



'Golam Mamun': A compelling spin-off of crime, betrayal, and societal reflections

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The web-series *Golam Mamun* has recently premiered on the OTT platform Hoichoi. Despite being a spin-off, the series is not a typical character-driven story. In Ayan Chakrabarty's plot, police officer Golam Mamun is accused of murdering a delinquent named Nasir. Concurrently, Mamun's colleague Sakib and Sakib's wife, journalist Tania, are murdered, with all fingers pointing at Mamun. While on duty, Mamun is presented in court but escapes, becoming a fugitive who investigates the connections between these murders. He eventually discovers a link to his brother-in-law's murder, another police officer.

In his quest to uncover the mysteries, Mamun faces betrayal, distrust, and the disguised faces of those around him. Can he rise above these challenges, or will his astute colleague, officer Robin, catch him? Are Robin and Mamun rivals or allies? The series answers these questions.

The screenplay, written jointly by Shihab Shaheen and Mezbah Uddin Shumon, opens with a tragic scene: a little girl narrates her deceased mother's condition over a phone call, setting a gloomy tone. The series interweaves numerous events, maintaining a cohesive pattern without becoming irrelevant. Shaheen aimed to present this story on a wide scale, introducing peripheral issues through brief dialogues. Some parts were effective, but not all. For instance, the attempt to address national issues like power outages through dialogues was commendable, but the absence of a generator in such a flat seemed unrealistic.

The attempt to introduce the narrative of domestic violence in the marital relationship of Mamun's brother-in-law and sister was praiseworthy. Shaheen avoided the common trope of unnecessary smoking and drinking to make the characters relevant to violence,

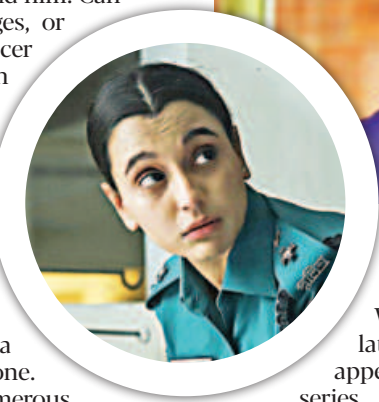
instead telling a different story.

Ziaul Faruq Apurba reprises his role from *Baker Moddhye Agun* and portrays the character Golam Mamun in this spin-off. He maintains his signature style, delivering a performance free from overacting, and shines in action scenes—a genre his fans haven't seen him tackle before. This fresh portrayal is a delightful surprise for his die-hard fans. However, outside the action and thrilling moments, Apurba appears somewhat subdued.

adds an attractive touch.

Nazmus Sakib portrays tourist police officer Milon. Though Sakib acts regularly, he seldom gets ample screen space. In this series, he has that space, and the role of Milon has the potential to add a new dimension to the story, enhancing its excellence. However, he needs to pay more attention to clichéd dialogue delivery and forced comedy.

Masum Basher delivers an impeccable performance as the chief. Rashed Mamun Apu and Sabrin Azad also make strong



appearances. However, Sharlin Farzana fails to make a significant breakthrough after a long hiatus. Even though *Golam Mamun* is a spin-off series, Shihab Shaheen uses it to reflect our current socio-political realities through fiction and brief dialogues, highlighting numerous inconsistencies in our surroundings. However, we should question his portrayal of everything under an invisible shadow, or 'h ukumat'. This 'invisible' aspect implants a spectral reality in our minds, which eventually seems insurmountable. The ruling apparatus takes full advantage of this, becoming more active in masking their failures.

Storytelling plays a significant role in creating such narratives, leading to a gradual decline in the audience's tendency to question authority. This decline is certainly not beneficial for any governance system or the state itself.

Intiaz Barshon plays the role of police officer Robin. With the addition of this latest series, Barshon has now appeared in three consecutive series, including *Sharey Showlo*, and *Kaalpurush*, as a cop—each time portraying a distinct character with different roles, appearances, and nuances. His versatility leaves no room for doubt. In *Golam Mamun*, he matches Apurba's performance, creating a compelling antagonist whose ruthlessness contrasts sharply with the protagonist Mamun, garnering audiences' sympathy for Mamun.

Sabila Nur plays police officer Rahi, an intriguing role in this series. She seamlessly transitions from a temperamental officer to a soft-spoken assistant, and then to an unknown identity at critical moments, showcasing her professionalism. Her urban Bengali accent

Warfaze's Tipu named official artiste for Zildjian drum brand



Sheikh Monirul Alam Tipu, co-founder and band leader of Warfaze, has been named an official artiste for the drum brand Zildjian, marking a significant recognition of Bangladesh's music scene.

Tipu, born on July 15, 1970, is celebrated not only as a drummer but also as a rhythm composer, lyricist, and music producer.

Tipu's endorsement by Zildjian marks a career milestone, showcasing his talent and global influence. Known for his distinctive setup with Zildjian cymbals, including the 14" A Custom Hi-Hats, 16" A Custom Medium Crash, and 22" K Series Heavy Ride, his preference for quality resonates with musicians worldwide.

Raihan Rafi announces 'Toofan' sequel with original cast

The release of *Toofan* during Eid has captivated audiences across Bangladesh, with theatres experiencing overwhelming responses. In a thrilling development, director Raihan Rafi has



announced a sequel is in the works, following the film's dramatic cliffhanger ending.

Starring Shakib Khan, *Toofan* carried high expectations even before its release and has not disappointed. Since premiering this Eid, the film has already broken records.

Toofan 2 began before the first film's release, but Rafi waited for audience reactions. "The film ends in a way that makes a sequel essential," he said. The script is ready, with the main cast returning and potential new additions.

NEWS

Super 8 brings

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defending 119 against Pakistan and South Africa defending 115 against Nepal and 113 against Bangladesh respectively.

The lowest successful defense, however, belongs to the Tigers, who bundled out Nepal for 85 after posting just 106 in St Vincent.

Bowlers' iron grip on batters was slipping as the first round was coming to a close. Two of the three 200-plus totals in the tournament so far came in the final two days of the first round—West Indies posting 218-5 against Afghanistan and Sri Lanka making 201-6 against the Netherlands.

This trend of higher scores continued in the first two matches of the Super Eight as well. In Group 2, South Africa posted 194-4 against the USA, who in reply made 176-6 in Antigua where Bangladesh are scheduled to play against Australia and India in the Super Eight.

On Thursday, hosts West Indies were blown out of the water by defending champions England despite posting a commendable 180-4 as Jos Buttler's side chased that down in just 17.3 overs in St Lucia.

Scores north of 170 being scored and chased down is signaling a change of tide in the tournament, which could very well add to the challenges of Bangladesh in the Super Eight.

The Tigers begin their Super Eight journey today against Australia, with the match starting at 6:30 am Bangladesh time.

The Tigers have heavily banked on their bowlers so far in the tournament, who have been making up for the shoddy performances from the batters.

However, the Tigers' bowling attack still hasn't been tested on a flat surface, and containing the belligerent Aussie batting line-up on a flat surface would be a huge challenge.

Less than 48 hours after the Australia match, the Najmul Hossain Shanto-led side will face India at the same venue.

The Tigers would be hoping for a return to first round's playing conditions in Antigua for the next few days, otherwise, they might risk seeing their misfiring batting get exposed by two superior teams in quick succession.

Elderly couple murdered

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Bloody footprints were spotted up to the fourth floor, police said.

As the underground water tank at Shafiqur's house started overflowing, neighbours went to notify someone at the building.

When a tenant from the third floor came down to switch off the water pump, he found Shafiqur lying in a pool of blood on one side of the garage. She called the neighbours for help and then dialed 999 to report the incident.

The police found the key to the main gate of the building with Shafiqur. The building can however be accessed by jumping over the back boundary wall.

Emon said the killers ransacked the almirahs, but no valuables were missing. His laptop, which was inside

Putin seeks security

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should not be given a stage on which to defend Russia's war in Ukraine.

Russia and Vietnam signed agreements on issues including energy, underlining Moscow's pivot to Asia after the West imposed sanctions on Moscow over the conflict in Ukraine.

"We are firmly committed to deepening the comprehensive strategic partnership with Vietnam, which remains among the priorities of Russia's foreign policy," Putin was quoted as saying by Russian media.

He was quoted by Russia's TASS news agency as saying the two countries shared an interest in "developing a reliable security architecture" in the region based on not using force and peacefully settling disputes with no room for "closed military-political blocs".

The II pacts signed in Hanoi were not on the same level as the landmark mutual defence agreement in North Korea.

But Putin's warm welcome was a public relations achievement for the Russian leader, who has an outstanding International Criminal Court arrest warrant against him over alleged war crimes in Ukraine, charges he denies. Neither Russia nor Vietnam is a member of the ICC.

The military ceremony put on to

an almirah, was found on the bed.

He went on to say that they didn't have any enmity with any neighbours, but had a land dispute in their village.

Meanwhile, the bodies of the victims were sent to Dhaka Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Speaking to reporters, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Wari division) Iqbal Hossain said the modus operandi suggests that this was a planned murder. "It's not a case of theft or robbery."

"The killers inflicted many blows to Shafiqur's neck and head to ensure his death. Nothing was missing from the house. The killers tried to pass it off as a robbery."

He said the double murder could have occurred due to previous enmity or family enmity.

greet Putin, who was embraced by both Vietnamese President To Lam and Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, was the kind reserved for the highest heads of state and rolled out when US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Vietnam last year.

The two presidents witnessed the exchange of II cooperation agreements and memorandums of understanding, including deals on oil and gas, nuclear science and education.

At another event, Lam said Putin continued to lead Russia "overcoming all difficulties and challenges, at the same time contributing to the peace, stability and development in the region and the world."

Vietnam's hosting of Putin was criticised by the United States, now an important partner which upgraded diplomatic relations with Hanoi last year and is Vietnam's top export market, and by the EU.

A US embassy statement this week said no country should be giving Putin a platform to promote Russia's war in Ukraine.

An EU delegation spokesperson in Vietnam said Hanoi had the right to develop its own foreign policy, but said Russia's war in Ukraine proved Moscow did not respect international law.

Hajj death toll

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Saudi authorities reported clearing hundreds of thousands of unregistered pilgrims from Makkah this month, but it appears many still participated in the main rites which began last Friday.

This group was more vulnerable to the heat because, without official permits, they could not access air-conditioned spaces provided by Saudi authorities for the 1.8 million authorised pilgrims to cool down after hours of walking and praying outside.

"People were tired after being chased by security forces before Arafat day. They were exhausted," one Arab diplomat told AFP yesterday, referring to Saturday's day-long outdoor prayers that marked the hajj's climax.

The diplomat said the main cause of death among Egyptian pilgrims was the heat, which triggered complications related to high blood pressure and other issues.

In addition to Egypt, new fatalities were confirmed yesterday by Pakistan and Indonesia. Out of around 150,000 pilgrims, Pakistan has so far recorded 58 deaths, a diplomat briefed on the tally told AFP.

"I think given the number of people, given the weather, this is just natural," the diplomat said.

Indonesia, which had around 240,000 pilgrims, raised its death toll to 183, according to the ministry of religious affairs, compared with 313 deaths recorded last year.

Deaths have also been confirmed by Malaysia, India, Jordan, Iran, Senegal, Tunisia, Sudan and Iraq's autonomous Kurdistan region. In many cases authorities have not specified the cause.

We'll retaliate

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to navigate the waters in Myanmar's territories of the Naf river, prompting firing either by the Myanmar military or the Arakan Army, he said.

The minister, however, said the situation has improved of late.

"Currently, they are not shooting at the boats in Bangladeshi waters. The two ships on the Myanmar side [of the Naf river] have been withdrawn," he said referring to the deployment of those Myanmar ships.

He expressed optimism that there would be no further shooting. "However, those who cross the area are taking necessary precautions."

Locals in St Martin's said gunshots were fired from across the border at trawlers and speedboats on the Naf river since June 6.

'Swiss banks not so lucrative now to park money'

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ago after tax probes by the US, France and Germany and a new system of bank data exchange between governments has scuppered the traditional "no questions asked" approach by Swiss banks to serving rich clients living abroad, Bloomberg reported in 2016.

The development of the Common Reporting Standards (CRS) in 2014 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also brought about a major shift in global tax transparency.

This is because by signing up, countries agree to automatically exchange financial account information. As a result, it has become harder for individuals to conceal their wealth offshore without the rest of the world knowing about it. Before this, countries generally had to request this information from other nations.

Data from the Swiss National Bank showed that Bangladeshi nationals saved 13.96 million CHF in Swiss banks in 2023, the lowest since 1997. The amount was 78 percent of the total deposits of 17.71 million CHF, or \$19.86 million.

The deposits were Tk 233 crore in Bangladeshi currency. In the case of Bangladeshi nationals, the deposits amounted to Tk 184 crore.

Iftekharruzaman, executive director of the Transparency International Bangladesh, said Switzerland is one of the many destinations for illicit fund transfers.

Switzerland is a conventional destination, but since it joined

the global efforts against money laundering and corruption, it has lost its shine, he added.

"Many destinations for illegal money transfers have sprouted, and they are more attractive," he said, citing the names of Malaysia, Singapore, and the Middle Eastern countries.

Plus, there are offshore destinations to park money, he said.

"One can buy properties in the UK, the US, Canada, and the Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern countries. This is not easy in the case of Switzerland," added Iftekharruzaman.

"So, the falling deposits in the Swiss banks belonging to Bangladeshi citizens and banks do not provide any relief that illegal capital flight has declined."

In 2022, the Tax Justice Network's Financial Secrecy Index, the UK-based organisation, named the US as the top destination for stashing money illegally. The country overtook traditional tax havens Singapore, Switzerland, Luxembourg, the Bahamas, and the Cayman Islands.

Mansur, a former economist at the International Monetary Fund, said Switzerland had once kept the information of depositors confidential. "Now it is not maintaining the secrecy. It provides information if any government seeks."

Bangladeshi living in Switzerland may hold a portion of the deposits. A part of the foreign currency reserves of Bangladesh are also kept there, he added.

US, UK, EU express

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dedicated efforts to provide essential services for Rohingya refugees and Bangladesh's host communities.

"We continue to advocate for global attention for this protracted crisis, amid emerging new crises and growing global humanitarian need," they said.

In the camps, improved opportunities for refugees to pursue meaningful education and livelihoods could build essential resilience and

self-reliance, the statement said. "This is important to overcome cycles of poverty and marginalisation for future generations."

"We remain committed to ensure a better and more dignified life for the Rohingyas while they remain in Bangladesh. We will continue to pursue regional coordination and collective efforts towards sustainable solutions for Rohingya refugees, partnering with the government of Bangladesh."