh reiterates that all disputes can and should be resolved peacefully through dialogue and diplomacy."

Former chief adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus also hailed the truce, urging world leaders to take "firm and effective measures to uphold international law".

"This is not merely a regional crisis; it is a moral challenge for all humankind... Now, more than ever, the world must come together... This is not merely about geopolitics or power; it is about the future of human civilisation. We must choose peace over war, dialogue over attacks, and unity over division," he said in a statement.

China welcomed the ceasefire, underlining its role in encouraging a deal between the US and Iran to pause hostilities.

Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning told a news conference that Foreign Minister Wang Yi had held 26 calls with counterparts from warring countries while Beijing's Middle East envoy had "shuttled across" the war-torn region.

Beijing would "continue to make efforts to ease the situation and achieve a complete end to the war".

US President Donald Trump, who announced the truce, said he believed China helped push Iran into negotiating the ceasefire.

Russia said the approach of a "one-track, aggressive, unprovoked attack" against Iran suffered a "crushing defeat".

Former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and the deputy chair of Russia's Security Council said the ceasefire showed that common sense has prevailed, but that "there'll be no cheap oil" going forward.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on X that he supports Trump's decision to suspend strikes on Iran, and the "US effort to ensure that Iran no longer poses a nuclear, missile and terror threat to America, Israel, Iran's Arab neighbours and the world".

Netanyahu said, however, that the ceasefire does "not include Lebanon", where Israeli forces have launched a ground invasion and are fighting with the Iran-aligned Hezbollah.

Lebanese President Joseph Aoun welcomed the truce, adding that Beirut "continued efforts to ensure that the regional peace includes Lebanon in a stable and lasting manner."

Pakistan, which led efforts to reach the ceasefire, was optimistic that this was the turning point needed in the war.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen hailed the "much-needed de-escalation."

Urging parties to uphold truce terms to "achieve sustainable peace in the region", EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas called the deal "a step back from the brink after weeks of escalation".

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said, "The Spanish government will not applaud those who set the world on fire just because they turn up with a bucket."

Sanchez said ceasefires were always welcome news, but added that "momentary relief must not make us forget the chaos, the destruction and the lives lost" while calling for "diplomacy, international law and PEACE" to prevail.

India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that it welcomed the ceasefire and expected that unimpeded freedom of navigation and global flow of commerce would prevail through the Strait of Hormuz.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the truce "will bring a moment of relief to the region and the world" as he headed to the region.

French President Emmanuel Macron called the ceasefire "a very good thing" and that Paris hoped it "will be fully respected throughout the region" and that it "fully includes Lebanon".

Germany's Chancellor Friedrich Merz urged a "durable end to the war in the next days," adding "this can only be achieved by diplomacy."

Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary Minoru Kihara told reporters that Tokyo sees the development as a "positive move" and it awaits a "final agreement".

Meanwhile, the Saudi foreign ministry said it hoped the truce "will represent an opportunity to achieve a comprehensive and sustainable de-escalation" and enhance the security of the region.

Qatar's foreign ministry said the truce was "an initial step toward de-escalation" and urged Iran "to immediately cease all hostile acts and practices that undermine regional stability."

United Arab Emirates presidential adviser Anwar Gargash said in a post on X that "The UAE emerged victorious from a war we sincerely sought to avoid."

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Minister for Foreign Affairs Penny Wong issued a joint statement welcoming the news and expressing their hopes that the deal will lead to a long-lasting resolution.

Ukraine welcomed the ceasefire, with Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha calling for similar "decisiveness" by Washington in stopping Russia's war on his country.

BSF shoots Bangladeshi

FROM PAGE 12
Bangladeshi crossed the zero-line late at night and entered about 500 yards inside Indian territory. They were attempting to cut the barbed wire fence. At that time, members of the Satgram camp of India's 156 BSF Battalion, who were on patrol, fired one round into the air to disperse the trespassers.

As they did not retreat, BSF members opened fire on them. A man was shot and fell to the ground, while the others fled, he said.

Later, BSF members rescued the injured Bangladeshi and took him to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead, Lt Col Fazle Munim added.

The commanding officer said, "We have spoken with the BSF. It has been confirmed that one Bangladeshi was killed in the firing. The body is currently at a hospital in India."

A flag meeting between BGB and BSF officials was underway when the report was filed at 7:00pm yesterday regarding the return of Ali Hossain's body.

Earlier on Monday, a Bangladeshi man was injured by rubber bullets fired by the BSF after he "mistakenly" entered into Indian territory while cutting grass for cattle along with the Rahmatpur Gatiar Vita area under Patgram upazila.

Following that incident, locals became agitated and detained an Indian citizen along with his cattle, bringing them into Bangladesh.

Hours later, the Indian citizen and his cattle were handed back to the BSF through a flag meeting, where BGB lodged a strong protest over the shooting.