Celebrating Durga Puja with on-screen favourites

While the festivities alone are enough to celebrate the holiday, watching a few good movies can help captivate the essence of the occasion.

LUBABA MAHJABIN PRIMA

Mahalya has arrived once again, bringing with it the spirituality and festivity that many of us love and cherish. And while the festivities alone are joyous enough for us to celebrate the holiday, it would be even more delightful to watch a few good movies that captivate the essence of the occasion.

So, with that in mind, I prepared a list of movies that feature Durga Puja, so that this year's celebrations can be that much more special.

JOI BABA FELUNATH

This movie revolves around a murder mystery during the time of Puja, on the holy site of Varansi. This "Feluda" movie, by Satyajit Ray, has been a favourite for many years. The first scene, where a child learns about mythology and continues to credit humanity, beautifully shows the very essence of Puja. The triumph of good over evil is also a reminder as to why we celebrate the holy occasion to begin with.

DEVI

Satyajit Ray, the unparalled hero of Bangla cinema does a wonderful job of showcasing the hidden and darker sides of blind faith. "Devi" begins with scenes of Puja, as the audience are introduced with Doyamoyee, a docile housewife, played on-screen by Sharmila Tagore.

Soon enough, we get to see how the very aspect of love ties her up, particularly when it becomes entangled with superstitions. Ray had been a strong protester against dogmatism and this particular project showcases this belief of the filmmaker clearly.

PARAMA

"Parama" is Aparna Sen's directorial marvel. The film begins with us seeing an eminent Bengali family celebrating Durga Puja. One character who is highlighted from the very beginning, is Parama, a housewife, and her role in the household. Showing her managing the Puja, the film questions if she can have any agency over her personal life.

ANTARMAHAL

"Antarmahal", a film by the legendary director Rituparno Ghosh, is based on Tarasankar Bandyopadhyay's masterpiece, "Pratima". Highlighting the Puja celebrations of a *Zamindar* family during the British period, it questions the notions of piousness, devotion and love. While this movie shows the much darker sides of humanity, it also showcases the concept of unconditional love and what it means to be truly loved.

KAHAANI

Set in modern-day Kolkata, during the Durga Puja festivities, this film reverses the roles we typically see in cinema. Vidya Balan plays the role of a woman searching for a mysterious person amidst turbulent times. "Kahaani" is an intense crime drama, featuring the colourful backdrops we see during Puja, which makes it quite a visual treat for viewers. The intensity of the ongoing plotline combined with the wonderful use of colours are what made this movie such a big hit.

BELA SESHE

This film captures the love and joy that is such a big part of celebrating festivals with family. "Bela Seshe" is able to resonates these emotions even further, particularly when the song "O Thakur" plays, with the lyrics "God, don't go for Bishorjan, let the family stay happy". The festivity of Durga Puja, the joy associated with the arrival of goddess Durga and the return of family members to their homes are beautifully narrated throughout the movie.

BISHORJAN

A beautiful story of a cross-border romance, between a Bangladeshi-Hindu widow and an Indian-Muslim man, "Bishorjan" tries to tell a story about how love triumphs all. The on-screen chemistry of Jaya Ahsan and Abir Chatterjee, combined with Kaushik Ganguly's wonderful writing and direction, creates an emotional rollercoaster ride that has you on edge from start to finish. So successful was this film that Kaushik Ganguly created "Bijoya", a sequel to "Bishorjan".

UMA

This Srijit Mukherji movie shows the strength of a father-daughter relationship, and how culture plays a role in binding them together. An emigrant father teaches his daughter, Uma, about Durga Puja, Kolkata and Hindu culture in general.

While Uma is very excited about the Puja, she is soon diagnosed with cancer. The doctors say that she might not be able to make it to autumn, when Durga Puja will take place. At the heart of this film, is an attempt to question the idea of dogmatism, reminding us that humanity comes above any fundamentalism.

I hope, that alongside your families and the festivities, good art and cinema will be able to make this Durga Puja even more joyous for you all!

'Punorjonmo 3': Chef Rafsan returns with a chilling revelation

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

The notorious chef, Rafsan Haque (Afran Nisho) is back and his hunger for the human body and its anatomy seems to have only grown since we last saw him.

Recently, Channel i released the trailer for "Punorjonmo3" and are finally able to witness Vicky Zahed bring together his very own cinematic universe.

The monologue at the beginning of the trailer for "Punorjonmo 3" builds the tension, as Chef Rafsan narrates how being able to use his culinary skills to cook humans has helped him with his guilty conscience.

We also saw the return of popular characters including Rokeya,Niloy, and Borsha in the trailer.

'Payer Tolay Mati Nai' wins award at World Film Festival Kolkata

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Bangladeshi film "Payer Tolay Mati Nai" won the Fipresci-India Critics Award for the 'Best Debut Feature Film' at the first edition of World Film Festival Kolkata. The festival commenced on September 20 and ran till September 25, at Nandan Cultural Centre in Kolkata.

Out of the 11 films from different countries, four films were chosen for the Critics award. Mohammad Rabby Mridha's "Payer Tolay Mati Nai" was selected as the winner in the coveted category.

On the closing day, Bangladesh actress Jyotika Jyoti accepted the award on behalf of the director, Mohammad Rabby Mridha and its producer Abu Shahed Emon.

NEWS

Two ferries left unused for a year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bagerhat*

Bardia-Mahajan Ferry Terminal, once a famous commercial port and later converted into a ferry terminal on the bank of the Nabaganga river, in Narail's Kalia upazila lying inoperative for over a year, thanks to the negligence of the authorities concerned.

Locals said after reconstruction of the terminal two ferries were brought a year ago, but they are still compelled to cross the river on small boats risking their lives.

Although, the two-way pontoons and connecting roads were constructed long ago, commuters are still deprived of services as the two ferries lying inoperative due to negligence of the authorities concerned, they alleged.

The authorities concerned, however, said the two ferries lying inoperative for lack of manpower crisis.

During a recent visit in the area this correspondent saw Narail district headquarters, Lohagara upazila and Mahajan Bazar are situated on the west bank of the river, while Kalia upazila headquarters and Baradia Bazar are on the other side of the river.

Mahajan Bazar is known as one of the largest tin-shed markets in the district while Baradia has the biggest food warehouse, locals said, adding that there are several banks and NGO offices at both Baradia and Mahajan Bazar.

Baradia Bazar is surrounded by at least 17 educational institutions including Baradia Polytechnic High School, Munshi Manik Mia Degree College, Fazilatunecha Mujib Secondary School, Mahajan Secondary School and Tona Islamia Madrasa.

Locals said although the ferry ghat was constructed considering public interest, two ferries are lying idle and getting damaged due to negligence of the authorities concerned.

A number of school and college going students said the authorities should take necessary measures to start the ferry service immediately instead of damaging those by keeping them unused.

Mauli Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Rosi Haque said traders from surrounding districts used to come to Baradia to buy goods.

Considering commercial and public importance, a bridge was supposed to be built here long ago, but it did not happen, the UP chairman said.

It not just the business, critical patients have to travel additional 30 to 32 kilometres to reach the Baripara Ferry Ghat to go to Dhaka or Khulna for better treatment, he added.

Mahajan Bazar Traders' Association General Secretary Feroz Khan said due to transportation problems buyers and sellers have to face huge difficulties to reach the famous tin-shed market.

General Secretary of Baradia Bazar Traders' Association Jagadish Chandra said they cannot use heavy vehicles like covered vans, trucks, pickups and trolleys for goods transportation as the ferries lying unused. Narail Roads and Highways Department (RHD) Executive Engineer Mohammad Ashrafuzzaman said it wasn't possible to start the ferry service from Baradia-Mahajan Ghat due to a shortage of manpower.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

TEESTA EROSION

Many houses, vast croplands devoured in a week

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Lalmonirhat*

Sudden erosion by the Teesta river has taken a serious turn in four upazilas of the district, devouring at least 200 homesteads, different fruit orchards and over 500 bighas of arable land in the last one week.

According to Lalmonirhat Water Development Board and District Relief and Rehabilitation Office, the erosion is going on simultaneously at 10 points of different villages under those upazilas.

The affected villages are Sindurna, Dawabari, Uttar Sindurna of Hatibandha upazila, Bhotmari of Kaliganj upazila, Kutirpar and Balapara of Aditmari upazila and Kalmati , Khuniagachh, Rajpur and Gokunda of Sadar upazila.

Aftar Ali, one of erosion-hit residents of Dawabari village, said his homestead and four bighas of cropland had gone into the Teesta in front of his eyes a few days ago.

"Finding no way, my whole family took shelter on other's house and living there for the last four days," he said.

Another erosion victim Nabir Hossain of the village said his homestead and two bighas of arable land had gone into the river a couple of days ago and the mighty Teesta continued devouring more fresh areas.

"Over a hundred houses and several hundred bighas of croplands are also under threat of being eroded anytime," he said.

Dawabari Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Advocate Mashiur Rahman said erosion by the Teesta has taken a serious turn at several points under his union.

At least 100 houses and 200 bighas of farmland in different villages under the union had gone into the river in the last six days, the UP chairman said, adding that many erosion-hit villagers have left their houses fearing further loss and took shelters in other places.

They have urged the WDB authorities on several occasions to take necessary measures to prevent the erosion, but no step has been taken in this regard yet, he said.

If the erosion is not checked in an urgent basis, more establishments and croplands may vanish into the river in near future, he added.

Hatibandha Upazila Project Implementation Officer (PIO) Maidul Shah said they have already prepared a list of erosion-affected families.

Lalmonirhat WDB Executive Engineer Mizanur Rahman said they have been dumping sand-filled geo-bags at different points to prevent the erosion.

"We are not able to take immediate measures in all the places at the same time for not having sufficient allocation, he said.

Beaten up on way to meet VC

FROM PAGE 1

The BCL activists, led by Reazul Islam and Muneem Shahriar Moon, president and general secretary of its hall unit, beat up the JCD men with cricket stamps and sticks.

Even though two JCD men became unconscious and fell on the road, the attackers did not stop, the witnesses added.

Later, BCL men from Kabi Jasimuddin Hall and Bijoy Ekattor Hall joined the attackers, they said.

Before the incident, several hundred activists of BCL, pro-Awami League student body, gathered at different points on the campus, including in front of administrative building and in front of the VC's residence.

Meanwhile, leaders of BCL DU unit met the VC around 3:00pm yesterday and submitted a memorandum on 30-point demand for the welfare of students, while the JCD leaders were scheduled to sit with the VC around 4:30pm, said sources.

The injured were taken to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

Eight of them were badly injured, the JCD claimed.

They include DU JCD President Khorshed Alam Sohel and General Secretary Ariful Islam Arif, joint general secretaries Abdul Jalil Aminul, Farhan Mohammad Arif, Assistant General Secretary Munsi Sohag, SM Hall unit President Nasir Uddin Shawon and General Secretary Raju Ahmed.

However, the BCL denied the allegation of its involvement in the attack.

Arif, who was undergoing treatment at the DMCH, told The Daily Star, "We got permission to meet the VC. When we were entering the campus, a group of Chhatra League men carried out the attack without any provocation."

"We are students of the university, but the university administration failed to give us security. It is quite clear that the situation is not in favour of coexistence of all student bodies as the administration is biased towards the Chhatra League. We demand resignation of the VC and the proctor."

Saddam Hussain, general secretary of DU BCL, told this correspondent that Chhatra League leaders were busy discussing various students' issues with the DU administration. "Chhatra League men were not involved in the attack."

He added that they learnt that a faction of JCD was not satisfied with the new committee of its DU unit. "The incident happened due to Chhatra Dal's internal feud."

VC Akhtaruzzaman told this newspaper, "It was a shocking and unexpected incident. Chhatra Dal leaders were scheduled to meet me. We are trying to know why the incident happened."

Condemning the incident, a faction of Bangladesh Chhatra Union DU unit, Chhatra Federation DU unit and Bangladesh Chhatra League (JSD) central committee demanded the attackers be brought to book.