



THE JOY OF GOING TO CINEMAS IS COMING BACK

The smell of freshly made popcorns hit you as you walk inside the cinema hall. You queue for your movie snack, you are spoiled for choices — potato wedges, chicken wings, assorted popcorns, chilled fizzy drinks, steaming coffees; you name it and it is there, even cream rolls and patties or nachos, if you are lucky enough. The modern cinema theatres are hell-bent on giving you an all-out experience. The seating

arrangement is equally laudable, you can curl up in your lounge seats and enjoy the movie, the VIP seats are spacious and give you a wonderful experience watching your favourite action hero kill bad guys on a humongous screen. Regular seats are great too; in a nutshell, cineplexes in Dhaka have successfully brought back the interest in general people to go watch a film in halls.

Gone are the days of torn seats, dirty, mucky floors and stale potato chips, (though a pack of the crispy ones still remain a classic). And the recent hit releases like *Poran*, or *Hawa* have multiplied the craze for local films. Imagine queuing up for four straight days to buy the tickets for the latest superhit without success; this says so much of the upgradation from cheap vulgar commercial releases to good scripts, awesome acting, great cinematography and the commitment to give you unquestionable entertainment.

If this trend continues, then the Dhaka crowd will flock to cinema halls again; for there is such a dearth of recreation in our city, except for eating out and parties; we don't have much to do. The film *Poran*, based on a true story and starring the new kid in town Shariful Razz, and Bidya Sinha Mim, generated so much excitement mixed with a feeling of admiration for the acting and script that people went home and read up on the gruesome crime of Noyon Bond and Minni. How Minni fares in her condemned cell was the common thought. Had she really become mentally compromised like the rumours suggested?

Hawa, the mystical story of seafarers, fishermen and their superstition take you for a ride. The deep-sea shooting set the mood for mythical beings coming your way. Is it true that women on the boat bring bad luck for fisherman's catch? The rattling revenge saga keeps you wondering.

These scripts are a breath of fresh air as opposed to the regular rubbish of 'poor boy falling for a rich girl and singing and dancing to mistuned songs around trees and gardens.' The industry is trying to come up with alternative commercially successful plots and the audiences are responding to it. The *Hawa* craze is proof enough.

We hear stories from our parents and grandparents about films like *Shujan Shokhi*, *Golapi Ekhon Train e*, *Shareng Bou*, commercial success like *Mintu Amar Naam*, *The Rain of the seventies* and listened to their experience in awe. Then, a period of lull that began in the eighties and continues to a large extent, caused the industry to take big dive and hit rock bottom with a slew of cheap releases.

Let us keep our fingers crossed and pray that we get more such deshi blockbuster releases for which we have to stand in long queues for both the tickets and then the popcorn. Bring back cinemas.

- RBR

Photo: Shahriar Kabir Heemel

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