



Arifin Shuvo



Shakib Khan



Bidya Sinha Mim



Mostafa Sarwar Farooki



Tisha

2017: A HAPPENING YEAR FOR DHAKA'S CINEMA

SHAH ALAM SHAZU and ROBINA RASHID BHUIYAN

As another year draws to a close, we come to reflect upon certain triggers of much needed change in Bangladeshi films. As the industry endured setbacks this year as legendary stalwarts of the film industry passed on to the next world, 2017 also witnessed the return of quality cinema, where viewers thronged the movie halls, and a new film in the works generated much publicity and excitement.

This year's most significant work was Dipankar Dipon's "Dhaka Attack", which created extraordinary waves both locally and abroad. It saw an extended run in the country, and sold tickets in waves. Although Dipankar Dipon had done extensive work for the small screen, "Dhaka Attack" is his film debut, which makes the achievement even more remarkable.

Following "Dhaka Attack" had been the much anticipated "Doob", helmed by Mostafa Sarwar Farooki. While the film did not draw a large audience, it had been the focus of discussion and controversy prior to its release. The film's main cast also sported Bollywood powerhouse Irrfan Khan in the main role alongside Nusrat Imrose Tisha, and earned international awards.

Rounding off this year was Tauquir Ahmed's thought-provoking riverine drama "Haldaa", which garnered widespread acclaim and popularity after having been released across 90 theatres. The film stamped Tauquir Ahmed's repute as director with a great penchant for storytelling. "Haldaa" continues to be screened at a few theatres at home, as well as abroad.

This year's film releases have also dispelled the notion of Shakib Khan being the quintes-

ential hero of Bangladesh's film industry. This year rightfully belonged to Arifin Shuvo, whose rugged good looks and stellar acting skills in "Dhaka Attack" will remain memorable.

Tisha also had a good year, playing central roles in "Doob" and "Haldaa". Tisha's performances have been laudable for years now, but having lead roles in two consecutive critically-acclaimed ventures have elevated her stardom. Mosharraf Karim, who played her romantic interest in "Haldaa", was also praised for his performance.

While this year had been tumultuous for Dhallywood's archetypal hero, Shakib Khan remained active and added a second National Film Award to his shelf. The actor also earned accolades for his performances in "Rongbaaj", "Ohongkaar", "Rajneeti" and the Bangladesh-India joint venture "Nawab" which made big money both in Bangladesh and India's West Bengal. Shakib Khan found himself at the core of controversy when he denied being married and having a son with popular actress Apu Biswas. The actor later retracted his claims later to avoid further scandal, only to send divorce papers to Biswas in a few months' time. Apu, who made her comeback with "Rajneeti", also signed two new projects.

Another actor who received some backlash this year was Nusrat Faria, who gained popularity with the film "Prem O Premi" released at the beginning of this year. The actor was featured in an item song from "Boss 2", whose lyrics drew much ire from viewers. Several lines at the song had to be subsequently changed.

Recent events also saw the release of Malek Afsari's "Ontor Jala" starring Zayed Khan and Pori Moni. The film proved popular with viewers, and its screenings were able to draw a large crowd.



Last year's biggest success was "Aynabaji", which seemed to have broken the dam for this year's numerous successes in films. "Aynabaji's" release was also a much needed impetus for the Bangladeshi's mainstream film industry, which had been in stagnation for too long, with little desire for progress. The year 2017 held onto the promise of better films, with "Dhaka Attack" setting the tone.

Another noteworthy mention is also "Oggatona", which despite being released last year, collected numerous awards from various international film festivals this year. Jaya Ahsan-starrer "Khacha", directed by Akram Khan and co-starring Abul Kalam Azad, was the Bangladeshi

submission for the Oscars, despite a brief run at the cinemas. Jaya Ahsan, who was quite busy with film ventures in West Bengal, was recognised as the Best Actress at the annual awards held by the Kolkata daily Anandabazar. Veteran actor Alamgir returned to the scene as a director after a long time, helming "Ekti Cinema's Golpo" starring Shuvu and Rituparna Sengupta.

Animesh Aich's "Bhoyongkor Sundor", starring Bhabna and Kolkata's Parambrata Chatterjee, failed to see commercial success. The film also received mixed reviews from critics and audiences alike. Parambrata's other big screen appearance, in Fakhrul Arefeen Khan's Liberation War drama "Bhuban Majhi" co-

starring Aparna Ghose and Maznun Mizan, was received well by the audience.

Eminent directors Tanvir Mokammel and Moshedul Islam also released films this year. Mokammel's "Seemantorekha" was a documentary about the 1947 partition, while Islam adapted another novel by Dr. Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, titled "Ankhi O tar Bondhura" that released in December. Abu Sayeed's "Ekjon Kobi'r Mrityu" premiered at the Kolkata International Film Festival to good response, but has not released in the country yet.

Off-camera, the year also witnessed the formation of Bangladesh Film Forum, and Misha Sawdagar being elected as President of the Artistes Association. The voting polls declared Zayed Khan as General Secretary, and Moushumi as a committee member, who later resigned and was replaced by actor Nipun.

Bidya Sinha Mim continued her rise on the silver screen this year, with releases including "Bhalobasha Emoni Hoy", "Dulabhai Zindabadi" and Indian helmer Srijit Mukherjee-directed "Yeti Obhijaan".

As ever, Popy has been on a steady track and worked on a few films this year, while Shabnoor seems to be keeping a low profile. On her return from her mysterious hiatus, Apu Biswas is regaining momentum and has played a role in a film this year.

The industry and the audience suffered its biggest blow this year with the demise of Nayak Raj Razzak, who has enthralled the audience for over 40 years and gave Bangladeshi cinema its definition.

And finally, we can say goodbye to 2017 with the release of Badrul Anam Saud's "Gohin Baluchor" today, and hope for bigger things to come next year.

TV WATCH



Ityadi's Cox's Bazar episode today

A CORRESPONDENT

The latest episode of popular magazine show "Ityadi", which will air on BTV and BTV World at 8:30pm today, has been shot on the world's longest sea beach in Cox's Bazar. The "Ityadi" team shot near Himchori Marine Drive at Doria Nagar for the year-end special episode.

The show has an informative documentary on some of the attractive sites of Cox's Bazar, a documentary on Magura's Halim who has featured in the Guinness Book of World Records thrice (he was first documented in an episode of "Ityadi" way back in 1995), and one on an unorthodox museum titled "Localised Life Diversity Museum".

The foreign segment zooms in on a different kind of a road of the Holy Madinah Sharif. The episode also has two songs, an instrumental song by Mithun Chakra and Imtiaz Ali Jimi, as well as regular segments such as invited guests' segment, nani-nati, comedy skits and mama-bhagne. Produced by Fagun Audio Vision and hosted by Hanif Sanket, "Ityadi" is sponsored by Keya Cosmetics Limited.

Zainul Festival and Art Fair 2017 begins today

ZAHANGIR ALOM

The Faculty of Fine Art (FFA), University of Dhaka (DU) is holding its two-day Zainul Festival and Art Fair 2017 from today at its premises, to mark Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin's 103rd birth anniversary (December 29).

FFA, popularly known as Charukala, has been organising Zainul Festival since 2009. Renowned artist Professor Nisar Hossain - also the Dean of FFA, DU gives his take on the festival in a recent conversation with the Daily Star. Excerpts:

"Charukala will wear a festive look at the Zainul Festival and Art Fair 2017. Eminent artists, teachers of FFA, Vice Chancellor of University of Dhaka and people from all walks of life will place wreaths at the grave of Shilpacharya at 8:30 in the morning. The festival will set off at 10 am with a Tagore song by noted singer Shama Rahman."

"Apart from the Zainul Fair, the opening day will feature the conferment of Zainul Sammanona; discussion, display and sale of artworks by all the departments of FFA, and a cultural programme in the evening. Promising artist Imran will hold an exclusive exhibition themed on the works of our opulent folk art heritage. The FFA authority will honour three eminent artists: professors Mustafa Monwar and Rafiqun Nabi (Bangladesh) and Sanat Kar (India) with Zainul Sammanona this year."

"The opening day will also feature cultural



Charukala premises take a festive look during the festival.

STAR FILE PHOTO

programmes held at Bakultala, where artistes of FFA, DU, Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology and a palagaan troupe from Tangail will perform. Based on the famous painting "Monpura 70" by Shilpacharya Zainul Abedin, a documentary film on the same title will be screened at 6:30pm on the opening day of the festival. Pradip Ghosh has directed the film."

"The Zainul Fair will exclusively showcase and sell art pieces by students and teachers of all the departments of FFA, DU. There will also be several stalls where local artisans will display and sell their

art and crafts products. Folk artistes with traditional instruments like dhol will keep the Charukala premises vibrant and rhythmic with their pulsating beats and music."

"Cultural Affairs Minister Asaduzzaman Noor will inaugurate the festival as chief guest.

Ambassador M Shahidul Islam, the secretary general of BIMSTEC; Professor Md Akhtaruzzaman, Vice Chancellor of University of Dhaka and Mainul Abedin, youngest son of Shilpacharya will attend the event as special guests."



"Gohin Baluchor" releases today

A CORRESPONDENT

"Gohin Baluchor", helmed by noted small screen director Badrul Saud, hits theatres today in about 30 cinemas across the country. The film marks Saud's first big screen directorial venture, and also the first time appearances of actors Neelanjana Neela, Tanvir and Moon, who play

central characters. The film has generated a positive buzz following the release of its trailer and a few songs, which promise a touching romance against the breathtaking riverine backdrop of the char.

The film's cast and crew held a press meet at the Bangladesh Film Development Corporation (BFDC) yesterday marking the release.



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