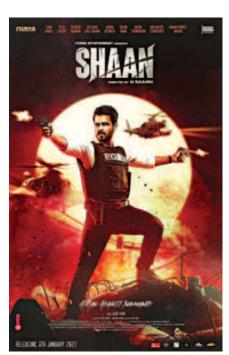
ARTS & ENTERTAINMEN









18 FILMS IN 6 MONTHS: Did they recover their investments?

The film industry has changed its ways, and revenues are no longer dependent on theatres only.

ZAHID AKBAR

After the devastating impact of Covid-19, filmmakers and cinema hall owners became optimistic with the booming response to Eid releases. While 18 movies have been released so far, only a few were able to pull audiences back to the halls.

The film industry has changed its ways, and revenues are no longer dependent on theatres only.

Directors can earn money through other mediums, including OTT platforms, sale of TV rights, digital rights, sponsors, release of their movies

in other countries.

Throughout the last 6 months, these are the movies which have been released: "Chitamahal", "Tor Majhey Amar Prem", "Shoshurbari Zindabad 2", "Mafia", "Mukhosh", "Shimu", "Gunin", "Lockdown Love Story", "Jal Cherar Somoy", "Golui", "Shaan", "Bidrohi", "Boddo Bhalobashi", "Paap Punno", "Agamikal", "Bikhov", "Omanush" and "Talash".

Azad Khan, the producer of "Shaan", told The Daily Star that he is really happy with the positive

"The movie has received superb response from the audiences. It's still running in a few theatres. However, we are not able to generate enough revenue to return the full investment just yet. We are hopeful that the investment will be recovered gradually in the future. In addition, there are many other ways to make money from movies. We are really happy that we were able to distribute 'Shaan' in other countries like US, Malaysia and Paris for screening," said Azad Khan.

"Shoshurbari Zindabad 2" director Debashish Biswas shared how Covid-19 impacted his film.

"The movie was released amidst the surge of Covid-19 pandemic, so it kind of hurt our film. However, it still ran for over 3-4 consecutive weeks in theatres. Many cinema halls have opened due to the release of the film. We were able to generate an investment of about BDT 25 to 30 lakh from the cinema halls," said Debashish Biswas.

Efthakhar Suvo, director of "Mukhosh" believes it is completely absurd to assume that one can regain full investments through release in theatres in this industry.

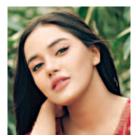
"My movie has run across cinema halls and multiplexes for two months, but the investment has not been recouped. The film industry has changed completely after the pandemic," he says, commenting that they have to rely on OTT and television premiers to recoup their investments.

Zahid Hasan, head of Avi Kathachitra, a film distribution company, emphasised that the film industry has to change its way in the post-Covid era.

"People have become accustomed to watching movies in other mediums since the Covid-19 surge. At present, it is possible to recoup 30 to 50 percent investment from the cinema hall. The rest of the investment will come back from OTT platforms, digital media, sponsors, TV rights and movie releases abroad," said Zahid Hasan.

"The movies that have released in the last few months have not been able to bring back the investment through the cinema halls. It has to be compensated by other means. Audiences have started returning to theatres with the release of films like 'Mission Extreme', 'Mukhosh', 'Shaan', and 'Golui'. However, the investment will not return solely from cinema halls alone. We have to think of better ways to optimise more returns for the movies. I am not saying that the movies that are being released now are bad, but we have to come to terms with this harsh reality," added





Samira Khan Mahi and Sharif Siraj to make silver screen debut

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Acclaimed director Syed Salahuddin Zaki, well known for his 1980 film "Ghuddi", is working on a new film which will also feature Afzal Hossain playing a negative role. The movie titled "Krantikaal" will see the silver screen debuts of two fresh faces, Samira Khan Mahi and Sharif Siraj, the former gained recognition for her work on small screen projects and the latter for his OTT projects such as "YouTumor" and "Refugee".

Jessia and Alisha to star in 'MR-9'

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Bangladesh of 2017, Jessia Islam and first runner-up of Miss Universe Bangladesh in 2019, Alisha Islam are set to star as Bangladesh Counter Intelligence Agency (BCI) spies in the upcoming Masud Rana

movie, "MR-9". The film has already wrapped up shooting in the US, with the next phase of shootings already

starting in Bangladesh. The "MR-9" team started shooting on June 24 in various locations across the country. Both Jessia and Alisha started shooting for their parts last Friday.

NEWS

Bangladesh is owed an apology

International Cooperation Agency and Islamic Development Bank withdrew their support from the project.

believe the institutions just because they are big. Many a time, they resort to chicanery of various purposes," said Momen, for them to rethink their who joined in the event virtually.

Following allegations, Syed Abul Hossain, who was the communications minister then, resigned.

Md Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, the then secretary of the WB to take a suspended and arrested for his alleged involvement in Bhuyian, who is now the corruption conspiracy. Bangladesh's ambassador

Fingers were also pointed to Germany. towards Prime Minister's Economic Affairs Adviser Mashiur Rahman.

The corruption charges were not proven.

"Many of our scholars the event. danced to the tune of ways of thinking," Momen said.

WB worked The inefficiently with regards to the allegations of above all, patriotism. corruption conspiracy, Rahman said.

secret information, said

"In fact, that was the time when I had told the World Bank that its jurisprudence was weak. then went to a court in That way of working can connectivity in South "It is not right to Canada, but the allegations only humiliate people, not and Southeast Asia, the support them," he said at

Prime Minister Sheikh the foreigners. It is time Hasina's decision then to forge ahead with the project with own funds was correct as it was based on people's welfare, the dignity of the nation and

least-developed countries often are It was not good form trapped in various forms of conditions set by the global to the bridges division, was major decision based on lenders, said Shahriar Alam, the state minister for foreign affairs.

"Bangladesh's success in

implementing the Padma FROM PAGE 1 bridge project would be an inspiration for the other LDC countries," he added.

Apart from boosting Padma bridge would make Bangladesh's position stronger in the regional geopolitical landscape, said Masud Bin Momen, the foreign secretary.

"We have implemented a number of mega projects and more are underway, but now we need to focus on mega social infrastructure that is education and health, to reap the full benefits of the projects," said Selim Raihan, a professor at the University of Dhaka's economics

minister for energy, octane \$148 and crude oil audit of the company... of inflation."

According to the BPC, if diesel price was raised by Tk 10 a litre, the cost commuting each kilometre by an individual in the capital and the port city would be Tk 2.23, up from the current Tk 2.15. For long-haul buses, the fare would be Tk 1.89 from the current Tk 1.80. Commuting costs would rise by Tk 0.16 and Tk 0.24 for each kilometre if diesel price was hiked by Tk 20

and Tk 30 respectively. However, consumer rights groups said the rates fixed by the government almost never followed by the transport companies and the people end up spending a lot

Nasrul Hamid, state

presided over the meeting \$115 in the international There are many anomalies attended by officials of market affect to the second of the international there are many anomalies attended by officials of market affect to the international there are many anomalies attended by officials of market affect to the international there are many anomalies attended by officials of market affect to the international there are many anomalies attended by officials of market affect to the international there are many anomalies attended by officials of market affect to the international the internat Petrobangla, BPC, BRTA, BIWTA and transport

Fuel prices may go up by at least Tk 10

filling station owners. Multiple who attended the meeting told The Daily Star that the state minister said the government would set the transportation fare before announcing the new fuel

In November 2021, after the diesel price was hiked, transport companies kept the vehicle off the roads for three days, causing people to suffer immensely. Transport operation regained normalcy after the BPC or the energy made profits, you didn't the government raised the

prices.

This month, the average 159 litres, of diesel was \$171, earlier demanded a proper already bearing the brunt

The BPC claimed that it was losing Tk 36 and associations leaders and Tk 55.15 for each litre of octane sold at Tk 89 and individuals diesel at Tk 80.

After refining crude oil, BPC now spends Tk 96.87 for a litre of petrol but sells it for Tk 86.

BPC annually imports 62 lakh tonnes of fuel, 72 percent of which is diesel, 4.8 percent octane and six

percent crude oil. Contacted, Prof M this regard. Shamsul Alam, energy expert and vice president of Consumers Association Bangladesh, said set fuel prices because the

accounts.

He added that the association would sue the secretary of energy division and the chairman of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission for not following the law.

Only the BERC has the legal right to set fuel prices, he said, adding that the association has a writ petition pending with the High Court in

Economist Hussain said the BPC has been making profit since fiscal 2014-15. "When you division has no right to lower the prices, but when vou are making losses, vou "BPC itself is a business want to hike the prices. It is price of each barrel, about organisation. We have not acceptable. People are

Form commission within 30 days

FROM PAGE 12

commission to identify the issued the rule following scheme. Later, Canadian stories" about corruption Canadian court's decision officials of SNC-Lavalin, regarding the Padma to acquit all three accused a Canadian construction Bridge Bridge project and why it should not be ordered to charges. bring those behind such stories to justice.

of Justice Quazi Reza- the project, raised the Md Nazrul Islam Talukder

At a programme, Health

Minister Zahid Maleque said

around 2.20 crore children

aged between five and 12

of corruption conspiracy firm.

Ul Hoque and Justice allegation in 2011 and and Justice Kazi Md Ejarul directed to form an enquiry Mohammad Ullah had eventually pulled out of the "culprits who made up media reports citing a police sued some top

On Sunday, Deputy World Bank, Attorney General AKM which was supposed to Amin Uddin Manik praved The then HC bench be the main financier of to the HC bench of Justice

Haque Akondo for hearing and disposal of the rule.

Lawyer Abdun Nur Dulal appeared for Bangladesh Authority while senior lawyer Khurshid Alam Khan argued for Anti-Corruption Commission during the hearing on the rule

Private relief efforts outpace govt's FROM PAGE 12 on user-submitted data

> and the figure there is conservative. crowdfunded These ventures were initiatives taken, more often than not, by friends and families of those affected.

Meanwhile, social media influencers like Syed Sayedul Haque Suman claimed to have raised Tk one crore in two days.

While government representatives on the field continue to say the allocated relief they got from the state is enough, flood victims strongly disagree.

These correspondents of The Daily Star were able to reach flood affected areas while traveling with private organisations providing relief.

Speaking to them on Friday, Md Lokman, union parishad chairman of

Tawakkul in Sylhet, said, "What we have is enough and we are hopeful of

of people banged on the gates of the parishad office demanding relief.

relief, or received a paltry amount only once. On Thursday, Abdul additional

Latif, union parishad Darbast, also insisted that the government relief they got

The government is really helping the people of my union.

On that particular day, multiple residents of the Uttar Gardhana village of the union told this newspaper that they had received no relief at all.

One exception was (flattened rice). Kabir Ahmed, a member of Paschim Islampur union of Companiganj upazila, who recently said, "For around four thousand people in three villages in

my ward, I received only

70 sacks of food and one

tonne of rice, all of which is inadequate." Debajit Singha, divisional commissioner (general) in Sylhet, recently told our correspondents, "The relief distribution was hampered due to a lack of

coordination in the early

days. No one really goes

hungry now as locals help

each other." Aytun of Chatlarpar village in Jaintiapur would

disagree. When these correspondents met her last Thursday, she had already spent nine days surviving on only chira

No boats carrying any relief came to her village until that day. "Do you have some rice that you can give me?" she asked.

Md Mosharrof Hossain, divisional commissioner in Sylhet, said, "The government-allotted relief and those coming from non-government sources are adequate, when combined, for the flood-affected people in the division." Meanwhile, Md Enamur Rahman, state minister for disaster management and relief, took to the parliament vesterday and spoke at length about how well the government was doing to

help the flood victims. He called it the worst flood in 122 years but he failed to mention what the needs of the affected people were.

Organisation not authorised vaccines suitable

Bangabandhu

years will be inoculated against Covid-19 soon. "The World Health had [child vaccination for this age] earlier; now we have got

Mujib Medical University in passports." the capital yesterday.

Mask mandate back again

said. The minister "Official statistics said there are 2.20 crore children children as early as possible. aged between five and 12. They have to register on three Covid-19 patients Surokkha app using birth registration certificates.

"Since the countrywide inoculation campaign against Covid-19 began on it and we already have February 8, 2021, people are required to register children," he said while on www.surokkha.gov. Sheikh cards, birth certificates or 29,145 and the confirmed dropped for months.

The minister urged the guardians to ensure registration for In another development,

died yesterday, said a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services. Besides, the DGHS reported 2,087 new cases, a decrease from the previous

day's 2.101. With this, the total addressing the event at bd using national identity number of deaths reached after the positivity rate

cases 19,69,361. Against

yesterday's 13,489 tests, the positivity rate was 15.47 percent. Of all confirmed cases yesterday, the highest 1,795 were in Dhaka city, according to the release. Of the three deaths.

division and two were in Chattogram division. The Covid cases started rising early this month

one was man and two were

women. One was in Dhaka

getting more in the future." As he spoke, hundreds

Several residents said they had either not received

member of is enough. "I got 24 sacks of rice.

His union has 1,100 families.