

Movie Review

"Jodhaa Akbar": Once upon a time in India



Scenes from the film

They may not make them like they used to in Hollywood, but sometimes in India they still do. *Jodhaa Akbar*, a historical romance directed by Ashutosh Gowariker, is filmmaking on the grand scale of Cecil B. DeMille, with romance, stirring battles, a cast of thousands and enough elephants and gold to sink the Titanic.

With so much attention focused on Islamic extremism, now seems an apt time for a movie about Akbar, the 16th-century Mughal emperor of India, whose legacy is one of enlightened rule and almost radical religious tolerance. *Jodhaa Akbar* begins before all that, when the young Akbar is still busy expanding the Mughal empire. This gives Gowariker a chance for some cinematic derring-do -- in one spectacular shot the camera rushes back to avoid being trampled by two armies -- and to show the seeds of what made Akbar one of history's greatest rulers. He fights with purpose (to

consolidate Hindustan) but not without mercy.

The battles, though, are really a window to the love story that propels the film. Forging a political alliance, Akbar marries Jodhaa, a feisty Rajput princess, and then sets out to win her heart. These royals are played by Hrithik Roshan and Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, two rather astonishing specimens of human beauty. Neither is a great actor, but both know what's required of a star and seem to the palace born.

Rai makes Jodhaa's wilfulness a sign of character, especially when she lays down the conditions for her marriage: She will remain a Hindu and would like a small temple to Krishna in the Mughal fort. As Akbar, Roshan, has the bearing of a king, yet can seem a little blank when not in motion.

Jodhaa's personal temple to Krishna within the Mughal *qilla* in Agra infuriates the court's influential Muslim clerics. Despite this

inauspicious start, Akbar and Jodhaa gradually realise they have much in common, and they begin to fall in love despite the political turmoil around them. But though Jodhaa finds a surprising ally in her mother-in-law, Mallika Hamida Banu (Punam S. Sinha), she has an equally powerful enemy in Maham Anga (Ila Arun), who nursed the emperor when he was a baby and thus secured the position of the most influential individual in the palace. Maham Anga sees the Hindu queen as a threat to her own influence, which she has used to further the ambitions of her dissolute son, Adham Khan (Shaji Choudhary). In addition, Jodhaa's beloved brother, Sujamal (Sonu Sood), is plotting to seize his birthright, which his father inexplicably bestowed on another, and highly placed nobleman Sharifuddin Hussain (Nikitin Dheer) who is also the emperor's brother-in-law, is conspiring to depose his master and

seize power for himself.

At -- fair warning -- three and a half hours, the film is too long and is crammed with huge battle sequences, court intrigue, swordfights, lavish sets and stunning costumes. There's something to look at even when there's nothing going on. The film lacks conventional Bollywood production numbers, but there are plot-driven dance sequences. Like most of the recent scores by A.R. Rahman, songs of *Jodhaa Akbar* are not targeted towards the South Asian masses. These songs rather grow on you, like the ode to the legendary Sufi saint Khawaja Moinuddin Chishti by swirling dervishes in a trance, or Jodhaa's humble offering to Krishna, or the subtle romantic number that captures the blossoming love between two strangers.

Gowariker's *Lagaan* (2001), a classic root-for-the-underdog story, was one of the rare Bollywood movies to attract a non-South Asian

audience. *Jodhaa Akbar* may lack that film's populist appeal but it shares its sense of national purpose and could just as easily have borne its subtitle: "Once Upon a Time in India."

Jodhaa Akbar is not a history lesson: where, for example, are Akbar's 199 other wives, or the artists and poets who made his court a fabled one? The film was greeted with vociferous complaints of historical inaccuracy involving Queen Jodhaa's name; though one of Akbar's many wives was Rajput royalty, the name Jodhaa (or Jodhabai) apparently belonged to his daughter-in-law. The epic Indian movie *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) is blamed for popular confusion about the matter, and feelings run so high in Rajasthan that *Jodhaa Akbar* was not released there. It did, however, open in more than 100 U.S. venues, the largest-ever release for a Hindi film.

Compiled by Cultural Correspondent

Vacancy Announcement



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On Air

News Bulletin

BTV
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am, 12:10 pm, 2:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 7:00 pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 1:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 8:00 pm.
News (English) at 3:00 pm, 10:00 pm.
Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm. (To be telecast on all Bangla channels).

CHANNEL-i
News (Bangla) at 7:15 am, 9:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 10:30 pm, 12:15 am.

ATN BANGLA
News (Bangla) at 7:00 am, 10:00 am, 2:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 11 pm. News (English) 8:20 am, 7:00 pm.
Latest News (Bangla) at 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm and 8:00 pm.

CHANNEL 1
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am, 12:00 pm, 2:30 pm, 6:30 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:00 pm, 12:30 am.

BANGLAVISION
News (Bangla) at 7:30 am, 1:30 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:15 pm, 10:30 pm.
News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am, 12:00 pm, 4:00 pm.
News (English) at 6:00 pm.

Rtv
News (Bangla) at 10:15 pm, and 12:15 am.

ntv
News (Bangla) 7:30 am, 12:02 pm, 2:00 pm, 7:30 pm, 10:30 pm, 1:00 am.

ETV
News (Bangla) 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm, 9:00 pm, 11:00 pm.

ATN BANGLA
08:15 Aajker Shingbadpotro
08:30 Talk Show: Onyodrishti
09:20 Educational Programme
10:30 Cookery Show: ATN Rannaghar
11:05 Islamic Programme
12:30 Jibon Jigyasha
03:15 Bangla Feature Film
05:00 Gram Gonjer Khabor
06:25 Amra Korbo Joy
08:00 Smile Show
09:20 Drama Serial: Amader Nurul Huda
10:40 Talk Show: Mukto Shanglap
11:30 Drama Serial: Dolls House
12:00 Grameenphone Lead News

CHANNEL i
09:30 Shingbadpotro Bangladesh Public Reaction
09:45 Grameenphone Tribomatra
10:30 Grameenphone Tele Shomoy
11:30 Islamic Programme
12:05 Talk Show: Kora Alap
12:30 Sa Re Ga Ma
01:30 Grameenphone Tribomatray Apni
02:35 Drama: Cheye Thakar Din
04:05 Special Programme
05:30 World Shorashon Boimela
06:00 Talk Show: Kathay Kathay
06:20 South Asian Music
07:50 Banglalink Banglar Pathay
08:20 Drama Serial: Rasta
09:35 Drama Serial: 420
10:00 Drama Serial: Ochena Neel Kontho
11:30 Game Show: Bajimaal Shorashon
12:00 Grameenphone Aajker Shingbadpotro

Rtv
08:15 Gaanchil Ei Din
09:05 Special Programme: Amra Jay Bhashey Kotha Boli
09:35 Special Programme: Ekusher Gaan
10:00 Drama Serial: Anondo Jalra
11:00 Taroka Alap
11:30 Smitr Miner
12:15 Musical Programme: Swapno Din-er Gaan
01:00 Islamic Programme
01:30 Dhallywood Beats
02:30 Bangla Feature Film
06:00 Protidin
08:00 Musical Programme: Indian Idol Concert
09:20 Special Programme: Hello Love

11:00 Drama Serial: Ebong Rohosyer Golpo
11:30 News Watch
12:00 Biz Event

ETV
08:00 Ekusher Shokal
10:00 Shonamani Shukhey Oshukhey
12:00 Ekusher Dupur
12:30 Aajker Potnikay
02:00 Bangla Feature Film
05:15 Ei Shoptaho
05:45 Ekusher Shondhya
06:15 SMS Mania
06:30 Mukhto Khabor
07:30 Drama: Batasher Shimana Akasher Thikana

08:30 Shurothaal
09:30 Ekusher Shomoy
10:30 Ekayto Kalha
11:30 Amader Boli Mela
12:00 Ekusher Raat

ntv
08:30 Aajker Shokal
08:55 Drama Serial: Swapnojal
09:30 Children's programme: Shapkur Protijogita
10:30 Apnar Jigyasha
11:30 Shedin Ki Gholchhilo
12:10 Talk Show: Ei Shomoy
01:05 Chelona-ye-Islam
01:25 Islamic Programme
02:30 Tele-film: Uttar Purush
04:25 Cookery Show
05:30 Tiphiner Phakey
06:20 Shokaler Khabor
06:45 Dunder Chhondey
08:15 Drama Serial: Swapnojal
09:00 Music Jam
11:20 ntv Deshey Deshey Uttar
11:30 Washington Barta

CHANNEL 1
08:40 Shuprobhat Bangladesh
10:30 Drama: Pakhi
11:30 Islamic Programme: Alor Kaphela
01:00 Drama: Din-er Aloye Joyotsna
02:00 Amar Ghar
03:30 Drama: Shikhati
04:30 Proshno Uttar
06:00 Saaj Bela
07:00 Shoptaho Sheshey
08:15 Chhoblat: Phaul Shuktara
09:30 Pran-er Shur
11:00 Pran-er Gaan

BANGLAVISION
09:30 Cookery Show: Amader Ranna Ghar
10:10 Bhalo Thakun
11:05 Nana Rong-er Dinguli
11:35 Jigyasha O Jobab
12:10 Islamic Programme
12:30 Pran-er Gaan
02:00 Ebong Classer Bairey
02:30 Vocab

Radio Foorti 88.0 FM
08:00am Hello Dhaka
12:00pm Hamd-Nath and Quran recita
11:45pm Foorti Unlimited
06:00pm Bumper to Bumper
10:00pm Back to Back music
Radio Today 89.6 FM
07:15am Good Morning Dhaka (Biplob)
07:45am Today's Happy Moments
08:45am Shokaler Khabor
11:00am Post Box 9032 (Kibria)
12:30pm Islami Gan
01:45pm Dupurer Khabor
02:00pm Rupali Gan (Rubi)
06:00pm Today's World Music (Sayfi)
06:45pm Shondher Khabor
09:45pm Raater Khabor
10:00pm Hart To Hart (Nirob & Sim)

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10:00pm Hart To Hart (Nirob & Sim)

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10:00pm Hart To Hart (Nirob & Sim)

02:40 Drama Serial: Swapno Chura
03:05 Media Bhuban
04:20 Boli Mela Protidin
05:30 Visa Apnar Agami
06:05 Citycell Din-er Sheshey
06:25 Banglavisoin Cafe

08:25 Drama Serial: Byasto Doctor
09:45 Drama Serial: Tanik Ali Hadari
12:00 Shongbad Protidin

STAR MOVIES
09:00 Three Fugitives
10:45 Run Down, The
12:30 Cruel Intentions 2
02:30 The Keeper: The Legend Of Omar K
03:35 Rhyme & Reason



Amader Nurul Huda
On ATN Bangla at 9:20 pm
Drama Serial
Cast: Mahfuz Ahmed, Reaz

STAR WORLD
09:30 Bionic Woman
10:30 American Idol
12:00 The Simpsons
01:30 Desire: Table For Three
02:30 The Ellen Degeneres Show
03:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
04:00 General Hospital
05:00 Enterprise
06:00 Malcolm In The Middle

10:30 Tna Wrestling
11:30 Ifi Fight Night
12:00 Seinfeld

HISTORY CHANNEL
08:30 Captain Crunch
10:15 Sauna Belt
10:30 Cop Cars
12:00 Swarna Heera
12:15 Eye Max
12:30 Fall from Grace
01:30 Battle
02:30 Cars and Planes
03:30 Mata Hari
04:30 Fast Food Tech
05:30 Work Clothes
06:30 Fall from Grace
07:30 Da Vinci Code
08:30 Mahatma: Great Soul
09:30 Rocky Marciano
11:30 The Universe
12:30 The Sword is Forged

ZEE STUDIO
08:35 The World's Fastest Indian
11:30 The Break
01:50 Princess Diaries 2: Royal Engagement
04:30 Honey, I Shrunk The Kid
06:35 Charlie Chaplin
07:00 Kiss Of Death
09:00 Problem Child 2
11:00 Dragonheart

STAR PLUS
10:30 Saibaba
11:30 Gnhasti
01:00 Baa Bahoo Aur Baby
01:30 Kunkum - Pyara Sa Bandhan
02:00 Bhabhi
02:30 Karam Apnaa Apnaa
03:00 Gnhasti
05:00 Star Voi Chhote Ustaad
06:30 Shararat-Thoda Jaadu Thodi Naz
07:00 Gnhasti
07:30 Raja Ki Aayegi Baraat
08:00 Aek Chhabhi Hai Padoss Mein
08:30 Kaho Na Yaar Hai
09:30 Prithviraj Chauhan
10:00 Baa Bahoo Aur Baby
10:30 Star Voi Chhote Ustaad
12:00 Karam Apnaa Apnaa

DISCOVERY CHANNEL
08:30 Journey Of Life (W): Living

09:30 Together
Meerkat Manor (Season 3): Journey's End
10:00 Animal Camera - Surveillance On Survival: Episode 2
10:30 In The Pink
11:00 India's Wild Dogs: The Wild Bunch

11:30 Greatest Ever, The: Bombers
12:30 Runway Moms: Marathon Birth
01:00 Feast India: Village Wedding, Jaisalmer, Pushkar
01:30 Anascondas With Nigel Marven
02:30 I Shouldn't Be Alive: Kidnap In The Killing Fields
03:30 How Do They Do It? Episode 2
04:00 Mystery Hunters: Grand Canyon
04:30 Journey Of Life (W): Living Together
05:30 Futureweapons: Power Of Fear, The

06:30 Junkyard Wars: Hot Rods
07:30 Journey Of Life (W): Human Life
08:30 Futureweapons: Maximum Impact
09:30 Dirty Jobs - Season I: Sewer Inspector
10:30 I Shouldn't Be Alive: Lost In The African Bush

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC
09:00 Gators High and Dry
10:15 Sauna Belt
10:30 Kamchatka
11:30 Megastructures
12:30 Hawaii Super Ferry
01:30 Mega Factories
02:30 Sahara
03:30 Minnie Driver
04:30 Costa Rica
05:00 Taiwan Reign Of Terror
05:30 Big Bang
06:30 Sacrific on the Shire
07:30 Animals Behaving Badly
08:30 Sahara
09:30 Name Is... Harry Pitts?
10:00 Amazing Adv Of A Nobody USA
10:30 Forest Diseases
11:00 Chasing Che: Latin America On Ghost Ships
12:30 Munich Olympic Massacre

ESPN
09:00 Basketball: Big Ten Conference
11:00 Golf
12:30 Soccer/Football: Barclays Premier League 2007/08
02:30 Basketball
04:30 Soccer/Football: Football Up Close
05:00 Auto Racing
05:30 Soccer/Football: Football Focus With John Dykes
06:30 Extreme Sports: Winter X Games
07:30 Soccer/Football
08:00 Soccer/Football: Premier League World
08:30 Sport News
09:30 Auto Racing: Planet Speed
10:00 Basketball: NBA Action
10:30 Sport News



Shomoyer Katha
On BTV at 9:00 pm
Discussion Programme
Host: Syed Munir Khasru