



Stars shine at Meril-Prothom Alo awards

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Stars gathered at the Bangladesh-China Friendship International Conference Centre yesterday evening for the 27th Meril-Prothom Alo Awards 2025, coming together to celebrate excellence in film, television and music.

Dressed in elegant outfits, stars shared moments of celebration while honouring achievements across film, television and music.

The programme began at 6 pm with a red-carpet reception that welcomed icons like Dilara Zaman, Alamgir, Runa Laila, Afzal Hossain, Zahid Hasan, Afsana Mimi, Jaya Ahsan, Nasir Uddin Khan, Pori Moni, Mehazabien Chowdhury, Zakia Bari Mamo, Sadia Ayman, among others, alongside numerous actors, directors and cultural personalities.

Popular duo Afran Nisho and Mehazabien Chowdhury hosted the programme, entertaining guests with their lively chemistry and humour throughout the evening.

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The star-studded evening ended with all the winners posing for a photo on the stage during Meril-Prothom Alo Awards 2025 at Bangladesh-China Friendship Conference Centre in the capital.

PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

'BNP moving towards one-party rule'

Says Shafiqur at Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Shafiqur Rahman yesterday accused the BNP of breaking its promises and moving towards one-party rule after assuming power.

"Fascists created narratives to divide the nation. And before the election, you [BNP] said you would form a government inclusive of all. What are you doing now?" he said, adding that the party is "trying to monopolise control of the country".

Shafiqur, who is also the leader of the opposition in parliament, was speaking as the chief guest of a rally in the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan, demanding implementation of the referendum verdict. The programme was organised by Bangladesh Khelafat Majlis and presided over by its Ameer Mamunul Haque.

The Jamaat chief said two slogans of the July movement – "We want justice" and "The country does not belong to anyone's father" – reflected the people's aspirations.

"This country belongs to the people, not to any individual."

He alleged that the BNP's "betrayal" forced the I-Party Alliance to take to the streets. Referring to the violence of October 28, 2006, he said, "Through that bloodshed,

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Tokyo govt workers swap suits for shorts to save on AC bills

AFP, Tokyo

Tokyo's metropolitan government is encouraging staff to wear shorts to work to cut reliance on air conditioning, an official said yesterday, as concerns grow over high energy costs linked to the Middle East War.

The loosened dress code is part of an upgraded version of "Cool Biz" – an energy-saving initiative started by Japan's environment ministry in 2005 that encouraged bureaucrats to ditch ties and jackets in summer, and saw some turn up to work in Okinawan-style collared t-shirts.

An energy crunch threatened by the Middle East war is "one of the factors" that prompted the Japanese capital to take it up a notch and start allowing its workers to don shorts this month, a Tokyo official who declined to be named told AFP.

Already, some male workers in the Tokyo government office can be seen sporting shorts and T-shirts, local media footage showed earlier this week.

Tokyo governor Yuriko Koike, who herself started the Cool Biz campaign as environmental minister two decades ago, is all in.

This summer, "we encourage 'cool' attire that prioritises comfort, including polo shirts, T-shirts and sneakers and – depending on job responsibilities – shorts," she told reporters earlier this month, citing "a severe outlook for the supply and demand of electricity".

The new Cool Biz initiative also includes a greater shift toward teleworking and starting work early, Koike added.



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Stay in line, don't be provoked

JCD asks unit leaders

SAJJAD HOSSAIN

The Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal, a pro-BNP student body, has instructed its grassroots leaders and activists to avoid disorder, remain alert to provocation, and help maintain a peaceful atmosphere on university campuses amid growing tensions with rival student groups.

The directive was issued at an emergency meeting of the BNP's affiliate organisation at Dhaka University, where leaders from more than 21 public university units joined to discuss current affairs.

Insiders said the central leadership asked campus units not to act emotionally or overreact to political provocation, warning that such conduct could give rivals an opportunity to criticise the organisation and damage its public image.

The meeting was attended by Chhatra Dal President Rakibul Islam Rakib and General Secretary Nasir Uddin Nasir, among others.

According to leaders present at the meeting, the organisation believes rival student groups are trying

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Govt to establish 170 urban health centres in Dhaka, Ctg

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government plans to set up at least one Urban Primary Health and Nutrition Centre in every ward of Dhaka North, Dhaka South, and Chattogram city corporations for residents deprived of care due to fragmented delivery of services.

It has chalked up a Tk 1,157 crore project titled "Expanding Access to Integrated Health Care for Urban Population", under which a total of 170 centres are expected to be established.

A Planning Commission official told The Daily Star that the proposal is likely to be placed at this week's ECNEC meeting for approval.

According to the proposal, the centres will be linked under a hub-and-spoke model – a centralised system where services flow from a "hub" to peripheral "spokes" to improve efficiency and reduce costs.

A senior Planning Commission official said the government expects the World Bank to provide over Tk 900 crore in loan assistance, along with technical support, for the planned project.

Discussions between the World Bank and the Economic

Relations Division have already been finalised. Once approved by ECNEC, the loan proposal will be placed before the World Bank board for endorsement.

Govt to seek Tk 900cr WB loan for Tk 1,157cr project

80% of medicines will be free of cost at the centres

Doctors, other workers will be deployed in 2 shifts

Government Division, and referral facilities to ensure quality primary healthcare. Capacity building, supply of medicines, medical equipment, and logistics will be strengthened.

All centres will be integrated into the District Health Information Software (DHIS 2) platform to ensure real-time data entry and access.

The document notes Bangladesh's rapid urban growth, with the urban population rising from 27 percent in 2011 to over 40 percent in 2023. By 2030, the figure is projected to reach 86.5 million, and by 2050, more than 100 million.

Dhaka alone is expected to grow from 18.9 million people in 2011 to 28 million by 2030. The megacity currently accounts for 44.26 percent of the country's urban population and contributes 36 percent to national GDP.

Urban primary healthcare in Bangladesh remains fragmented, with the health and family welfare ministry overseeing rural areas while urban centres fall under the local government, rural development and cooperatives ministry.

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Jamaat MP's car vandalised in Netrokona

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrokona

Netrokona-5 MP Masum Mostafa's vehicle was vandalised at a filling station in Purbadhala upazila of Netrokona yesterday.

The incident occurred after sunset when the lawmaker, who is also a leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami, was offering Maghrib prayers at a mosque next to Giripath Filling Station in Atkapara.

Masum alleged that local BNP activists targeted him and the upazila Jamaat Nayeb-e-Ameer out of political rivalry.

He said he had gone to the filling station after inaugurating a madrasa and entered the mosque for Maghrib prayers. While praying, he heard shouting and the sound of his vehicle being vandalised.

"The worshippers locked the mosque doors and protected me. Later, after a call to 999, police and army personnel arrived and rescued us. Even as a member of parliament, I do not have security – so one can imagine the condition of ordinary citizens," he said.

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India denounces 'hellhole' remark shared by Trump

AFP, Washington

India has criticised as inappropriate a post by US President Donald Trump that called the South Asian country a "hellhole".

The comments come ahead of a planned visit next month to India by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who would seek to turn the page on recent tensions between the normally friendly powers.

Trump late Wednesday posted on social media a screed apparently written by someone else denouncing the US constitutional right to citizenship for everyone born in the country.

The post accused Indian immigrants in the tech industry of not hiring white native-born Americans and inaccurately alleged that Indian immigrants lack English proficiency.

"A baby here becomes an instant citizen, and then they bring the entire family in from China or India or some other hellhole on the planet," the post said.

Indian foreign ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal responded that the remarks were "obviously uninformed, inappropriate and in poor taste."

"They certainly do not reflect the reality of the India-US relationship, which has long been based on mutual respect and shared interests."

Congressman Ami Bera, a Democrat who is the children of Indian immigrants, called the post by Trump "offensive, ignorant and beneath the dignity of the office he holds."

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Roadside vendors and hawkers illegally occupy a footpath on Mirpur Road near the New Market area of the capital. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

BNP men assault female teacher, principal inside Rajshahi college

Teacher slaps BNP man; party expels a leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

A female teacher was beaten with a sandal after a group of local BNP leaders and activists entered Daokandi Government College in Rajshahi's Durgapur and attacked teachers during an examination on Thursday.

The incident occurred around noon when second-year degree examinations were underway. Section 144 had been imposed within and around 100 yards of the exam centre, with police deployed since morning.

A video circulating on social media shows BNP activist Shahad Ali hitting teacher Aleya Khatun Hira with a sandal inside the principal's room after she slapped him for trying to stop her from recording footage.

College sources identified the attackers as local BNP men Akbar Ali, Afaz Ali, and Shahad.

According to them, seven to eight men entered the principal's room around

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