

#HUMOUR

Why Dhaka's weddings feel like NETFLIX SHOWS IN WINTER

For every '90s kids, the words wedding and winter are synonymous to them. There weren't any June matrimonyes or extravagant destination weddings. There were only communal gatherings of relatives the bride and the groom barely knew. Fast forward three decades, weddings are now a season more dramatic than any Netflix series you've binged this year — wedding season. These aren't just weddings; they're multi-episode extravaganzas, with production values that could rival a big-budget streaming show. From elaborate sets to themed invitations and guest lists that resemble casting calls, Dhaka's winter weddings feel less like family events and more like award shows.

Episode 1: The Trailer (Aka The Invitation)

Every Netflix show needs a compelling trailer, and every Dhaka wedding begins with an over-the-top invitation. Long gone are the days of simple cards handed over with a heartfelt "Esho toh." Today, invitations arrive in boxes, often themed, and as intricate as the bride's jewellery.

From faux movie posters featuring the couple to QR codes linking you to the wedding's official Instagram page, these invites set the stage for what's to come. One wedding in Gulshan even delivered invites alongside a box of imported dates, as if whispering, "This is just the pilot episode, darling."

Episode 2: The Prequel (Holud Ceremony)

If there's one event that screams "Netflix prequel," it's the holud. Think of it as the origin story of the bride and groom's journey to marital bliss — or, at least, a

journey to the nearest salon.

Every holud is a meticulously directed production, complete with dance performances choreographed by someone's overly enthusiastic cousin who dreams of being a celebrity stylist. Spoiler alert! Only one couple among the dancing crew was competent in dancing because they performed the same dance number at some other wedding. The decor often resembles a set from

Heeramandi. And let's not forget the guest dress code, which might as well come with a caption: "No outfit repeats allowed — this is streaming in 4K."

Episode 3: The Grand Premiere (The Wedding)

The wedding day itself is the pièce de résistance, with sets that could make even a Bollywood director swoon. From floral arches reminiscent of Sylhet's tea gardens to stage designs that mimic Rajshahi's mango orchards in full bloom, no expense

is spared.

Dhaka weddings also have every guest playing a starring role. The aunties wielding small talk like The Oscar's acceptance speeches, and the uncles lamenting about traffic (despite a no-traffic-jokes policy) are the unscripted comic relief and, last but not least, the individuals suffering from the "Wannabe Bride" syndrome. But the true stars of the show? The bride and groom, who arrive with the gravitas of royalty, complete with an entourage of photographers who ensure their every blink is Instagram-ready.

Episode 4: The Spin-Off (The Reception)

If the wedding is the main event, the

reception is the spin-off series. It's bigger, bolder, and somehow, even more lavish. Here, themes range from "Winter Wonderland" to "Vintage Bengali Elegance," which, ironically, costs anything but vintage prices.

The food, however, is the real plot twist. Guests often find themselves in line for Kachchi, which tastes oddly similar to every other wedding biryani they've had that season. But it's the dessert corner, with items so exotic they come with a side of Google Translate, that truly steals the show.

Episode 5: The Behind-the-Scenes Drama

Like any good Netflix show, Dhaka weddings also have their fair share of behind-the-scenes drama.

The Budget Overrun Arc: The bride's family wanted a simple mehendi, but somehow, they're now financing a pyrotechnic display for the groom's entrance.

The Outfit Meltdown: A missing blouse or an ill-fitted panjabi can derail an otherwise seamless production, or ensue a pre-wedding fight between the soon-to-be-weds."

The Photographer Scandal: Somewhere, a photographer will demand an absurd amount of money for "candid" shots that look anything but candid.

The Streaming Success (Instagram and Beyond)

Once the season wraps up, the entire production is immortalised on social media. Photos are edited, hashtags are coined, and highlights are uploaded with captions like "#FinallyMarried #WinterDreams #BiyeGoals." Behavioural

psychologists suggest that this constant validation via likes and comments reinforces the desire to go even bigger with the next wedding. And so, the cycle continues, with each winter season raising the bar for over-the-top wedding productions.

Despite the excess, chaos and inevitable debt (financial or emotional), weddings have a certain allure. They are a celebration of our shared turmoil as a people, our culture, and our community. They keep us captivated, amused, and excitedly anticipating the next season, just like any other great Netflix series.

So, whether you're in Dhaka for a colleague's wedding, your cousin's in Chattogram, or a friend's in Barishal, relax, take in the spectacle, and never forget that every great performance requires a crowd.

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Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

