



Shobnom Bubby



Shakib Khan



Nusrat Imrose Tisha



Arifin Shuvoo



Puja Chery



Afran Nisho

## The film industry in 2023: MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM

**2023 was a hopeful year for cinema. After a prolonged period of near-empty halls, people started to attend screenings last year. The trend continued as cinema culture thrived with discussions and opinions, making it a successful year for the film industry. Apart from festivals, audiences flocked to theatres more than before. The year saw the release of 51 Dhallywood films, with some achieving commercial success while some failed as well. Overall, the industry could keep up the momentum that started with last year's rejuvenation of films.**

ZAHID AKBAR

### Most talked-about film actors:

The most talked-about film of 2023 was *Priyotoma*, directed by Himel Ashraf, and starring Shakib Khan. The film topped the charts, and Shakib Khan, following its success, has set his remuneration to Tk 1 crore, making him one of the most liked and discussed actors of this year.

*Priyotoma* generated around Tk 40 crores in ticket sales, according to information from the distribution

*Nation* was directed by legendary Indian filmmaker Shyam Benegal.

The film achieved a record release both nationally and internationally, hitting theatres in Bangladesh on October 13. Before its national release, the film had its premiere at the Business Branch of the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) on September 13.

Arifin Shuvoo also starred in another film this year, titled *Black War: Mission Extreme 2*, where his acting and action sequences

were in the forefront of discussion for her roles in several films over the past few years. This year, she earned critical acclaim for her performances in films like director Topu Khan's *Leader: Ami E Bangladesh*, *Prohelika* directed by Chayanika Choudhury, *Local* directed by Saif Chandan, and *Casino* directed by Saikat Nasir. Through these films, she portrayed diverse characters and received praise for her acting.

On the other hand, Nusrat Imrose Tisha gained acclaim for her role as Sheikh Fazilatunnesa Mujib in the film



Imran Mahmudul



Somnur Monir Konal



Balam

company. Through this film, Shakib Khan has contributed to the demand for multiplexes. Additionally, viewers have shown a strong liking for another film, *Leader: Ami E Bangladesh*, directed by Topu Khan.

Meanwhile, Arifin Shuvoo has received acclaim for his performance in the biopic of the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. *Mujib: The Making of a*

impressed the audience.

This year, Afran Nisho had his debut in the film directed by Raihan Rafi, titled *Surongo*. Released during the Eid-ul-Azha, the film received attention and commercial success. *Surongo* has marked a significant achievement for Nisho as the lead actor in the world of cinema.

**Female leads of the year:** Shobnom Bubby has been at the

### *Mujib: The Making of a Nation.*

Puja Chery was in the limelight for her role in the film *Jinn* directed by Nader Chowdhury. The audience appreciated her performance in this film.

**Movie posters that created buzz:** Movie posters have sparked discussions throughout the year too particularly with Shakib Khan's aged appearance in the poster for the

film *Priyotoma* gaining significant attention. His look was widely shared by his devoted fans on social media.

Additionally, Arifin Shuvoo's rendition of Bangabandhu in the film *Mujib: The Making of a Nation* and Afran Nisho's look in the poster for the film *Surongo* have been extensively discussed and praised. The artistry and presentation of these posters have contributed to the anticipation and buzz surrounding these movies and have worked well as the promotional campaign for these films.

### Most discussed playback singers of the year:

In 2023, the most discussed playback pair in cinema was Somnur Monir Konal and Balam, for their duet song *O Priyotoma* from the film *Priyotoma*. The song, written by Asif Iqbal and composed by Akash, has

earned over 130 million views in just five months on three official YouTube channels, reaching more than 13.5 million people.

Konal was also in the discussion for her other songs like *Surma Surma* and *Megher Nouka*, where she collaborated with Imran. Meanwhile, newcomer Riyad lent his voice to the song *Eshwar* from the film *Priyotoma*. The song, with lyrics by Sameshwar Oli and music composed by Prince Mahmud, quickly became a favourite amongst listeners after its release.

Tanjib Sarwar and Abanti Sithi's duet *Ga Chhuye Bolo* from the film *Surongo* was one of the most liked songs of this year, showcasing their versatile voices. The song, penned and composed by Tanjib Sarwar, has captivated the audience with its melodious appeal.

### Films of the year:

Mahfuz Ahmed was seen in a new film after eight long years through the film *Prohelika*, directed by Chayanika Chowdhury. The film has received praise from audiences both nationally and internationally.

Hridi Haq's directorial debut film, *1971 Sei Sob Din*, has been well-received by the audience. The film has captured the hearts of the new generation as well as viewers from all walks of life. It has gained acclaim both domestically and internationally, with Sajal's acting specifically being appreciated by the audience.

The trailer of Saif Chandan's film *Local* generated significant discussion. After its release, the audience showed keen interest in the film. Ador Azad's transformation in this film has gained much attention from viewers.

## COUNTRYWIDE

### Charity hospital struggling to stay afloat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Joyal Abedin, a resident of Mymensingh Sadar upazila, established a charity hospital – Momtaz Hospital – with his life's savings to provide medical support to poor people in his locality and other neighbouring villages.

However, since his death two years ago, the hospital has been struggling to remain afloat, reeling from a fund crisis.

There has been no financial support from any corner for the hospital and if this situation lingers it would no longer be possible to run it, said Joyal's grandson Mahmudul Hasan.

Joyal, who used to work as a rickshaw puller in Dhaka, established the hospital naming it after his daughter at his house in Taan Hasadia village in 2001.

He used to spend a portion of his income for his family and the rest was used in buying medicine for the hospital, said Joyal's wife Lal Banu.

Joyal was titled as a "Sada Moner Manush" (Man with a golden heart) in 2008 for his exceptional initiative.

Lal Banu said they started getting donations from affluent individuals after a report titled "Hope-maker" was published in The Daily Star in 2011.

At present, no MBBS doctor is assigned to the hospital due to financial strains. A village medical practitioner visits the hospital three days a week for free.

The hospital offers primary treatment to around 50 patients daily while

handing out free medication including pain killers, saline, paracetamol, antacid and deworming tablets.

"The hospital needs some Tk 40,000 per month to bear its operational cost and my expatriate son Jahid Hasan has been trying desperately to manage the money," informed Lal Banu.

The poor patients from Hasadia, Foliamari, Hiron Polashia, Mirkandapara, Nayapara, Char Sirta, Baula, Bahir Char, Char Kharicha, Paranganj and Abdullahpur villages visit the hospital daily, said Joyal's nephew Ashiqur Rahman.

### Since Joyal's death two years ago, the hospital has been struggling to remain afloat, reeling from a fund crisis.

Residents of those villages still respect Joyal's initiative and it will be sad if the hospital will not be able to continue, one of the villagers Moyna Bibi said.

Paranganj Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Abu Hanifa said Joyal's initiative has been supporting the rural people, mostly living below the poverty line.

Affluent people and organisations should come forward to support this noble initiative, he added.

### 18 hurt in pre-polls violence

FROM PAGE 12 candidate Shamim Haque's followers in Sadar upazila's Mamudpur area.

Janak is currently undergoing treatment at Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital in the district.

Other supporters of Azad told reporters that some 20-25 people, led by Mobarak Kholifa, Jamalpur's councillor of ward-21 of Faridpur Municipality, attacked and vandalised the independent candidate's camp around 6:30pm, and stabbed Janak.

Mobarak, a supporter of Shamim, could not be reached for comments.

The district's Additional Superintendent of Police Md Salauddin, said, "I have visited the spot and spoke to the victim. We are probing the incident."

The night before, two supporters of Shamim were injured in an attack allegedly by Azad's followers in the upazila's Bishnupur area.

Shamim alleged his supporters – Kamrul Mollah and Selim Sheikh – were attacked by Azad's supporters while campaigning.

Wahimul Islam Fahim, medical officer at Faridpur General Hospital, said the two were in critical condition.

Azad's election coordinator Md Shoebul Islam denied the allegation.

Faridpur's Kotwali Police Station's OC Shohidul Islam said police were investigating the incident.

In Jamalpur's Sarishabari upazila, four people were hurt in clashes between supporters of the AL-nominated candidate and those of an independent aspirant.

Locals said followers of AL-nominated candidate Mahbubur Rahman Helal in the upazila's Tariapara area.

In response, Helal's supporters attacked the independent candidate's camp in the same area.

Contacted, both groups blamed one another for the attacks.

Of the injured, two were Murad's supporters and two were Helal's.

On information, police rushed to the spot and brought the situation

under control. No complaint was filed, said Musfiqur Rahman, OC of Sarishabari Police Station.

In a separate incident, a journalist in Jamalpur filed a General Diary alleging that Jamalpur Municipal Councillor Sakhawat Alam Mukul, a close aide to Murad, on Monday night threatened to "teach him a lesson" after the election.

Shafiqul Islam, Sarishabari upazila correspondent of the daily Prothom Alo, filed the GD with Sarishabari police early yesterday, confirmed police.

In Patuakhali-3, a supporter of independent candidate Abul Hossain was attacked, and his poultry shop was looted in Galachipa upazila's Sharif Bari Bazar area.

The victim, Sabbir Sardar, alleged that a group led by Nasir, a supporter of AL candidate SM Sahajada, led the attack.

Nasir could not be contacted over phone for comments despite repeated attempts.

Mohiuddin Al Helal, upazila nirbahi officer, said, "On information, we

sent police to the spot. We are investigating the incident."

In Narayanganj, six people were arrested from Rugganj upazila's Chonpara area hours after they allegedly attacked the supporters of Narayanganj-1 independent candidate Shahjahan Bhuiyan on Monday afternoon.

They were detained on Monday night after a case was filed with Rugganj police.

Emon Mahmud Robin, 25, Sentu Talukder, 49, Don Sharif, 45, Anisur Rahman Shawon, 32, Rasukul alias Rakib, 30, Chan Mia, 27 were shown arrested and produced before a court yesterday morning, said Additional Superintendent of Police (C circle) Abir Hossain.

In Lalmonirhat, Golam Mortuza Hanif, a freedom fighter, filed a written complaint with the deputy commissioner against Social Welfare Minister and AL-nominated candidate for Lalmonirhat-2 Nuruzzaman Ahmed for allegedly threatening to break his neck if he campaigned for

the constituency's independent candidate.

Meanwhile, Abu Bakkar Siddik Shamol, chairman of Gaddimari Union Parishad under Lalmonirhat's Hatibandha upazila, at an election campaign on Monday night said he would not allow any candidate, except AL nominees, in his area.

(Our correspondents from respective districts contributed to the report.)

### It all boils down

FROM PAGE 12 Taleb Shatil, a voter of the constituency. Many other voters said that during his term as an MP, he was not accused of any irregularities for which people are now supporting him more.

Rafiqul Islam, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver in Kendua, said, "Ashim Babu used to come here every Friday and Saturday but did not meet general people here, which has aggrieved many."

"However, it's good that he has admitted it was wrong of him and has begun going from door to door seeking votes."

Voters in Bolaishimul union, the largest union under Kendua upazila, with 16,000 voters, have expressed disappointment with Ashim for his role in constructing houses, under the Ashrayan Project, on a 100-year-old playground, which may prove to be a disadvantage for him in the polls.

There are 3,94,513 voters in Netrakona-3.

Several district level AL leaders, preferring anonymity, told The Daily Star that they think a higher voter turnout might bring positive results for Pintu in the January 7 polls due to his popularity among the masses.



Momtaz Hospital, a charity clinic in Mymensingh Sadar upazila, has been struggling to cope with the rise in number of patients due to fund crisis. PHOTO: STAR