

# 'ANTONAGAR'

## Portraying life in our metro

**Out of the countless stories, Goutam Koiri collectively weaved a plot for his debut web film, "Antonagar", which will be streaming on Chorki from June 8.**

SHARMIN JOYA

People from all walks of life live in this busy metro called Dhaka. They have different shades to their lives and thousands of untold stories that float through Dhaka's dingy air.

Out of the countless stories, Koiri collectively weaved a plot for his debut web film, *Antonagar*, which will be streaming on Chorki from June 8.

The film is based on the interconnection between human relationships, their crisis and eternal bond. The hyper-link film will showcase the narratives of three couples, experiencing ups and downs of life, which the audience might connect with very easily, due to the light-hearted storytelling.

The three on-screen pairs that will be featured in the production from Runout Films will include Runa Khan (Rozina) and Shamol Mawla (Ilias); Sabnam Faria (Moushumi) and Shohel Mondol (Maruf); Nidra Neha (Purnima) and Prantar Dastider (Shubho).

Shamol Mawla shared that working with Koiri has been a pleasant experience. "Koiri and I share a great bond. Together, we have worked on quite a number of experimental projects and share lots of memories together. It is always fun to work with him."

Shamol plays Ilias, a CNG driver, who falls for his neighbour Rozina. Their chemistry grows with time, followed by sudden incidents that bring a twist in their lives. He noted that the film falls within the anthology genre, and a new form of storytelling in terms of interconnected stories will definitely enjoy it.

Runa Khan plays Rozina in the film, who has two different sides to her life. "Rozina works in a parlour, and she lives in a place that is very



crowded. She is one person at her workplace, and another one at home," elaborates Runa.

Sharing the experience of working with Shamol, Runa felt nostalgic about the days they worked together in *Sisimpur*. She also praised the director as one of her favourites.

Koiri shared that he has metaphorically plotted the entire story, after collecting a series of events that he observed in his surroundings. "All of the characters in the film are named after celebrities of our country. This has been done intentionally. This is another metaphor, that life is no less than a film, as they both have certain levels of drama, intervals and a climax."

Shohel and Faria donned the roles of Maruf and Moushumi. Maruf is an employee at an undergarment shop, while Moushumi is Rozina's colleague at the same parlour.

"I have known Goutam Da for a long time, we have worked together behind the camera on many projects," said Shohel. "He shared the story with me a long time ago, for the

part that I worked in, and for some reason it didn't happen. However, he connected that particular story to the hyper-link plot and finally we did it."

This is the second time Faria and Shohel shared the screen. "As a co-actor, she is very cooperative and fun to work with. I have really enjoyed working on this project and hope that the audience will experience something soothing on the screen," shared Shohel.

Faria's experience of working with the team has been satisfactory. "A reflection of reality will be seen in the film. I know the story of my part only, and it is one of such stories that has been represented in a unique way. I am grateful to the director for having me in such a team where my co-actors are phenomenal artistes. It made my work easier."

Chorki has been keeping the bar high by producing a variety of stories since its launch. It is time to tell how the audience embraces this new project, which will be released this Thursday.



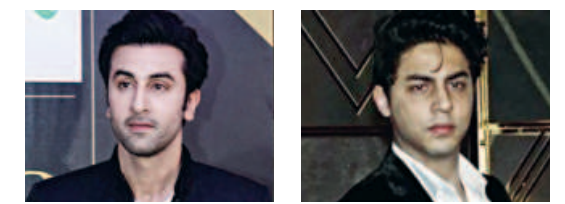
Goutam Koiri

## 'JK 1971' wins best feature film at Rainbow International Film Festival

The 24th Rainbow International Film Festival concluded on June 4, in London, with a screening of *JK 1971*. The festival proved to be a success story for Bangladeshi films as *JK 1971* won the Best Film in the Feature Film category, while *Saatoo* received a Rainbow Film Society Special Mention.

Moreover, another Bangladeshi film, *Tulika* also earned the Best Film award in the Short and Documentary category.

The festival started on May 28 at the Genesis Cinema Hall in East London. It showcased 45 films from different countries like, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, and China between May 29 and June 3.



## Ranbir Kapoor to appear in Aryan Khan's series

Shah Rukh Khan's son, Aryan Khan, is ready to make his debut as a director with the series, *Stardom*. The filming is currently underway, and to heighten the anticipation, Ranbir Kapoor has been enlisted for a special cameo appearance, which has already been filmed in the presence of Shah Rukh Khan.

Recently, Ranbir Kapoor pleasantly surprised everyone by visiting the series' set to check on Aryan's progress and also to shoot his own cameo. It also is rumoured that Karan Johar has a significant role in Aryan's project and completed his part during the initial three days of shooting.

The eagerly anticipated OTT series will explore the history of the Hindi cinema business.

# COUNTRYWIDE

## ONGOING HOT SPELL

### Vegetable cultivation faces setback for lack of rain

S DILIP ROY

Vegetable growers in different upazilas of Lalmonirhat and Kurigram are getting frustrated due to lack of rainfall during the ongoing hot spell for the last couple of weeks and they are now worried that they may not get the expected production of crops this season.

Finding no alternative, some of the farmers have been irrigating their vegetable fields, using diesel-run shallow machines, but it is increasing the production cost of the crops.

Farmer Jiten Chandra Barman of Kumrihat village in Aditmari upazila said though he is taking care of his two bighas spinaches field as much possible, he is worried about getting expected output due to the drought like situation currently prevailing all over the country.

"There has been no rainfall in the district for over a month now," Jiten said, adding that he had never witnessed such weather condition during this time of the year.

"Now I fear that I may not get the expected production from my four bigha bitter gourd field as there is no rain for the last couple of weeks, said Ashraf Ali of the village."



A woman takes care of her vegetable field at Kumrihat village in Lalmonirhat's Aditmari upazila.

PHOTO: STAR

Moreover, their vegetable fields are getting attacked by different insects and pests due to lack of rainfall during this period of the cultivation, he added.

Meanwhile, Narendra Nath Barman, a vegetable grower at Baiddar Bazar in Kurigram's Rajarhat upazila, said lack of rain as well as the ongoing heat waves have been badly hampering the vegetable farming in his locality.

"Rain is essential for the vegetable farming, especially during this time of the season," he said.

Farmer Altab Uddin of Shimulbari village in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila said local farmers fear that they may incur losses due to lack of irrigation water for vegetable farming.

According to Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), different kinds of vegetables have been cultivated on 1,850 hectares of land in Lalmonirhat and 2,340 hectares in Kurigram this season.

Lalmonirhat DAE Deputy Director Hamidur Rahman said he is also upset over lack of rainfall during this time of the year.

Due to lack of rain the production of spinach has fallen alarmingly while the quality is very poor as well, he said.

## Ailing Mohsin deserves

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in the country -- Abahani and Mohammedan -- and then rejuvenated Muktiyoddha Sangsad. There was a time when the fans flocked to the club premises to see him in action during the training sessions.

"Where has that football [atmosphere] gone, when a lot of people came to watch us during our times. I captained Abahani, Mohammedan, and Muktiyoddha Sangsad, but I liked to play for Abahani."

Following his mother's sickness and separation with wife, Mohsin returned to Bangladesh in February, 2014. A few years back he often visited his beloved Abahani and Mohammedan while players like Wasim Iqbal, Satyajit Das Rupu, and Kaiser Hamid also visited

his house, but he stays confined in his apartment at present.

After calling time on his illustrious football career, Mohsin went to the United States of America in 1997 before shifting to Canada. There, he worked at the store of a sporting club, associated with ice hockey and basketball, and later got married to a Bengali girl, hailing from his Manikganj district.

"The problem is that he [Mohsin] forgets everything. It has been happening for the last five to six months. That's why we have kept the door locked so that he can't go outside," Pintu informed.

Asked why Mohsin did not get involved in anything like business or football activities since his return, Pintu said: "My brother came back to see our sick

mother in February, 2014, and did not go back after he himself fell sick. My brother could not bring anything following separation, since everything (assets) belonged to my sister-in-law. I had to hire a car to bring him from the airport. He always feels anxiety whenever he has to do something."

With the responsibility of having to take care of his elder brother, Pintu had to give up his online clothing business. Their family is being run with the pension of his late father and some financial assistance from the sisters but they are unable to bear the expense of Mohsin's home-treatment or even get him admitted to the hospital.

"We have not sought any financial help before but we really need it now

to cure my elder brother. If the government can come forward to help my brother, then it will be really good, like how we got Tk one lakh from the government when he was given a national sports award last year."

"However, we would appreciate if the government help us rescue our 67-decimal land in Savar from the land grabbers, then we will sell some of it and spend behind brother's treatment," said Pintu, adding that he also sought help from BFF president Kazi Salahuddin and vice president Abdus Salam Murshedy.

Salahuddin told The Daily Star, "I got informed about Mohsin yesterday [Monday] from Manik [BFF vice president Ataur Rahman Bhuiyan Manik] and I am really shocked after learning about his

current condition as I played with him and against him.

"I must take care of him and provide the things he needs to get cured."

A former footballer, who played along with Mohsin, told this reporter on condition of anonymity: "You can understand what actually happened if you look at his face. What happened has happened, now it's our duty to stand beside him so that he can return to a normal life. He, as a famous footballer, deserves our attention."

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has already given assurances in extending necessary support to ailing Mohsin. We hope many more arrive to help him so that he can tell the tale of his glorious past to the new generations.

## 6,500 pilgrims in visa trouble

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Shafiqul Azim, Biman's managing director and CEO, said during the hajj season, the flight schedules are planned in advance and approved by the Saudi authorities.

It would be difficult to manage hajj flights for those who missed their flights due to the busy schedule in Saudi Arabia, he said.

AGREEMENT Seeking anonymity, a top Biman official said the ministry's flawed agreement with the Saudi authorities is also responsible for vacant seats on hajj flights.

"According to the agreement, 30 percent of the pilgrims will travel to Madina first and then to Makkah. But the pilgrims are not willing to go to Madina first. Most of them

want to go to Makkah first," the official added.

HOUSE RENT Biman officials said there is a tendency of hajj agencies to send pilgrims to Saudi Arabia late to spend less on accommodation.

"The agencies search for low-cost houses at their convenience. The Saudi authorities will not issue visas if the agencies fail to show house rental contract.

This is a clear violation of the country's Hajj-Umrah policy," said another top Biman official, wishing not to be named.

Asked, M Shahadat Hossain Taslim, president of Hajj Agencies Association of Bangladesh, "The Saudi authorities urged us in a letter to quickly process the visa applications of the pilgrims. We have forwarded the letter to the agencies."

He said 56,971 pilgrims travelled to Saudi Arabia until June 4.

A total of 1.22 lakh Bangladeshis will perform hajj this year. Of them, Biman will carry 61,000 Bangladeshis and Saudia and Flynas the rest, said sources at the three airlines.

Biman has permission for 162 flights to send the pilgrims to Saudi Arabia with a deadline of June 22.

## 20 hurt as AL factions clash

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municipal area. A tension was prevailing from morning in the area centring the programmes.

Around 9:00am, both groups started chase and counter-chase. At one stage, Mizanur's supporters vandalised the stage triggering a clash.

Both the groups, equipped with sticks and

sharp weapons, attacked one another. Instantly, the clash spread over the area, said witnesses.

The agitating people of both the groups came on the Dhaka Chattogram highway around 10:00am and locked into a clash again.

They vandalised few vehicles and set several motorbikes on fire. It halted vehicular movement on the

highway for around two hours.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation under control, said Jahidul Islam, assistant superintendent of Cumilla police.

Traffic movement normalised around 12:00pm after the clash ended, he added. Police suspended

vehicular movement in the area for safety reasons, said Muhammad Rahmat Ullah, superintendent of Cumilla highway police.

Contacted, Shuvo Ranjan Chakma, officer-in-charge of Chaudhagram Police Station, said 20 to 25 people of both the groups were injured in the violence. However, none of their injuries were serious. "We were holding

programme against BNP-Jamaat. Mujibul Haque tried to obstruct us. In response, our people resisted them," Mizanur told a Bangla daily.

On the other hand, Mujibul's supporter Rahmat Ullah, also general secretary of the upazila unit AL, said, "They [Mizan's followers] vandalised our stage. They acted like BNP-Jamaat's agents."