



PHOTOS: COLLECTED

## 'FOREIGNERS ONLY' Nuhash Humayun reminds us of our colonised roots

**The film is able to show the duality and inequality that defines Dhaka. It hints at the influence of the media in shaping our mindsets. The scenes showing advertisements of skin lightening products portray the colourism that centres our concepts of beauty.**

LUBABA MAHJABIN PRIMA

A dark comedy, with artistic value and a brilliant satirical take on the social fabric of formerly colonised countries, "Foreigners Only" is yet another masterpiece by Nuhash Humayun.

"Foreigners Only" is the first Bangladeshi content to be released on Hulu. This short film is a part of season 3 of the "Bite Size Halloween" horror-anthological series, covering social issues through a variety of genres.

The short film begins with shots from a Bangladeshi tannery, the manager of which is looking for a rental apartment. Despite having money and fulfilling the other acceptable criterion, he is denied by most tenants, as many of them are looking for foreign renters.

"Foreigners Only" proceeds to highlight the concepts around race, in formerly colonised countries like ours. One is forced to take a step back and ponder about the helplessness when



revolting against such subtle, yet impactful racism.

With a blend of brilliant cinematographic skill and artistic storytelling, the short film shows how natural and circumstantial, and thus insignificant, skin is. But the social significance of skin colour is aptly shown in the film.

The film is able to show the duality and inequality that defines Dhaka. It hints at the influence of the media in shaping our

mindsets. The scenes showing advertisements of skin lightening products portray the colourism that centres our concepts of beauty. However, the grim cinematography, which highlights the elements of gore in the film, has to be its most gripping part.

So believable and raw is the cinematography, that one feels disgusted seeing the scenes involving the tannery, the main character's skin disease and a foreigner. Yet, the gripping storyline engages the audience so much, that one can't help but want to find out what happens next. The suspense built around the drama climaxes with a brilliant ending, challenging our notions around the concept of value judgement.

We have been colonised for centuries. Our wealth has been looted, our dignity tarnished. Nuhash Humayun reminds us of this particular part of our history, and tells us once again that our fascination with white foreigners and the supposed moral and intellectual superiority they possess is extremely unfortunate.

If you're still debating whether you want to watch this particular short film, then I would highly recommend you give this, and the rest of the season, a watch.

## 'Chirokumar': Marzuk Russell returns to NTV this November

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Chiku Bhaggyoban, played by Marzuk Russell, in the telefilm "Chirokumar Songho" was one of the most popular characters on NTV in 2008.

After 14 years, the director of the project, Tuhin Hossain will now direct the serial titled "Chirokumar", featuring Marzuk Russell, which will follow a similar plot to that of "Chirokumar Songho".

"Chirokumar" will be the director's debut serial. The plot revolves around Chiku Bhaggyoban, the head of Bachelor's Equity (Chirokumar Songho), who motivates people to remain bachelors.

The project will be aired from November 2, four days every week, on NTV.



## 'The Midnight Club' breaks Guinness record for most jump scares

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

If you are someone who is easily spooked, you might want to browse Netflix a little more carefully for the next show you might choose to binge-watch.

The streaming platform's latest horror-series, "The Midnight Club" has broken the Guinness World Record for the most jump scares in a single episode—having a total of 21 jump scares in the first episode.

The series was created by American filmmaker Mike Flanagan, who also made "The Haunting Of Hill House" (2018) and "Midnight Mass" (2021) for Netflix.



# NEWS

## No possibility of famine

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the agriculture ministry at the secretariat.

The government has recently reduced tax to encourage import of rice.

Replying to a question, Razzaque said a little amount of rice is being imported though the government reduced VAT and allowed private organisations to import rice.

He said they were working hard to increase agricultural production in the country through increasing subsidies on fertiliser and various incentives.

The ministry has formed blocks at field levels to increase food production. Each union is separated into three blocks where field officers are looking after farmers' needs, he said.

Forty-four individuals and organisations have won Bangabandhu Jatiya Krishi Award 2018 and 2019 for their contribution to the agriculture sector.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina will be present virtually at the prize-giving ceremony that will be

held today at the Osmani Smriti Auditorium.

Veterinary surgeon of Department of Livestock of Bogura Md Raihan, Upazila Agriculture Officer Shafiqul Islam and a farmer Amirul Islam of Pabna have won gold medals.

Raihan won for creating public awareness and encouraging farmers through publicity and publication.

Shafiqul won for inventing environment friendly technology for agriculture and Amirul for success in farming cattle and poultry commercially.

According to the Agriculture Ministry, Silver medals recipients are - Badrul Haidar of Pirojpur, Hamidul Haque, upazila nirbahi officer (UO) of Kishoreganj; Sharmim Aktar of Jhenaidah, Dulal Mridha of Pabna, Kobbad Hossain of Savar, Moniruzzaman Monir of Rajshahi, Muhammad Rakibul Ahsan Rony of Dhaka's Sher-e-Bangla Nagar area, Ayub Hossain, UAO of Jashore; Halima Begum of Khulna, Nasrin Sultana of Jashore, Abdul Hai Azad Babla of Sylhet, Saiful Islam; deputy director of Madaripur Horticulture

Center, Rafiqul Islam of Jhenaidah, Abul Hossain Sardar of Khulna, Babul Hossain of Narayanganj and Paramount Agro Limited.

Awardees who will receive Bronze medals are: Nur Mohammad of Rajshahi, Berek Hawladar of Pirojpur, Mozdul Islam of Rangpur, Shafiqul Islam of Narayanganj, Goutam Kumar Saha of Naogaon, Purnima Begum of Rajshahi, Mahbubur Rahman, former UAO of Dinajpur; Moqbul Hossain of Jhenaidah, Sahidul Islam of Sirajganj, Hlashing Mong Chowdhury of Khagrachhari, Gazi Mamud of Mymensingh, Mahbubul Islam of Sirajganj, Rina Begum of Tangail, Momrez Ali, UAO of Natore; Rostom Ali, UAO of Sirajganj; Md Shahinuzzaman of Pabna, Tou Yo Mro of Bandarban, Mojibul Haque of Feni, Siraj Khan of Munshiganj, Sanwar Hossain of Tangail, Abdul Awal of Rangamati, Shakil Mia of Gaibandha, Tonima Afrin of Narail and Rakhi De of Dinajpur. Nipu Traders of Dhaka's Nawabganj get awards under organisation category.

## IMF lowers forecast to 6pc

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The government, meanwhile, has an ambitious target of 7.5 percent.

However, some leading economists of the country expressed doubt about whether the country would be able to attain even IMF's slashed projection. Ahsan H Mansur, executive director of the Policy Research Institute, said the lingering effect of the economic downturn was not reflected in the IMF forecast.

The economist said the crisis just started when the IMF team visited the country three months ago. Back then, it was thought that the situation could stabilise soon.

"But it did not stabilise," he said, adding, "Given the continuing uncertainty in the balance of payment, faltering export performance, declining remittances, and rapidly worsening power situation, it would be great if we can achieve 6 percent."

According to the IMF forecast for other South Asian countries, the GDP of India would grow by 6.1 percent in FY23, the Maldives by 6.1 percent, Bhutan 4.3 percent, Nepal 5 percent, Pakistan 3.5 percent, and Sri Lanka's GDP would shrink 3 percent.

In its report, the IMF trimmed its 2023 global GDP forecast to 2.7 percent, 0.2 points down from the July forecast.

Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, the editor of the IMF Economic Review, warned that more than a third of the global economy is headed for contraction this year or next, and the three biggest economies -- the United States, European Union and China -- will continue to stall.

"The worst is yet to come and, for many people 2023 will feel like a recession," said Gourinchas.

Former lead economist of the World Bank's Dhaka office Zahid Hussain said, "The 6 percent GDP growth projection for FY23 is similar to the forecast from other international agencies... Nature has not been kind to agriculture this year while energy and electricity shortages show little sign of alleviation. The increased prices of raw materials and intermediate inputs also have contractionary effects."

"Domestic demand is likely to be compressed due to historic high inflation. External demand conditions are likely to get worse. The GDP contracted in the first half

of 2022 in the US and a contraction in the second half of 2022 in the eurozone is imminent. These indicate significant headwinds for our exports. Remittances through formal channels have started to slow down since mid-September despite a surge in the number of Bangladeshi workers going abroad in the last year and a half."

"A 6 percent growth, if achieved, will in fact be outstanding at a time when global growth forecast is at 2.7 percent in 2023, in emerging and developing Asia at 4.9 percent, Latin America and the Caribbean 1.7 percent, Middle East and Central Asia 3.6 percent and Sub-Saharan Africa 3.7 percent. About a third of the world economies are facing two consecutive quarters of GDP decline."

"The message here is not to take anything for granted. Intensifying structural reforms to improve productivity and ease of trading internally and externally would ease supply constraints. At the same time, getting the external deficit under control will be critical to ensure the adequacy of foreign exchange availability."

## Bangladesh

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competitive international election of all candidates Bangladesh floated since 2018," the foreign ministry said.

The result of this extremely competitive election is a clear manifestation of the recognition by the international community of Bangladesh's continued endeavour and commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights at home and abroad.

Bangladesh, as a responsible and responsive member state of the UN and an elected UNHRC member for the next three years, remains committed to making all efforts to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights nationally and globally, it said.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md Shahriar Alam led the Bangladesh delegation to the UNGA during the UNHRC election.

## Govt might import fuel

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number of recruitments came down recently. Between January 2020 and August 2022, only 950 were recruited.

Officials said Brunei was eager to recruit workers through a state-owned recruiting agent, Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Ltd (BOESL), to streamline the recruitment process against the backdrop of irregularities in the past.

The proposal for a direct flight between the two countries has already been approved by the Bangladesh cabinet, Momen said.

Direct flight can improve Bangladesh's export to Brunei as well as reduce migration costs, officials said.

Momen said Brunei is eager to source halal food from Bangladesh. Especially, the Sultan likes the Black Bengal goat of Bangladesh.

He said Brunei, which is heavily dependent on food imports, wants Bangladesh to provide expertise

to Brunei in fish and agriculture, especially fish and shrimp.

MoUs on these matters were also signed in 2019.

Also, Brunei is an important member of ASEAN and Bangladesh is eager to become a sectoral dialogue partner to ASEAN as well as seek its support in Rohingya repatriation.

"We hope for a fruitful visit by the Brunei Sultan."

President Abdul Hamid will receive the Brunei Sultan, his family members, cabinet members and officials at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on October 15.

He will visit the Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhaka's Dhanmondi 32 and National Martyrs' Memorial in Savar.

The Sultan will hold meetings with President Abdul Hamid and attend a banquet hosted by the president.

He will hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

## Court denies bail

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The prosecution, however, opposed the defence plea on grounds that the charges brought against them of hurting the complainants grievously were primarily proved.

Upon hearing both the sides, the magistrate turned down the defence pleas.

Chhatra League Organising Secretary Nazim Uddin and activist Aminur Rahman filed the cases with Shahbagh Police Station accusing 25 and 140-150 unnamed people.

Police on October 7 detained 24 parishad men at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and from nearby areas in connection with the incident.

Among the detainees were several people who went to the hospital for treatment of their injuries.

Earlier in that day, at least 13 people were injured when BCL attacked a rally organised by the parishad marking the death anniversary of Buet student Abrar Fahad.

Abrar died on October 7, 2019, in a dormitory after being brutally beaten up by some Chhatra League men.

## Dhaka Wasa has to submit

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legality of Taqsem's holding the position of MD and CEO and paying him Tk 6.25 lakh as his gross monthly salary.

The court issued a rule asking the government authorities concerned to explain why their inaction in not taking any step to remove Taqsem from the post of Wasa MD and CEO and in cancelling the previous decisions to increase his salary in violation of the Service Order (Salary and Benefits), 2015 and the notification issued in this regard by the finance ministry, should not be declared illegal.

Secretary at the ministry of local government and rural development; board of Dhaka Wasa and its chairman; and Taqsem were made respondents to the rule.

Taqsem was made Dhaka Wasa MD in 2009. Despite severe criticism of his role in ensuring quality of Wasa services, he was reappointed for the sixth term.

The HC also questioned the