

KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM'S 127TH BIRTH ANNIVERSARY

Nazrul cannot be contained within a singular frame

DOWEL BISWAS

Nearly 50 years have passed since the death of Kazi Nazrul Islam, born on May 24, 1899, whose 127th birth anniversary is being marked today, and between his birth and death lies a body of work that has never behaved like still literature.

Nazrul's "Rebel Poet" identity is too constrained to limit him within a single frame. Nazrul's poetry moves, shifts beyond even its historical significance. They take rebirth, enter speech, then public conscience, and Nazrul returns as chant—becoming the primary language of people's struggle for rights, carrying an unyielding spirit in every movement when people most need him.

Whenever I, along with my friends, went to protest streets—past Shahbagh, quota reform marches, road safety demonstrations, and earlier anti-authoritarian mobilisations and even now when as national being we voice our dissent—his lines arrived as declarations of our deepest strength, as a call for justice, equality, and a human resilience that refuses to be subdued. For Bengalis, Nazrul is not only a poet; he exists in constant form—as voice, force, and presence whenever power feels absolute.

Bolo bir—

Bolo unnoto momo shir!

(Speak, O hero—

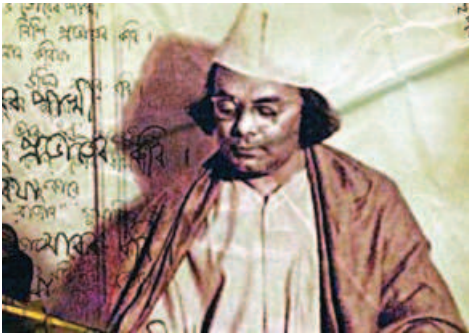
lift my head high!)

Then comes *Bidrohi*—not as a poem we recite fully, but as fragments that survive in memory and pressure.

Moha bidrohi rana klanto, ami

shei din hobo shanto—

In this line, the meaning is not only rebellion, but



exhaustion turned into refusal. It is a declaration that violence and oppression have to disappear before peace can even be imagined. That is why the lines never stay inside literature. They spill into speech and movement.

Ami chiro-bidrohi bir—

Bishwo charaye uthiyachi eka chiro-unnoto shir!

These lines are nationally memorised and chanted, not because he is simply a national poet, but because he understood what the Bengali human spirit should sound like when it refuses submission.

This is where Nazrul stops functioning as author and begins functioning as shared vocal and national conscience infrastructure. He is who we go to every time we face atrocity, silence, or pressure from power, and we each become fragmented extensions of that same rebellious voice.

A second line appears, more forceful in form and usage, as if it refuses silence:

Karar oi

louho kopat,

bhenge fel kor

re lopat

(Break the

iron gates of prison, tear them apart)

A strange thing happens when Nazrul reappears in uprisings and movements. He is so blended into the collective psyche that he does not feel distant, or even only literary.

Even when partially remembered, it holds shape:

Bhangar gaan gao, bhangar gaan

(Sing the song of breaking)

In protest environments, when hundreds of protesters chant his poetry as slogans, as collective calls, as rights, one voice begins a line, another completes what is missing, a third intensifies rhythm. Meaning is not transmitted; it is reconstructed under pressure.

This is why Nazrul does not appear in these spaces as a literary reference. He appears as something closer to shared script.

The circulation of his work in Bengal has always carried instability. During colonial rule, his writing travelled through periodicals, theatre, political gatherings, and informal recitation networks. Suppression did not stop circulation; it displaced it into oral form. That displacement never ended. It only changed medium.

Later political moments in the region show the same pattern of return. In mass mobilisations—from the late 20th century into recent student uprisings—Nazrul's lines re-enter public space without announcement, on banners, in slogans, in shouted bursts that rarely pause for attribution.

Sometimes the poetry arrives as near-invocation:

Gajoner bajna baja! Ke malik? Ke se raja?

(Drums of rebellion sound! Who is the owner? Who is the king?)

His lines are designed, whether intentionally or not, for environments where clarity is constantly under pressure.

Across different protest cycles in Bangladesh, newer forms of mobilisation—social media clips, short form videos, rapid digital slogans—have not displaced this older archive. Instead, they have accelerated its fragments. A line appears in a 10-second clip, detached from origin, reattached to urgency. In that circulation, authorship becomes irrelevant. What matters is usability.

This is where Nazrul's afterlife becomes visible: not as a preserved national symbol, but as a repeatedly activated language system. A system that appears when collective speech becomes necessary, and individual speech is no longer enough.

Nazrul is reborn every time Bengalis need him, every time oppression crosses the threshold of endurance. He continues to live in Bangladesh through oral memory, public speech, and collective conscience.

'ROCKSTAR' cleared for Eid-ul-Azha release

Shakib Khan starrer *Rockstar* has received clearance from the Bangladesh Film Certification Board ahead of its Eid-ul-Azha release. According to Deputy

Director Moinuddin, the official certificate is expected to be handed over to the producers shortly.

Directed by Azman Rusho, the film has already generated strong online buzz following the release of its teaser and songs, with many social media users calling it one of the most anticipated films of the Eid season. Audiences have also expressed excitement over seeing Shakib

Khan in a new on-screen avatar.

The cast includes Sabila Nur, Tangia Methila, and Tariq Anam Khan. Produced under the banner of Sun Motion Pictures, *Rockstar* is also scheduled for international release on June 5 in the US, Canada, and the UK.



WHAT'S THE HAPS?



'Confluence'

Bhumi Gallery presents *Confluence*, a curated art exhibition featuring around 70 paintings in different mediums by talented contemporary artists from Bangladesh. The exhibition aims to showcase originality and diversity in modern artistic expression through a unique presentation. It hopes to create interest and inspiration among art lovers and collectors. Visitors will get the chance to explore a wide range of creative works and styles in one space.

Date: May 15 – June 15, 2026

Time: 3 pm – 8 pm

Venue: Bhumi Gallery, Lalmatia

Oyshee, Black Zang team up for 'Noakhaila Maiya'

Singer Fatima Tuz Zahra Oyshee has released the teaser for her upcoming song *Noakhaila Maiya*, featuring a collaboration with rapper Black Zang. The track's lyrics were jointly written by the two artistes, while Oyshee also composed the song.

Music production was handled by Beat Baba, with Shochi Shams in charge of mixing and mastering. Directed by Nasimul Mursalin Shakkhar, the music video features choreography by Mofassal Alif, assisted by Riaz Khan and Fahim Mondal.

Dancers Saima Haseba Apurbo, Tanvesh Tushi Khan, Arisha Siddika, and Soniya Soni also appear in the video. Produced under the banner of Oyshee Express, *Noakhaila Maiya* is set to release today on Oyshee's official YouTube channel.



'Fjord' claims the Palme d'Or in a night of historic streaks



Tao Okamoto and Virginie Efira share Best Actress honour for 'All of a Sudden'



'La Bola Negra' and Fatherland' filmmakers share Best Director honour

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ, from Cannes

The collective gasp that just rippled through the Grand Théâtre Lumière was one of genuine surprise.

For two weeks, the international press corps on the Croisette had convinced itself that the 79th Cannes Film Festival was a two-horse race between Pawel Pawlikowski's icy *Fatherland* and Andrey Zvyagintsev's devastating *Minotaur*. Journos parsed the grids like scripture, tracking their decimal points. But jury president Park Chan-wook has never been a man to follow a pre-written script.

In a stunning final move, the jury bypassed the media front-runners to award the 2026 Palme d'Or to Romanian auteur Cristian Mungiu for *Fjord*.

In doing so, Park Chan-wook's jury cemented a historic milestone: Mungiu joins the ultra-exclusive club of two-time Palme d'Or winners. He previously won in 2007 for *4 Months, 3 Weeks and 2 Days*.

The win also secures an unbelievable seventh consecutive Palme d'Or victory for independent powerhouse Neon — an institutional streak that borders on the miraculous. *Fjord* — starring Sebastian Stan and Renate Reinsve as a Romanian-



The winners, barely being able to contain their joy, pose for a photo as the award ceremony ends

Norwegian couple under terrifying community scrutiny over alleged child abuse — is a suffocating, masterfully restrained examination of cultural paranoia and state power. It is the definitive cinematic statement of 2026.

The rest of the jury's choices represent a brilliantly balanced, high-concept division of spoils that reflects the sheer depth of this year's competition line-up:

Grand Prix: Andrey Zvyagintsev's *Minotaur*. The exiled Russian director's searing critique of moral erosion and collective denial surrounding the war in Ukraine took the festival's runner-up prize — a massive statement.

Jury Prize: Valeska Grisebach's *The Dreamed Adventure* was a quiet, border-crossing triumph for German slow cinema that completely won over the Palais in the final 48 hours of screenings.

Best Director (Tie): The jury split the directing honours down the middle. Spain's radical dynamos Javier Calvo and Javier Ambrossi (*La Bola Negra*) share the stage with Pawel Pawlikowski (*Fatherland*).

Best Screenplay: Emmanuel Marre took the prize for *A Man of His Time*. Marre's

chillingly banal, claustrophobic dissection of bureaucratic collaboration in Vichy France took the winning honours.

FOR THE PERFORMANCES

The acting awards leaned heavily into themes of emotional endurance and psychological fracturing, with the jury opting to share the wealth across both categories. Best Actress was awarded jointly to Virginie Efira and Tao Okamoto for *All of a Sudden*, their quiet restraint and shared chemistry beautifully anchoring Ryusuke Hamaguchi's deeply patient, three-hour masterclass on empathy. On the male side, the Best Actor prize delivered a similar double-punch, going to Valentin Campagne and Emmanuel Macchia for their raw, devastating leads in Lukas Dhont's intimate drama *Coward*, with both actors recognised for brilliantly carrying the heavy, internal weight of the film's central moral conflict.

BEYOND THE MAIN COMPETITION

The prestigious Camera d'Or for best first feature went to Marie Clémentine Dusabejumbo for *Ben'Imana*, a striking and deeply moving debut that signals the arrival of a major new directorial voice. Meanwhile, Federico Luis took home the Short Film Palme d'Or for *For*



Andrey Zvyagintsev celebrates 'Minotaur' Grand Prix win



Cristian Mungiu poses with 'Fjord' Palme d'Or

PHOTOS: AFP

the Opponents, keeping the festival's dedication to short-form experimentation alive and fiercely competitive.

The 79th edition will be remembered for its trio of Honorary Palmes d'Or, anchoring the festival's historical gravity. Peter Jackson was honoured during the opening days for his monumental contributions to cinematic world-building, while a surprise, short-notice tribute celebrated the enduring pop-culture legacy of John Travolta. Finally, tonight capped off with a bittersweet, sweeping tribute to Barbra Streisand — with Isabelle Huppert stepping in to present the lifetime achievement honour on behalf of the screen legend, who unfortunately had to miss the trip due to a recent knee injury.

PARTING THOUGHTS

If Cannes 2026 felt like a return to the festival's pure arthouse roots throughout its daily run, tonight's closing ceremony confirmed it. By elevating Mungiu's suffocating, complex moral maze over more conventional historical epics, Park Chan-wook and his jury sent a clear, uncompromised message back to the global film industry: Cannes remains a sanctuary for cinema that refuses to offer easy answers.