

PUNORMILONE

A riveting drama that bucks all trends

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SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

Action-packed, fantastical, nail-biting: Mizanur Rahman Aryan's 'Punormilone' is none of those things. In spite of that, or perhaps because of that, the family drama succeeds in subverting audience expectations amidst OTT's "Thriller Fatigue", with a powerful reminder of the age-old phrase *la familia es todo* (Family is all).

The opening, accompanied by a picturesque drone shot of an adroit flute melody, follows Antu (Siam Ahmed) on his favourite bike to what is the primary setting in the web film – his ancestral home in Sylhet.

The premise is delicately poised around the ever-jovial Antu and his cousin Riad (Shashwta Datta), when the latter comes to Bangladesh from abroad to marry Trina (Tasnia Farin).

The story is told within two timelines: the years 2019 and 2023, and starts in medias res, where the matriarch of the family, Antu's grandmother, looks at the photo album of a formerly loving and united family, reminiscing the events that set in motion its distressful breakup. As she faints soon after, Antu rushes in to the hospital and receives a lukewarm welcome, because he is perceived to have 'broken up' the family because of his affair, and later marriage, to Riad's wife, Trina.

If the former sounds convoluted to you, it absolutely is, and rightfully so. Family in itself is a more complex phenomenon than that we

give it credit for, which the director craftily portrays in a tense scene between the fathers of Riad and Noyon (Noor Imran Mithu) early on.

As the story moves forward and is given the space to breathe, Siam and Farin's chemistry shines through. However, it is intentional the lack of chemistry between Farin and Shashwta that is incredibly understated – Riad's stoic demeanour plays a yong to Antu's carefree yin. While Siam is a tested actor and bona fide film star, he brings forth an earthly charm in



PHOTO: COURTESY

Antu that is far removed from most roles that he has played. Shashwta was given a difficult job to portray the slightly awkward Riad, but he pulls it off quite convincingly.

Tasnia Farin's maturity in showcasing Trina's dichotomy between the two male leads is exceptional. In some takes, her eyes do the acting for her – conflicted, confused, sad.

However, what separates *Punormilone* from most other OTT projects is the attention to detail on the proverbial 'side' character. In truth, the entire cast assembles as one believable family – whether it be Noor Imran Mithu's simple yet amicable goofiness or Tajnuva Jabin's calming influence on the proceedings.

Nawba Tahia, Dipta Dey, Manas Bandyopadhyay, Golam Farida Chhonda, Shoab Monir, Hamidur Rahman, Shampa Khan Jannatul Ferdous Kajol, Mala Bhattacharjee all make a charming and memorable cast. Jahid Nirob does a fantastic

job with the music as well.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the few things that stuck out like a sore thumb – some dialogues were a bit weak in places, and could have clearly used some rework. The ending, while extremely tragic, begs the question of if it was only added for shock value.

In the post-credits, we are given a hint of relief – no matter what, life moves on, and whatever tragedy one has to face immediately becomes a little bit easier with the help of your loved ones.

While Mizanur Rahman Aryan deserves props for his direction, story and screenplay, the biggest win that he has scored is for his vision. After exploring love and friendship in *Networker Baire*, he has been blissfully ignorant of all current trends to make a riveting family drama, one that can be watched with one's entire family. Actually, it is recommended that you do, to get the most out of *Punormilone*.

Legal notice issued to halt promotion of 'Puff Daddy'

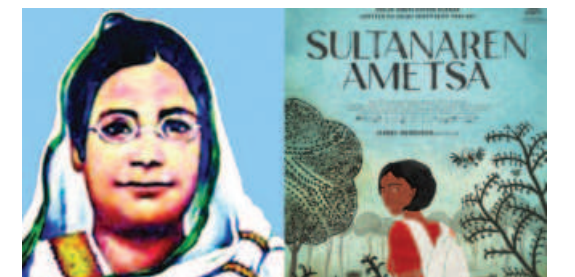


A legal notice has been dispatched with the aim of putting an immediate halt to the promotion, broadcasting, and screening of the web series *Puff Daddy*, which features the renowned actress Pori Moni. The notice, dispatched by

Supreme Court and Comilla Judge Court lawyer Zainal Abedin Mazhari, stipulates a strict three-day compliance period.

The legal notice states that the absence of specific policies governing the content on OTT platforms are allowing certain groups to exploit these platforms to disseminate explicit content and reap financial benefits.

This legal notice, issued on Sunday (September 24) has been communicated to several key figures, including the Chairman and Managing Director of Bangladesh Telecommunication Company Limited (BTCL), the Managing Director of the OTT platform Bongo BD.



Begum Rokeya's 'Sultana's Dream' come to life through Spanish filmmaker

The San Sebastián International Film Festival kicked off on Friday in Spain, showcasing a diverse array of cinematic talents from around the world. Among the standout entries was Spanish filmmaker Isabel Herguera's debut feature, *Sultana's Dream* ("El sueño de la sultana"), which celebrated its world premiere at the festival.

Sultana's Dream draws inspiration from the eponymous 1905 book by the renowned Bengali feminist thinker and writer, Begum Rokeya.

COUNTRYWIDE/NEWS

TRADITIONAL FISHING TOOL Good days for teprai artisans

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Teprai, a traditional fishing tool made of bamboo slits, makers in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram are all geared up for their seasonal business as demand for the item sees a rise during the monsoon every year.

The traditional method of catching fish with bamboo-made fishing trap, usually used for catching indigenous fishes, is still popular among the villagers in Lalmonirhat and Kurigram.

It is being sold in about 80 local bazars in the two districts.

Over two hundred craftsmen in the two districts manage to earn some extra money from the seasonal business during every monsoon.

A number of artisans said they usually produce teprai between the months of April and June, and sell their produces in July to September.

Almost all the members of a craftsman's family are involved in making the traditional fishing tool.

Each family produces around 300 to 500 teprai every season and earns a profit of Tk 200 to Tk 300 from per piece.

Niron Chandra Das, a craftsman from Jaturapur village in Kurigram Sadar

upazila, said teprai is made in three sizes – five feet, three feet and two feet in length and one foot in width.

Each teprai has five to ten openings to allow fish to enter and one pocket for collecting fish, he said.

Niron said they were selling each large size teprai at Tk 800 to Tk 1,000, middle size at Tk 500 to Tk 600 and small size at Tk 400 to Tk 450, while they have to spent Tk 250 Tk 500 for bamboo and other raw materials to make each teprai, depending on its size.

Another artisan Subhas Chandra of Shimulbari village in Kurigram's Phulbari upazila said he produced about 300 teprai this season and already sold those all.

Rajanikanta Das of Chaparhat village in Lalmonirhat's Kaliganj upazila said all the five members of his family are involved in teprai making.

His family has produced nearly 400 teprai this season and sold most of those in the last few weeks.

Fisherman Meher Ali of Megharam village in Sadar upazila said each teprai can be used for one season only.

Kurigram District Fishery Officer (DFO) Kalipada Roy said teprai is usually used for catching local variety fishes in knee-deep water.



A craftsman carries teprai by a battery-run auto-rickshaw to Chaparhat Bazar in Lalmonirhat's Kaliganj upazila for sale.

PHOTO: STAR

BCL men beat up journo over news report

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took him to the university's medical centre from where he was taken to the CMCH for better treatment.

Mosharraf, a student of communications and journalism, told this correspondent that attackers asked him why he reported on their clashes and published photos of BCL men wielding weapons.

"If you do report one more time, we will see who saves you," Mosharraf said, quoting one of the attackers.

Abu Tayyab, chief medical officer at the campus medical centre, said Mosharraf needed four stitches on his forehead.

Contacted, Rubel told The Daily Star that he had no idea who attacked the reporter.

CU's Proctor Nurul Amin Shikdar said, "We are trying to identify the attackers and we will take action against them."

NON-STUDENTS Asked TO VACATE DORMS
Those who have already graduated, got expelled from the university and those who are not students at all were asked by the campus administration to vacate the dormitories by 6:00pm today.

A notice, signed by acting registrar KM Nur Ahmad, specifically mentioned that those who were admitted to the university in the 2014-15 session and were still living at the dorms should leave.

It's up to court to give approval

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"I think there is a legal complexity and the court's permission might be needed. Our ministry can't do anything going beyond the law," the home minister said.

Asked whether the BNP has written to the home ministry about taking Khaleda abroad for

treatment, Asaduzzaman said they were yet to receive any such letter.

Reporters then asked the minister about the BNP's claim that whenever they write to the home ministry, they seek permission to take Khaleda abroad for treatment.

"They [BNP] do it

every time. We approve [extension of suspension of conviction] what is in our jurisdiction. They will have to go to the court if they want to do more," Asaduzzaman said.

Meanwhile, United Lawyers Front, a platform of pro-opposition lawyers, held a march near the Supreme

Court area, demanding the government send Khaleda abroad for better treatment.

The programme was led by ULE Convener Zainul Abedin, also BNP chairperson's adviser, and Co-convener Subrata Chowdhury, also Gonoforum's executive president.

Allow Khaleda to go abroad within 48hrs

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from multiple health complications, including arthritis, diabetes, kidney issues, liver problems, and heart diseases for a long time, said the medical board formed for her treatment.

On September 12, the government extended the suspension of Khaleda's

jail sentence by six more months with the same two conditions as before – she would not be able to go abroad and would have to receive treatment in the country.

Fakhrul said not only the US, but Bangladeshis have also imposed sanctions on the government.

"People of the country

have already told the government that [you] have tortured enough... we will not accept anything more. People of the country have woken up and you [government] cannot send them back home," Fakhrul said.

"If you don't step down, people will oust you from office and it would not be

good for you."

The BNP organised the rally demanding Khaleda be sent abroad for better treatment. Party leaders and activists thronged the meeting venue with placards and banners of Khaleda Zia's portraits and the venue area turned human sea before the rally started.

No strains on US-Bangla ties

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Saturday, the foreign minister said his country was not "bothered" by the US visa curbs on unnamed Dhaka officials for undermining the election process as part of Washington's push for free and fair general elections slated to be held early next year.

"The US is a democracy, so are we," he said.

"As a global power, they, of course, can exercise power over others, but we are not bothered because we know how to hold an acceptable election," Momen said, echoing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's assertion that her government is capable of conducting free and fair elections.

He added that his party's rank and files are not worried about the visa sanctions as most of them want to stay in this "prospering country".

"Our voters are also not bothered because they probably are not thinking of going to the US at all."

Friday said it began applying the visa policy that was announced on May 24 this year. However, it said it would not share the names of individuals who faced visa restrictions under this policy, saying visa records, including individual visa denials, are confidential under the US law.

Meanwhile, Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan said he did not know anything about Bangladeshis facing US visa restrictions.

"They [US] declared a visa policy and we heard that. They did not inform us through any letter... We are yet to know about those who have been banned from entering the US [under the policy]," he said while replying to a reporter's query at the Secretariat about lists doing the rounds on social media.

In another development, Faruk Hossain, deputy commissioner (media) of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, said the visa policy will not affect Bangladesh Police.

"We don't know who they are. There are over two lakh police members. If the visa policy is

implemented, a small fraction of the force may not be able to enter the country," he told journalists at his office yesterday, reports UNB.

Asked about US concerns regarding the role of law enforcement agencies during the upcoming election, he said police will continue to work within the framework of law.

"The role of police during the upcoming election is to provide security at polling centres. We will carry out the responsibility that will be placed on us by the Election Commission."

"We don't think the US visa policy will pose any obstacle to our duties."

Talking about the US visa policy, Election Commissioner Brig Gen (ret'd) Ahsan Habib Khan said it is a matter of the government.

"The Election Commission will continue to do its constitutional duties and you will see if we are doing our job properly or not," he said while talking to reporters at his office yesterday.