

SHUKLOPOKKHO

an extraordinary conclusion reveals a cinematic universe

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Ziaul Roshan, Sunerah Binte Kamal, and Khairul Basar starrer web film "Shuklopokkho" was released on Chorki recently. The psychological thriller, directed by Vicky Zahed, is the director's second collaboration with the streaming platform, after "Redrum".

Keeping technical deficiencies aside, "Shuklopokkho" dives into the themes of love, friendship, and mystery. While

expectations were set high from the trailer, I was expecting a typical love triangle among three jolly college goers. The chemistry between Manju (Khairul Basar), Humayun (Ziaul Roshan) and Laboni (Sunerah Binte Kamal) diverted my expectations.

Starting from the off-beat chemistry to falling in love randomly, more build-up, especially focusing on the development of their naive emotions, was something I was looking forward to.

While there could be a lot more to Laboni's persona and her presence in the plot, Sunerah seems to do justice to her character, as briefed to her. Laboni, despite being a pretty and kind young college student, lacked a certain sparkle in her eyes—the shine that I had anticipated after coming across her character poster.

Roshan manages to hold on to his character of Humayun, throughout the production.

However, Manju's character was my biggest disappointment. While the graph of this character seemed derailed, I expected Manju, who is an orphan, to be more prompt as he has to find his own ways of survival. Manju not only lacked the drive to become independent, him breaking down into tears in most scenes expect one, just seemed absurd.

After his performance as 'Jackson Bhai' in "YouTumor", expectations were quite high from Sharif Shiraj, who essayed the character of police officer Kamrul in the project. He pulled off his role with grace and much sincerity, but his best is yet to come.

Coming to the script, I found glimpses of the old Vicky Zahed, who had left a mark in the audiences' mind with productions like "Chirokal Aaj", "Kaikobaad", and "Punorjonmo". Only for the effort he had invested in the last 30 minutes of the production, I completely forgot its shortcomings. I applaud his effort in trying



to keep up with minor details, his planned small clues for the audience and his narrative style when it comes to flashbacks.

The show was salvaged in the last 30 minutes of the production by Abdullah Al Sentu, who plays the role of Kamal. Starting from brilliant expressions to his body language, especially when he shares the screen with Sunerah and Afran Nisho (Rafsan Haque), during the climax.

I was teleported to the time when I had just watched Nisho as Rafsan Haque -- the same silent face with restless eyes, trying to confess to his crimes. Nisho's presence only offered more for thriller-lovers to relish on, especially the "Punorjonmo" series fans.

While the cinematography of the production was not out-of-the-box, the background score, especially during the climax when the twist is revealed, is phenomenal. Starting from the close shots, to revealing an unthinkable climax, Shuklopokkho's ending justified the maker's claim of the production being a psychological thriller.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSEHD

Art competition held on National Mourning Day

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

On the occasion of the National Mourning Day and death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, a children's art competition was organised at Hotel Intercontinental around 12pm yesterday.

Md Abul Mansur, Secretary of the Ministry of Culture and Md Mokammel Hossain, Secretary of the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism were present at the art competition. Prominent artist, cartoonist and former dean of Fine Arts Faculty of Dhaka University, Professor Rafiqun Nabi was also in attendance.

A total of 273 children participated in the art competition. Prizes will be distributed among the winners on August 24.

Prabhas announces release date for 'Salaar'

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

After the immense success of "KGF Chapter 2", director Prashanth Neel is set to return to the silver screen with his next big-budget release "Salaar". The film's lead, superstar Prabhas took to his Instagram on Monday to announce the release date of the film.



According to his post, the film will be released worldwide on September 28, 2023.

After "Baahubali", Prabhas has not been able to manage a place on the critics' notebook, though he tried his luck with "Saaho" and "Radhe Shyam".

His fans have high hopes from "Salaar", hoping that the star will bounce back with his performance.

Action-thriller Salaar, produced by Vijay Kiragandur under Hombale Films, also stars Prithviraj Sukumaran, Shruti Haasan and Jagapathi Babu.

COUNTRYWIDE

AMAN CULTIVATION

Scanty rain, high irrigation cost put farmers in double trouble

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

High cost of irrigation has dealt a severe blow to Aman farmers of Pabna region in this unusually dry rainy season.

When Aman cultivation is already facing a setback due to a drought-like situation caused by inadequate rainfall during the ongoing season across the country, hike in fuel prices has added woes to the Aman growers.

As a result, Aman farmers are fearing that they would not be able to reach their targets this year.

Masud Rana of Shyampur village in Sadar upazila said he has a target to cultivate Aman in four bighas land this year.

Although he prepared his field in mid-July, soon after harvesting jute, he could not start Aman

cultivation in time for lack of rain in the last couple of weeks.

After a long wait for rain, he finally managed to cultivate only one bigha by irrigating the field with hired electric water pump last week, he said.

"Last year, I irrigated my Aman field only once, but I already had to irrigate the field three times this year," Masud said.

Last year, it cost him Tk 650 to Tk 700 to irrigate each bigha of land, but due to the high fuel price the rate shoots up to Tk 1,200 this year, he added.

"Farmers cultivate paddy during the monsoon every year, depending on rain water, but due to lack of rain this year they are compelled to spend extra money as irrigation cost," Ismail Hossain of the same village said.

Ismail said he needs Tk 10,000

to Tk 12,000 for irrigation, Tk 5,000 to Tk 6,000 as labour cost and Tk 5,000 for fertilizer and seeds this season.

As a result, it would cost him Tk 22,000 to Tk 24,000 to cultivate each bigha of land, which was between Tk 15,000 to Tk 16,000 last year, he added.

Firoz Hossain, a shallow power pump operator, said he needs three litres diesel to irrigate one bigha land.

But, due to high fuel price he is compelled to charge extra money, Firoz said.

Pabna Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) Deputy Director Dr Saiful Alam said they have a target to bring 55,990 hectares of land under Aman cultivation this year, but only 35 percent of the target has been fulfilled so far.



Vast Aman fields are lying barren due to the lack of irrigation. The photo was taken from Pabna Sadar upazila. PHOTO: STAR

50 hurt

FROM PAGE 12

According to locals, the two groups have been in a feud since Barguna district Chhatra League council was held after eight long years on July 17 this year.

ASP Tarek said, "Legal action will be taken once a written complaint is lodged."

Meanwhile, additional forces were deployed in the town to avert further untoward situations.

All five- to 11-yr-olds

FROM PAGE 12

So far, the government has a stock of 30 lakh Pfizer vaccines for the campaign. This stock will increase to one crore by the end of this month, according to health officials.

The minister said a child has to be registered to get the vaccine. "[Only] those who have registered will get vaccines ... the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education has been working on it."

He however did not mention how out-of-school children would register for the vaccine.

During a previous drive to vaccinate children aged 12-17 years, children living on streets were vaccinated through on-spot registration.

On August 1, Prof Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of the health directorate, told The Daily Star that they would employ a similar method this time too.

Mentioning that the ministry is well prepared to implement the campaign, Zahid Maleque said yesterday, "We have trained and experienced doctors and nurses ... we have given special attention for the child vaccination."

Meanwhile, one female Covid-19 patient died in the 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday, said a press release of the Directorate General of Health Services. In the same period, the DGHS reported 259 new cases and a positivity rate of 4.09 percent.

With this, the total number of deaths due to Covid-19 rose to 29,314.

Armour-plated

FROM PAGE 12

thyreophoran that lived much earlier, making it a surprise that it dated from the Cretaceous. Apesteugia said never before has such a thyreophoran been dug up anywhere in the southern hemisphere.

Fire in Old Dhaka

FROM PAGE 12

Madaripur; and Abdul Motaleb, 16, of Mostafa Maji.

Among them, relatives identified Billal, who has been working as a waiter at the restaurant for three months. Billal was unreachable after the fire caught the building around 11:45 am, said his brother Ayub Ali.

Soon after the fire broke out, Swapan had called his cousin Badshah Sarker for help at 11:46 am, said Badshah, who has a restaurant nearby.

The bodies were sent to Sir Salimullah Medical College morgue for autopsy.

This is the latest in a long line of devastating fire incidents in this congested part of the capital.

Rows of plastic factories and

Husband sent

FROM PAGE 2

on social media.

"Relatives and even some colleagues of Khairun had made offensive comments ... the couple did not want their marriage to be in the news. But the media did not listen to ...," he had said.

Myanmar court

FROM PAGE 12

Suu Kyi has been the face of Myanmar's democratic hopes for more than 30 years, but her earlier six-year sentence already meant she is likely to miss elections the junta says it plans to hold by next year.

"Immune from domestic and international outrage, the punishment trials against Suu Kyi and her supporters are designed to erase the democratic past," independent Myanmar analyst David Mathieson told AFP.

"Their intent is clear to everyone it seems, everyone but the international community."

In June, Suu Kyi was transferred from house arrest to a prison in the capital Naypyidaw, where her trial continues in a courthouse inside the prison compound.

She remains confined to the jail, with her link to the outside world limited to brief pre-trial meetings with lawyers.

Many of her political allies have also been arrested since the coup, with one chief minister sentenced to 75 years in jail.

warehouses of plastic goods line the narrow alleys of Chawkbazar's Kamal Bagh area.

On 20 February 2019, a devastating fire that broke out at Chawkbazar's Churhatta intersection claimed the lives of 70 people.

"There is no fire safety system in the plastic warehouses and adjacent buildings -- these establishments are very dangerous," Zillur Rahman, director of operations of Fire Service and Civil Defence, told reporters at the scene of the incident.

Fire service will form an investigation committee over the incident, he added.

The bodies will be handed over to their families after DNA tests, said Zafar Hossain, deputy commissioner of Lalbagh.

2-day school

FROM PAGE 12

students would decrease, which would help reduce use of fuel and electricity.

After a meeting at the Prime Minister's Office on July 21, senior and other secretaries of all ministries and divisions directed all public offices to cut energy consumption by 25 percent.

Officials have been asked to avoid holding in-person meetings to reduce fuel and electricity consumption as much as possible.

It also recommended the rationalisation of the number of private vehicles running to pick up and drop off school children.

Youth lands

FROM PAGE 12

TikTok a few days ago, said police.

Law enforcers detained him in Mollapur village on Sunday night after being informed by some local Chhatra League activists about the incident.

Yesterday, a local named Jahidul Haque Tahmid filed the case against Mohi Uddin under the Digital Security Act (DSA) with Beanibazar Police Station.

Hillol Roy, OC of the police station, said a Sylhet court sent the arrestee to jail after he was produced before it.

Earlier on Saturday, another youth named Abdul Wahid was detained in Sylhet's Zakiganj upazila over a Facebook video defaming the PM over the hike in fuel prices. He is now behind bars in another DSA case.