

Cinema

Classic Bengali novel Lalsalu made into film

Front-ranking film-maker Tanvir Mokammel's new venture is set to hit silver screen soon



In the opening scene Majid (Raisul Islam) offers prayer upon arriving the village for the first time

AZIZ AMIRUL

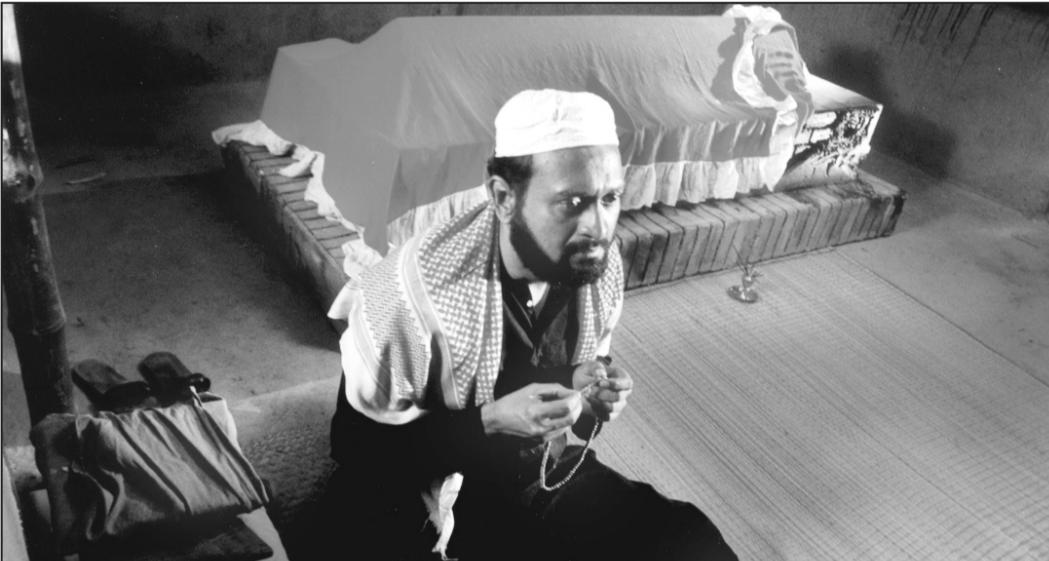
ONE of the most celebrated novels of contemporary Bengali literature *Lalsalu* by Syed Waliullah has been made into film by country's leading film-maker of alternative cinema. Cine literates of the city will soon be able to savour the movie.

Lalsalu, Tanvir Mokammel's ninth production, focuses on rural Muslim community of the then-East Bengal (presently Bangladesh).

Set in the 40's, Lalsalu is a brilliant commentary of rural Muslim psyche. The film opens at a remote village in some marshy region of the country as suddenly a bearded Mullah arrives among the simple and unlettered Muslim community. Majid, a quite haggardly middle-aged man impresses the innocent villagers with his religious knowledge and profundity. Soon after his arrival, Majid starts cleaning and renovating an old, dilapidated grave lying in an un-cared state since ages among the bamboo forests.

One day he declares the grave is of a great Pir or saint and even rebukes the ignorant villagers for neglecting the place for such a long time.

This shrewd and sly fellow,



Majid (Raisul Islam) fingering beads with the red clothed mazaar in the background

under his influence.

The mysterious 'grave overnight turned into a holy place covered with the piece of red cloth (Lal salu) on top of the oval shaped grave and glowing

start bringing offerings of cash and kinds to the 'holy' shrine, in fact to the self-created vault of Majid.

Once a vagabond with no home and family, Majid, within a few years, makes his fortune and immense influence on the villagers. Majid, the holy man, of the village marries Rahima, a hard working peasant woman, not so young, robustly built yet docile and obedient to his commanding husband.

But Majid soon decides to take a younger girl as his wife and marries Jamila, a teenager, who soon sniffs something fishy about her husband's spiritual authority. Jamila, the simple young girl, has been portrayed in the film as the nemesis of Majid, who causes the collapse her husband's hypocritical façade.

It was some twelve years back when Tanvir Mokammel first decided to make a film out of the novel and in fact, he was further inspired after the publication of his analytical book 'Syed Waliullah, Sisyphus and Quest of Tradition in Novel

(1988)'. Said Tanvir, 'Lalsalu tells a story very much close to that of our own lives. Though the novel is set in the mid 40's, nothing has practically changed in the



Awal Pir (Aly Zaker) arrives as a rival of Majid, trying to influence people with his brand of religious preaching

aware of the fact that fake pirism and shrine business is a misdemeanour going on since ages and would probably, continue to exist. Therefore the relevance of Lalsalu will remain in future as

communities of the pre-partition period lacking enlightenment. But to give the novel a cinema version, Tanvir Mokammel has seen the novel from a wider perspective.

Tanvir finds a new chapter of interest as he closely observes the clash of Majid with the peasants. Majid is a parasite, living on the donations of the peasant-community yet he, all the time, holds sway on the poor people, throwing them into desolation. Hiding behind a mask of hypocrisy and misinterpreting the ideals of Islam, Majid finds success but ultimately fails when his wife Jamila reveals his misdeeds before the public.

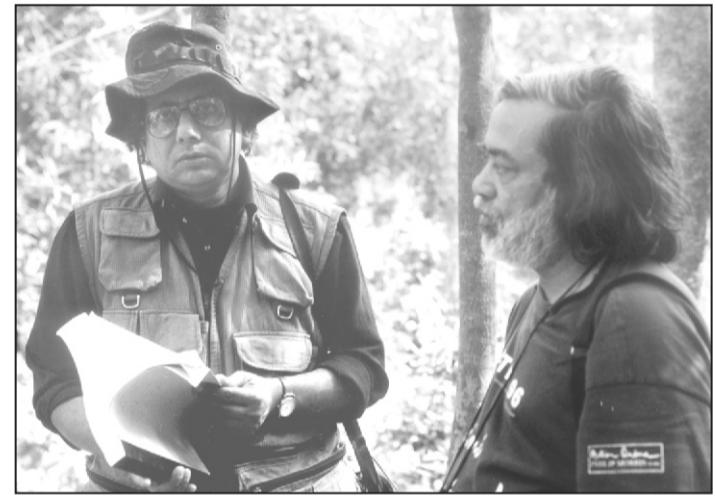
Tanvir hopes that the film will arise fresh discussion among the critics and the general viewers about obscurantism and religious hypocrisy. In a period of social unrest and anxiety, worsened by harsh attitudes of fundamentalism and fanaticism, the screening of Lalsalu would be a befitting mode of protest and a means of awareness for the secular people of the country.



Jamila (Chandni), the young wife of Majid

Majid, fast manages to enchant the poor, illiterate folks with his fake speeches on religion and soon succeeds to create a supernatural awe and mystery around the grave thus bringing the people of the entire village

candles gives the place a metaphysical aura. Verses from Quran recited by Majid day and night creating awe in the minds of the villagers, most of them are landless peasants. Completely succumbed in the spell, people



Director Tanvir Mokammel (wearing a cap) sharing a moment with cinematographer Anwar Hossain

it has been now.

While writing this bold novel, the chief aim of Syed Waliullah was to expose the misdeeds of the religious hypocrites and to show the dark and backward

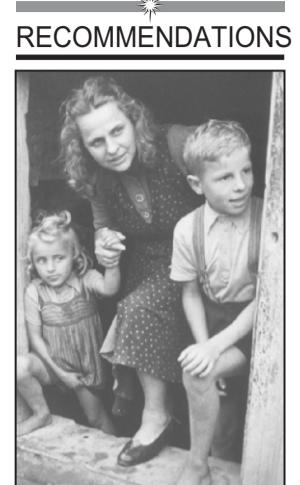


Photo-Exhibition : Germany 1945-1995.

Goethe Institute Dhaka holds a photo exhibition titled 'Germany 1945-1995' (Deutschland seit 1945), featuring fifty years of German history at House # 10, Road # 9, Dhanmondi R/A. The show runs from 2 to 8 p.m. every day, (except Fridays & Saturdays)



till September 30.

Solo exhibition

A solo painting exhibition by Ali Akbar is being held at the Gallery 21 (765 Satmasjid Road, Dhanmondi, Dhaka). The exhibition will remain open to all everyday from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. till September 30.

Sculpture show

The 3rd solo sculpture show by Maynul Islam Paul is being held at the La Galerie l'Alliance Francaise de Dhaka. The exhibition will remain open to all everyday from 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. till September 30.

Six Seasons

Shilparag Gallery at Dhanmondi (House #15, Road # 27 old) presents an exhibition on the theme six seasons. Leading artists of the country have captured in their canvas the rich variety of our seasons and their ambience. The month-long show will continue till October 14 everyday from 11 am to 8pm.

TV GUIDE

EKUSHEY TV

12:00 Ekushey Headlines
12:05 Ek Jeker Potrikay
12:14 Ekuttrai Ei Dine
12:20 Mukto Khobor
12:50 Bolte Chai
2:30 Ei Shoptaho
3:00 Ekushey Headlines
3:05 Muktomchon
5:30 Deshjore
6:00 Ekushey Headlines
6:05 Serial: Thief of Baghdad
6:55 Ekushey Headlines
7:00 Prosongo: Nirbachon
7:30 Ekushey News
7:58 Ek Minute
8:40 Bangla Film
10:00 News: Simulcast from BTV
11:15 Ekushey Late Night News

ATN

5:30 Islamic Prog.
6:07 Child's prog: Shapla Saluk
6:45 Film Songs prog: Surchobi
7:20 Drama Serial: Uttar
8:00 Drama Serial: Gunjor
8:35 Magazine prog: Tasmyer Kechukhon
9:10 Reporting prog: Ghotanar Neepathee
10:00 ATN Bangla News
10:30 Drama Serial: Rahiman Purer Bilkis
11:00 Bollwood Khobor
11:45 Bengali film: Odhinayok

CHANNEL-i

(Evening session)
6:10 Patriotic song
6:40 Documentary Suryar Sawpna
7:15 News Headlines
7:20 Drama Serial Joyor Bhata
8:00 Drama Serial Durbin
8:30 Ispahani Tele Quiz
8:40 Music Horizon
9:15 Film and Freedom Struggle
9:30 Results of Ispahani Tele Quiz
10:00 Quiz programme 60 seconds
10:01 Magazine Chhaya
10:30 I Prabha
11:00 News Headlines
11:05 Bengali feature film Aamar Desh Aamar Prem: Star-ring Ilias Kanchan, Ditee

HBO

6:30 Atomic Dog
8:15 Baby Monitor: Sound of Fear
10:00 The People Under the Stairs
12:00 Nick of Time
1:45 Don't Talk to Strangers
3:45 The Unholy
5:45 Losing Isaiah
8:00 Event Horizon
10:00 The Chamber
12:15 Urban Legend
2:15 Do The Right Thing
4:45 Losing Isaiah

STAR GOLD
10:30 Amul Bollywood News
11:00 Geet Bahar
11:30 Kartavya (Dharmendra, Rekha)

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STAR PLUS

5:30 Doogie Howser
6:30 Star Geetmala
7:30 Ek Main Aur Ek Tu
8:00 Hit Ya Fit
8:30 Atma
9:30 Fox Kids
10:15 Sangeet Toppers
10:30 National Geographic Special
11:30 Hit Ya Fit
12:00 Kuchha Papad Pucca Papad
12:30 Minch Masala
1:00 Son Pari
1:30 Gharvali Uparwali
2:00 I Love My India
2:30 National Geographic Special
3:30 Tea Time Cinema
6:30 Fox Kids
7:15 Sangeet Toppers
7:30 The Sword of Tipu Sultan
8:30 Star Superhit: Bade Miyan Chhote Miyan (Amitabh Bachchan, Rajnikant, Govinda)

STAR GOLD

11:00 Rahein Na Rahein Hum
11:30 New Wave Cinema
Diksha (Nana Patekar, Mahanor Singh)
12:30 Diksha (Contd)
3:00 Geet Bahar
3:30 Patthar Ke Sanam (Manoj Kumar, Waheeda Rehman)
7:00 Parbat Pe Apna Dera (Vannala, Ulhas)

BBC WORLD

6:30 World Business Report
8:30 Asia Today/World Business Report
10:30 Talking Movies
11:30 Hospital
12:30 Click Online
1:30 Correspondent
2:30 Millionaires
3:30 People's Century
5:30 This Week
6:00 BBC News
6:30 Millionaires
7:30 Click Online
8:30 2nd Russ Rev
9:30 People's Century
10:30 Mastermind India
11:30 This Week
12:30 Earth Report
1:30 Millionaires
2:30 Talking Movies
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STAR MOVIES

6:30 Drama: Before & After
9:00 Comedy: Good Morning Vietnam
10:45 US Top Ten
11:15 Action: Terminator-2 Judgment Day
12:30 Xena
1:30 Hercules
2:30 Cops
3:00 Key of David
3:30 Morris Cerullo
4:00 Benny Hinn
4:30 Small Wonder
5:00 Mr Belvedere

CHANNEL [V]

7:30 [V] So Long Gone
8:30 [V] Best of Jumpstart
11:30 Billboard US Count-down

STAR CHANNEL

6:30 Treasures of the World 1
7:30 Ultimate Guide
8:30 Wild Discovery
9:30 Discovery Kids Watch.... Prehistoric Sharks
10:00 Real Kids, Real Adventures
10:30 Going Wild With Jeff Corwin
11:00 Naturequest
11:30 Treasures of the World I
12:30 Living Britain
1:30 Chimpanzee Diary
2:00 Wild and Dangerous
3:30 Crime Night
4:30 Lonely Planet VII
5:30 On The Inside
6:30 Untamed Australia
7:30 Land of the Tiger
8:30 Shark Weekend 2001
10:30 Trauma V Life in the ER
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