



‘Khub Kachheri Keu’ blends tradition with arranged marriage’s quirky charm

SADI MOHAMMAD SHAHNEWAZ

I had decided I would watch *Khub Kachheri Keu* the moment I stumbled upon its trailer. Something about it felt familiar, almost binding, as if the story had already etched itself into a memory I carried. When I finally pressed play, I realised why. The film transported me to a very specific moment in my life – about fifteen months ago, when I married the love of my life.

The short starts quietly, with a seemingly ordinary exchange of Mimi chocolates. But that simple gesture was enough to disarm me. Rakin, played by F S Nayeem, remembers that

his fiancée had mentioned that she likes these often-unattainable chocolate bars. He goes out of his way to get them for her. There is something disarmingly honest in the way director Arafat Mohsin Nidhi and writer Raba Khan present these little exchanges – gestures so mundane they almost go unnoticed in real life, until you realise they are the building blocks of intimacy.

Sunerah Binte Kamal, in her role, doesn't seem like she is acting at all. Her brand of childlike innocence feels lived-in, familiar, and utterly charming. F S Nayeem plays the proverbial “straight man” with just the right balance of restraint and warmth. Their back-and-forth is easy, believable, and filled with the sort of subtle electricity that never screams for attention but lingers long after the scene cuts.

It is perhaps no coincidence that the film feels so achingly real. The director and writer, both recently married, clearly draw from the well of their own lives. Raba Khan

is one of Bangladesh's pioneering content creators, rising to fame in her teens. Arafat Mohsin, even though a renowned music director, is a lot more grounded in real life – and I suspect that the dynamics are similar among the two. Their lived experience, perhaps, lends the story an authenticity you don't often see in short films. “Khub Kachheri Keu” isn't polished to the point of sterility – it is textured with little hesitations and imperfections – the kind that make relationships feel lived, not staged.

By the time the credits rolled, I was smiling again, thinking of my own journey. “Khub Kachheri Keu” succeeds not because it tries too hard to impress, but because it reminds us that love often lives in the smallest of moments.

In its quiet way, the film assures us that these little things are enough.

The author is the Entertainment Editor at The Daily Star.

‘Nakshikathar Jamin’ to release on OTT



After earning accolades at international festivals, Akram Khan's *Nakshikathar Jamin* was released in theaters nationwide on December 27 last year. The film is now set to be released on iScreen at the end of this month.

Based on acclaimed writer Hasan Azizul Haque's story *Bidhobader Kotha*, the film portrays the harrowing days of the 1971 Liberation War.

At its core, the film tells the story of two sisters, Rahela and Saleha, portrayed by Jaya Ahsan and Fariha Shams Sheuti. The cast also includes Iresh Zaker, Rawnak Hasan, Dibya Joyti, Shounmya Joyti, and others.

The film has already won the Best Film award at the Bengaluru International Film Festival in India and was nominated for the ICFT-UNESCO Gandhi Medal at the 53rd International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

WHAT'S THE HAPS?

‘Mulya Amulya’

Anuswar's third production, *Mulya Amulya*, is an adaptation of Arthur Miller's *The Price*.

The play offers a gripping exploration of family, values, and the cost of profit. Directed by Mohammad Bari, it features powerful performances by Mohammad Bari, Saif Suman, SR Sompod, and a talented ensemble. The production promises a thought-provoking theatrical experience that raises urgent contemporary questions.

Date: Wednesday| September 24, 2025

Time: 7:30 pm to 9 pm

Venue: Experimental Theatre Hall, BSA



Poet Rezauddin Ahmed Stalin has been appointed director general of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy for a one-year term, according to a government gazette issued yesterday. An Academy official confirmed the appointment, effective from the date of his joining, on the condition that he severs ties with other organisations.

Poet Rezauddin Stalin appointed Director General of Shilpakala Academy



The appointment was confirmed through a notification issued yesterday, undersigned by Abu Saleh Md Mahfuzul Alam, Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration.

Born in 1962 in Jhenaidah, Stalin published his first poem at eight and later earned his degree from Dhaka University. He built a career in journalism and

cultural activism, served as deputy director of the Nazrul Institute, and received the Bangla Academy Literary Award in 2006.

His appointment marks the Academy's fourth leadership change in just over a year, following the resignations of Liaquat Ali Lucky, Syed Jamil Ahmed, and acting DG Wares Hossain.

NEWS

What does recognising a Palestinian state

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UN membership, though that requires approval by the Security Council, where the United States has consistently used its veto on Palestine-related motions.

With the British and French recognition, Palestine will soon enjoy the support of four of the UN Security Council's five permanent members. France is expected to recognise it later in the week.

China and Russia both recognised Palestine in 1988.

This will leave the US, Israel's strongest ally by far, in a minority of one.

Recognition could also strengthen Palestine's position in international institutions, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), by bolstering its claims to statehood and legitimacy in pursuing cases related to occupation and war crimes. In addition, countries

that recognise Palestine may establish or upgrade diplomatic missions and increase aid or political backing.

However, realities on the ground may not change.

Palestine is a state that does and does not exist.

It has a large degree of international recognition, diplomatic missions abroad and teams that compete in sporting competitions, including the Olympics.

But due to the Palestinians' long-running dispute with Israel, it has no internationally agreed boundaries, no capital and no army.

However, the symbolism of such recognition is strong. Britain bears a special burden of responsibility to support the two-state solution. It goes back to 1917, when Britain signed the Balfour Declaration that envisioned the “establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”.

The territory previously known as Palestine, which Britain ruled through a League of Nations mandate from 1922 to 1948, has long been regarded as unfinished international business.

Israel came into being in 1948, but efforts to create a parallel state of Palestine have foundered.

World leaders have always supported a two-state solution. The phrase refers to the creation of a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, broadly along the lines that existed prior to the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, with East Jerusalem – occupied by Israel since that war – as its capital.

Israel's colonisation of large parts of the West Bank, illegal under international law, has turned the concept into a largely empty slogan.

Palestine is currently recognised by around 75 percent of the UN's 193 member states.

Court orders confiscation of \$81m

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in laundering the stolen funds.

Later in a press release, the CID said the Bangladesh government will now formally request the Philippines to return the money, following guidelines from the UNTOC convention and the FATF.

On February 4, 2016, \$101 million was stolen from BB's reserves at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York. Of this, \$20 million was recovered from Sri Lanka within days. The other \$81 million was sent to four accounts at RCBC in Manila, which quickly went to different casino accounts in Manila.

According to the CID, of the \$81 million that went to the Philippines through RCBC, \$68,000 was returned to BB on February 16, 2016.

A Reuters report on July 21, 2016,

stated that \$18 million had already been recovered from the Philippines. In September 2016, a Philippine court ordered the return of another \$15 million to BB, which had been confiscated by the country's central bank from a casino operator. According to a Daily Star report, BB received these funds on November 11 of that year.

In total, BB recovered more than \$33 million of stolen money from the Philippines and another \$20 million from Sri Lanka, according to reports. So the total unrecovered amount is nearly \$48 million.

When asked why Bangladesh is still claiming \$81 million from the Philippines, Jasim Uddin Khan, special police superintendent of CID, told The Daily Star, “Our investigation finds RCBC, as

an institution, was involved in laundering \$81 million from us. We only recovered \$68,000 from them. The rest of the money was recovered from other sources.”

On March 15, 2016, M Zubayer Bin Huda, then deputy director (accounts and budgeting) of the central bank, filed a case under the Money Laundering Prevention Act at Motijheel Police Station against unidentified individuals. The CID was assigned to investigate the case, and the submission of the reserve heist probe report has been delayed multiple times.

The CID was scheduled to submit the investigation report on August 26, but failed to do so. Dhaka Additional Metropolitan Magistrate Jakir Hossain's court has since set September 29 as the next submission date.

ACC traces Javed’s assets

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seized from there. In the documents, we found information about the former minister's assets in India, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, and Malaysia,” he said.

Rukmila is also absconding. Earlier, the anti-graft body had got information about his assets in the US, UK, Dubai, and Singapore.

Akhatarul said, “The volume of the seized materials is huge, and it will require significant time for a full review. Once complete, the findings will be submitted to the ACC headquarters for further action.

“Preliminary reviews indicate

evidence of house ownership, rental income, maintenance expenses, and illegal transfer of funds overseas.”

On Wednesday night, ACC officials arrested two Aramit Group officials, Abdul Aziz and Utpal Pal. They were taken into custody with the permission of the court on Thursday and interrogated. Acting on their information, ACC officials raided the house of Ilias.

Aziz is the assistant general manager of Aramit Group and Utpal Pal is working as AGM (accounts).

Akhatarul said the documents were taken to a house in Shikalbaha area from the Aramit Group's industrial

facility in Kalurghat on September 16, adding that the documents were finally seized from the house of Ilias in the presence of the acting union parishad chairman, police, and other witnesses.

Meanwhile, a Chattogram court yesterday ordered the issuance of Interpol red notices against former land minister Javed and his wife Rukmila.

Acting Judge Md Abdur Rahman of the Chattogram Metropolitan Sessions Judge Court passed the order following a petition filed by the ACC.

Confirming the order, ACC lawyer Mokarram Hossain told The Daily Star, “Now the ACC will act accordingly”.

Protest erupts in Philippines over graft

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projects has been mounting in the Southeast Asian country since President Ferdinand Marcos put them centre stage in a July state of the nation address that followed weeks of deadly flooding.

Marcos said early last week he did not blame people for protesting “one bit”.

Sunday in the capital began without violence with a morning demonstration at a park that drew nearly 50,000 people, according to city estimates.

Thousands more joined an afternoon rally at the capital's EDSA thoroughfare, ground zero for the 1986 movement that ousted Marcos's dictator father.

“It's very rare for me to go to rallies, but this situation was bad enough that I was really urged to say ‘this is enough’,” Mitzi Bajet, a 30-year-old designer told AFP at the EDSA protest.

Teddy Casino, 56, chairman of left-wing alliance Bagong Alyansang

Makabayan, said his group was demanding not only the return of stolen funds, but also prison time for those involved.

“Corruption requires people to go to the streets and express their outrage in the hope of pressuring government to actually do their jobs,” he said.

Some of those at the clashes could be seen holding aloft the pirate flag seen at recent Indonesian protests sparked by low wages, unemployment and anger over lavish lawmaker perks that left at least 10 dead.

The Department of Finance has estimated the Philippine economy lost up to 118.5 billion pesos (\$2 billion) from 2023 to 2025 due to corruption in flood control projects.

Greenpeace has suggested the number is actually closer to \$18 billion.

Earlier this month, the owners of a construction firm accused nearly 30 House members and Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)

officials of taking cash payments.

The scandal has already sparked leadership changes in both houses of Congress, with House speaker Martin Romualdez, a cousin of Marcos, tendering his resignation earlier this week as an investigation got underway.

On Sunday, multiple politicians were among those taking part in the EDSA protest, an event supported by the powerful Catholic Church that drew numerous families.

“This is not partisan,” said 58-year-old Manuel Dela Cerna, who said he had attended the People Power protests at EDSA four decades earlier.

“They are draining the people's money while citizens suffer from floods, their homes being swept away, while officials ride private planes, live in mansions,” he said.

The Philippines has a long history of scandals involving public funds, in which high-ranking politicians found guilty of corruption have typically escaped serious jail time.

Britain, Australia, Canada recognise Palestinian state

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peaceful future”, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney wrote on X.

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the move “recognises the legitimate and long held aspirations of the people of Palestine to a state of their own”.

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas hailed the recognitions as “an important and necessary step toward achieving a just and lasting peace”.

Starmer wrote to Abbas to confirm Britain's decision, noting that London had backed a Jewish homeland in 1917 while also pledging to protect the rights of non-Jewish communities.

It is a watershed moment for Palestinians and their ambitions for statehood, with the most powerful Western nations having long argued it should only come as part of a negotiated peace deal with Israel.

Although a largely symbolic move, it puts those countries at odds with the United States and Israel.

US President Donald Trump, after talks with Starmer, last week said that

“one of our few disagreements” was over Palestinian statehood.

A growing number of longtime Israeli allies have shifted their long-held positions as Israel has intensified its Gaza offensive, which began almost two years ago. The Gaza Strip has suffered vast destruction, with a growing international outcry over the besieged coastal territory's spiralling death toll and a UN-declared famine.

Following yesterday's recognitions announced simultaneously in the three capitals, Israeli Security Minister Ben-Gvir said he would propose that the cabinet apply sovereignty in the West Bank. That would represent the de facto annexation of land seized in the 1967 war.

Ben-Gvir also said the Western-backed Palestinian Authority, which has limited self-rule in the West Bank, should be dismantled.

Culture and Sports Minister Miki Zohar echoed the threat, describing the recognition of Palestinian statehood as “a meaningless declaration reeking of antisemitism and hatred of Israel”.

“The only proper response to this foolish statement is the application of Israeli sovereignty over Judea, Samaria, and the Jordan Valley,” he said in a post on X, using biblical terms to refer to the West Bank.

The UK government has come under increasing public pressure to act, with thousands of people rallying every month on the streets. A poll released by YouGov on Friday showed two-thirds of British people aged 18-25 supported Palestinian statehood.

Starmer yesterday said that Britain was acting “in the face of the growing horror in the Middle East”.

He renewed calls for a ceasefire and again demanded Hamas release its remaining hostages.

Many obstacles remain before statehood, including who would run the territory.

The UK's foreign ministry said there was a coordinated effort to draw up a framework for peace to “address governance, security, humanitarian access” as well as building a two-state solution.