

‘I support Brazil, but I also enjoy watching Argentina play’



SHAH ALAM SHAZU

For decades, Misha Sawdagar has been one of the most recognisable faces in Bangladeshi cinema, appearing in hundreds of films and earning immense popularity through a wide range of memorable characters. While audiences know him as a celebrated actor, few may be aware that his childhood dream lay elsewhere — on the football pitch.

Speaking to The Daily Star, the veteran actor reflected on his

lifelong passion for football and the dream he once cherished of becoming a professional player.

“I dreamt of becoming a footballer,” he says. “As a child, I was obsessed with football. I watched countless matches and spent hours playing the game. Like many young boys, I imagined that one day I would become a renowned footballer. Unfortunately, that dream never came true.”

Asked why he was unable to pursue football professionally; Misha explains that family concerns played a significant role.

“Back then, parents wanted their children to grow up, receive a proper education and establish themselves in life. My mother worried that I might get injured playing football or that it would affect my studies. Because of that, I was never able to devote myself fully to the sport, despite how much I loved it.”

Growing up in Dhaka, Misha witnessed a period when football dominated the nation’s

“Although I support Brazil, I also enjoy watching Argentina play. Germany and Spain are teams I like as well.”

Reflecting on some of the players he has admired over the years, Misha mentions several Brazilian greats.

“Roberto Carlos was a fantastic player. Ronaldinho was brilliant too, and there have been many others. Neymar is also an excellent footballer. I’ve heard he may be playing again this time. Brazil’s form tends to fluctuate, but they’re always exciting to watch.”

When asked about Lionel Messi, Misha has nothing but praise.

“Messi is extraordinary. I really enjoy watching him play. Anyone who loves football would acknowledge how exceptional he is.”

Misha also views Bangladesh’s enduring football fever positively, seeing it as part of the country’s sporting identity.

“The enthusiasm is completely natural,” he says. “We grew up witnessing genuine football

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sporting landscape.

“At that time, the entire country was immersed in football,” he recalls. “We were passionate about sports, and football was by far the most popular game. Even today, football remains one of the most widely followed sports in the world, and that popularity extends to Bangladesh as well.”

A lifelong supporter of Brazil, Misha’s affection for the five-time world champions began in childhood.

“I’ve supported Brazil since I was young,” he says. “I watched footage of Pele and was captivated by the way Brazil played. Even though they haven’t won the World Cup for quite some time, Brazil remains my favourite team.”

However, his admiration for football extends beyond national allegiances.

mania. Whenever Abahani and Mohammedan played, the stadiums would be packed. I supported Mohammedan back then. The excitement and passion surrounding those matches were incredible.”

He believes football is deeply woven into the nation’s culture.

“Football is in our blood. Our fathers played football, our grandfathers played football. That’s why the passion still exists today.”

Recalling some of the stars who shaped Bangladesh’s football scene, he adds, “I remember the excitement when brothers Monju and Nannu played for rival clubs — Monju for Mohammedan and Nannu for Abahani. I watched so many great players, including Kaisar Hamid, Salahuddin, Munna and Sabbir. Those memories will stay with me forever.”

Nawshaba makes directorial debut with ‘Someshwari’

Actor Quazi Nawshaba Ahmed is making her feature directorial debut with ***Someshwari***, a film exploring environmental degradation and its impact on rural communities in northeastern Bangladesh.

Produced by Bibesh Roy under Green Films, a banner of the International Academy of Film and Media, the film was shot in Madhyanagar and nearby areas along the Someshwari River in Sunamganj. The cast combines Nawshaba with first-time actors and local residents.

Developed through a collaborative process involving Nawshaba and fellow creators Apan, Lata, and Zahid, the story was shaped on location rather than from a completed screenplay. Although she initially planned only to direct, Nawshaba took the lead role after the team failed to find a suitable actor.



Acclaimed play ‘Happy Days’ returns to BSA after three-year hiatus



After a gap of nearly three years, the acclaimed stage production ***Happy Days*** is set to return to Dhaka audiences on June 26 and 27 at the Experimental Theatre Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Both performances will begin at 7:00pm.

Produced by Hritmancha in collaboration with Manipuri Theatre, the play is based on Nobel Prize-winning playwright Samuel Beckett’s renowned absurdist work. The Bengali translation was done by late scholar Kabir Chowdhury, while the adaptation and direction are by Shuvashis Sinha.

Veteran actor Jyoti Sinha takes centre stage in a solo performance as Winnie, a woman navigating loneliness, memory, desire, and enduring love. First staged in 2019 with support from the Embassy of France in Bangladesh, the production has since travelled to numerous venues at home and abroad, earning acclaim for its contemporary interpretation of Beckett’s classic.

WHAT’S THE HAPS?

‘Dialogues in Coexistence’

Bringing together art, architecture, and public engagement, ***Dialogues in Coexistence: Shaping Inclusive Public Spaces in the Bengal Delta*** examines how civic spaces can be reimagined through feminist thought, climate awareness, and community participation. Created by architects Saiqa Iqbal Meghna and Suvro Sovon Chowdhury, the exhibition positions design as a tool for dialogue, care, and collective belonging.

Date: Saturday–Saturday | June 27–July 25, 2026
Time: 4:00 pm–8:00 pm
Venue: Bengal Shilpalay, Dhanmondi

Understanding the psychology of ‘obsession’ on screen



MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

There is perhaps no emotion that cinema loves more than obsession. Not love, because love can be quiet. Not ambition, because ambition can be rational. Obsession sits somewhere in between — a feeling so intense that it consumes judgment, morality, and sometimes reality itself. It raises the stakes of every story it touches, turning ordinary relationships into psychological thrillers and personal dreams into cautionary tales.

Recent conversations surrounding ***Obsession*** by Curry Barker and the discourse around the character Freaky Nikki may make the theme feel fresh, but filmmakers have been exploring the psychology of fixation for decades. From stalkers and artists to entrepreneurs and serial killers, some of cinema’s most memorable characters are united by one defining trait: they simply do not know when to stop. And perhaps that is because obsession makes for irresistible storytelling.

At its core, obsession creates momentum. A character who cannot let go keeps pushing the narrative forward, often dragging everyone around them into increasingly dangerous territory. The audience may not agree with their actions, but they cannot look away.

Some of cinema’s most enduring explorations of obsession emerged through romance. Alfred Hitchcock’s ***Vertigo*** remains one of the greatest examples, following a detective whose fixation on recreating an idealised woman becomes increasingly detached from reality. What begins as grief evolves into an unsettling attempt to manufacture identity itself, suggesting that obsession is often less about another person than about projecting one’s own desires onto them.

Bollywood delivered its own unforgettable study with ***Darr***. Shah Rukh Khan’s Rahul is not simply in love with Kiran; he is consumed by the idea of her. His inability to accept rejection transformed him into one of Indian cinema’s most memorable antiheroes, demonstrating how obsession often thrives on wounded ego rather than

genuine emotional connection.

As storytelling evolved, obsession itself became more sophisticated. Modern films increasingly avoid presenting it as outright villainy and instead blur moral lines until viewers find themselves empathising with characters they should probably fear.

Few contemporary examples embody this better than Joe Goldberg from ***You***. Through constant internal narration, Joe frames stalking, manipulation,

and violence as acts of devotion. His commentary invites viewers into his reasoning, forcing them to confront the dangerous gap between intention and action. The result is a character simultaneously condemned and romanticised across social media, proving that perspective can dramatically alter perception.

The same ambiguity defines Amy Dunne in ***Gone Girl***. Rather than obsessing over love, Amy becomes fixated on narrative control itself. She carefully engineers events to reshape how others perceive her, demonstrating that obsession can revolve around image as much as emotion.

Cinema has also repeatedly shown that obsession need not involve another person at all. In ***Black Swan***, Nina Sayers’ pursuit of perfection slowly dismantles

her psychological stability, while ***Whiplash*** transforms artistic excellence into an almost violent pursuit in which achievement and abuse become difficult to separate.

This fascination has only intensified in the streaming era. Characters are now designed for binge-watching and internet discourse, often carrying enough complexity to sustain endless reinterpretation. As a result, morally troubling figures frequently become internet favourites. Patrick Bateman from ***American Psycho*** and Arthur Fleck from ***Joker*** continue to inspire debate long after their stories end, demonstrating how easily audiences become captivated by characters they would never wish to encounter in real life.

Perhaps this explains why obsession remains such fertile storytelling ground. It exaggerates emotions that most people have experienced in milder forms: the inability to move on after rejection, the relentless pursuit of success, or the need to prove one’s worth at any cost. Cinema simply amplifies those impulses until they become impossible to ignore.

The recent popularity of ***Obsession*** and the viral discourse surrounding ‘Freaky Nikki’ therefore says less about changing audience tastes than it does about the timeless appeal of watching someone cross emotional boundaries that most of us would never dare approach. Whether it is Rahul Mehra whispering ‘Kiran’, Nina Sayers chasing perfection, Joe Goldberg insisting it is all for love, or Amy Dunne rewriting her own story, these characters force viewers to confront an unsettling truth: obsession rarely announces itself as madness. More often, it arrives disguised as passion. And cinema has never been able to resist that disguise.