



Jaya Ahsan in the film.



Mahmud Didar



Ferdous, Jaya Ahsan and ABM Sumon.

There is an unseen pressure on 'Beauty Circus'

MAHMUD DIDAR

When "Beauty Circus" first emerged with its teaser/trailer, it is safe to say that many received the wrong idea about the film. In reality, it is a wonderful amalgamation of the lost art of circus, and the times of our Liberation War.

SHARMIN JOYA

Mahmud Didar's debut directorial film was released in September 23, in 19 halls across the country. It features Jaya Ahsan, Ferdous, ABM Sumon, Gazi Rakayet and the late Humayun Sadhu, among others.

The film went head-to-head with Dipankar Dipon's "Operation Sundarban", another heavyweight production by the RAB Welfare and Cooperative Society Limited. The latter, however, was released on the same day in 35 halls across the country. On the second week, halls for "Operation Sundarban" increased to 45, while halls for "Beauty Circus" was reduced to a measly 11 halls.

The director of "Beauty Circus", Mahmud Didar, has been vocal about the fact that some 'unknown forces' have been tampering with the film's 'true' success. According to Didar, this is the reason why it did not get the number of halls, that the production crew had been hoping for. For this film Didar had received a government grant in the 2014-15 fiscal year. It has been co-produced by Channel i.

"Our film so far has received a positive response, despite not being able to market properly before release," says Didar.

On the first week of release, Jaya Ahsan expressed her disappointment with Star Cineplex authorities, for not giving them slots for evening show. Initially, Cineplex ran two shows of "Beauty Circus", at 11 am, and 4:50 pm. The actress expressed concerns that the audience prefers evening shows, in comparison. On its second week, "Beauty Circus" did finally get evening shows.

The distribution of "Beauty Circus" had



been sold to director Anonno Mamun. "He was given the responsibility of managing the number of halls. However, after a few days of the film's release, he went to Kolkata and we couldn't reach him," shares the director. "I won't directly blame anyone, but there has been an unseen pressure on every one, but from our

end we did not put enough effort as well."

The director shares that after the announcement of its release date, they had been wanting postpone the date. Eventually, that did not happen, since the production house informed Didar that there is no empty slot in the coming months.

"Our posters were not visible in the halls, I feel like we have been neglected," shares the dejected director. "Honestly, even the halls that we showcased the film in, outside of Dhaka – most of them were not up to the mark."

"I am doing everything that is possible," says Didar. "In a huge premise like Jamuna Blockbuster Cinemas, we had only one poster! Despite that, my audience is my strength, which is why we got houseful shows there."

"Due to a huge communication gap between the artistes and the producers, the entire production was hampered", says the director.

On the third week of its release, "Beauty Circus" is making its way to international waters. It will be released in Australia, on October 9, across a few theatres in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane, and Canberra. "It is definitely a great news for all of us, and I am hopeful that the international audience will receive the film well."

According to Didar, circus is an extinct culture in our country, it has been evicted by a group of fundamentalists. His film not only tells the tale of an indomitable woman and her struggle, but it also showcases the strength she has to fight against evil. "Punching upwards is a theme that I explore, through the narrative of Beauty Circus."



This is a rumour, if I work on a film I'll announce it: Tanjin Tisha

Recently, Raihan Rafi announced that he will be working on a new film with Dhallywood king Shakib Khan.

The director had also stated that the actress for this new project would not be disclosed as of yet, and would be a surprise for the audiences.

As a result, rumours began to circulate that Tanjin Tisha would be the lead actress in the film.

Tanjin Tisha was left baffled by the random rumours and addressed the issue through her Facebook account.

"If I really do act on the silver screen I will announce it to the world. However, stop spreading rumours or fake news about me," said the actress.



PHOTO: AP

Angelina Jolie accuses Brad Pitt of physically harming their children

Angelina Jolie has filed a countersuit against Brad Pitt for allegedly hurting and choking their children during their infamous '2016 flight'. She also accused Pitt of being physically violent towards her.

According to CNN reports, the actress produced documents that cited the ruckus during the incident. Apparently, Pitt got into an argument with one of their six children, who were between the ages of 8 and 15 at that time.

Their children tried to stop Brad Pitt from being violent against the actress on the flight, resulting in the actor choking one of his children and hitting another one in the face.

NEWS

JP rift widens

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A day after Raushan announced that she would convene the party's council on November 26, the JP Parliamentary Party on September 1 at a meeting decided to remove Raushan from the post of opposition leader.

After the meeting, a letter signed by Ranga, was submitted to the Speaker, urging her to make Quader the opposition leader.

On September 13, however, Ranga told media that the process asking for Raushan's removal was not done in the right manner.

The following day, Quader removed

JP Presidium Member Ranga, who is known to be loyal to Raushan, from all party posts.

In recent days, Quader has been sharply criticising the incumbent government.

Aggrieved by his criticism, the ruling Awami League high-ups are allegedly backing the pro-Raushan group to put pressure on Quader, sources said.

The conflict between Raushan and Quader took a new turn as Ranga on September 20 sought to withdraw the letter the JP Parliamentary Party sent to the Speaker for removal of

Raushan.

Raushan on September 21 said she has suspended the "special power" bestowed upon the JP chairman as mentioned in the party's charter, citing it contradictory to democracy and the constitution.

As per the special power, the JP chairman can remove or suspend anyone from the party unilaterally at any time.

The feud between Raushan and Quader started over taking the party helm when HM Ershad fell sick in early 2019 and picked up steam after Ershad's death in July 2019.

Workers' interests 'mostly ignored'

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The 56 recommendations were jointly made by Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad, one of the oldest labour movements and a platform of over a dozen labour rights bodies, and IndustriALL Bangladesh Council, a platform of 18 labour unions and federations.

According to the amended rules, workers can be retrenched during factory takeovers.

As opposed to terminations, companies retrench workers following certain procedures due to external reasons like revenue downturns.

The amendments will now allow retrenchments during factory takeovers, which was not the case before.

This means during takeovers, workers' rights will be curtailed.

"The [labour] law allows for retrenchment in instances where a factory is not getting orders and such. There is nothing mentioned about factory takeovers in the law. The retrenchment benefits given to workers are less than termination benefits. For example, workers employed for less than a year will not get any benefits other than arrears in case of retrenchment -- for termination, that time period is three months," explained Bangladesh Garment Industrial Workers Federation President Babul Akter (representative of IndustriALL).

The new rules also mean that workers employed for less than nine months in the factory will not be covered by group insurance schemes in case of workplace accidents, point out leaders.

"A worker is the responsibility of the factory from the day he or she

joins. What if an accident happens then?" said Babul.

Also as per the amendments, workers will be paid less during their maternity leaves.

The Bangladesh Labour Rules 2015 stated that the daily wage of a worker on maternity leave would be based on the average of their previous three months' income. Following the amendments, only payment of the month preceding the leave would be taken into consideration.

"Most workers work overtime every day to make ends meet. During the last trimester of their pregnancy, garment workers cannot work overtime," said Razequzzaman Ratan, chair of Samajtantrik Shramik Front.

Readymade garment workers routinely state that it is mandatory for them to work overtime almost every day, as the extra income is vital to stay afloat in an economy where they struggle to meet living costs.

"We are calculating that they [pregnant workers] would be getting 20 percent less," said Babul.

Under the old rules, workers on maternity leave used to get two months before and two months after delivery of the baby. The new rules state that if labour is delayed by a certain number of days, those would be deducted from the two months following delivery, giving the new mother less time with the baby.

The platform of workers' bodies had recommended that workers being investigated or dismissed for misconduct be allowed to utilise external counsel, but this was not accepted.

At the moment, investigations

into misconduct are done by a six-member committee, and the worker representative has to be from the factory.

"It is not possible for a worker to take a stand against the administration on behalf of another worker, for fear of losing his or her job," said Ratan.

Furthermore, the platforms had recommended an amendment to the current rule that says bonuses cannot be more than the basic salary of a worker. This recommendation was also not taken up, pointed out Ratan.

The leaders said they have been going back and forth with the government for three years, and had given the recommendations last December, but to no avail.

Stay alert

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that in the coming days all religious festivals will be celebrated with more beauty and grandeur, and the bonds of harmony and amity will be strengthened among all, irrespective of caste or religion.

State Minister for Religious Affairs Md Faridul Haque Khan, Senior Vice-Chairman of Religious Welfare Trust Manoranjan Shil Gopal, Trustee of Hindu Welfare Trust Professor Pran Gopal Dutta, Vice-Chairman of Hindu Welfare Trust Subrata Pal, President of Bangladesh Puja Celebration Committee JL Bhowmik, Dhaka Metropolitan Sarbojonin Puja Committee president Monindra Kumar Nath, Dhaka Ramakrishna Math and Mission's Principal Swami Haripremananda Maharaj, also spoke at the end.

6 suspected

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to Malaysia by a local syndicate.

The bodies of three women and a child, aged four or five, all of whom were Rohingya, were recovered on Tuesday. Two more bodies were found yesterday. Some 45 people were rescued, of whom four were Bangladeshis and involved in a trafficking syndicate.

According to the first information report (FIR), the mastermind of the trafficking syndicate is Shahid Ullah, who is a resident of the Sabrang union in Teknaf.

OC Hafizur said they sent the victims to the refugee camps after verifying their identity.

Meanwhile, no new information has been found regarding the missing people.

The rescued said there were at least a hundred people on the trawler, although the exact figure could not be known.

One of the witnesses, Shah Alam, 48, said the trawler was carrying not less than hundred people.

Trio win Nobel

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idea in cancer immune therapy.

The academy said the laureates' discoveries had been used far beyond oncology, enabling products such as antimicrobials, herbicides, diagnostic tests, corrosion retardants and brightening agents.

Identify

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UN missions in 14 countries. So far, 1,83,378 others have completed their 54 missions in different capacities in 43 countries once or multiple times.

Bangladesh was the leading troops-contributing country to UN peacekeeping missions in 2011, 2014 and 2015.

Iran schoolgirls

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classrooms and appearing at flash-mob protests to avoid detection, in other footage shared online.

A boisterous group of girls are seen yelling "Get lost, Basiji", in reference to the paramilitary force, at a man standing at a podium in the southern city of Shiraz, in a video shared by the 1500tasvir social media channel.

As the women-led protests stretch into a fourth week, Iran has widened its crackdown, rounding up high profile supporters of the movement and imposing internet restrictions that limit access to social media.

Brunei keen on migrants

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and facilitate trade.

Brunei, a gas and oil-rich nation, may also ink an MoU on import of fuel oil by Bangladesh during the first ever state visit to the country by the former's Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah on October 13-15.

This would be the Sultan's reciprocal visit after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's first state tour of the Southeast Asian country in April 2019.

Diplomatic sources said the visit is important given the global and regional challenges in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which caused disruptions in the global supply chain, especially of energy, food, and fertiliser.

Brunei, a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), can also play an important role in resolving the Rohingya crisis, the sources added.

During the Sultan's visit, the two countries may sign five memorandums of understanding in the areas of labour cooperation, energy, direct air service, cooperation on sailors and culture, officials said.

"We are in the process of finalising the deals. We are hopeful about completing the process soon," a foreign ministry official told The Daily Star.

According to the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), Brunei hired 75,435 Bangladeshi workers from 1992 to August this year. However, between January 2020 and August 2022, only 950 were recruited.

An estimated 20,000 Bangladeshi workers are currently employed in Brunei, said an official at the Bangladesh mission in Bandar Seri Begawan.

"Brunei is expanding its economy in the areas of petroleum, food, and agriculture. There are good opportunities both for investment and labour recruitment," said an official of

the expatriates' welfare ministry.

Irregularities in recruitment of Bangladeshi labours were reported over the years. Among those include additional expenses incurred by job seekers and recruitment of higher number of workers than required.

Both the countries are disturbed by the irregularities. Brunei has suggested that a government agency manage the recruitment process in Bangladesh, the official said.

"We also agreed on this point. If we can ensure discipline in labour recruitment, we can also be able to ensure their welfare."

Bangladesh wants the Brunei authorities to ensure minimum wage, regular salary and insurance coverage for the migrants.

The foreign ministry official said as energy prices went up following the start of the Russian-Ukraine war in February, Bangladesh started looking for alternative sources, including Russia, Brunei, and India, apart from traditional ones in the Middle East.

"As Brunei is a net exporter of energy and not far away from Bangladesh, we are eager to buy fuel from there. The transport cost would also be less," the official said, adding that there might be a breakthrough in this regard if Brunei agreed.

During the Bangladesh PM's visit to Brunei in 2019, the two countries signed nine MoUs on agriculture, fisheries, and livestock, among other areas.

Brunei wants technological support in agriculture from Bangladesh, who has demonstrated a remarkable success in this regard.

"Bangladeshi companies can even take lease of land in Brunei and produce crops, fish and livestock," the foreign ministry official said.

Asean is very important in terms of global geopolitics. Brunei can play an important role in making Bangladesh's bid to become Asean's sectoral partner a success, officials said.

Mohila Dal leader held

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against the prime minister and circulated those on social media.

"Sonia intentionally made and circulated false, fabricated, and defamatory speech on the prime minister to tarnish the goodwill of the prime minister," the case statement added.

Contacted, Mohammad Sahadat Hossain, officer-in-charge of Rajbari Sadar Police Station, said she was

arrested for posting "insulting remarks" about the prime minister.

Meantime, Sonia's arrest drew flak from the netizens and her party leaders. They demanded immediate release of Sonia.

Former BNP lawmaker Ali Nawaz Mahmud Khayam said Sonia was arrested from her home around midnight. She has two children.

He too demanded her immediate and unconditional release.