

## 'Roid' set to release in Australia and New Zealand

Bangladeshi film *Roid* has secured theatrical distribution in Australia and New Zealand following its premiere at the International Film Festival Rotterdam. According to Variety, the film will be released across both territories in early June through Screenxcope in partnership with DeshiEvents.

Directed by Mejbaur Rahman Sumon, *Roid* premiered in Rotterdam's Tiger Competition section and has also been selected for the Seattle International Film Festival. The film marks Sumon's follow-up to *Hawa*, Bangladesh's 2022 Oscar submission.

Set in rural Bangladesh before the digital era, the story follows a struggling farmer and his volatile relationship with his wife. The cast includes Nazifa Tushi and Mostafizur Noor Imran in lead roles.

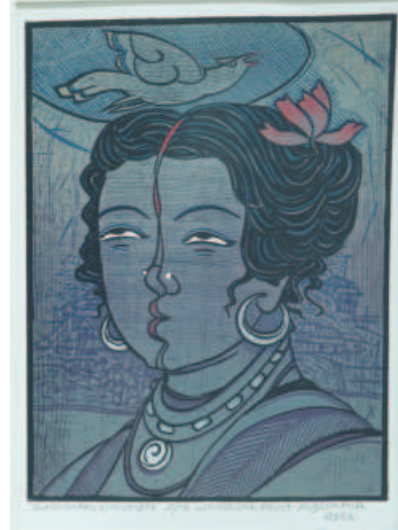


## 14th Kibria Printmaking Fair: Celebrating a distinct artistic tradition

NAVEEN ISLAM TOREE

Printmaking has often remained one of the lesser-explored forms within Bangladesh's art scene – admired within artistic circles, yet less familiar to wider audiences than painting or sculpture. Over the past few weeks, however, Kala Kendra in Lalmatia has turned renewed attention toward the medium through its month-long printmaking festival, drawing visitors into a world of layered textures, memory, and experimentation.

One of the festival's major highlights, the 14th Kibria Printmaking Fair, concluded on May 9. Held on the third floor of Kala Kendra, the fair brought together printmaking studios and institutions



PHOTOS: ABRAR FAIYAZ NILOY

from across the country alongside works by pioneering late artists Safiuddin Ahmed and Mohammad Kibria.

Over the years, the fair has grown into an important platform within Bangladesh's art scene, helping introduce printmaking to wider audiences while creating opportunities for emerging artists and collectors alike.

The organisers said the fair aims to make printmaking more accessible to the public and encourage greater engagement with the medium beyond conventional gallery spaces. The availability of artworks at comparatively affordable prices has also helped attract younger and middle-class collectors.

The fair is part of a larger month-long printmaking festival that began

on May 1 and will continue until May 23 at Kala Kendra's new premises in Lalmatia D Block. The exhibitions remain open daily from 4:00pm to 8:00pm.

The festival was inaugurated by two pioneering figures of Bangladeshi printmaking, artist Rafiqun Nabi and artist Monirul Islam. Professor Nazrul Islam, artist Abul Barq Alvi, and artist Fareha Zeba also addressed the opening ceremony, while artist Wakilur Rahman hosted the event.

One of the festival's main attractions is the exhibition titled *Pioneers of Printmaking*, currently being held on the first floor of Kala Kendra. The exhibition showcases early works by Safiuddin Ahmed, Mohammad Kibria, Rafiqun Nabi, and Monirul Islam – artists who played a crucial role in

establishing printmaking as a distinct artistic language in Bangladesh.

The fair presents a wide range of approaches to printmaking, from deeply personal reflections to works rooted in everyday life and memory. Many of the displayed works belong to the formative years of the artists' careers, offering viewers a glimpse into the evolution of modern printmaking practices in the country. Rafiqun Nabi's works, in particular, stand out for their emotionally charged visual language. Some pieces focus on human figures and urban moments through layered textures and muted colours, while others experiment with bold graphic forms and striking contrasts.

Alongside the exhibitions, the festival is also hosting workshops and artist talks focused on printmaking practices, creating a learning space for aspiring and emerging artists.

The final segment of the festival, *Contemporary Printmaking Exhibition*, will begin on May 12 and continue until May 23. Bringing together works by both emerging and senior artists; the exhibition is expected to highlight the diversity and evolving language of contemporary printmaking in Bangladesh.



## Four Bangladeshi films join Cannes Docs 2026

Four Bangladeshi documentary film projects have been selected for Cannes Docs 2026, a major international platform for documentary filmmakers, producers, broadcasters, and distributors.

The selected projects are *Opekha* by Kazi Arefin Ahmed, *Blue Collars from the Frontline* by Citto Aanond (Sumaiya Binte Selim), *In Search of Her* produced by S M Kamrul Ahsan, and *My Cousin* by Sumon Delwar. Chosen through a national open call and jury evaluation process, the projects were recognised for their artistic merit and global potential.

## 'Silver Sadia' to premiere as Bangladesh's first micro-drama series

Bangladesh's first micro-drama series, *Silver Sadia*, is set to premiere on May 15 on Cinemawala's Facebook page. Directed by Miraj Hossain, the 15-episode series features three-minute vertical-format episodes designed for mobile viewing.

The story follows Sadia, a madrasa student from a lower middle-class family who secretly pursues gaming and livestreaming on YouTube with support from her mother, leading to conflict when her father learns the truth. Starring Sadia Ayman in the lead role, the cast also includes Allen Shubhro, Farzana Chobi, Kamruzzaman Topu, and Rafsan The Choto Bhai in a special appearance.



## NEWS

### Punish those who attacked The Daily Star, Prothom Alo

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not only tied journalists' hands but also silenced their voices."

Akon praised Mahfuz Anam's honesty and courage for acknowledging that news publishing had at times been influenced by intelligence agencies.

Freedom fighter Nurul Alam Farid said those who attacked The Daily Star while wearing panjabis and prayer caps were people who never accepted Bangladesh's independence.

He alleged that some politicians and bureaucrats patronise journalists for personal interests.

Farid, also editor of Dainik Biplobi Bangladesh, said yellow journalism had deprived genuine journalists of proper recognition.

Barishal City Jamaat-e-Islami Nayeb e-Ameer Professor Mahmud Hussain Dulal demanded the identification and punishment of those responsible for attacking and setting fire to The Daily Star, while Ebaudul Haque Chan, president of the Barishal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, urged the newspaper to publish more reports on the problems and potential of Barishal division.

Cultural activist Pankaj Roy Choudhury called for initiatives to improve children's healthcare services and demanded punishment for those responsible for recent child deaths caused by measles.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (Revenue) Md Obaidullah described The Daily Star and Prothom Alo as

examples of ethical journalism.

Addressing the guests, The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam said the future of a newspaper ultimately depends on the trust of its readers.

"If people do not believe in us, do not have faith in us, and do not trust our journalism, they will stop reading The Daily Star. And when people stop reading a newspaper, it ceases to exist. Therefore, the greatest credit for our 35-year journey, especially for our revival after such an attack, belongs to our readers."

He said independent journalism is necessary not only for journalists but also for society, the state, businesses, educational institutions, NGOs, and citizens in general.

"But the most curious thing is that those who need it the most often try to ignore, restrict, or even destroy it – and that is the government."

"After coming to power, governments need to know how people view their actions and whether they are fulfilling public expectations.... It is not the bureaucracy, intelligence agencies, or ruling party leaders who provide that information. Only independent, honest, and dedicated journalists can do that."

Democratic governments and independent journalism are deeply interconnected, he said, adding that The Daily Star had held every government accountable.

"When the BNP was in power,

we practised what we call 'speaking truth to power'. If you examine our role from 1991 to 1996, from 1996 to 2001, and up to the present day, we are proud of our role, [even] during the July movement."

"Every day we carried front-page reports on the deaths. We ourselves were shocked to publish headlines reporting 20 deaths, 35 deaths, 40 deaths, and at one point as many as 64 killings in a single day due to police firing."

The editor also acknowledged that the newspaper had not been able to give Barishal adequate coverage. "We will place greater emphasis on journalism in different parts of the country, especially historically important regions like Barishal. We will highlight your hopes, aspirations, and problems."

The Barishal event was part of The Daily Star's divisional-level celebrations marking its 35th anniversary, following similar programmes in Chattogram and Khulna.

Among others who spoke at the event were Barishal district Islami Andolon Bangladesh Ameer Sirajul Islam; Barishal's Shochetan Nagorak Committee President Tunu Rani Karmakar; Barishal Police Commissioner Md Sharfuddin; Barishal Press Club President Aminul Islam Khasru; Jhalakathi Press Club President Akkas Shikder; Patuakhali Press Club President Md Jakir Hossain; and political leaders from different parties.

### Govt to amend laws

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against listed terrorists, extortionists and drug traffickers were continuing.

Urging the force to become a modern and public-friendly institution, the minister said the police must play an uncompromising role in protecting fundamental rights and establishing the rule of law.

To combat technology-based crimes, cybercrime, and cross-border offences, the government plans to send teams from the CID, SB, RAB, and Financial Intelligence abroad for advanced training. Salahuddin emphasized the

need to strengthen the relationship between the police and the public to control crime. He pointed out that public trust must be earned through community policing, bit policing, and "Open House Day" activities.

Prime Minister Tarique Rahman attended the event as chief guest; Senior Secretary of the Home Ministry Manzur Morshed Chowdhury spoke at the event as a special guest. IGP Md Ali Hossain Fakir delivered the welcome speech and Additional IGP (Crime and Operations) Khondoker Rafiqul Islam gave the vote of thanks.

### Mob beats three dead in Kaliakair

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rescued the three critically injured men before taking them to Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmad Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared them dead, he said.

Asaduzzaman, an official of the hospital's emergency department, said the three were brought dead to the hospital.

A case was filed with Kaliakair Police Station, SI Yusuf, investigation officer of the case, told this correspondent.

### BNP moves to counter its portrayal

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asking them to prepare detailed month-long schedules.

"There is ongoing propaganda claiming the BNP does not want to implement the July Charter. The prime minister has asked us to present the facts directly to the public," he said.

The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami-led 11-party alliance, both inside and outside parliament, has been critical of the BNP-led government, describing the party as "anti-July Charter" for not yet taking the initiative to convene the Constitution Reform Commission in line with the charter implementation order. The alliance has also blamed the government for failing to curb the measles outbreak.

The alliance took to the streets in late April and has announced divisional rallies beginning on May 16.

BNP leaders expressed concern that opposition parties are attempting to mislead the public through these repeated allegations. The party has therefore decided to explain the government's position directly to the people.

Senior leaders will monitor the programmes and participate in selected events. Units that fail to conduct effective activities may be asked to provide explanations.

Earlier on Saturday, BNP Chairperson and Prime Minister Tarique Rahman met with grassroots leaders and instructed them to engage with the public, explain the government's actions, clarify its decisions, and correct false information.

Regarding the July Charter issue, senior leaders said party leaders and activists should convey to the public that the BNP is committed to

implementing the charter, which was signed with notes of dissent from different parties.

On the measles situation, BNP sources said opposition parties have falsely claimed that the government failed to manage the outbreak. In reality, vaccination coverage had declined during the previous administration. The last special measles vaccination campaign was held in December 2020, and a follow-up programme scheduled for 2024 was not carried out.

After assuming office, the BNP-led government moved quickly to secure vaccine supplies, and party leaders said sufficient doses are now in stock and being administered to children.

A district BNP president, seeking anonymity, said, "We have identified areas where Jamaat has been campaigning, and we plan to visit those places to clarify our position."

### Jamaat MP asks finance ministry not to merge SIBL

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without consulting its "genuine entrepreneurs and shareholders" has caused thousands of small investors to suffer heavy losses.

He insisted the bank could regain confidence if returned to its "genuine entrepreneurs and shareholders" with credible investment and restructuring of the board.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Zainul

stressed he had no ownership ties to SIBL, though he had worked there from its early years until retiring in January 2026 as a vice president.

He said several former sponsors and directors remain capable of contributing to the bank's management and are seeking support from potential investors.

Earlier in February, another Jamaat MP, Mir Ahmad Bin Quasem

Arman, expressed interest in bringing fresh investment into the troubled mobile financial services provider Nagad, now under an administrator appointed by the BB.

On February 8, three days before the 13th parliamentary election, he wrote to the BB governor, requesting permission to conduct an audit to assess the company's position ahead of any potential investment.

### British-Bangladeshis shine in London

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winning 33 of the 45 council seats.

Labour candidate Forhad Hussain won the Newham borough's mayoral contest with 25,538 votes, ahead of challenger Mehmood Mirza from Newham Independents Party. His victory marked a significant moment for British Bangladeshis within mainstream British politics.

Forhad rose through Labour's traditional structures, from councillor to cabinet member and now mayor.

In one of Europe's most ethnically diverse boroughs, Forhad presented himself as a consensus builder.

For many younger British Bangladeshis, Forhad's election

symbolised something broader than ethnic representation alone: acceptance into the political mainstream of British civic life.

While Tower Hamlets and Newham drew most of the headlines, the Bangladeshis political presence was equally visible in Redbridge and Barking & Dagenham.

Together, the four East London boroughs now represent one of the most concentrated centres of Bangladeshi political representation anywhere outside Bangladesh itself.

The elections exposed a dramatic fragmentation of British politics. Reform UK gained roughly 1,450 council seats and took control of 14 councils across England. Labour,

meanwhile, lost nearly 1,500 councillors and control of dozens of local authorities, while the Greens and Liberal Democrats also made significant gains.

Yet, East London's Bangladeshi-majority areas revealed a somewhat different political mood. Here, elections were fought less on national identity wars and more on schools, council housing, welfare support, youth services, and the rising cost of living.

The message from these elections was not simply that diaspora communities are participating in British politics.

It is that they are increasingly shaping it.