

A Heartwarming Film

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Mon kerechhe "Monpura" said someone in the elevator as I was going down with my family after watching the movie. The statement sounded acceptable as I was also thinking on the same lines. *Monpura* can be described as a wholesome and thoroughly enjoyable Bangla film. The director Giasuddin Selim is a member of the new generation of moviemakers in Bangladesh who has revolted against the vulgarity and poor quality of mainstream Bangla commercial film. In 2003, the film industry was virtually paralysed with actors and producers blaming each other for introducing vulgarity to movies. It was only in January 2006 when an anti-obscenity law was passed in the parliament which brought back many of Bangladeshi film makers as well as movie goers back to the local cinema theatres.

Filmmakers like Tanvir Mokkammel, Taukir Ahmed and Tareq and Catherine Masud have made films which have earned international fame. In 2003 Bangladesh officially submitted a film for nomination for Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film. The film was *Matir Moina* by Tareq Masud which got many foreign awards. Bangladeshi movies have come a long way since then. Every now and then we get good films made by talented filmmakers.

Monpura is one such film that represents a genuine Bangladeshi rural love story. True the theme is common enough and other famous writers have written similar stories. But the picturisation, the setting of the island named Monpura is what has made the movie unique. Moreover, it is not only a love story; there is a hidden satire in it.

The actress Farhana Mili who plays the lead role shows amazing talent; the expressions of her eyes are something she should be awarded for. Chanchal Chowdhury, a renowned actor of recent times is a natural in his role of Shonai. In his solitude in Char Monpura he befriends the bird and the animals that Gazi left him to look after. The islet is owned by Gazi; one of the influential landowners of the locality. After Gazi's mentally challenged son kills a woman in his house, Shonai must take the blame for the murder. Gazi promises to get him out of jail in case the police catch him. Shonai being a simple soul believes his master and goes to live in Monpura. Just when he is on the verge of losing his sanity in the quiet, lonely islet he encounters the enchanting Pori, the local belle and this changes him forever. The two pairs of eyes met and many untold tales are revealed. They meet on a regular basis until one day when Gazi comes to Monpura and decides to make her his daughter-in-law. Hearing this Shonai is furious and has a row with his master. As Pori and Shonai plan to abandon everything to be with one another the police come and arrest him. Pori gets married to Gazi's son. But the wondrous strength of her heart makes her resolute in her love. What happens afterwards is something one would find out while watching the movie.

The eternal beauty of the Bangali woman in a sari is depicted in the movie. The pleats are not once misplaced nor is her *kajol* smudged. The work of the camera in bringing in the effects of sun and rain is commendable. The falling of leaves and dried fruits from the trees is beautifully captured. The audience in fact is constantly reminded of the beauty of the Bangladeshi countryside. The songs, which were already a big hit in Dhaka before the movie was released, added to the film's overall aesthetic quality.