

Ashutosh Sujan talks ‘DESHANTOR’

SHARMIN JOYA

During the partition of Bengal in 1947, Hindu families were forced to move to India in groups. At that time, a woman named Annapurna from Mymensingh could not accept this cruel truth.

She was willing to leave her husband and family, but her heart did not want to leave her homeland.

Director Ashutosh Sujan has portrayed this picture in his debut directorial movie *Deshantor*. The

government-funded film is based on noted poet Nirmalendu Goon's novel *Deshantor*.

The recently released film stars Moushumi, Ahmed Rubel, Yash Rohan and Rodela Tapur, among others. We caught up with Ashutosh Sujan to know more about the film.

What made you choose the novel 'Deshantor' as your first movie?

When I read the novel *Deshantor* in 2011, I had made my mind that I would bring this story into the screen. In between the time we worked in other projects, we decided to apply for government grant in the 2020-21 fiscal year. We were lucky enough to receive the grant.

Nirmalendu Goon, in his novel 'Deshantor' has brilliantly highlighted the political, social and economic conditions of India in 1947. Could you do justice to it?

The novel itself was very cinematic, there are a lot of dimensions in the storytelling. All I can say is that when the author (Nirmalendu Goon) watched the film, he was extremely happy and shared that he felt *Deshantor* was amazingly filmed.

Pairing Ahmed Rubel and Moushumi was an unusual choice indeed. How did this thought come to your mind?

There is a story behind this. Moushumi previously signed a film of mine titled *Babar Jutta*, which was being funded by Bengal



Foundation (BDT 60 Lakhs). We shot the film just one day, and after that when we wanted to shoot in full swing, the organisation stepped back, probably because they did not have enough confidence in us.

When I thought of the role of Annapurna, I couldn't think of anyone else to be honest.

Moushumi was my first choice. Also, the character Monindo is the voice of Bengal, he is very rigid and bold as a person. I could not think of anyone else other than Ahmed Rubel.

Yash Rohan and Rodela Tapur's pair has become one of the attractions of the film. The new duo's chemistry in the film's trailer and two songs has gotten appreciation. What is the story behind casting Tapur?

Getting Tapur for the film still

seems to be a miracle for the entire team. We had looked for a near-perfect face for this role, but we were not satisfied. We were looking for a girl who is young and looks sweet, innocent and has simplicity on her appearance, we did a lot of screen tests but we were not getting the right person.

When learned about actress Chhanda's twin daughters, we immediately reached out and auditioned both of them. What we were looking for we found in Tapur, and finally she became the role.

What kind of obstacles did you face while shooting the film?

The location where we wanted to shoot the film, was tough to select. We had confirmed a place after speaking to the owners. When we went there to shoot, we found out that the owners, who were two brothers, had internal conflict between them and had built a barrier in the middle of their premises. We were shocked and it was not possible to postpone the shoot either, as we would not find the artiste's schedule further. However, the matter was resolved afterwards.

Won't share the screen with Razz for now: Mim

Actors Bidya Sinha Mim and Sariful Razz have been a popular duo in the past few months because of their two hit films, *Poran* and *Damal*. Recently, she signed a film titled *Pothe Holo Dekha* directed by Raihan Jewel. In that film, she was supposed to share the screen with Razz. However, Mim refused to act opposite Razz in upcoming films for now.



"I have made a final decision that I won't be acting with Razz in the near future. I don't know what will happen after that, but we won't be sharing screen together for now," said Mim to The Daily Star.

"There can be a romantic scene in any film. If people question me just for holding the hands of my co-star on screen, then how will I act in any film with that co-star?" she added.

Chris Hemsworth to take a break from acting

Chris Hemsworth is taking a break from acting after learning that he is genetically predisposed to Alzheimer's disease.

The *Thor* star found out about the news while filming the fifth episode of his Disney+ series *Limitless*, after he met with a doctor and learned he has a genetic tendency to the degenerative disease that destroys memory and other vital mental functions.

In an interview published Thursday, Hemsworth told Vanity Fair that the revelation inspired him to take more time off work to be with his family.



NEWS

Shariatpur youth mauled

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Police on September 13 registered his statements as a regular case under Torture and Custodial Death (Prohibition) Act against five to six unknown persons.

After investigation, sub-inspector Ibrahim Patwary of Palong Model Police Station, on November 16 submitted a charge sheet to the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court of Shariatpur, stating that four DNC personnel tortured Nur Alom in custody.

The four DNC personnel are Apurbo Biswas, assistant sub-inspector Tofail Ahmed and sepoy Prokash Roy and Priyanka Ghoramy.

The abuse started with Apurbo and Prokash hitting Nur Alom in a side alley at Ganganagar Bazar in Shariatpur, according to the charge sheet.

Nur Alom was taken to the house of one Sumon Robi Das adjacent to the Ganganagar Bazar, where Apurbo and Tofail beat him up with plastic pipes and injured various parts of his body.

Prokash hit Nur Alom's left eye so hard that it caused a blood clot, while Priyanka verbally abused him and hit him on his cheeks.

"The accused, despite being members of the law enforcement agencies, kept the complainant in their custody at the time of the arrest, and inhumanly tortured him physically and mentally," the charge sheet added.

The charge sheet lays bare the extent of the brutality of the accused and their crimes, Shahidul Islam Sajib, the victim's lawyer, told The Daily Star.

"After this, the accused cannot continue their service in the DNC legally."

Anticipating a premature end to their employment, three of the accused went to Nur Alom's house on Friday and pressed him to withdraw the case, according to Sajib.

"At that time, some 20-25 people, including local influential political leaders, accompanied the accused. Now my client is feeling insecure," the lawyer said, quoting Nur Alom.

Contacted, Tofail acknowledged they went to Nur Alom's house for an out-of-court settlement.

"But could not reach a solution," he added.

Harun Mollah, a former ward member of Shaulpara Union Parishad

in Shariatpur Sadar Upazila, told The Daily Star yesterday that he along with some other local people went to Nur Alom's house on Friday to patch up the sad episode.

"The DNC officials apologised to Nur Alom. The administration people now realised that they filed the narcotics case based on wrong information," he added.

THE NARCOTICS CASE

On October 19, DNC pressed charges against Nur Alom in the narcotics case.

The charge sheet says Tofail filed the case, while Apurbo investigated it. Prokash has been named in the charge sheet as a witness.

In the charge sheet, Apurbo said the DNC men searched Nur Alom's body before three local men – Alomgir Madbar, Maruf Madbar and Lutfor Chowdhury – and recovered 52 yaba pills from his possession.

However, the three men on September 14 told The Daily Star that the DNC officials did not recover any yaba pill from the 21-year-old.

"Soon after I heard the incident, I along with some people rushed to the spot. There I saw the narcotics in one of the DNC staff's hands. The DNC men told me to give my address and I did," Alomgir said.

Lutfor and Maruf echoed the same.

Four Syrian soldiers killed in Israeli 'air aggression'

REUTERS, Damascus

Four Syrian soldiers were killed and one wounded in Israeli "air aggression" on some military posts in the coastal and central region of Syria yesterday morning, Syrian state news agency SANA reported.

Syrian air defences countered the attack, which came from the Mediterranean Sea side and also caused material damage, the agency said.

"At approximately 6:30 this morning (0330 GMT), the Israeli enemy carried out an air aggression over the Mediterranean Sea, from the direction of Banias, targeting some posts in the central and coastal region," the agency quoted a military source as saying.

Govt won't meddle

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Sylhet, rather it's here in Gazipur ...

"Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has developed the country so much. And you want her to step down? The prime minister has kept your leader [BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia] at home showing mercy. A convict. Do you not have any shame? You cannot even bring out a procession for her," Quader added.

Speaking at the programme, AL lawmaker Kamrul Islam, also former food minister, said, "Fair, impartial and free elections will be held under Awami League. BNP wants to bring back caretaker government through conspiracy. There will be no caretaker government. Hasina's government will serve as an electoral government. If you do not come in that election, your existence will be in danger ..."

Awami League Presidium Member and Minister of Agriculture Abdur Razzak, Liberation War Affairs Minister AKM Mozammel Huq, State Minister for Youth and Sports Zahid Ahsan Russel, lawmakers Meher Afroze Chumki, Mohammed Ikbal Hossain also spoke at the programme.

A level playing

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are performing their duties as per the constitution. I have seen their passion to become voters so that they can choose their leaders themselves."

About a foreign envoy's remarks regarding the polls, he said, "The government and the ministry concerned will talk about that. Our [the election commission's] duty is to ensure the election process as per the constitution. We will do whatever is needed for that."

About the EC efforts to ensure all parties' participation in the election, he said there was no "lack of cordiality" from their end. "We called all the political parties for discussions and exchanging views. Some of them came and some didn't. However, our door is open for all. If any party wants to come and talk to us, we will oblige."

Asked whether CCTVs would be installed at the polling stations across all 300 constituencies, he said at least 350-400,000 cameras will be required for that.

"The matter is currently under discussion. We also need to consider that making quick decisions will be difficult after having to go through so many footages."

2 weeks gone, no headway

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arrested his friend Amatullah Bushra from Banasree in a case filed by the deceased's father.

However, investigators did not find her involvement in the killing yet.

They said Fardin left his Demra house around 3:00pm on November 4 to go to his university. But he was with Bushra from 5:00pm to 10:00pm, after which he dropped her off near her home in Banasree.

According to law enforcement findings, mobile radio tower locations and CCTV footages, Fardin was traced in Dhanmondi at 5:51pm, in Rampura 9:57pm, in Zinzira at 10:35pm, Shuvadda of Keraniganj at 10:53pm, Johnson Road area at 11:09pm and Gulistan Patal Market area at 12:50am.

At 2:01am, he was located in Jatrabari's Bibirbagicha area.

Analysing multiple CCTV footages, police claimed to identify a young man as Fardin, who was seen boarding a human hauler along with four people from Jatrabari intersection at 2:13am. He was seen getting off at Demra Staff Quarter intersection at 2:27am.

He and the four others were then seen getting on a CNG-run autorickshaw, which took them to Chonpara at 2:34am.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Fardin's father Noor Uddin Rana said he has seen all three footages.

"In the Rampura footage, I confirmed it was my son Fardin. In the Jatrabari footage, it seemed like my son because I recognised his walk. But in the next footage at Demra Staff Quarters, I could not understand anything."

"I told them [journalists] it can't be my son. In the footage from after boarding the human hauler to getting on CNG, that is not my son. He [Fardin] did not walk the same way the boy in the footage walked."

Rana lamented that some journalists reported he confirmed it was Fardin all along, though he never said anything like that.

"I am very upset about everything. The media trial is going on from the beginning ... The investigation should not be diverted into different directions."

"No one is verifying whether Fardin was fed anything [any intoxicants] or whether he was trapped ... I'm not giving up hope. We

hope a fair investigation will disclose everything."

Meanwhile, hundreds of Buet students demonstrated on campus yesterday, demanding proper investigation and identification of the killers.

One of the protesters, Mashiat Zahin said, "Fardin has no connection with any crime or such [drug] gangs. We never knew or heard of any such things from anyone. Besides, he did not even have any romantic relationship with anyone, which some media had written."

"We have faith in the law enforcers. We hope they will conduct a fair investigation and find out the perpetrators as soon as possible."

Shadman, a batchmate of Fardin, said, "He was our class representative. He was a very responsible student and, as far as we knew, he had no enemies."

About the recent developments, he said, "It seems unnatural to us that his last location was that place. We had an exam the next day, so he was not meant to be there at that hour."

Responding to a question, he said, "We are not sure if it was Fardin in that CCTV footage. We don't want to make further comments. The law enforcers should work on it."

Duronto

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He said there would be more details today.

Rejecting PBI's finding, Duronto's younger sister Shashwatee Biplob demanded further investigation.

She said it was clearly mentioned in the post mortem report that Duronto was murdered as there were injury marks in his chest and head.

On November 12, the body of Biplob was found in the river in Narayanganj's Fatullah, five days after he went missing.

Duronto was a member of the agriculture and cooperatives sub-committee of the Awami League.

A farmer by profession, he was also the former general secretary of Jahangirnagar University's Chhatra League unit.

Before he went missing, the last location of his mobile phone was tracked to Muslimbagh of Kamrangirchar, family members said.

One killed, 5 hurt

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chairman of Srinagar Union Parishad.

Additional police were deployed in the area, said Sottojith Kumar Gush, circle superintendent of Raipura Police Station.

The deceased Asgor Ali was a known supporter of UP member Abdul Khalek Mia.

The injured are Chand Mia, 40, Bacchu Mia, 54, Shahin Mia, 32, and three other unidentified persons. They are taking treatment in different local hospitals to avert arrest.

Earlier on July 13, Mofizuddin, 50, a supporter of AL leader Shah Alam, was killed during a clash over establishing supremacy in the same locality.

Shah Alam and Abdul Khalek could not be reached for comment.

Timekeepers

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of time, such as satellite navigation, software, telecommunication, trade and even space travel.

It has caused a headache for the International Bureau of Weights and Measures (BIPM), which is responsible for Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) -- the internationally agreed standard by which the world sets its clocks.

A resolution to stop adding leap seconds by 2035 was passed by the BIPM's 59 member states and other parties at the General Conference on Weights and Measures, which is held roughly every four years at the Versailles Palace west of Paris.

The head of BIPM's time department, Patrizia Tavella, told AFP that the "historic decision" would allow "a continuous flow of seconds without the discontinuities currently caused by irregular leap seconds".

"The change will be effective by or before 2035," she said via email.

She said that Russia voted against the resolution, "not on principle", but because Moscow wanted to push the date it comes into force until 2040.

Other countries had called for a quicker timeframe such as 2025 or 2030, so the "best compromise" was 2035, she said.

The United States and France were among the countries leading the way for the change.

Tavella emphasised that "the connection between UTC and the rotation of the Earth is not lost".

"Nothing will change" for the public, she added.