



**Humayun Ahmed's *Ghetuputro Komola* and *Nandito Noroke*:**

**A Study of Sexual Exploitation and Repression**

**Submitted by:**

**Quazi Farzana Yesmin**

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**Submitted To:**

**Afrin Zeenat**

**Assistant Professor**

**Department of English**

**East West University**

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**Humayun Ahmed's *Ghetuputro Komola* and *Nandito Noroke*:**

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**By**

**Quazi Farzana Yesmin**

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree**

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**Dedicated to-**  
**Professor Dr. M. Maniruzzaman**

## Declaration

I Quazi Farzana Yesmin, confirm that the work for the following thesis paper with the title,

Humayun Ahmed's *Ghetuputro Komola* and *Nandito Noroke*:

A Study of Sexual Exploitation and Repression

was solely undertaken by myself and that no help was provided by anyone except the guidance of my supervisor. All sections of the thesis that use quotations and arguments or descriptions by other authors have been acknowledged appropriately and I have maintained all the ethical code and conduct accordance with academic regulations.

Quazi Farzana Yesmin

ID: 2015-3-93-005

MA in English Literature

Course Title: Dissertation

Course Code: ENG 599

Signature:

Date:

## Certificate of Supervisor

I certify that this thesis, under the title, “Humayun Ahmed’s *Ghetuputro Komola and Nandito Noroke: A Study of Sexual Exploitation and Repression*” is supervised by me, Afrin Zeenat, and I hereby declare that this thesis maintains all the requirements as a dissertation for the fulfillment of the degree of Masters in Arts in English Literature.

Dr. Afrin Zeenat

Adjunct Professor

Department of English

East West University

Dhaka, Bangladesh

&

Assistant Professor

Department of English

University of Dhaka

Dhaka, Bangladesh

Supervisor’s Signature:

Date:

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## ABSTRACT

The principle aim of this paper is to create awareness among people about sexuality by analyzing two films of Humayun Ahmed, *Ghetuputro Komola (Pleasure Boy Komola)* and *Nandito Noroke (In Blissful Hell)*. This dissertation focuses on the sexual exploitation and repression in our society as it is reflected in those films. This study intends to present the practical situation of existing society regarding sexuality by relating it with the films. The first chapter focuses on the film *Ghetuputro Komola*, which actually represents the regressive culture and tradition of pederasty of mediaeval Bengal, while the second chapter concentrates on the sufferings of females, especially mentally challenged women in this patriarchal society. In both chapters, real scenario of present society has been connected with the films by mentioning relative data. This study believes that change can come only through awareness. As literature is a reflection of real life and films are the best way to convey messages to the common people in an entertaining way, through presenting these two films this paper intends to create awareness among people about sexuality to ensure a safe and secure life.

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## Introduction

In this civilized age, children's rights, feminism and gender studies have become important topics of discussion in Western countries, but in the Eastern countries, these are the burning questions. Particularly, when it is about sexuality or sexual education, the issues become more restraining, especially in such a conservative country like Bangladesh. Here discussions of sexuality is treated as vulgarity. Parents, too, discourage their children from sexual education during their childhood. Sexual education is acquired either by watching pornography or having secret gossips with closest peers. Technology has provided us with diverse explicit websites, adult movies, various kinds of sensual posts and videos, so forth. As a result, the youth are getting more attracted to and involved in watching pornographies which gives them unreal notions of sexuality. It leads them to sexual perversion. Sometimes we come to know about those sexual perversions, or sometimes they happen secretly. And day by day we ourselves are becoming victims of this perversion, sometimes knowingly, sometimes unknowingly. In our society, especially children and women, become victims of sexual perversions, although in most of the cases the issue remains hidden. Whenever society faces such moral issues, literature can take the responsibility to create awareness as literature itself is a part of society and a manifestation of its culture and tradition. In this context, films are the most powerful means to convey the right message to the mass people. It can be said that like other film makers, Humayun Ahmed, one of the best and popular writers in Bangladesh, tries to convey his messages through his films in which he portrays sexual exploitation and repression in our society.

Ahmed is popular for his easy going, friendly, and contemporary writings. In his writings and films, he often portrays sexual perversions of which children and women are the victims.

*Ghetuputro Komola* (2012) and *Nandito Noroke* (2006) are two of his famous films in which Ahmed portrays sexual perversion with the perfect image and story of contemporary society. This thesis focuses on two films of Ahmed, where people experience a real taste of fiction mingled excellently with a real picture of both the contemporary and the existing societies. Though in *Ghetuputro Komola* he brings out the regressive cultural practice and tradition of homosexuality in our country, it provides us with a lesson of the brutality of this perverse tradition. In this film, the cruelty of homosexuality has been highlighted by representing an adolescent boy who has to give up his life for the tradition of perversion. This boy acts here in the role of *Ghetuputro* (pleasure boy) who has to entertain the landlord both sexually and mentally as it happened in the past. The boy has a dream to play with his sister in an open field but the brutality of homosexuality takes away his life. Cruel reality does not allow the boy to make true his little dream of playing. Although it was an old tradition in Bangladesh, homosexuality is still happening secretly in our society, and in many cases children become the victims. These children do not get a secure life, and in consequence they grow up in misery and ultimately become immoral and dishonest. It is one of the reasons for the increase of anti-social activities in our society.

In *Nandito Noroke*, Ahmed portrays another image of perversion, and it is about a mentally challenged girl who has no sexual education at all, but has to be a victim of social suppression. She gets sexually exploited and then in the name of social norms becomes oppressed by her own family. Eventually, she has to embrace untimely death. This girl has no other demand but a wish for a simple gramophone from her brother. She is such an innocent girl who does not even understand that someone has raped her and she has conceived. Yet, this mentally challenged innocent girl becomes a victim of social repression in the name of saving her family's reputation. She dies to have a forced abortion. Although it is a fictional story, many women in our society are

becoming victims to sexual exploitation and repression. Many cases remain concealed. Most of the time, for the sake of maintaining the social reputation of the victim and her family. Even in the twenty first century, our society cannot warmly accept a girl who has been sexually exploited once. As a result, the victim becomes a victim again for this social oppression. Being ashamed and frustrated, many women even commit suicide or after a certain period become a prostitute. They do not get any safe shelter where they can stay and lead a comfortable and secure life.

Thus, through his films, Ahmed tries to convey a moral message to the readers and society. Sexual exploitation and repression are quite vividly portrayed in these two films which actually gives us a picture of the contemporary society. Although talking about sexuality is offensive and even prohibited in our society, sexual exploitation and repression are horribly occurring every time, and leading to hideous perversion. About sexual repression, Michel Foucault, one of the famous theorists of the western culture, gives his theory of repressive hypothesis where he claims that modern industrial societies increase sexual repression. It reveals the suppression of sexuality in western society from the seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century due to the rise of capitalism and bourgeois society which led to the “world of perversion.” In his *The History of Sexuality* (Vol. I), he maintains, “For a long time, the story goes, we supported a Victorian regime, and we continue to be dominated by it even today. Thus, the image of the imperial prude is emblazoned on our restrained, mute, and hypocritical sexuality” (3). Foucault argues that prior to the eighteenth century, discourse on sexuality focused on the productive role of the married couple, which was monitored by both canonical and civil law. This repressive hypothesis theory is quite appropriate now for our own social context where even in the twentieth century, sexuality is a subject to be subjugated by social norms. Due to this social repression, perversion is increasing day by day and

women and children are becoming its victims. In these two films of Ahmed, a true scenario of the present society has been portrayed by presenting fictional stories.

Many women and children have to give up their lives for the brutality of sexuality. Yet, society does not allow people to talk about it or to create awareness as our society strictly conforms to patriarchy. But everyone has the right to lead a secure life and to get proper protection from the state. In our country, people are not concerned at all about the issue, though sufferings have not been stopped. Social norms have stopped the issue only in the name of religion or conventional thoughts. Why don't people have the right to talk about sexuality or have sexual education? Why do people become victim of sexual perversion? Why will our children grow up in a repressive society where they themselves are not safe? People need to know that knowing about sexuality is not deviant. It is a right. It is a question of safety and issue of awareness. Everyone should have sexual education to lead a healthy and secure life. This thesis intends to minimize people's misconception about sexual education and create awareness among them about sexuality to stop the vulgarity which is now considered as a trend in our society.

## Chapter One

### **Pederasty in Humayun Ahmed's *Ghetuputra Komola***

Jahir, a 12-year-old boy, dreams only to play with his sister in an open field. He wants to fly in the sky of his imaginative world just like a free bird. But another identity of Ghetuputro Komola (Pleasure Boy) brings all his dreams to an end. This ending of Ghetuputro is a stifling of a life's freedom. *Ghetuputra Komola (Pleasure Boy Komola)* is a 2012 Bangladeshi musical film presented by Impress Telefilm and acted by renowned actors and actresses of Bangladesh like Tariq Anam Khan, Jayanto Chattopadhyay, Munmun Ahmed, Agoon, Pran Roy and Mamun (in the role of the protagonist character, Komola) and so on. It is a film directed by Humayun Ahmed, the legendary playwright of Bangladesh. The film is about pederasty and based on the history of mediaeval Bengal where there was a culture of 'Ghetu Gaan' or 'Ghetu Song'. The practice of pederasty came through the culture and young boys were its victims. Homosexuality or bisexuality is not an unusual fact but when it is a matter of forced pederasty, it becomes questionable. About homosexuality and bisexuality, Foucault gives his theory of repressive hypothesis where he claims that homosexuality or bisexuality is not unusual, but sometimes it happens by force especially with the young boys which is morally wrong. Foucault mentions the fact as suppressed and restricted in society. The paper argues that the fact of pederasty should come to light of modern society and people should talk about it openly. Why does the issue remain suppressed in the society? Why do children become the victims of this vulgarity? This chapter intends to bring the truth behind the fact and raise awareness among the people of society.

In the very beginning of the film, a brief introduction of ghetu culture is provided where it is said that around one hundred fifty years ago, a new trend of music named 'Ghetu Song' emerged in a Vishnu Akhra at Jolshukha village. During that time, a musical group was created where young

boys danced in female costumes, and those dancers were called “Ghetu” (Pleasure Boy). It is also mentioned in the introductory part that the songs they sung had a traditional melody with the influence of classical music. The presence of young boys in guise of women injected this musical tradition with vulgarity. The rich and influential people of society started being lecherous to get these young boys as their sexual partners. Gradually, this matter got social recognition and became a culture. It was considered a natural phenomenon that influential and luxurious landlords of Haor region would hire Ghetuputros at least for some days during the flood season as at that time the landlords were left idle because of rising water. But the wives of those landlords used to consider Ghetuputros as their rivals. With the declining of ghetu culture, ghetu song has been lost too as it is mentioned in the beginning of the film “It’s a matter of rejoice that ‘Ghetu Song’ is a memory today. The misconduct in the name of music has been stopped. At the same time, an amazing trend of music has disappeared.” But still the impact of sexual exploitation is present in our society, and young boys are still becoming the victims of this vulgarity.

In the movie *Ghetuputro Komola*, Ahmed portrays the character of a young boy who plays the title character’s role. Komola’s real name is Jahir. He is just a child who has no practical knowledge of reality of this cruel world. Like other children, he intensely desires for playing in the field. But due to poverty, Jahir has to join his father’s music group. The group roams here and there on the call from rich people. Jahir is hired along with the music group of his father by a Zamidar (landlord) in the Haor region of East Bengal. The musical group has to entertain the Zamidar until the annual flood is over. But the boy finds out that he has to do something more than the rest of the members of the group are required. He has to satisfy the landlord sexually as well. Although it is so unwanted to this young boy, he is forced to be the sexual partner of that landlord for entertaining him both mentally and sensually.



Figure 1: Ghetuputro Komola in action of getting money from the landlord, and a group performance

The wife of the Zamidar cannot stand this new 'rival' of hers. Although the landlord himself and the other people of his house including his own family are religious minded and practice religious duties at home. His daughter reads the holy Quran regularly with a teacher and takes religious lessons from him. Once when Jahir, the Ghetuputro, comes into the room where the landlord's daughter is reading the Quran, the teacher says to him not to come there again. He says, "Stay away from pious places." In Islam also, it is strictly forbidden to have homosexual relation. Yet the landlord involves himself in such a sensual relation with an innocent boy who even has no idea about sexuality at all, but the boy has to be the hated one to all. Although Jahir is a little boy and he is forced to become a pleasure boy, he has to tolerate people's hatred and wrath. Sometimes the landlord's wife herself helps Jahir to prepare to act as Komola in a woman's attire, but every time she spits upon his face with hatred and anger. Thus, she considers Komola as her competitor and conspires to kill the boy, and finally according to the direction of her conspiracy, one of her

maidservants kills the boy by pushing him from the roof top. Hence, the chapter of the innocent boy's life comes to an end. This murder scene of the film carries the ultimate brutality of those pleasure boys who in spite of being unknown, became the victims of vulgarity in the name of music and culture. From this movie, it becomes manifest that these Ghetuputros have no value to



Figure 2: The murder scene

anyone except their duties to entertain the wealthy people. They had no importance of their lives to others. Though it was a social tradition, people could not accept these boys for their activities. These boys faced people's hatred.

The film, *Ghetuputra Komola*, brings out a loathsome aspect of the Bengali history. According to the article published in *The Daily Star* on 14 September 2012, the movie tells the story of an abusive practice that was once a popular form of entertainment in the haor (inundated field) areas of the north eastern Bengal where young adolescent Ghetu performers (pleasure boys) were the objects of entertainment to the influential people. At that time, people had no other option

of entertaining themselves except through dance and music. Folk songs became very popular among people and as Ghetu gaan had an influence of classical music and folk song, people accepted warmly this music trend. But the appearance of Ghetuputros introduced the culture with crudeness. The luxurious and rich landlords' lust and sensual desire to have Ghetuputros as their sexual partners damaged the beauty of this music trend. The Ghetuputros were forced to engage themselves with this vulgarity by their own families for want of money, and the rich landlords made the best use of the chance of those poor people's necessity. It reminds us of the impact of imperialism and bourgeois trend in the society. In consequence, in spite of being so much popular among people, the crudeness of this musical trend made the culture terrible, and at last the tradition became decayed.

Although the tradition and culture of Ghetu gaan is no more, its impact is still present in our society. Still now young boys are becoming the victims of sexual exploitation and repression. Both the suppression of poverty and the sexual repression has been portrayed in the film. It is shown here that poverty was the main reason for those Ghetuputros to take this profession to manage their livelihood. Still now in our society, many young boys are becoming the victims of such vulgarities for want of money, but it remains secret as society does not allow people to talk about sexuality. These young boys even have no sexual education, but they are being suppressed by social norms as society injects the idea into people's mind that talking about sexuality is a matter of barbarism. This repression actually increases vulgarities and perversions about sexuality in our society. For the theme of sexual repression Foucault's theory of repressive hypothesis (1976) in *The History of sexuality* is quite appropriate, where he argues that modern industrial societies are increasing sexual repression day by day (49). He says:

We have not only witnessed a visible explosion of unorthodox sexualities; but- and this is the important point- a deployment quite different from the law, even if it is locally dependent on procedures of prohibition, has ensured, through a network of interconnecting mechanisms, the proliferation of specific pleasures and the multiplication of disparate sexualities. (49)

Foucault argues, titled as “The World of Perversion” that the repression of sexuality is not a right task to protect it. Especially, when it is about homosexuality or bisexuality, the entire fact gets suppressed specially by the victims. By the nineteenth century, he maintains, sexuality was being readily explored both through confession and scientific enquiry, but still it is repressed by the common people. To define ‘sexual repression’ Foucault says, “...repression operated as a sentence to disappear, but also as an injunction to silence, an affirmation of nonexistence, and, by implication, an admission that there was nothing to say about such things, nothing to see, and nothing to know” (4). In the movie, also audience can observe the repression in the common people. In the film, Jahir is sexually abused by the landlord and everyone learns about the matter, but no one raises voice against it, even knowing the fact that it is immoral. Even the landlord’s wife cannot protest against her husband from the act of pederasty, although she argues against this and wants to go to her father’s place. She starts to consider the Ghetuputro as her rival and hates him from the core of her heart which leads her to conspire to kill the young innocent boy. It happens only for an unusual and ill mentality of having sensual entertainment of the landlord as he says in the film, “The banks have filled up with water. They will stay three months. I have nothing to do. I called on him for my entertainment.” It also proves the influence of power and money as Foucault himself also argues that the labeling of perverts conveyed a sense of pleasure and power. Basically,

the Ghetuputro of the musical group is compelled to work as a pleasure boy for want of money. Thus, the role of money is quite manifest here.

The film brings out the dark and ugly truth of the culture and tradition of 'Ghetu Songs'. Though at first it was a culture, later it became a tradition of pederasty. The landlords of haor areas were used to have sexual relation with these pleasure boys to spend their idle time because of tidewater. They used to have this practice for their entertainment at flood season. In this context, money played a very important role, because, these landlords bought the pleasure boys for certain period by paying money. Poverty and practice compelled the young boys to act in this way. Though the fact was known to everyone, no one raised their voice against the practice considering it as a tradition. As a result, 'Pederasty' itself became the tradition.

Although the act of homosexuality and bisexuality have been long practiced, greater attention has been paid to different forms of sexual 'perversions' in the modern era that took place outside the confines of marriage. For Foucault, power, discourse, and knowledge are linked. But he connects this deepening of discourse directly to the exercise of power. In the movie also, the influence of power is quite vivid. The landlord's power over other characters in the film represents the real scenario of the past. Common people and even the wives of the landlords had to accept the so-called tradition of pederasty.

Since pederasty is the main theme of the film, it faced some obstacles at the time of its release. This film was not received well by the Bangladeshi audience and critics. Even the director himself requested the audiences not to watch the movie with children. In the article, published in *The Daily Star* on 19 September 2012 has mentioned that the film banners and advertisements clearly advised against to watch the movie with children, because the movie is considered to have bad impact on children. So, to common people, the story of the movie is such a restricting story to

discuss publicly. Moreover, there are many people who actually do not get the theme of the film exactly as they do not have the knowledge about homosexuality or bisexuality. Most of the people of Bangladesh are not aware or conscious about these matters. So common people did not accept the movie as the other movies made by Ahmed.

In his movie review, a blogger says in his blog site that though the movie represents the history, there is not that much element to rely on it, because the reaction of other characters in the movie against the forceful but paying sexual attachment of the landlord with the pleasure boy is not clear. So, it does ensure how the common people's reaction was about the practice (Darashiko, 'Movie Review: Ghetuputro Komola'). But this fact makes clear the repressive hypothesis of sexuality' of Victorian age, the concept given by Foucault. In Darashiko's analysis, the story of the film took place in Victorian age as the penny in the movie is sculptured with Victoria's face. So, it can be considered that the history of Ghetu culture is taken from Victorian age as Foucault also claims that sexual repression happened in England in the same period. Wayne R. Dynes mentions, "In tribal and pre-modern societies pederasty occurred chiefly as a form of initiation into the world of male adulthood through sexual intimacy between the older partner who serves as patron, protector, and mentor, and the younger, who is the pupil." Again, Foucault also indicates money as responsible for forceful sexual relations with children. The same reason is presented in Ahmed's *Ghetuputro Komola* as Darashiko rightly mentions in his movie review that the movie is a perfect one for strongly preventing child abuse and sexual perversity.

The Ghetu boys were compelled to have sexual relation with their proprietors to whom they were sold for a certain period. They compromised in doing so as it was their way of earning. Even their parents allowed them to have such kind of vulgar participation for want of money. In the movie also, the scenario is quite vivid where the Ghetu's parents act like hypocrites. In the

movie, Jahir's father is seen to prepare his son with his own hands for entertaining the landlord and then consoles him by saying, "We will go home with a lot of money. We will make a new tinned roof home. Three months will pass in the blink of an eye." It is one of the most touching parts in the movie when the little boy screams with pain but gets no help from others. It indicates the cruelty of bourgeois society. In this context, Foucault states "The seventeenth century, then, was the beginning of an age of repression emblematic of what we call the bourgeois societies, an age which perhaps we still have not completely left behind" (17). It was the age when in spite of continuing sexual torture on those little boys, no one was there to protest as the feudal society was entirely tyrannical. So, power of the bourgeois society was undoubtedly another main weapon in establishing pederasty as a tradition in the society as Foucault also claims.

Critics' analysis from history let us know that the wives of the landlords could not accept the Ghetuputros (Pleasure Boys) easily. Though they had been suppressed, they could not protest the incident. As they treated the boys as their husbands' second wives, the boys became an object of their hatred. In the movie also the audience can see that the landlord's wife who cannot tolerate the Ghetuputro as it is mentioned before. Out of her envy, the landlord's wife plans to kill the Ghetuputro by pushing him from roof. In the film she asks her maid-servant by giving her gold as bribe, "The Ghetu boy often roams in the roof. Can you push him when you get a chance?" This conspiracy takes away the innocent boy's life. But as the Ghetuputro is very ordinary and poor, nothing has been changed in the consequence of this murder. It has also occurred for the landlord's power. From this incident, the cruel and brutal history emerges to light. These pleasure boys have no value of their lives and it becomes clearer in the film when the landlord wants to pay money in front of Jahir's dead body. The landlord says in the last part of the film, "I will try to reduce his mother's pain. I will provide handsome amount so that the rest of life goes well." It is certainly an

insensitive commitment to reduce a mother's grief caused by the loss of her son. Later the landlord understands that on the order of his wife her servant Mayna has killed the Ghetuputro Komola, he does not take any proper action but only expels her from her job. He says to his wife, "Tell your servant Mayna to leave. She should not be seen anymore." The brutal death of that little boy does not touch the landlord's heart. It cannot change him or make any impact on any other's daily life as it is portrayed in the last part of the film where the landlord says, "The water has passed. Now a lot of work will begin. Ghetuputro is not needed anymore. Let the water rise again. Then I will see." It makes clear that the lives of Ghetuputros have no value to anyone in the society. The last scene of the film becomes more hurtful with the acting of the landlord's little daughter who only cries for Ghetuputro Komola and the background music "Shuya urilo, urilo, jib er o jibon (Beloved bird wings its way, wings its way, life of the living)" which really touches the heart.

The music in the film reflects Ahmed's love for our folk culture and his effort in preserving the same. Songs like "Shua Urilo" and "Baje Bongshi" signifies the glorified folk song of Bangladesh. Except one song, the lyrics of the rest of the songs are not objectionable. The song "Jomunar Jol" reflects the vulgarity of Ghetu culture of that period. If the language is analyzed, the depth of indelicacy of Ghetu gaan is found. For instance, the lyrics of the song "Jomunar Jol" can be mentioned where it is said, "Amar Jomunar jol dekhte kalo/ Shan korite lage valo/ Joubon mishia gelo jole" (My Jamuna's stream seems dark/ Yet I feel fine to bath/ Youth amalgamated with that stream). Through this song the director has portrayed the vulgarity that became a part of Ghetu gaan. But another songs like "Baje Bongshi" or "Joley Vasa Saban" or "Shua Urilo" represents the beauty of Ghetu gaan where the taste of classical music and folk song is manifest. The same has to be said about the garish makeup and attire of Komola.

Male homosexual relationship is a common fact in the majority of human societies throughout history. Although it is known by the term ‘pederasty,’ in medical science it is termed as ‘Pedophilia’. According to Igor Primoratz as it is described in his article “Pedophilia”:

Pederasty refers to sexual attraction of an adult male to boys and sex between an adult male and a boy in his mid-teens. It has been the characteristic form of male homosexuality in many societies; its best known type, of course, is the “love of boys” among the ancient Greeks. (99)

Again, he claims pederasty as one of the varieties of pedophilia in the wide sense of the term. According to medical science, “pedophilia” is a psychiatric disorder in which an adult or older adolescent experiences a primary or exclusive sexual attraction to prepubescent children (Wikipedia). So, the act of pederasty also can be treated as a psychiatric disorder like pedophilia where a young boy becomes a victim of sexual exploitation. There is another medical term named “Transvestism” which is also applicable specifically for Ghetuputro or the pleasure boy. Transvestism is the practice of dressing and acting in a style or manner traditionally associated with the opposite sex (Wikipedia). It is to seduce and engage physically the opposite sex. In “Ghetuputro Komola,” Komola is also presented in such a way where Ghetuputros or pleasure boys dressed and acted traditionally like females. Sometimes Komola is seen here to wear such seductive dress as pleasure boys were used to wear at that time. Wearing such female costumes, they had to entertain the landlords through dancing and singing. They had to appear with sensual attire to seduce the landlords, though these young boys were nothing but puppets in the hands of their masters. In the movie also, the Ghetuputro is seen in such kinds of appearances:



Figure 3: Ghetuputro Komola in garish makeup and seductive costume

Thus to bring out the perverse history of ‘Ghetu’ culture, Ahmed took the step to make the film with a real taste of the past.

Though the tradition of Ghetu culture is no more, pederasty continues to be practiced in society in different ways. And at the same time sexual repression is ongoing. Even in such a conformist country like Bangladesh, pederasty practices still now though most of the times secretly. In these cases, young boys become the victims of this vulgarity. John Frederick gives an overview on the sexual abuse and exploitation in South Asia, especially on young boys. In the paper titled “Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Boys in South Asia,” Fredrick mentions:

Among children aged 6 to 12 years old in South Asia, boys are generally considered to be more vulnerable than girls outside the home because social custom protects and monitors girls more, while boys have relatively more freedom. 16 Social customs contribute to the

vulnerability of boys, as they are generally considered capable of protecting themselves and because society in general tends to deny the sexual abuse of boys and consensual sexual relationships between males. (6)

As a country of South Asia, in Bangladesh also, the sexual abuse and exploitation of boys are quite common facts, though sometimes they remain out of knowledge of mass people. Studies indicate that children aged 10 to 14 years are the most vulnerable to sexual abuse in the family and community in Bangladesh. In most cases, abusers of boys are adults. Young boys are abused by older boys and women as well. Frederick argues that mainly poverty is responsible for such incidents as Foucault also claims. Moreover, authentic data and descriptions are also given here regarding sexual harassment of both girls and boys in Bangladesh.

To consider authentic evidence of sexual exploitation, according to the research paper, more than one-third of boys aged 11 to 16 are not in school and 38 percent of them are in the labor force (45). In a conservative country like Bangladesh, most of the times the news of sexual exploitation of boys remain secret. Most information comes from newspaper articles and police reports. According to the research paper, boys may comprise up to 45 percent of sexual abuse cases (46). Frederick accuses lack of legal identity, poverty, absence of primary caregivers and extensive rural-to-urban migration as responsible for sexual abuse of young boys (45). Most of the boys become victim in their owners' hand at work places. Some studies have addressed the sexual abuse of children as a whole, but specifically sexual exploitation of young boys gets less importance in our country. Nonetheless, in studies it is found that boys especially adolescents who live in streets or working places become victims of secret sexual exploitation. Frederick further mentions:

Children aged 10 to 14 years are the most vulnerable to sexual abuse in the family and community. In most cases, abusers of boys are adults they know, such as cousins, brothers,

uncles and family friends, as well as teachers and house tutors. Most perpetrators are male and middle-aged, primarily between the ages of 25 and 40, while some are from ages 17 to 25. (47)

The analysis of the data shows the real horrible situation of present time. In Bangladeshi context, parents hold a prevalent belief that relatives and friends are safe. Thus the abusers get privileged in the domestic sphere which parents or the abused children cannot understand. Moreover, the family's reluctance to report abuse creates effective silence that allows abuse of children with freedom. There is a strong tendency of blaming victims rather than accusing perpetrators. In consequence, to cover up the incidents in the name of saving their reputations, parents of the victims do not even take any approach to seek justice. So, the victims becomes victims for the second time for social suppression. Thus, sexual repression increases sexual exploitation. Although the tradition of Ghetu culture has been declined from our society, such secret sexual perversion is the reflection of it.

However, proper law is not applied to these cases and that is another reason of increase of the crime in our society. If we see international law, it is found that States are bound to give all kinds of protections to children. In UNCRC (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) it is clearly said that States must have to provide all kinds of protections and facilities to children. A simplified version of that particular Article is given here:

States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.  
(UNCRC, Article 19)

According to this article it is Government's liability of giving proper protection to children, though in Bangladesh in most of the cases it is not applicable. Although Bangladesh Government has prohibited children labor, but their sexual protection has not yet been ensured. Moreover, parents are not aware about this and they do not give sexual education to their children. On the other hand, sexually abused children are typically inclined not to disclose their experiences due to feelings of guilt and shame. In that case, children who are sexually abused are even less likely to share their trauma with their parents, teachers or relevant authorities. It happens because children are taught from the very childhood to consider the fact of sexuality as a matter of shame. The social restriction, sometimes in the name of religion, forces people to act in this absurd way. It must be mentioned here that, though young girls are at more risk, adolescent boys are also not safe from such exploitation and repression.

Sexual repression makes people subjugate their conscience. Homosexuality and bisexuality become unethical and immoral when they occur by force. But the sense of sexual repression also allows people to accept the unethical task in many contexts which is also presented in the film *Ghetuputra Komola*. Still present, the social context of our country remains the same as it was before. Here people are too conservative and reluctant to have open discussion about sexuality. Particularly, children are kept away from such topics. In this kind of restrictive circumstances, teenagers grow up with a fantasy and sometimes without any idea about sexual activities. As a result, people specially children, cannot know about the fact and they create their own perception as they wish. Somewhere sometimes people are alert about the girls. But boys, especially young boys also become victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. This situation increases the problems around sexual facts in a rapid rate. Sexual and psychological illness, perversion, rape, conflict in

conjugal life and on a whole sexual exploitation like pederasty are increasing hastily. Only breaking the invisible wall of repression in society can stop these.

Repression or suppression cannot be a solution or way to stop something else specially such a sensitive issue like sexuality. Repression increases the curiosity and interest which makes fantasy among people, especially among the young people about sexuality in a wrong way. If our children are brought up frankly where they can have open discussion about the right or wrong path of sexual choices, they will be alert and be able to avoid many unwanted circumstances. Even at their work places, they can have security. Moreover, people will understand about the sexual exploitation. Especially proper implementation of law will be more helpful to stop forceful sexual attachment and torturing of children. This may stop pederasty where young boys become the victims. Ahmed's *Ghetuputra Komola* can be considered as an attempt where the director wanted to show the cruelty of pederasty and horrible results of sexual exploitation and repression. Though the movie itself has not been received warmly by the audience, yet like it more movies or documentary works should be done to stop the vulgarity right now.

So, in the conclusion, this paper has come to the firm point against sexual exploitation and repression. People should know the fact with vivid idea and knowledge. Children should have the chance to talk on this topic openly and share their opinions. Parents should value children's opinions and create an inclusive environment for children to express themselves which will enable children to disclose all types of information freely without fear and shame, even in case of sexual abuse. Both boys and girls should be treated as social agents to consult on the matters that affect them. They must have the right and capacity to express own experiences and opinions and the chance to receive and impart information. Listening to children and learning from their experiences can resist the vulgarity. And obviously the proper application of law is important to give children

a safe and comfortable life. Creating awareness can be the best weapon to break the silence. Ahmed's *Ghetuputra Komola* is just an attempt to break the traditional social context. So if people get aware and alert from right now it is possible to stop sexual harassment even in a conformist society like Bangladesh.

## Chapter Two

### **Sexual Exploitation and Social Repression in *Nandito Noroke***

Unlike other girls, Rabeya's expectations are limited to only a gramophone. She dreams of having a gramophone after her brother Khoka gets a job. But her dream remains unfulfilled because of the lust and typical social norms of this patriarchal society. *Nandito Noroke (In Blissful Hell)* is a 2006 Bangladeshi film, presented by 3S Productions, based on the original book title, written by Humayun Ahmed and directed by Belal Ahmed. The film is acted by some renowned actors and actresses of Bangladesh like Ferdous Ahmed, Soma, Monir Khan Shimul, Litu Anam, Khairul Alam Sabuj, Afroza Banu and Keramat Mowla. Being Ahmed's debut novel, it was published in 1972 when Ahmed was a student of Dhaka University and it was admired and accepted by critics and general people as the theme of the novel portrays the social customs and context of new born Bangladesh. After the release of the film, it was appreciated by all for its originality of theme, though the story was fictional. The suppressive social context of Bangladesh regarding sexual exploitation has been sketched in this movie. Its presentation of characters, delivery of dialogues, and expression of emotions have successfully drawn a picture of the simplicity of Bangladeshi people and their awful social norms pertaining to sexual abuse. Sexual repression enforced by this masculine society regarding male sexual perversion is a general trend in the entire South Asian region. As the film represents the fact from the point of view of Bangladeshi social context, this chapter intends to give a clear view of this taboo. To do the research on this social taboo, this chapter relies on Michel Foucault's theory of repressive hypothesis where he claims that our society has become perverse because of sexual repression, and Louis Althusser's theory of Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) where he argues that social beings are bound to society by born. The study argues that the fact of sexual repression that arises from social

customs and norms should be changed. Why do women become the object of oppression in this society even after being a victim of sexual exploitation by a male? Why does such a crime like abortion take place in the case of mentally challenged women without their consent? Why do parents in our country feel shame and guilt to offer sexual education to their children especially differently abled children? The aim of this chapter is to bring out the hidden issues which work behind this social oppression and to create awareness against this social trend.

In the movie *Nandito Noroke*, Ahmed portrays a female character named Rabeya who is an adult and mentally challenged. Being specially abled, her sexual maturity is wanting. She cannot understand all things and even cannot explain everything as she wants to. She is nothing but a child. She ruffles all the things when things do not go as she wishes:



Figure 4: Rabeya's childlike action in her home

As a special child, her family should have brought up her since her childhood with extra care and affection, but in Bangladesh, especially in the rural areas, it does not happen. Most of the parents do not want to accept the abnormality of their special children, and if they do so, they do not take extra care of them and treat them as burden. In most of the cases, these mentally challenged children do not get proper care and protection from their families or relevant authorities. Especially in the cases of women, the picture is more awful, because often they have to be victims of secret sexual exploitation. As they do not have any idea of it, they even cannot express their bad experience to others. In this movie, Rabeya also has to face the same situation. Moreover, if we move from this point of view, we will find another issue and that is the dominance of men over women in our society. In spite of being a mentally challenged woman, Rabeya cannot be saved from the lust of men of this so-called progressive society. In this movie, an aged male character has been portrayed, who is Rabeya's neighbor and a teacher by profession. Rabeya and all her siblings call him "master chacha" (Teacher Uncle). This person, though is a teacher, cannot hold the moral values in himself and shows his masculine power over Rabeya.

In *Nandito Noroke*, Rabeya has been raped by her "master chacha" and as she cannot explain anything in a normal way like others, that aged person takes the advantage. Being privileged as a very respectable and reliable member of society and within the circle of trust of Rabeya and her family, this person wants to fulfil his sexual desire (perversion in another sense) by raping her and as a result the girl becomes a victim of his lust. After a certain period, when Rabeya's mother understands that she (Rabeya) is pregnant, the girl again becomes a victim and this time it is of sexual repression by social norms. This differently abled protagonist is not permitted to give birth to her illicit child even though she does not understand that she has been raped brutally by someone else. This results in her forced abortion of that illegitimate child by a

midwife to save her family's reputation and in doing so she has to sacrifice her own life. Thus Rabeya's life meets a tragic end. A mentally challenged woman who even does not know the meaning of perversion, has to be a victim of sexual exploitation and sexual repression.



Figure 5: The moment before Rabeya becomes sexually exploited inside the boat

After publishing it as a book in 1972, *Nandito Noroke* received an unprecedented reception by the critics. The story of the film represents the practical scenario of Bangladesh about sexual exploitation. Critics and writers like Abul Fazal and Ahmed Sharif welcomed the novel warmly. In the introduction of the novel, Ahmed Sharif mentioned the significance of the novel. He found out the relation of the theme and the real scenario of our society on the same line. He said, “The writer seems to have no statement, no perspective; you have told your story in a surprisingly passionless manner, as if it is not a story telling but portraying a picture” (*Nandito Noroke*). The

title of the novel carries its own significance. It suits perfectly the story in an effective way. The frontispiece of the novel also carries the significance of the story where a pregnant woman's figure and her unborn child's figure have been portrayed. It reveals Rabeya's pregnancy and her untimely death for forceful abortion in the novel. The title itself speaks through the picture in which a blissful feeling of being a mother becomes dreadful, that is, a heavenly moment turning into hell.



Figure 6: The frontispiece of the novel

After releasing of the film, it became popular by critics and the audience also welcomed it as one of Ahmed's films. It can be considered that even after being a restraining theme and story, *Nandito Noroke* basically represents the brutality of man-made social norms and customs of our country. And as Bangladesh is one of the most important countries which upholds traditional values in South Asia, it actually portrays a real picture of sexual exploitation and repression as practiced.

This sexual exploitation and repression proves that even in this twenty first century, women are treated as physical objects. Simone de Beauvoir, a French feminist and social theorist, states appropriately in this context, “One is not born, but, rather, becomes a woman” (900). In one sense, it is absolutely true. Her analysis focuses on the social construction of woman as the other. She argues that women have historically been considered deviant and abnormal. In this modern era also females have to face critical situations regarding sexual harassment at both domestic and professional environments. Still women are treated just an object. Most of the societies consider women as an object who are just confined at home, give birth to child and take care of their families. Luce Irigaray, another French feminist, argues that though women are considered as productive to men, a virgin woman has another value of exchange. She says, “The virginal woman, on the other hand, is pure exchange value. She is nothing but the possibility, the place, the sign of relations among men. In or of herself, she does not exist: she is a simple envelope veiling what is really at stake in social exchange” (807). Irigaray argues a woman’s body is not marked with sexuality as yet; it is “a simple envelope.” The same thing happens in the film *Nandito Noroke* where the female protagonist has to be sexually exploited by an aged person though being mentally challenged that girl has no sense of sexuality but virginity and it makes her a male’s target of lust. Moreover, as this differently abled girl cannot express her feelings to others, the lustful person takes the advantage to fulfil his sexual desire.

Thus, women become victims of sexual exploitation almost everywhere. A very few women are there who can protest all these, but being scared and ashamed most of the women cannot even share the fact with others. Especially in the context of South Asia, women’s voice after being oppressed becomes more and more subjugated. This concept is very much related to

Foucault's theory of repressive hypothesis where he says about the prohibitions of sexuality of the seventeenth century in Europe:

And even these prohibitions, it seems, were afraid to name it. Without even having to pronounce the word, modern prudishness was able to ensure that one did not speak of sex, merely through the interplay of prohibitions that referred back to one another: instances of muteness which, by dint of saying nothing, imposed silence. Censorship. (17)

Although this "censorship" about sexuality was a concept of seventeenth-century Europe, its impact is still present in this twenty first century, especially a country of third world like Bangladesh. In this movie, this concept becomes more manifest when after knowing the pregnancy of their unmarried mentally challenged daughter, Rabeya's parents decide to force her to a secret abortion by not a practiced doctor but by a midwife, thereby putting her life in danger. Even they do not want Rabeya's siblings to know the fact. Before the abortion they take more preparation of secrecy than of safety of Rabeya. In the last part of the movie Rabeya's father says, "Send Runu to her aunt's house, let Montu take her. I don't want anybody here." Thus her parents want to keep the matter a secret. To maintain secrecy, Rabeya's parents do not admit her at a hospital even after a practiced doctor prescribes it. At that time Rabeya's mother requests the doctor in such an emotional way and says, "No, Doctor, save my daughter's honor!" Whenever a daughter's life becomes less important than the family's reputation to maintain social status, such pathetic request becomes ruthless indeed. When it is a matter of an innocent girl's life, in the name of saving honor her parents do not take her to hospital. In spite of being a mentally challenged woman, Rabeya has to sacrifice her life for her family's excuse of saving reputation because her family is ruled by the society. Therefore, it can be said that Rabeya actually becomes an object of social repression.



Figure 7: The dying moment of Rabeya

This poor girl becomes a symbol of betrayed innocence. She has been deprived of her right to live with all kind of protections.

This family actually gets bound by the social norms where being raped and conceiving an illegal child is a sin. Although their daughter is not normal like others and has received no sexual education since her childhood, they force her to save the family's reputation in the society. It refers to the social power over people, especially over women, about which Althusser argues that the state actually has two components: a repressive state apparatus, which includes the army, the police, and the courts, and enforces class domination directly, and the ideological state apparatuses (ISA), which maintain complicity and identification with class society. Contrarily, Althusser argues that the domestic sphere of family life also becomes influenced by the domain of the state because it functions to maintain and develop an ideology that will maintain psychological

adherence to and participation in class society (*Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*). He mentions:

As ideology is eternal, I must now suppress the temporal form in which I have presented the functioning of ideology, and say: ideology has always-already interpellated individuals as subjects; which amounts to making it clear that individuals are always-already interpellated by ideology as subjects. (106)

Althusser believes that an individual is always-already a subject, even before he is born. So being a subject of society, people become bound to follow the social ideology. Sometimes it happens forcefully also as Althusser says:

And yet the descriptive theory of the State represents a phase in the constitution of the theory which itself demands the 'supersession' of this phase. For it is clear that if the definition in question really does give us the means to identify and recognize the facts of oppression by relating them to the State, conceived as the Repressive State Apparatus, this 'interrelationship' gives rise to a very special kind of obviousness, about which I shall have something to say in a moment: 'Yes, that's how it is, that's really true. (91)

According to him, State itself demands suppression to subjugate people, and as social beings people are bound to be suppressed by social norms. Basically human beings create the bridge between social norms and suppression which are interconnected.

Although it is a fictional story, the film *Nandito Noroke* is a real picture of social repression. Althusser's theory is also applicable in the case of this film as the victim's family in the film is basically suppressed by the social domination as the theorist claims in the second component. People become bound by their society, and in our society women become the victims of this social

repression most of the times. So it is society itself which actually subjugates its subjects. The social norms and rules dominate people. In such a conservative society like Bangladesh, it is a quite common fact that a woman gets neglected and disregarded by society even by her own family after being a victim of sexual harassment. Even in educated families a similar situation continues to exist. Sometimes the matter gets focused and sometimes it remains hidden. In most of the cases, it is found that sexual harassment of women basically begins from their very early age and by their very close and reliable persons. Even after getting married, many women become victims of sexual exploitation and perversion, but most of the times either they themselves cannot understand the fact or they do not want to disclose it to others. It happens because in our country, people do not get the proper sexual education, especially in the rural areas. This suppression of sexuality arises more and more sexual exploitations. As our conformist society does not allow us to have an open talk on sexuality, we follow Foucault's repressive hypothesis as it was followed in England from the seventeenth to the mid twentieth century. So it is clear that at some point Foucault's theory of repressive hypothesis and Althusser's theory of Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses are quite similar and both of them explain the sexual repression in society.

In the film, the rapist is presented as an unmarried and knowledgeable aged person. He is Rabeya's father's friend and their neighbor and acts like a teacher. Definitely he is expected to have the moral value. Instead of having moral values this aged man becomes seductive and forces Rabeya for physical relation with him. He raped this differently abled girl Rabeya in the guise of her good companion, and uses her blind belief upon him as an opportunity. This person knows that it is not possible for Rabeya to disclose his name as she neither has any idea about sexuality nor the capability to express herself to others and possibly it is the main reason to make her target of his lust. In spite of being a teacher this person gets detached from his morality and

ethics and uses the advantages of sexual repression in society as his weapon of lust. It is not only a story of the film, but also a representation of the true scenario of this conventional society where maximum sexual exploitations occur for the advantages of social repression.

After the sexual exploitation, this autistic girl has to suffer sexual repression or in another word, social repression. In such a conservative society like Bangladesh, especially females have to be the ultimate sufferer of sexual repression. In this country sexual topic is such an indecent and banned topic to talk over publicly. Here, people keep in distance children and teenagers from getting knowledge about sexuality. And more importantly, if a girl becomes raped, she has to be suppressed and over ruled by the social norms in the name of saving reputation and religion. In the film, Rabeya has to go for abortion secretly as many girls in Bangladesh do the same task. In such a situation, the life of a pregnant woman or the unborn child becomes less important than the family reputation in society. *Nandito Noroke* is a kind of film where actually brutal activities of man-made society has been portrayed with a fictional touch.

On one hand as Rabeya has not ever been taught anything about sexuality by her family for being a special child, she cannot understand what happens with her and as a result, becomes a victim of sexual exploitation. On the other hand, after becoming pregnant, she is forced to have an abortion by a midwife but not by a skilled doctor to save her family's reputation and again becomes a victim and this time a victim of sexual repression. And this time also this poor girl cannot understand what is happening actually though she feels, but cannot explain properly. But the loss of a child even an unborn child touches a mother's heart profoundly. Being mentally challenged, Rabeya cannot express her feelings in proper manner, but feels the loss of her unborn child. In this scene of the film, after the abortion Rabeya says to her father, "My chest is empty... Why my chest is becoming empty?" This time the sad background music makes the scene more touchy and tragic.

Although the culprit has been killed in the hands of Montu, another character of the film who actually is a protégé of that family, the justice has not been established indeed. A very innocent childlike girl's life meets a tragic end. She is an adult girl who has to pin up 36 safety pins in her saari as she cannot manage it. Once this girl makes friendship with a neighboring boy named Harun. She can sing songs and likes to sing in front of Harun. All these actually reveals Rabeya's innocence and childlike tender mind. However, this innocent girl becomes a victim of this cruel world where nobody gives value to her innocence:



Figure 8: Rabeya's innocent face when she sings a song

Although it is a fictional story of the film, it is not something incoherent from the real scenario. In our society such secret abortion is happening randomly. According to Bangladesh law, it is a severe crime to force a woman to have abortion of a woman without her consent. In the Penal Code 1860 it mentions that whoever commits the offence of abortion without the consent of the

woman will be punished with transportation for life, or with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and will also be liable to fine (Section 313). Thus our law takes place against of secret and forced abortion. Again in Section 314 it is said:

Whoever, with intent to cause the miscarriage of a woman with child, does any act which causes the death of such woman shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to ten years, and shall also be liable to fine; and if the act is done without the consent of the woman, shall be punished either with transportation for life, or with the punishment above mentioned. Explanation—It is not essential to this offence that the offender should know that the act is likely to cause death. (The Penal Code 1860)

Hence, it is clear here that law has a strong position against abortion without the consent of women. Law gives the power to women to save both their and their children's life.

In spite of having strong laws against forced abortion, in most of the cases people do not follow it because of the lack of proper appliance of law. Again there is law against sexual harassments also. A man's maximum punishment for committing the offence of rape, under section 376 of the Penal Code, is life imprisonment. Moreover, "The Prevention of Oppression against Women and Children Act of 2000," the punishment for rape, under this Act, is a maximum of life imprisonment with a fine. But, if the victim later dies, or the rape is committed by more than one man (i.e. gang rape), then the maximum penalty imposed is capital punishment. But yet sexual violence has not been stopped in the society, rather it is increasing day by day at a terrific level.

This is not only the story of a Rabeya in the film. Like this Rabeya, there are many girls in our society who have to be victims of these exploitations and repressions. Even in this well

civilized period, Sexual Exploitation is not only a term but also a burning question. In Bangladesh, both boys and girls are becoming victims of sexual manipulation, and even mentally challenged women and children are not spared. In the film, Rabeya is presented as the representative of all autistic girls and boys who become victims of this perversion. Most rape cases go unreported in our country due to save reputation of victim's family in the society or the lack of providing proper support and protection to victims. Even people of this country do not have apposite knowledge about sexual violence. According to an article published in *The Independent* on 30 August 2015, "The Eighth United Nations Survey on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems (2001 - 2002)" reported on the sexual violence in Bangladesh where The United Nations Multi-country Study on Men and Violence asked men in rural and urban Bangladesh if they had forced a woman to have sex at any point in their lives. The study mentions that in Bangladesh, the incidents of rape happen mostly in the rural areas than the urban areas. Again, 61.2% of urban men who had raped did not feel guilty or worried afterwards, and 95.1% experienced no legal consequences. Moreover, the report mentions, "89.2% of urban Bangladeshi men answered 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the statement if a woman doesn't physically fight back, it's not rape" (*The Independent* "Rape and blaming and punishing the victims"). The report makes it clear that in Bangladesh sexual exploitations is being practiced both in urban and rural areas where people themselves even do not agree to term it 'rape'. All these happen because in our country, people do not consider forceful sexual relation as rape but as traditional practice. Due to having no sexual education and no proper protection, people belong to wrong assumption regarding sexuality.

In another survey conducted by "Odhikar" another result has been found where they reported on the rape cases in Bangladesh from 2001-2016. It records the cases of both the women

and the children victims. This statistic shows the horrible scenario of sexual exploitation in Bangladesh. The chart is given below:

**Table 1. Rape: January 2001- March 2016**

RAPE							
Jan 2007-March 2016							
Female Victims							
Years	Total	Adult	Children	Unidentified	Killed after being raped	Committed suicide after being raped	Victims of gang rape
2016	169	57	109	3	7	1	41
2015	789	293	479	17	65	5	277
2014	666	244	393	29	66	12	227
2013	814	336	452	26	71	6	236
2012	805	299	473	33	75	10	197
2011	711	246	450	15	90	13	239
2010	559	248	311	0	91	7	214
2009	456	213	243	0	97	8	176
2008	454	202	252	0	98	9	180
2007	549	193	330	26	79	1	191
<b>Total</b>	<b>5972</b>	<b>2331</b>	<b>3492</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>1978</b>

**Source:** Odhikar, A Bangladesh-based human rights organization and a member of the

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

The chart gives a vivid view about sexual violence in Bangladesh. It presents the real picture of sexual exploitation of women in Bangladesh. Here it is seen that there are many women who either has been killed or committed suicide after being raped. Moreover, many women chose the path of prostitution when society does not want to accept them after being raped. In most of the cases, women cannot share their experiences with others or seek justice either out of shame of social stigma or facing antipathy or outright hostility.

Thus, women are deprived of their right of sexual protections. Furthermore, they do not get proper justice for being victims of sexual exploitation; rather they become victims of social

repression. Our world has always been a patriarchal world, does not matter how much developed or advanced we are. This is the time, women should withdraw from patriarchy entirely and constitute an alternative arena of their own. Society also should change its idea about women. Not only implementation of laws is important to stop the violence, but also to raise awareness among all is equally needed. People should change their thoughts about sexuality. Parents should give sexual education to their children from their early age. Especially mentally challenged children should be taken special care with proper protection. Although many NGOs and other govt. or private organizations are now working on women's rights, especially they are working for mentally challenged women, the awareness, the education and the practice of morality should start from home. This should come from each and every family. Only then the violence of sexual exploitation and repression can be stopped.

## Conclusion

Literature is the reflection of life and society, and movies are ways of representing this reflection. Movies are considered to be the best way to convey messages to the common people in an entertaining way. In Bangladesh, filmmakers try to make social films as our conformist society demands. As is evident, Ahmed's films have a great impact on audiences' mind. His style and strategy of presenting characters, delivering dialogues in simple language and manner, choosing songs especially folk songs and the background music, and focusing on the story in an entertaining way are really quite different from others. Ahmed's films talk about the common people of Bangladesh. His popularity surpasses all others for the simplicity of his works. In his works, he focuses mostly on the peasant culture and tradition, and social norms of our country as he has done so in both *Ghetuputro Komola* and *Nandito Noroke*.

In such a conventional society like Bangladesh, no other filmmaker showed the courage to make a film on homosexuality or sexual exploitation as Ahmed did so. In a very simple but sensitive way, he presents the regressive culture and tradition of pederasty of the ancient Bangla and the terrible impact of social rules and repression in our country. He actually endeavors to focus on the horrible condition of our society. The findings mentioned in the research basically reveal the real scenario of sexual exploitation in our country. Still people are not aware of or concerned about it. To them, sexuality is a secret issue that should be kept concealed. Sexual education is such a filthy matter to them. Consequently, sexual repression becomes the best option for them, though sexual exploitation happens both knowingly and unknowingly, intentionally and unintentionally.

As the aim of this study is to focus on the hidden issues of sexual exploitation and repression in our society, two films, survey, recent data, proper references all have been used here

to draw a vivid picture of the present condition. This research study tries to present the real scenario with the aim of creating a public awareness. The analysis of the data shows that sexual violence occurs mostly in the rural areas than urban areas. It happens because rural people have less sexual education than the urban people. Usually they are more conformist than the urban people. On the contrary, urban people get much facilities of using technology and interacting with people openly. Although it is easier for them to have sexual education, in many cases they also lose their morality and act barbarously. The people of our society particularly the young generations are getting addicted to pornographies. This is making a fantasy about sexuality in them, which leads them to perversion. Even in urban areas, countless educated girls are becoming victims of sexual exploitation.

In our society, most of the children are brought up in such a rigid manner that they are forbidden to interact with the opposite gender. In most of the cases, it is seen that they cannot interact with the opposite gender publicly until they do not complete at least college education. Moreover, though we have a co-education system in most of the places in our country, people are still not comfortable with the system. They believe in the orthodox idea of keeping distance from the opposite gender. Therefore, naturally a secret attraction for the opposite gender grows up in them. Sometimes it misleads the young people. It may create immorality among young people.

In every religion, it is said to follow an honest and a decent way of life. In Islam also, it is mentioned very strongly and clearly several times. As Bangladesh is a Muslim country, most of the people of this country follow the religious rules and regulations. They are conservative in nature. But sometimes people subjugate women and children in the name of religion which is totally baseless. In religion also, homosexuality and any kind of sexual perversion has been forbidden strongly, and abortion has been compared to murder. Yet, people, especially women and

children become the victims of sexual exploitation first and then of repression in the name of religion or saving reputation. But those exploited women and children do not get any shelter to lead a protected life.

This is the time we should change ourselves. If we do not change ourselves, our society will not be changed. Such acts of sexual violence will continue. The two films by Ahmed studied here are not only for entertainment but also for educating people and creating awareness among them. Although our conformist society has not received the films warmly, we should receive the messages that Ahmed intends to convey. This study explored that in our country, there is a huge lack of application of law and proper education about sexuality. Hence, this paper advocates that change can come only through awareness. To ensure a healthy and secure society, it is the right time to start our journey of protecting sexual exploitation and repression.

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