

FILM REVIEW

# DHAKA ATTACK

## The Dhallywood humdinger we've all been waiting for

## "Acting is all I have, it's all I want"

### Runa Khan on her three upcoming films

NAZIBA BASHER

Popular film, TV and theatre actor Runa Khan has three films in the release pipeline, two of which will come out this year. In a conversation with The Daily Star, the actor speaks about her upcoming big screen ventures:

"Gohin Baluchor" is my first full-length film. It is a love story, in which two families from two villages are involved. I play the daughter-in-law of the leader of one of the villages. My character is named Shamima -- a simple girl with simple dreams. Even though her past is not shown in the film, you can tell the innocence she was brought up with. Once she was married off to a rich family, she was never treated with love and care by anyone in her new home. But she became best friends with her husband's little sister, who is one of the main characters of the film," says Runa. "The thing about Saud bhai's (director Badrul Anam Saud) film is that each and every character, even the supporting cast, has their own established backgrounds. You don't even need to watch their past to understand it."

Another movie she has recently taken part in is the Tauquir Ahmed's much-anticipated "Haldaa". "In 'Haldaa', I play a character called Jui. Tauquir bhai has wonderfully portrayed the similarities and the relationship between women and rivers, in this case, the river Haldaa."

The third upcoming film by Runa is called "Chhitkini" by Sajedul Awal. While the film has already received the censor certificate, the release date hasn't been announced yet. "My character in 'Chhitkini' is called Moimuna. She leads a difficult life, earning a living by breaking rocks for construction work. The story of 'Chhitkini' is based on Moimuna's struggle."

While Runa is still working on TV series and single-episode plays, her dedication towards film is paramount. "Every actor wants to be on the silver screen, because films live forever. I chose these films because I liked the scripts, I love working with these directors, and the supporting cast in all the films are amazing. But the main reason I took on these roles were because these roles spoke to me. I believed in them, and believed that I could play them well," says Runa.

"I never judge myself to be a great actor. I just try to do the best I can. It's not like I want to inspire something in someone while they watch me. But I want all my viewers to understand from my acting exactly how much I love doing it. Acting is all I have, it's all I want. And I want to do it for the rest of my life," says Runa on her professional mantra.

Runa Khan-starrer "Gohin Baluchor" is set to release this October 20, while "Haldaa" is set to hit cinemas in December.



FAHMIM FERDOUS

Tuesday afternoons are quite quiet at the Star Cineplex; being the middle of the week and with the shopping mall Bashundhara City on its weekly closure, it's the day that draws the smallest numbers to the country's premier multiplex and is my favourite day to visit the cinema to avoid the crowds. This week, however, I had to stand in a rather long ticket queue there, something I had never seen happen on a Tuesday. People of all ages were there, and they were not looking to get tickets for the big Hollywood titles like "It" and "Blade Runner 2049". It was all "Dhaka Attack".

Dipankar Dipon's directorial debut, dubbed the country's first cop thriller, is shaping up to be a Box Office juggernaut with over seven crores in sales in its first week-end. Social media has been a buzz leading up to its October 6 release, and the hype train is only gathering momentum with houseful shows across the country. Dhallywood has not seen this big an audience except for Eid Festivals in years.

And it is all for a good reason. With a well-crafted story providing ample thrill, edge-of-the-seat action sequences, good music and formidable acting put together by an audacious director, "Dhaka Attack" delivers what Bangladesh's film audience have been craving for far too long: a full-blast action extravaganza to call our own. Dipon keeps the story up-tempo even for the lengthy, near-three-hour runtime, injects just the right amounts of emotional quotient



and the quintessential 'commercial' film music that is a signature of films of the subcontinent, balances the thrill and procedural aspects of police investigation with great precision and makes the big reveal of an antagonist that leaves the audience awestruck.

In terms of acting, Arifin Shuvo shoulders his biggest film role to date with a lot of responsibility. AC Abid is the centerpiece of the film, and Shuvo's hard work and commitment to the role is commendable. ABM Sumon also handles his character's layers well -- delivering equally well in the intensity of a SWAT officer and the sensitive personal side of a loving husband. Hasan Imam, Alamgir, Afzal Hossain and Nawshaba all stand their ground in their smaller

roles, while Shatabdi Wadud shows why he is a trump card in any filmmaker's hand, producing one of the finest performances of the film. Mohammad Ali Haider, a powerhouse theatre actor, also deserves a mention - showing glimpses of his acting prowess in a small but crucial role. Mahiya Mahi is probably the Achilles Heel in the cast, but in her defense it was not the best-written character of the lot, and she was cast more as the token heroine and a star attraction.

But for many, the actor that steals the show is the virtually-unknown Taskeen Rahman, playing the diabolical, psychotic antagonist Jisan. He has an imposing presence in the film from its beginning despite being absent from the screen, and in a relatively brief screen-time following his late reveal, puts on a smashing performance. Big credit for it must go to Sunny Sanwar, the real-life police high-up who wrote the script, for coming up with such a sinister, maniacal and yet believable character. Jisan is not the garden variety Dhallywood villain; he is a classic antagonist with a strong back-story and Taskeen doesn't just act the role; he lives it.

Is the film a flawless cinematic masterpiece? Not by a long shot. Shuvo's hair keeps going back and forth from

short to long throughout the film, Afzal Hossain's voice is dubbed by someone else, and a couple of CGI shots are less-than-perfect. But sometimes, especially in terms of films made for a large audience, it is much more about the entire impact the film makes than flaws to be nipped, and it is the case with the "Dhaka Attack"; the audience is so taken in by the film itself they don't care about the small stuff. Another reason the film establishes the audience's willing suspension of disbelief is its authenticity: it is written by a police official and directly backed by Dhaka Metropolitan Police, most of the SWAT and bomb-squad members are real-life professionals, and the director does not have to assume how the police would approach it -- it's written down for him.

The cinematography is excellent, (I particularly loved the natural-light sequences shot in Banderban) and the sound design, background scores and the songs are all the right fit. Most importantly, the writer, director, producers knew what they wanted the film to be and they delivered it -- a realistic action and thrill-fest, and they delivered a humdinger. The end of the film also quite openly promised a sequel, and fans already cannot wait.

## Int'l Folk Dance and Music Festival in New Delhi

Bangladesh's noted folk singer Kiran Chandra Roy along with a musical troupe from Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy enthralled the audience at an International Folk Dance and Music Festival organised by Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) on Tuesday, says a press release.

Kiran Roy presented a number of popular Lalon songs much to the delight of the audience at Kamani Auditorium in New Delhi. Bangladesh's budding folk singer Shakila Shukla impressed the audience with her Lalon and Hasan Raja numbers. Dances were also presented depicting the cultural heritage of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh High Commissioner to India Syed Muazzem Ali felicitated the performers with floral bouquets. Riva Ganguly Das, Director General of ICCR, was also present.

Bangladeshi artistes presented an attractive show on the second day of the three-day festival that was also participated by teams from Spain, Egypt, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Russia and host India.



Kiran Chandra Roy (C) performs at the event.



## Actors' Equity to hand out ID to registered artistes

NAZIBA BASHER

The Actors' Equity Bangladesh comprises television actors of the country. Through this organisation, agreements are formed between actors and other parties involved in a production, and problems existing in the industry are mitigated through an elected committee as new rules and regulations are implemented.

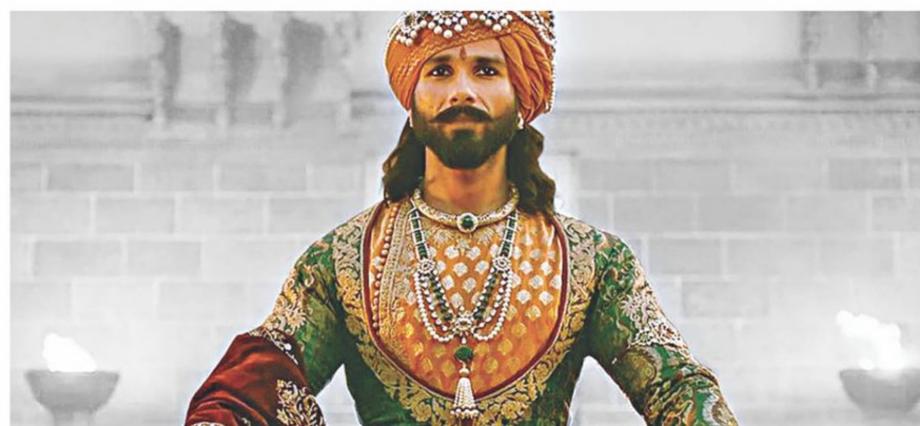
On February 10 this year, the Actors' Equity elected Shahidul Alam Sachchu as President and Ahsan Habib Nasim as General Secretary through elections. Other members of the committee include Intekhab Dinar, Tanveen Sweetey, Urmila Srabonti Kar, Shamima Tusty, amongst others.

One of the major pledges of the committee was to present actors registered with the Actor's Equity with ID cards, and the committee has brought that pledge to fruition. Members of the equity have been asked to receive their designated IDs from the Actors' Equity office, marking the first time actors will get official identities as actors of Bangladesh.

"The identification of actors is important for a number of reasons. There are many incidents when someone plays a cameo role or does one advertisement and declares themselves a professional actor. What happens then is that if there is any negative news regarding that one person, the whole industry faces a shameful situation because the news then identifies the person in question as an artiste, when in fact, they are not," said Nasim.

To alleviate these problems, all enlisted members need the identification. "Another reason is that through this ID card, our actors will get societal benefits, for healthcare, accommodation and such." New actors or actors who haven't enlisted themselves yet will go through an interview session to become primary members, and after two years of supervision, will get permanent membership.

## Shahid Kapoor shares cryptic message about "Padmavati"



The much awaited trailer for "Padmavati" was released on Monday, and was an instant whirlwind on the internet, racking up 20 million views in a day. The movie's strong star cast which includes Shahid Kapoor, Ranveer Singh and Deepika Padukone is definitely a reason, but the fact that it is also directed by master filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali also plays a big part in the hype it has generated.

On Wednesday, Shahid shared a cryptic message on his official Instagram account about his character 'Maharawal Ratanag' in the movie. Alongside the photo, he wrote, "Still waters run deep. He will rise on the 1st of December. Wait for it. #rajputpride."

In the photo, he can be seen flaunting his chiseled body, forging a sword in the fire.

The film is scheduled to release on December 1.

Source: TOI