

'Bala' promises to be a hair-raising affair

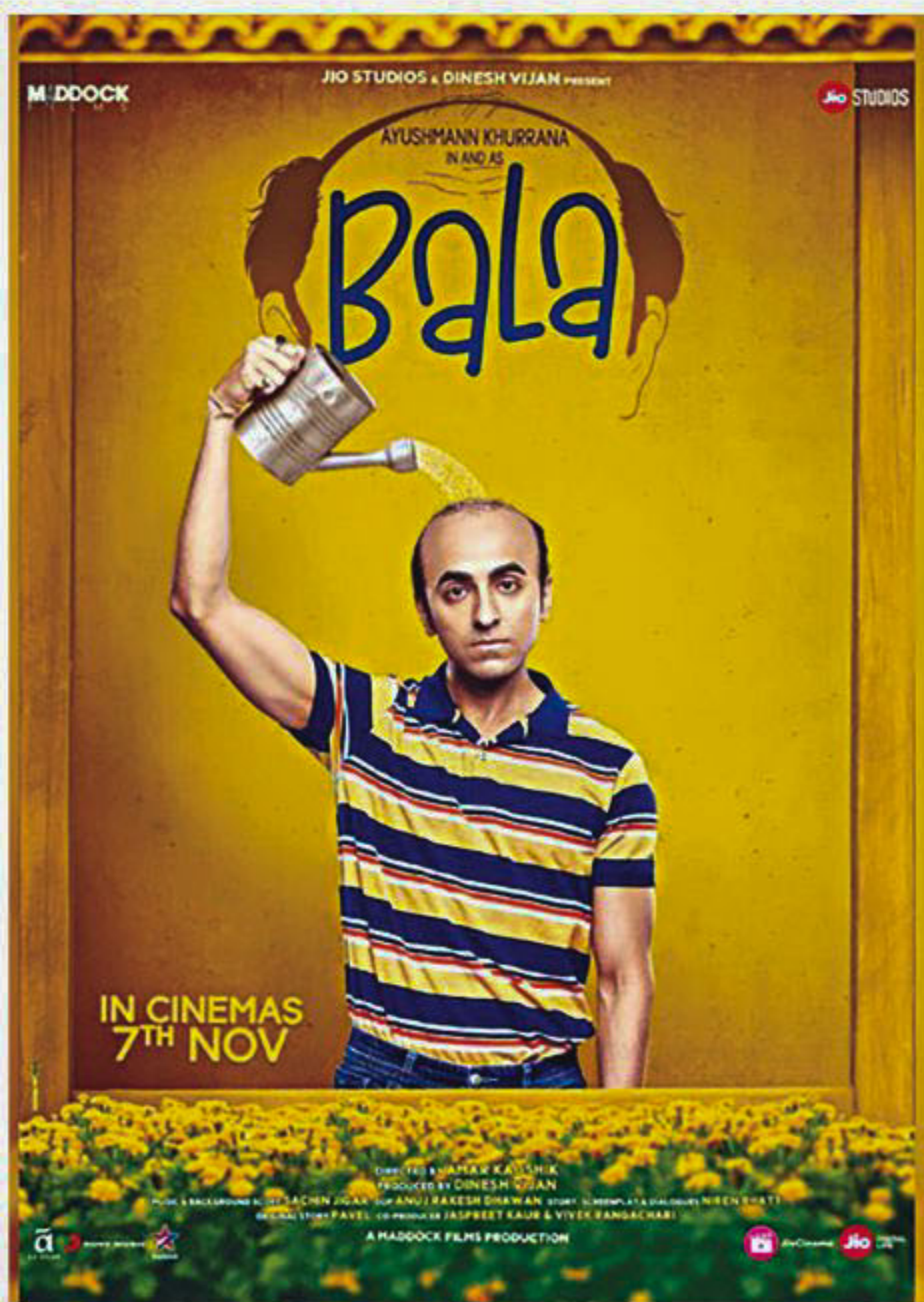
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Ayushmann Khurrana is riding on the success of his last release, *Dream Girl*. Ever since the announcement of his next film, *Bala*, his fans have been excited about the same. A trailer and poster of the film were released recently.

In the trailer, Ayushmann is playing the role of Gaurav Rawat or Bala, a man from Lucknow who is facing premature balding. The film also takes on the topic of people's obsession with fair skin.

The trailer starts with Bala selling skin whitening products. He is seen telling people how a family always looks for a fair-skinned girl for their son. Bhumi Pednekar, a dusky girl from Lucknow, gets offended and asks Bala why he is wearing a cap.

She then removes the cap, leaving Bala's semi-bald head in the open. The trailer then goes on to show Bala's struggle with premature balding and how it is proving as a hindrance in his marriage. Yami Gautam is playing the role of a super model from Lucknow, Bala's love interest in the film. The film, which releases in November, is directed by Amar Kaushik.



SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

What you have been up to lately?

We are promoting Rubaiyat Hossain's *Made in Bangladesh* in various film festivals across the world. I just came back from the world premiere of the film at Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), where it was well received. I play the character of Dalia in the film, who is actually the antagonist in a way.

You are the central character of *Rickshaw Girl*, which is based on a very popular book by Mitali Perkins. Tell us about your experience working on the film.
In *Rickshaw Girl*, I play the role of Naima, who is a free and artistic soul. She does not understand the complexities of the world. At one point, she feels like her gender is holding her back in the society. Adamant on proving a point to the society, the girl starts driving a rickshaw, which is predominantly a male job. The best part about working with Amitabh Reza Chowdhury is that if he feels like you are working on the same frequency and understanding the character, he will give you a lot of freedom. He is easy-going to work with, and I had a great experience. I am also very excited about Shakib Khan having a cameo in the movie!

Did you always want to be an actor?

Since my mother, Momena Chowdhury,

Rendezvous with THE RICKSHAW GIRL

Having made her on-screen debut when she was only two months old in the tele-fiction 'Dure Kothao', Novera Rahman is set to star as the lead in the Amitabh Reza Chowdhury directorial 'Rickshaw Girl'. The film is based on Mitali Perkins' book of the same name. The promising actor talks to The Daily Star in an exclusive interview about her projects, acting philosophy and future plans.

is an actor, I have seen the profession very closely since I was a child. I was in very popular serials, including *Pakhi Shob Kore Rob*, *Ekanno Borti* and *Ityadi* as a child. My first film appearance was a cameo in *Ekattorer Khudiram*. I have always loved telling stories, and getting a reaction out of people. This is what ultimately inspired me to become an actor.

If you were given the chance to work with anyone in the industry, who would it be?

I would love to work with the director of *Dhaka Attack*, Dipankar Dipon. Redoan Rony's work also inspires me, and it would be a pleasure if I ever got to star in one of his projects. I would also like to star alongside Mosharraf Karim, if he plays a serious role.

Would you consider doing a mainstream Bangla film?

It really depends on what you would call 'mainstream'. For me, *Rickshaw Girl* is mainstream, as Amitabh Reza Chowdhury directed it. However, I would like to work in more 'indie' projects, as it gives me scope to experiment, and act in fully fleshed out characters. My generation is constantly fighting an uphill battle, trying to bring something new to the table. People like me are stuck navigating our way, and it is hard to get something meaningful done in an industry that thrives in mediocrity. That being said, we are here to make a change.



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Airin's 'Padmar Prem' gets a release date

After its successful screenings across Kolkata, 'Padmar Prem', starring prominent model and actor Airin, is set to release nationwide on November 1. The film is directed by Haroonuzzaman.

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The film was released in Kolkata on September 20 under the title *Padmar Bhalobasha*. The Indo-Bangla joint production features Airin in the titular role, Padma, a girl from the 60s who lives

on the bank of the Padma River. Actor Sumit Sengupta stars opposite Airin in the film, which also includes Sadek Bachchu, Jayanta Chattopadhyay, Alexander Bow and Moonmun, among others, in different roles.

The shooting of the film took place near the bank of the Padma River in Manikganj.



PHOTO: SHEKH MEHEDI MORSHED



MAYABOTI

to release in Sydney and Melbourne

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Arun Chowdhury's *Mayaboti*, starring Nusrat Imrose Tisha and Yash Rohan in the lead roles, is about a young girl named Maya who fights an uphill battle for justice. The film performed remarkably well throughout its run in Bangladesh, attracting crowds of all ages. It is set to release in Sydney and Melbourne on October 27, 2019.

David Letterman's 'My Next Guest Needs No Introduction' to feature Shah Rukh Khan

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Netflix recently released the teaser for the episode featuring Shah Rukh Khan on David Letterman's *My Next Guest Needs No Introduction*. As expected, the two celebrities rave about each other throughout the duration of the clip.

American talk show host David Letterman recently made a visit to Mumbai where he was hosted by King Khan at his house. In fact, Letterman also celebrated Eid with the Bollywood superstar. By the looks of it, Khan also cooked Italian food for Letterman.

Calling him the biggest star in the world, Letterman expressed what a blast he had getting to know Khan. "The most fun I have ever had," he claims at the end of the video. The episode will start streaming on Netflix from October 25.



PHOTO: COLLECTED