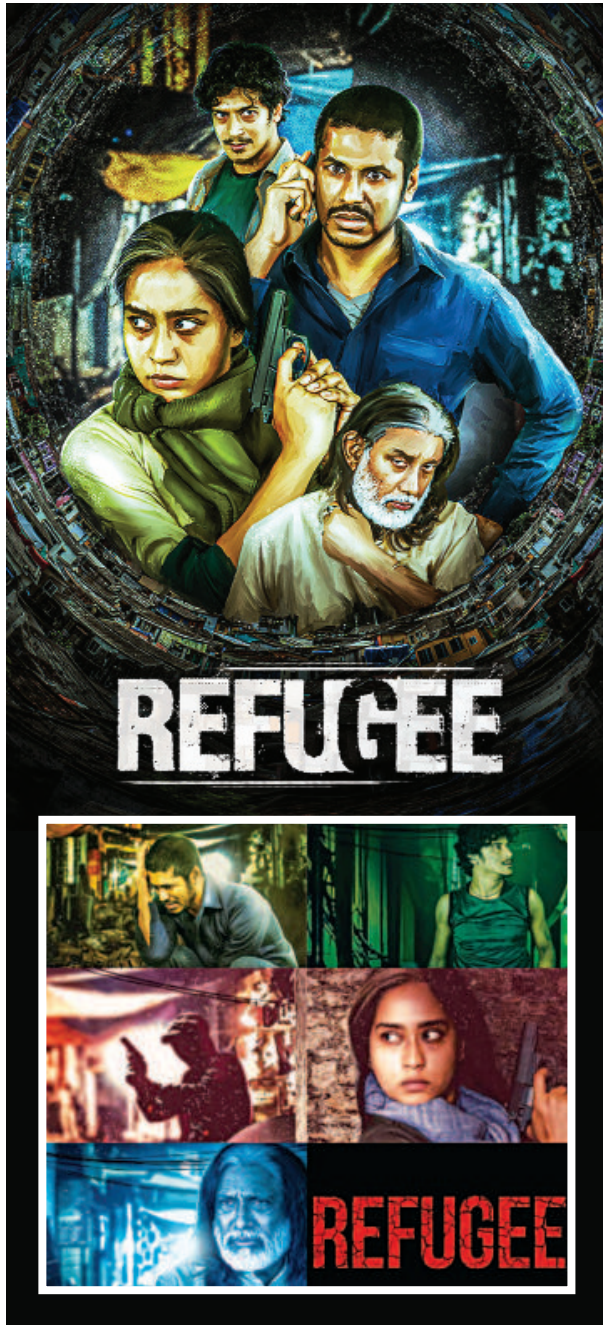


# Does 'Refugee' do justice to the portrayal of the Bihari community?

**The plight of a group of people who can neither integrate into mainstream Bangladeshi culture nor migrate back to Pakistan is a classic example of being caught between a rock and a hard place.**



AR NODI

The new Hoichoi crime-thriller web series "Refugee," starring Afzal Hossain, Zakia Bari Mamo, and Sohel Mondol, attempts to portray the unexplored lives of the Bihari community in Bangladesh, who have been living a life of neglect and abuse as "stranded Pakistanis," who allegedly opposed the 1971 Liberation War.

This series has become somewhat of a hot topic among audiences in recent times, for its plot that revolves around life in the Geneva Camp, a setting which is rarely seen in Bangladeshi media.

Directed by Imtiaz Hossain, the series is set in 2007, when Bangladesh was discussing whether or not to grant the member of the Bihari community citizenship – it delves into their restlessness at the time.

The plight of a group of people who can neither integrate into mainstream Bangladeshi culture nor migrate back to Pakistan is a classic example of being caught between a rock and a hard place.

The plot revolves around Iqbal (Sohel Mondol), a drug dealer at the Geneva Camp, whose circumstances force him to become an informant for police officer Maria (Zakia Bari Mamo).

While the series had the potential to be a thrilling experience for its viewers, it falls short due to its predictable plot and lack of genuine emotions.

The story progression is convoluted and slow-paced, with only six episodes in the first season. The script is riddled with poor dialogue and characters who are difficult to relate to, and as a result, it fails to leave an impression. Furthermore, the plot lacks the necessary depth, making it highly predictable. Finally, the representation of a refugee camp, which is comparatively new territory

for directors, is underwhelming and unsatisfying.

However, the series does have some good things going for it, namely the impressive colour-grading and cinematography and brilliant performances by a talented cast.

Cinematographer Tuhin Tanzimul and colourist Chinmoy Das use a dark green overtone to emphasize the Biharis' loyalty to Pakistanis, as well as the cramped and claustrophobic life in the refugee camps.

Actress Zakia Bari Mamo takes a risk by playing the character of an investigative police officer in this series, as she played a similar character in the critically acclaimed "Mohanagar". It is difficult to portray two similar characters in different ways, but she did it brilliantly.

Sohel Mondol has already received applause for his acting in "Taqdeer" and "Boli". To his credit, he made the character believable.

Afzal Hossain's portrayal of a terrorist, in my opinion, needed a little more backstory and buildup. He was on the screen for very little time compared to the other characters, but he still showed charisma during that time. But it feels like the director could not use Afzal Hossain in the proper way in this series.

Apart from this, Sharif Siraj caught the viewers' attention with his natural acting and fluent dialogue delivery, amidst a cast of high-profile actors.

The portrayal of sexual abuse of men in prison is what grabbed my attention the most in this series. In a subtle manner, the director depicts a man's helplessness, mental trauma, and distress with just two dialogues.

Despite its many flaws, "Refugee" is worth seeing once for its portrayal of some social issues that requires actual courage to execute.

## Disney apologises to Johnny Depp

Disney have sent an apology letter to Depp, offering a handsome amount to return as Jack Sparrow. According to reports, draft for a film about Jack Sparrow has been penned already, and the producers are hopeful that Johnny will forgive them for axing him from their projects.

## Nawshin and Hillol announce first child together



Renowned television artistes Nawshin Nahreen Mou and Adnan Faruque Hillol are expecting their first child together. The couple are residing at the USA for a long time. Pictures of celebrating their baby shower has been posted on the social media.

## Unprecedented response for country's premier OTT Awards

We are overwhelmed by the tremendous responses & submissions for the Blender's Choice-The Daily Star OTT and Digital Content Awards 2021. The awards are intended to recognize artists, content producers, and individuals who are making a positive impact on both the OTT & Digital Content industry, as well as the entertainment industry. Awards have been set up in 36 categories, and there have been approximately 1200 submissions overall. The categories under accordingly films/drama, TV series, and individual content, as well as the critics' choice section. After the nominations are thoroughly sorted by our esteemed jury panel, a date for the grand gala will be announced.



# NEWS

## Substance abuse in children

FROM PAGE 12  
"I take Dandy as it makes me sleep easier and it is cheap and available," a 12-year-old street child at the capital's Kawran Bazar told the correspondent.  
Another reason for the increase in substance addiction is the use of children as drug mules, according to Mahmood.  
More than 21 percent of the narcotics carriers are children, according to a recent DNC research.  
"Smugglers use children to carry narcotics from one place to another to douse law enforcers' eyes. On the way, the children try them and become addicted," Mahmood said, while urging the DNC to increase monitoring.  
Children also veer towards substance use due to the disintegration of their families, said Atanu Barua, project director of BARACA.  
"We have found a number of children in dropping centres who came to Dhaka after getting angry at their family members and then get drawn to drugs through friends or out of curiosity," he added.  
The DNC is now focusing

mainly on the treatment of the addicted children, said Md Masud Hossain, director of DNC.  
"But we have a plan to take special initiatives to address the scenario," he told the correspondent.  
**EIGHTY PERCENT OF ADDICTS ARE YOUTH**  
DNC yesterday observed the "International Day Against Drug Abuse, Illicit Trafficking" at the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium with the theme "addressing drug challenges in health and humanitarian crisis".  
Statistics show about 7.5 to 8 million people in the country are addicted to drugs, said Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan while addressing the event as the chief guest.  
But many say the figure is much higher.  
"And the most alarming part is that 80 percent of them are youths."  
Of the addicts, 57 percent are involved in sex crimes.  
"We are not sparing anyone – we have to address this menace at any cost."  
The law has been amended, as a result of which a large number of drug addicts are now

behind bars, Khan said.  
Last year, a total of 20,592 narcotics cases were filed against 21,992 people and they are drug dealers, smugglers or addicts.  
And 60 percent of the inmates in the 68 jails around the country are drug dealers, smugglers or addicts.  
"It's your responsibility to know what your son does, what your neighbours' sons do. If you don't carry out your responsibilities properly, our dreams will be shattered," Khan added.  
Earlier, Khan said a law is being formulated to conduct dope tests before enrolling students at the universities to prevent drug abuse.  
Medical tests will be done at the time of admission, during which dope tests will also be carried out, he said at a programme at the secretariat.  
He, however, did not give a time frame for this.  
At present, recruits at law enforcement agencies have to pass dope tests in line with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's zero-tolerance policy towards drugs.

## Tarique, wife are fugitives

FROM PAGE 2  
the order for holding its trial.  
The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul Haque Akondo delivered the verdict after hearing arguments on whether Tarique and Zubaida, who have been living in London since 2008, are fugitives in the case.  
The question was raised before the bench on June 5 when it was dealing with three separate writ petitions filed by the accused, challenging the filing and initiation of the case under the then Emergency Power Rules.

Details of the HC judgment could not be known as its full text has not been released yet.  
Anti-Corruption lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan told The Daily Star that Tarique has been convicted in three cases and sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in a money laundering case, 10 years' imprisonment in the Zia Orphanage Trust corruption case and to life imprisonment in the August 21 grenade attack case.  
The HC declared him a fugitive as he did not surrender before any court in connection with the

cases, the lawyer said.  
Warrant of convictions against him is pending and therefore, he is a fugitive in the eye of law in the Tk 4.82 crore graft case, he said.  
The ACC counsel said the HC declared Zubaida a fugitive in line with an observation from the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court that in a judgement on April 13 termed her a fugitive in the eye of law.  
No lawyer can appear for Tarique and Zubaida during trial of the corruption case against them until they surrender before the lower court concerned, Khurshid Alam

claimed.  
Zakir Hossain, a lawyer for Tarique and Zubaida, said they would be able to understand after going through the full text of HC verdict whether lawyers can appear for his clients during the trial proceedings.  
On September 26, 2007, the anti-graft body filed the case with Kafrul Police Station against Tarique, his wife Zubaida and her mother Iqbal Mand Banu for amassing assets worth Tk 4.82 crore through illegal means and concealing information in their wealth statements.  
After separate writ

petitions were filed by the accused, the HC that year issued rules asking the state and the ACC to explain why the filing and initiation of the case under the then Emergency Power Rules should not be declared illegal. The court also stayed the trial proceedings of the case.  
Attorney General AM Amin Uddin and Deputy Attorney General AKM Amin Uddin Manik represented the state, while lawyers AJ Mohammad Ali, Zainul Abedin, AM Mahub Uddin Khokon and Kayser Kamal argued for Tarique and his wife during hearing the petitions.

## Soybean oil prices cut

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"Taking into account the overall situation, I think the prices of [Soybean] oil should have been cut by 15 percent [Tk 30] a litre in the domestic market."  
Citing data from Reuters, Bangladesh Trade and Tariff Commission said the price of crude soybean oil fell 26 percent in Argentina in a month. It fell to \$1,464 a tonne on June 22 from \$1,970 a month ago. Palm oil price also fell by 27 percent to

\$1,230 from \$1,690.  
Edible oil prices in Bangladesh depend on international price movements, as up to 90 percent of the annual demand of 20 lakh tonnes is met through imports.  
According to retailers in Dhaka and Chattogram, one-litre bottle of soybean oil sold for Tk 196 yesterday and five-litre bottle for Tk 980-990, while loose soybean oil sold for Tk 175-180 a litre.  
Shafiul Ather Taslim,

director of TK Group's finance and operations wing, said oil prices have been reduced keeping in mind the decline in its prices in the global market, flood situation and the Eid-ul-Azha.  
"It appears from the declining trend in edible oil prices in the global market that the prices will decrease further in the coming days. But the products that we are selling in the market now were purchased at a higher price..." he added.

## Health dept concerned

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recorded after testing 10,728 samples yesterday, the total number of cases rose to 19,65,173  
With two deaths, the death toll stood at 29,140,

yesterday and the death rate now stands at 1.48 percent.  
Among the two deceased, one was male and the other female, both aged above 60.  
At least 169 patients have

recovered from Covid-19 within this period. The total number of recoveries now stands at 19,06,688, with the recovery rate being 97.02 percent.  
The minister said they

were taking measures to curb infections. With officials of the health ministry and the health directorate general testing positive for Covid recently, Maleque requested all to be

cautious.  
"We'll have to wear masks and maintain social distance," he said, urging everyone to complete their vaccine courses immediately.

## Farmers face hunger after loss of crops

FROM PAGE 1  
invading his house. Along with those went his 40 ducks.  
And just like that, a healthy homestead is now surviving on relief food.  
At the first sight of sun last Saturday, farmers brought out their meager stocks of rice and put them out to dry on plastic sheets the road leading from Shalutikar Bazar to Tawakkul union.  
Any patch of land that was not under water was covered by ankle-deep mud, forcing the farmers to crowd the tarmac with barely enough space for even a CNG to pass through.  
But for every plastic sheet containing shining golden grains, there were 10 others containing damp, brown kernels that would

yield inedible rice.  
At one spot, goats happily munched away at the damp grains without getting chased away as farmers let the animals eat what they can't.  
At another, a pick-up truck mistakenly ran over the plastic sheet, and a thin man in worn-out clothes came charging with a stick, trying to protect his spoiled rice with a fierceness that can only be driven by hunger.  
Asked how he would consume the damaged rice, he said he would try and salvage any good grains.  
In the last flash floods that hit the Sylhet division in the last week of April, 7,730 hectares of Boro were damaged in Sunamganj, Sylhet and Habiganj districts.  
Another flash flood hit

on May 11 and damaged around 2,534 hectares of Boro, 1,674 hectares of Aush, 1,500 hectares of vegetables and 75 hectares of peanuts.  
The floods that began on June 15 is the third blow within two months.  
In Sylhet district alone, 28,945 hectares of crops were damaged till June 26, according to the district administration.  
The loss of the crops in three other districts is being assessed as the floodwaters had still not receded in the low-lying areas.  
However, an estimate released on June 21 by the agriculture ministry said 56,000 hectares of Aush had been destroyed.  
Musharraf Hussain Khan, additional director

of Sylhet Divisional Agriculture Office, said, "This flood is a major blow to the agriculture in Sylhet as around 50 percent of the Aush is damaged."  
"Moreover, we are facing a huge crisis of dry land to prepare Aman seedbeds as the floodwaters were still not receding."  
Sylhet division alone produces around 16 percent of the nation's Aush yield and eight percent of Boro.  
Meanwhile in Sirajganj, Babul Kumar Sutrodhor, deputy director of the district's agriculture extension department, told The Daily Star that 12,599 hectares of crop fields were submerged in floods this year.  
"We are calculating the crop loss and expecting to get a full report this

month."  
Md Nasir Bhuiya, a resident of Kawakhola in Sirajganj Sadar upazila, said he had cultivated 10 bighas of jute – all of which has gone under water.  
"If the floods last a week longer, none of my crops will survive."  
Meanwhile, the flood claimed two more lives in Sherpur and Habiganj districts in 24 hours till yesterday morning, raising the fatalities to 84, reported UNB.  
Each of them died by drowning in floodwater, according to the Directorate General of Health Services. The total deaths were recorded from May 17 to June 26.  
(Our Pabna correspondent contributed to the report.)