

'SHYAMA KABYA' withdrawn from Cineplex over alleged 'disrespect'



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Intekhab Dinar, and A K Azad Shetu, amongst others, who played significant roles in the film further pushed their concerns over the screening issues on the first day of release.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Seasoned film director and scriptwriter, Badrul Anam Saud, who came to prominence with his debut feature film, *Gohin Baluchor*, has decided to withdraw his much-anticipated film *Shyama Kabya* from Star Cineplex due to projection and irregular scheduling issues.

The Shohel Mondol and Neelanjona Neela starrer psychological thriller was released in theaters across Bangladesh, on May 3. However, amidst Star Cineplex's alleged inclination towards showcasing foreign films over Bengali films, which has garnered severe criticism from the artiste community and audiences alike, the director asked for his film to be withdrawn from Star Cineplex.

Pointing out numerous discrepancies in Star Cineplex's undertaking of the government-funded film, director Badrul Anam Saud said through a Facebook post from his official account, "I want to withdraw my film *Shyama Kabya* from Star Cineplex due to several reasons."

"Firstly, due to projection issues, the audience was given an inaccurate experience of the movie. As a result of which, I cancelled an almost housefull show on the opening day. Admittedly, the projection issue was solved the next day with a change of halls," he said.

"Secondly, once the show ran the very next day, we noted inappropriate timing of the interval. It was given in between a sequence. We question the integrity of the projectionist for this mishap as the show resumed within a sequence after the interval," the director continued.



"And last but not least, Rebecca Sultana, marketing manager of Star Cineplex presented some statistics about the sales after the very first day at 2:58pm on Friday. But the next day, we noted discrepancies within the same ticket sales stats. We pleaded that we did not want any morning shows. They were kind to listen to our requests on Saturday. Unfortunately, on Sunday we faced the same problem again when a couple of our shows were slotted in the morning," the director stated.

Concluding the post, director Saud called out Rebecca Sultana and requested, "Ms Rebecca I would like to withdraw my film from Star Cineplex. Please don't project any of our shows."

Opposing Saud's stance, Mesbah Uddin Ahmed, senior manager of Media and Marketing of Star Cineplex, said, "The withdrawal of the film has nothing to do with any of the issues Badrul Anam Saud has stated. As far as I know, seeing the poor turnover of audiences, the distributors have decided to opt for *Kajol Rekha* instead of *Shyama Kabya* for better profit. That is all I can say regarding the issue."

As of yet, this Suborna Mustafa-produced

film's screening has officially been withdrawn from Star Cineplex's website.

Badrul Anam Saud's *Shyama Kabya* dominated at the Gange Sur Seine Film Festival in Paris, claiming awards in four categories. The government granted film for the 2019-20 session has won the Special Jury Award, the Best Original Screenplay Award, the Best Picture Award, and the Best Editing Award.

The film portrays the tale of a college teacher (Shohel Mondol) who had experienced a traumatic childhood incident and tends to seclude himself in his home, where he lives alone. However, his life takes a new turn when he falls in love with a beautiful girl (Neelanjona Neela) and marries her, only to find out that not all is as it seems.

Intekhab Dinar, and A K Azad Shetu, amongst others, who played significant roles in the film further pushed their concerns over the screening issues on the first day of release.

"As a distributor Bongo has collaborated with the film, however, the final decision regarding the film will be taken by the producer and its director," said Chief Content Officer Mushfiqur Rahman, of Bongo. "He texted me that he doesn't want to continue shows in Star Cineplex anymore."

He continued, "We all know that *Shyama Kabya* is not a fully commercial film, it is more of an art film - so it has a different audience." Adding to this, he shared that the film was being screened with a faulty projector, which was changed after complaints.

Since the director has backed out from the only relevant multiplex that Bangladesh has, what will happen to the film? Only time will tell.

Rituparna and Shakib Khan reunite at Kolkata

The enduring friendship between Rituparna Sengupta and Shakib Khan has been a highlight of the showbiz scene, marked by their stellar performances. Currently, Shakib is filming *Toofan* in Kolkata, sparking speculation that their reunion may have occurred on set or at an event.



Yesterday, clarifying the context, Rituparna shared photos on her social media, captioning, "It was a pleasure to reconnect with

my dear friend Priya Karfa, her husband Rittik, and their family amidst the promotions of my film *Dabaru*. Serendipitously, I bumped into Shakib Khan, my superstar friend from Bangladesh, currently filming in Kolkata."

The filming for Pathikrit Basu's *Dabaru* commenced last July. Simultaneously, Raihan Rafi's film *Toofan* is slated for release during Eid-ul-Azha, jointly produced by Chorki, Alpha i, and India's SVF.

Unicef India appoints Kareena Kapoor Khan as national ambassador



Unicef India has recently appointed Bollywood icon Kareena Kapoor Khan as its national ambassador, reinforcing her longstanding commitment to children's rights.

Having collaborated with Unicef India since 2014, Kareena officially transitioned from her previous role as a celebrity advocate to serving as the national ambassador on last Saturday.

In a statement, the 43-year-old actor expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to advocate for children's rights, emphasising the importance of ensuring every child's access to early childhood development, health, education, and gender equality.

COUNTRYWIDE



People of Chhota Baishdia union in Patuakhali's Rangabali upazila still use this ramshackle bridge on Gahinkhali Canal as authorities are yet to construct a new bridge, 12 years into declaring it abandoned. PHOTO: STAR

Risky ride on abandoned bridge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Although it was declared abandoned nearly 12 years ago, the bridge on the Gahinkhali Canal in Patuakhali's Rangabali upazila is yet to be removed or reconstructed.

meanwhile, several thousand residents of eight villages under Chhota Baishdia union have continued their risky ride on the awfully dilapidated bridge, that connects the union with the upazila headquarters, as authorities failed to make any alternative arrangement in all these years.

Besides, Local Government and Engineering Department (LGED) declared the 65-metre-long and two-metre-wide bridge abandoned about 12 years ago, but no step has been taken to reconstruct it to ease communication for its users.

Finding no alternative, villagers set wooden pillars and tree logs in place of the decaying iron pillars and set up a wooden platform on the damaged structure to make it usable.

In order to facilitate road communication between Rangabali Sadar and Chhota Baishdia unions, LGED constructed the 65-metre-long iron structured bridge in 1990.

Although LGED renovated the bridge for the first time in 2002, later declared it risky in 2012, considering its ramshackle state.

One of the local residents Shakeel

Ahmed said although vehicular movements through the dilapidated bridge was suspended long ago, pedestrians still use the bridge risking their lives.

Abbas Hawladar, a grocer at Baherchar Bazar, said earlier many people from the nearby areas used to come to the market, but since traffic movement through the bridge stopped the number has drastically fallen.

Headteacher at Rangabali Model Secondary School Nasir Uddin said hundreds of students from three villages - Gahinkhali, Chatlakhali and Purba Chatlakhali - use the ramshackle bridge to come to the institution every day amid risk of accidents.

Acting Chhota Baishdia Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Kamal Pasha said about 2,000 residents, including school and college going students, cross the dangerous bridge every day.

The authorities concerned should reconstruct or replace the bridge with a new one as soon as possible in order to ease the communication trouble.

Rangabali Sadar UP Chairman Saiduzzaman Mamun said LGED declared the bridge risky about 12 years ago, but did not take any initiative to construct a new bridge there due to unknown reason. Rangabali LGED Upazila Engineer Habibur Rahman said they have already sent a proposal to the higher authorities to construct a new bridge on the Gahinkhali Canal.

Panchapalli men go into hiding in fear of arrests

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clothes put on the idol had caught fire and thought construction workers at the nearby Panchapalli Government Primary School had done it.

"Seven workers were then confined to a room in the school and beaten up. The two brothers died in the incident," he told journalists on the day of the incident.

On April 21, a video clip of the workers being beaten up went viral on social media.

In it, Dumain Union Parishad Chairman Shah Asaduzzaman and member Ajit Kumar Biswas were seen to be involved. Both have gone into hiding since

it was released.

On April 26, Deputy Commissioner of Faridpur Qamrul Ahsan Talukdar announced a reward for handing them to law enforcers for their involvement in the incident. The Daily Star has seen the clip.

Contacted, the victims' father Md Shajahan Khan, said, "A few days before the incident, my sons told me that some people wanted to take away some iron rods from the construction site but they resisted."

"I then requested Jalal Sheikh, sub-contractor of the construction site, to remove my sons from the school's work. He did not

listen to me. Instead, he later showed up with my sons' dead bodies."

A cousin of the brothers, Imran Khan said, "Around six to eight people killed my brothers. It wasn't a mob beating. A fire was deliberately set to the temple to divert the incident to a different direction."

WHAT HAPPENED ON APRIL 18
Tapati Mondal, priestess of the temple, said, "Like other days, I went to the temple and lit the evening lamp around 6:30pm."

She added, "Around 15 minutes later, I went to the premises I stay on, just a few yards from the temple. I

suddenly heard some noise of the workers [who were working nearby] followed by someone shouting that the temple was on fire.

"Some villagers then came and doused it."

Assistant teacher of the school Bimal Mondal, 56, said, "Our education officer informed me that there was some chaos at our school. I rushed to the spot around 7:30pm."

"I saw the construction workers sitting in a room in the school. A few moments later, the chairman [Dumain Union Parishad Chairman Shah Asaduzzaman] and a member [union parishad member Ajit Kumar

Biswas] came there."

He added many people then began gathering there and shouting. "As chaos was erupting, I left the scene."

Police said they went to the spot when the situation got out of control and some of their officers were attacked and injured.

Three cases were filed in connection with the incident - a murder case filed by the father of the two dead workers, an arson case filed by a local, and one filed by police over attack on law enforcers.

So far, 23 people have been arrested in the cases, and four of them given confessional statements before a court, police said.

128 Myanmar border troops

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88 BGB troops entered Bangladesh through the Kanchan jetty under Sabrang union around 11:00am yesterday.

They surrendered to the Bangladesh Coast Guard members stationed on the Naf river.

The junta troops were disarmed and provided food and medicine before they were handed over to the BGB.

On Saturday, 40 more BGB members entered Bangladesh through two points along the border in Teknaf.

Of them, 14 entered through Achar Bunia border and 26 through Nazirpara border.

BGB first disarmed them and later shifted them to Hnila High School.

On February 15 and April 25, a total of 618 Myanmar nationals, mostly

BGP members, entered Bangladesh after fleeing the conflict between the military junta and the Arakan Army in Rakhine State. Later, they returned to their country in two phases.

The conflict between the junta troops and Arakan Army intensified from the beginning of February along the Ghumdhum border in Naikhonchhari upazila of Bandarban.

EC scraps nomination of Quader's brother

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the nomination form. He also didn't mention the sources of his income and expenses in the form. His nomination paper was cancelled after scrutiny," the RO told reporters at his office.

Regarding the nomination paper cancellation, Shahadat said, "As far as I know, the cases filed against me have been withdrawn. That's why, I didn't mention them in the

affidavit."

He said he would appeal against the Election Commission decision.

The RO also cancelled the nominations of another chairman candidate and two vice-chairman contenders after verifying the documents of the candidates of three upazilas in Noakhali that will go to polls in the third phase of the election.

Meanwhile, nominations of 37 candidates have been deemed valid in three upazilas.

The candidates whose nomination papers have been cancelled can appeal to deputy commissioners to regain their candidatures between today and May 8.

Elections to Noakhali Sadar, Begumganj, and Companiganj upazila parishads will be held on May 29.

Ask MPs

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what kind of election we want and urge lawmakers to refrain from exerting influence," he told reporters at his EC office.

"It carries the message that ministers and MPs can have relatives as candidates, but they can't exert any influence," he said.

Asked about what the EC will do if ministers and MPs do not obey the EC's message, Alamgir said, "If the ministers and MPs do not follow the rules, it will be seen that rules have been breached, and action will be taken accordingly."

The EC's move to write to the Speaker came after field-level administration and police officials expressed concern that lawmakers and ministers trying to influence the upazila polls might pose a serious challenge.

They said this at a meeting with the commission on April 25.

Meanwhile, sources in the ruling Awami League said relatives of more

than 50 ministers and lawmakers are contesting the polls.

They are still in the race, defying the party's decision that close relatives will have to withdraw their candidatures, the sources added.

This year, upazila polls will be held in four phases from May 8 to June 5.

Hopes for Gaza

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assault, according to Gaza's health ministry. The bombardment has devastated much of the coastal enclave and caused a humanitarian crisis.

Residents and health officials in Gaza said Israeli planes and tanks continued to pound areas across the Palestinian enclave overnight, killing and wounding several people.

Israeli forces killed five Palestinians, including four fighters from Hamas, in an overnight raid near the city of Tulkarm in the occupied West Bank.