



# SAND CITY

## Bangladesh

Produire au Sud Nantes 2018

### MAIN DATA

**Category:** Drama  
**Length:** 90'  
**Language:** Bengali  
**Shooting location:** Bangladesh  
**Shooting dates:** March 2020  
**Expected dates of completion:** December 2020  
**Stage of production:** development stage

### PRODUCTION

**Budget:** 275 000 €  
**Financing in place:** 38 000 €  
**Production company:** Khona Talkies  
**Workshops and platforms attended:** Open Doors Hub 2018, Ekadeshma Film Lab 2017  
**Current situation:** Development stage, seeking for partners

### AADNAN AHMED, PRODUCER

After studying economics at the University of Toronto, Aadnan Imtiaz Ahmed has pursued his career as a film producer and worked with several acclaimed filmmakers in Bangladesh. He is an alumnus of the Locarno Film Festival's Open Doors Lab, 2016. His upcoming feature film, *Made in Bangladesh*, directed by Rubaiyat Hossain is a co-production by Bangladesh, France, Denmark and Portugal.



### MAHDE HASAN, DIRECTOR

Based in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Mahde Hasan is an introspective and visually keen screenwriter and director. His short films *Death of a Reader* (2018), *Where is the Friend's Home* (2017), and *I Am Time* (2013) have been screened and received awards at Locarno Film Festival for three years in a row (2016–2018). His feature film project, *Sand City*, won the CNC development grant "for its visual audacity and artistic originality" at Open Doors Locarno 2018.



### SYNOPSIS

A monk, a materialistic young man and an ethnic-minority woman are linked together by the unstable element of sand, as they exist through a web of fantasy, spiritual practices and repressed sexuality in the ruthless metropolis of Dhaka.

The monk, Karunananda, returns to the city after visiting a monastery that has been demolished by religious fanatics. He collects sand from the debris of the broken Buddha temple and tries to make a sand mandala to recover from his pain. He attempts to concentrate his energy on building this mandala but the constant sounds and noise from the surrounding metropolis distract him.

Emma sets out on her scooter every week to pick up sand for her cat litter. One day, she finds a finger in the sand - an amputated finger with a red painted nail. Instead of panicking, she gradually develops a strange bond with the lone finger.

Hasan works in a sand-washing plant. He steals sand from the plant to make glass at home. What starts out as a solitary activity, soon leads to a fantasy that slowly causes his own destruction.

### DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

« [...] I have been both a subject and an observer of the city of Dhaka all my life. With age and the intervention of my camera, the negotiations and the revelations of the city changed; through the lens of my camera, the skeleton of the city unfolded before my eyes. As an image maker and story teller, images and sounds represent the essence of the city to me. When I look at the city through the lens, I become an outsider and insider at the same time and I cannot escape my city.

With this film, I want to focus my gaze on deconstructing the monolith of this city. I want to join my camera in searching for the spirit of this city and its citizens. In this process, I want to trace the journey of my tormented soul and the roads it takes through the metropolis. This film is my chance to make a journey into my reality and coming face to face with my own story, instead of escaping it. Through this journey, I want to explore the many facets of urban survival, fantasy, sexuality and religion. I also want to weave a story by exploring my own emotions with the city and depict how this city constantly occupies my thoughts and creations.

My narrative focuses on the element of sand to stand in as a microcosm for describing city life. Sand is an unstable element and, to me, it seems like an appropriate metaphor for our wobbly urban existence. All my characters end up having their lives intervened with sand, both consciously and unconsciously. »

### CONTACTS

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