

NEWS bytes

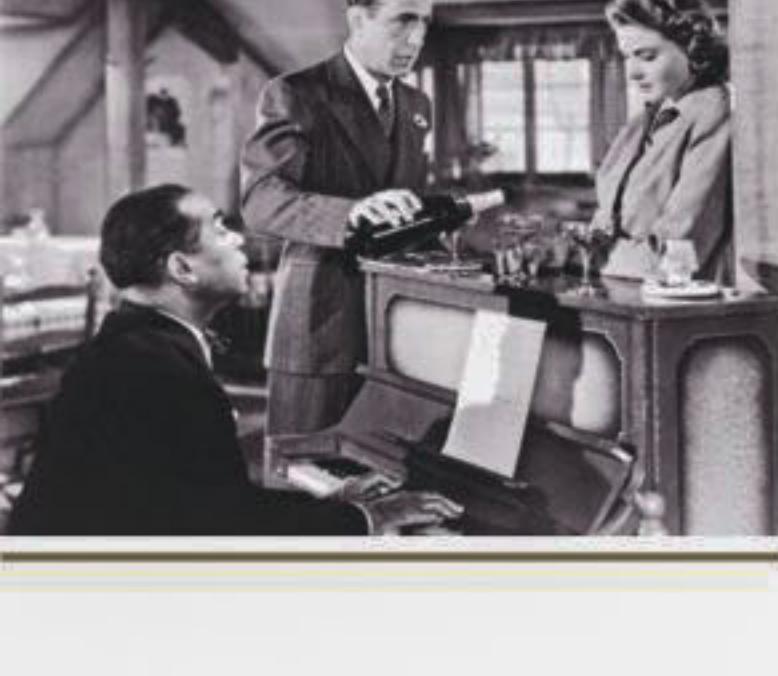
Casablanca

piano goes up for auction

The piano from Rick's Cafe in the classic romance film Casablanca will be auctioned at Bonhams this autumn. It is one of the most famous pianos in film, the one played by Sam in Rick's Cafe, triggering dewy-eyed reminiscence in Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

The piano is expected to sell for a seven-figure sum in New York in November, after another piano from the film, used in flashback scenes in Paris, was sold for 602,500 USD in 2012. The Rick's piano is still very much playable, having been used in a concert of Max Steiner's music for Casablanca at the Hollywood Bowl in 2006.

Source: The Guardian

Entertainment show
Hashtey Nei Mana
on BTV

A CORRESPONDENT

Entertainment-based variety show "Hashtey Nei Mana" will be aired on BTV during this Eid. Compiled and hosted by Iqbal Khandakar, the show will be divided into three segments -- adda, outdoor play and performance of skits. Al Mansur, Tushar Khan, Kachi Khandakar and Shirin Bokul will take part in adda while stand-up comedian Naveed Mahbub, Mirakkel star Abu Hena Rony, actress Sashi and others will perform skits and participate in an outdoor play.

The programme has been emceed following rhythmic rhymes. Md. Nasiruddin produces the programme.

The artistic world of Mahera Khaleque

Britto Arts Trust organises solo show



STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mahera Khaleque, a US-based Bangladeshi artist was a research artist in residency with Britto Arts Trust, Dhaka, Bangladesh. Her residency period spanned from June 24 to July 20. The residency ended with an open studio visit from July 19-20, where she exhibited an installation at the Britto Space. The title of the show was "Laundering of History".

On her installation, Khaleque stated that history occurs in its own way, following its own timeline; not necessarily do we know history as the way it occurs. Deliberate efforts in erasing and re-writing history are not uncommon. Light and mundane words, images and sounds become precious, even heavy, when they are locked up in containers. Khaleque combined digital media

along with readymade objects and painting. The major components for the installation were newsprint paper, fabric, tin trunks and video pieces. She intended to offer the experience of a laundry with newsprint papers pasted on thin fabric that were hanging from a huge number of hangers. Some paper-pasted fabrics were also placed in tin trunks. Other paper-pasted fabrics were painted and skillfully torn-off leaving some information from previous layers. This is a continuation of her practice of using texts and images in layers.

"I am interested in reflecting the external appearance of the world around me as well as my understanding of its complexities. The contemporary global socio-political and environmental issues that I am surrounded by keep me informed. Preferring to raise questions as opposed to answering them, I

attempt to leave ample space for the viewers to contemplate," said the artist.

Khaleque's training in art began at the Institute of Fine Arts (now Faculty of Fine Arts), University of Dhaka. On the completion of her undergraduate degree in 1994, she went to the US for higher education, earning a BA (1997) in Fine Arts from York College of Pennsylvania and an MA (2000) in Painting as well as an MA (2004) in Visual Communications Design from Purdue University. Currently she is pursuing her MFA (2012-2015) at the Lamar Dodd School of Art at the University of Georgia. She has taught art and humanities as a lecturer at Augusta State University, Georgia before going for her MFA. Khaleque has received the 2014 Mary Rosenblatt Teaching Award from the University of Georgia.

FILM REVIEW

Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania
A below-par rom-com

KAVITA, New Delhi

Rom-com "Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania" makes no bones about its parallels with all time classic "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge". Like "Dilwale", "Humpty Sharma" boasts of an attractive young cast, the girl is engaged to marry a man who she has never met, she is immediately struck by a charmer she encounters, the two part but decide to convince a dictatorial patriarch of the depth of their feelings for each other. Of course all's well that ends well.

But where "Dilwale" scored with its the power to get viewers all emotional, "Humpty Sharma" doesn't exactly set the screen on fire; firstly, Varun Dhawan as Rakesh "Humpty" Sharma and Alia Bhatt as the spunky Kavya Pratap Singh share a lukewarm chemistry.

"Humpty Sharma" begins on a



promising enough note as the weepy city boy Humpty watches yet another rerun of "Dilwale..." on TV. Apart from being sentimental, he's also hot as the opening sequence shows a girl leaving the bathroom where he is closeted. When he meets small town girl Kavya, the sparks fly. She is from Ambala and has come to Delhi to buy a designer lehenga for her arranged wedding to an NRI doctor. Humpty decides he's going

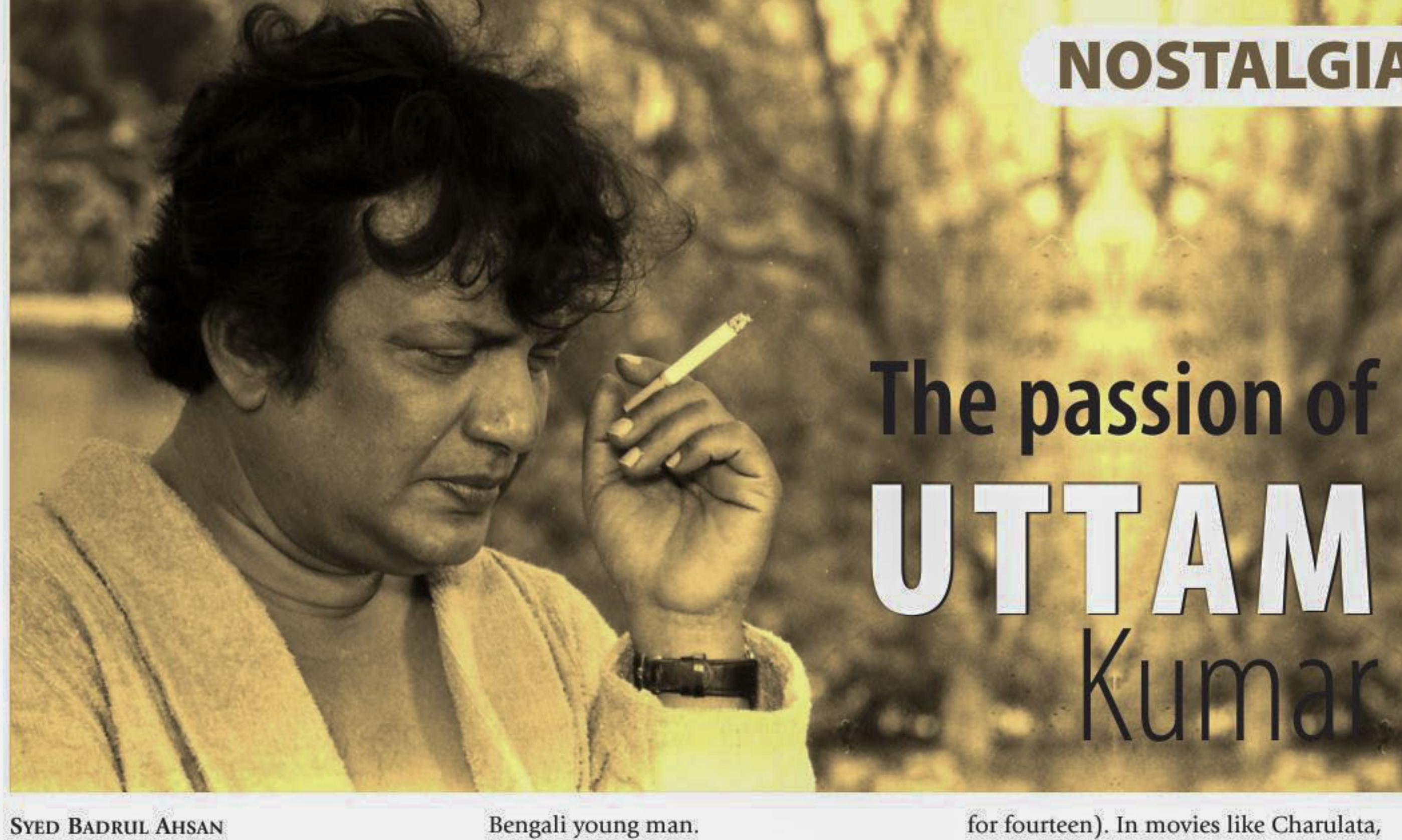
to help her get her heart's desire. He resorts to every stratagem to get her that lehenga.

Along the way, the two fall in love and horror of horrors (by Hindi movie standards), end up in bed. But Kavya has to go home and is soon reluctantly caught up in the family's preparation for her wedding. Humpty arrives on the scene and the two manage to share some moments together.

Of course love conquers all and the best man wins. Kavya tells her father that she will settle for a local rather than designer lehenga-- a metaphor for the home-grown Punjabi who she has fallen for, rather than Mr. Perfect who is revealed to have feet of clay.

"Humpty" is disappointing fare and the audience can be forgiven for going home wondering what the ado was all about.

NOSTALGIA

The passion of
UTTAM Kumar

SYED BADRUL AHSAN

Uttam Kumar continues to exude the aura that defined him when he was alive. Thirty four years after his passing, there are the memories that speak of the man. He was part of our fathers' generation before becoming part of ours. It was his movies that our parents went to, especially if he was paired with Suchitra Sen. They went to see him not merely because they wished to judge his acting --- he was, for that generation, above judging anyway --- but also and more decidedly to experience the romance he personified in his on-screen relationship with Suchitra. And then, of course, there were the songs which, sung by Hemanta Mukherjee, quickly became Uttam's. Only days before he died, Hemanta spoke of the vacuity he went through when Uttam's life came to an end. 'When Uttam died, a huge chunk of me died with him', said the artiste.

You could pick up from there, broaden the thought, and suggest that Uttam's death was the end of a dream. He had not been ailing, he had not grown into the infirmities that age brings. It was his heart that stopped beating on a July day in 1980. The Mahanayak ended his life in the sort of blaze with which he had stormed his way into the hearts of his fans. And there were millions of them. Shooting stars are a rare sight and yet Uttam's run in life was the rise and fall of a shooting star. The light simply and quickly went out. And yet it was Uttam, the light in him, which for years made a generation of moviegoers, indeed an entire bhadrak class on both sides of a politically divided Bengal, endlessly aware of the romantic that epitomized the

Bengali young man.

In Uttam, the sparks of romantic love never quite died out. He was every woman's dream. If Suchitra gave him reason to feel that his star quality was no reason for him to be nonchalant about shooting schedules (early on she made it clear that he could not keep people waiting for him to appear before shooting could begin), there were others who craved roles beside him. One of them, Supriya Devi, did better: she made his way into his heart, lived with him, in effect told the world she and he belonged. There was Sharmila Tagore, who blended well with Uttam. But no romance for Uttam was higher or more profound than the chemistry he shared with Suchitra. Supriya Devi, she who shared her life with Uttam for seventeen years, attests to the closeness which underlay the Uttam-Suchitra relationship. Maitreyee B. Chowdhury puts it on the record: "Passionate romance or teasing humour, Suchitra is believed to have pulled Supriya's leg on many such occasions. Once, when Suchitra called up to speak to Uttam, on being informed that he had stepped out, she mischievously added, 'What a pity. I felt like kissing him.'"

You do not argue about Uttam being the epitome of romance. He was a dashing on-screen lover who could sing his way into the hearts of his women and his audience. Pause awhile, now, to ask if Uttam Kumar was a great actor, at once ready and equipped to play roles that went beyond those he portrayed in his movies. You need to reflect on why Satyajit Ray went looking for Soumitra Chatterjee when he needed a character for his movies (Uttam appeared in only two Ray movies, while Soumitra was chosen

for fourteen). In movies like Charulata, Soumitra convinced the audience of the depths in him, of the versatility which informed his abilities. There is little question that in terms of intellectual substance, Soumitra was the bigger actor. Much the same can be said about Chhabi Biswas and Pahari Sanyal. All three men were intense in the range of the roles they played. Uttam suffered on that score. He was, if you think about it, in a way imprisoned by the stereotype his roles had turned him into. But there was no hint that he ever suffered inwardly for it. That he was a heartthrob was all.

If women swooned before Uttam or were willing to be in his arms, there were the men who imitated him in all his mannerisms and style. And not just ordinary men. If you travel back to the 1960s, you will bump into actors who clearly and secretly tried moulding themselves on the Uttam persona --- all the way from the manner in which he wore his hair to how he walked to how he addressed his on-screen lovers.

Uttam Kumar's smile was infectious, tinged as it was with a dash of mischief. He filled the room with his presence. He was not part of the Coffee House crowd, as Soumitra was. College Street was not a place he fancied. As Swapan Mullick tells it, "He was too much the family man, who loved his pujas at home, and too much the bhadrakol." He hummed Tagore's akash bhora shurjo tara and mone robe ki na robe amare.

Uttam Kumar is the virile, passionate man all Bengali men have dreamed of being. That is how we celebrate him.

(Uttam Kumar passed away on 24 July 1980.)

Lalu Bhai
in remembrance...

AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Cultural activists here reminisced on AFM Abdul Ali Lalu, once a popular comedian of Bangla films, radio and television at a discussion at the Muslim Institute auditorium in Mymensingh town on Monday afternoon.

Lalu Sangskritik Smriti Parishad organised the discussion, marking the 6th death anniversary of Abdul Ali Lalu, better known to a generation of TV and film audiences as "Lalu Bhai".

Mayor of Mymensingh municipality Ekramul Haque Tuu was the chief guest. The prominent speakers were drawn across several cultural organisations.

Masud Kabir, secretary of Smriti Parishad, delivered the welcome address while its convener Mustafa Hasan Khokon, son of Lalu Bhai, presided over the event. Smriti Parishad member Zakir Hossain anchored the event.

The speakers pointed out that at one point of time, Lalu Bhai, a 'special category' level artiste of BTV was an important figure at cultural functions in Mymensingh. Ironically, Lalu Bhai, died of old age complications in 2008 in utter



poverty and neglect.

His family did not receive any financial aid from any quarter after his death, said the speakers adding that urgent steps should be taken to preserve the memory of Lalu Bhai.

"My father was once a busy entertainer and a familiar face on TV and in films but his life ended in complete poverty," said Khokon while talking to this correspondent.

"My mother Halima Khatun is old and infirm. It is difficult for me to make both ends meet," lamented Khokon urging the authorities of BTV and Film Development Corporation (FDC) to lend a hand to the distressed family.

Born at Sehora in Mymensingh town on October 20, 1932, Lalu Bhai received much public acclaim as an actor. He became a familiar name through the comic serial "Triratna"; plays -- "Gharua", "Anwara" and magazine programme "Babarupi". What's more he founded the reputed Modern Theatre and was associated with "Amoraboti Natya Mandir" in Mymensingh.

His career as an actor took off in 1962 through his role in the film "Surya Snan".

He acted in more than 100 films in his busy career. He also worked with Abdul Jabbar Khan, director of the first Bangla feature film "Mukh O Mukhosh".

Among films Lalu Bhai acted in are: "Dui Diganta", "Raja Elo Shahorey", and many more.

Shihoron on Desh TV



A CORRESPONDENT

Single episode TV play "Shihoron" will go on air on Desh TV at 7:45 pm on the fourth day of Eid. Written by Sadat Russel, the drama has been directed by Shoibur Rahman Russel.

Plot: RJ Arnob hosts popular radio programme Shihoron, where the audience participates and tells their personal stories. One day a middle-aged man comes to the show and tells a story. His story strikes Arnob. The next morning Arnob meets a mysterious woman at the park and starts following her. Meanwhile detective Tanvir Ahmed arrives on the scene, he tells Arnob that he can sense a mystery. Suddenly the woman disappears.

The drama casts Sadia Islam Mou, Kalyan, Tariq Anam Khan and others.

