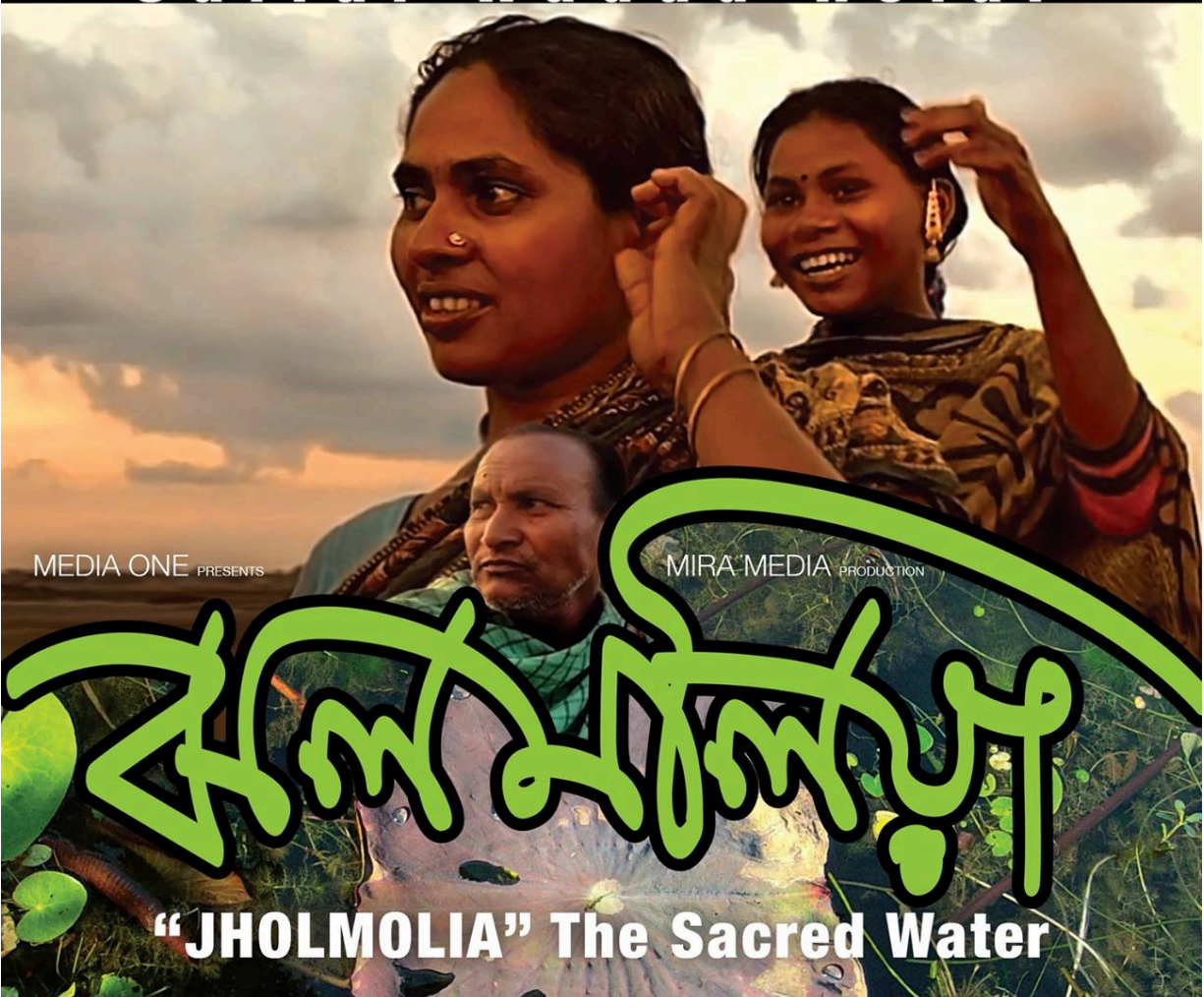


a tale of sweet-life and salty-water

a film By

**S a i f u l W a d u d H e l a l**



MEDIA ONE PRESENTS

MIRA MEDIA PRODUCTION

**জলমলিয়া**

**“JHOLMOLIA” The Sacred Water**



Short Description

**There** is this village in the coastal belt of southwest Bangladesh. And the village has Jhalmolia- the shimmering pond that adds sparkle to the life of its people. Being near the sea, drinking water is scarce all across the region. The pond has been the only source of drinking water for the residents. In 2009, Cyclone Aila flooded the entire region; the pond was somehow spared. Life and living for the people of this area, their folklores, stories, and tales of miracle centre on this pond.

With the passage of time nature alters, so does environment. They leave their imprint on the lives of people nurtured by nature. At the whims of nature people lose their homes, or are displaced from their homesteads. People too break up or desert home at their own free will. If people change, how much do they change? Does drifting life ever finds its way? “Jholmolia - The Sacred Water”, the documentary, is an intimate observation and exploration of the life and living of people in a south west coastal village of Bangladesh over a six year period in the aftermath of Cyclone Aila.



## **Plot Outline**

**I**n the year 2009, cyclone Aila hit southwest Bangladesh and southeast India. It caused a lot of short-term and long-term damages to the people and their livestock. Hurka, one of the villages near the coastal area of southeast Bangladesh, was hit hard by Cyclone Aila. A few months after Aila, a group of men and women from the capital Dhaka were visiting Hurka for a different reason. I was among them- with a camera and working behind the camera. However, there is a pond in Hurka village named Jholmolia, which did not drown in the cyclone even when the rest of the village went under water. The villagers see this as a miracle. Jholmolia pond is their only source of drinking water, a lifesaver. They also believe that the pond is sacred. People come from far, far away to get water from the pond. When we ourselves have locked water and life in a bottle, we are sentenced to live a life with preservatives. In contrast, the people of Hurka village drink Jholmolia's sacred water fearlessly.

Jholmolia pond, which was filled with waterlilies, stimulated me somehow. I kept filming the people who came to Jholmolia's ghat and the reflection of their faces in the water. At some dark moment in time this fairy tale land of salty life and sweet water might have to compensate for global warming. The told, untold tales of these marginalized people might be wiped out from the face of the earth. Before it dissipates into water, let the water-tale of these Bangladeshi people be saved up for a warmer tomorrow.



**Director Statement**

**There** is this village in the coastal belt of southwest Bangladesh. And the village has Jhalmalia- the shimmering pond that adds sparkle to the life of its people. Being near the sea, drinking water is scarce all across the region. The pond has been the only source of drinking water for the residents. In 2009, Cyclone Aila flooded the entire region; the pond was somehow spared. Life and living for the people of this area, their folklores, stories, and tales of miracle centre on this pond.





One afternoon little girl Sumaiya was sitting by the pond. The ten year old Sumaiya doesn't go to school. Sumaiya's father earns his livelihood by fishing. Sumaiya's mother is her father's second wife. From dawn till dusk she has no time to breathe. After managing household chores she has to rush to the field, to the dock, everywhere. Sometimes she can be seen standing solitary by the eroding bank of the pond. The fringe of her sari blows in the wind. In the evening, on way to Jhalmalia to fetch water she eagerly waits for someone to show up. She chitchats with somebody. After daylong backbreaking work, this momentary encounter is her only respite, her peace of mind. People might survive struggling with nature, but can they endure battling with the mind? Ripples of Jhalmalia mirror images of flickering human faces. At times a few salty tears drop into the pond's sweet water. The camera lenses fail to capture it. The enigmatic bird that dwells in human mind wants to break free time and again, and fly away. In the end, is anyone set free?



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“Jholmolia - The Sacred Water”, the documentary, is an intimate observation and exploration of the life and living of people in a south west coastal village of Bangladesh over a six year period in the aftermath of Cyclone Aila.



## Credits

### **SAIFUL WADUD HELAL**

Director, Cinematographer/DP, Editor, Writer

### **KAZI FAHMIDA KAMAL SUMI**

Additional Photography, Assistant Director, Production Manager

### **AMINUR RAHMAN**

Producer

### **MUNIR HOSSAIN**

Producer

### **SHAFIUL WADUD,**

Producer

### **KAZI MIRA**

Producer

Key Cast:

**AKKAS MOLLA**

**SHAFIA BEGUM**

**NAZMUNNAHAR SUMAIYA**

**Film Type:**

Documentary

**Runtime:**

60 minutes

**Completion Date:**  
January 1, 2017

**Production Budget:**  
50,000 USD

**Country of Origin:**  
Bangladesh

**Country of Filming:**  
Bangladesh

**Film Language:**  
Bengali

**Shooting Format:**  
DIGITAL

**Aspect Ratio:**  
16:9

**Film Color:**  
Color



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### **Director Biography**

Born in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 1967, Saiful wadud helal began his career as a journalist in Montreal, Canada. After receiving a diploma in Cinema studies & Television production from Montreal, he start working in the TV industry as a program director & editor. He wrote, produced, Short films, TV Magazines and Documentaries for various channels in Canada and abroad.

**Filmography:** "Color of Faith" (2005), "Smriti Ekattor" (2006), "Chabir Haat" (2008), "Anika's Home" (2009), "Cinemaniam" (2010)., "Aparajeyo Bangla" (2011) and "Bangladesh's Ridoy" (2013). Work- is in progress "Jholmolia - The Sacred Water" (2016).

Contact: saiful@mac.com Phone: +1 613 262 7110, 01732784283  
[www.facebook.com/saiful.w.helal](http://www.facebook.com/saiful.w.helal)

Dear friends,

With this letter I just wanted to share my thoughts about filming the documentary “Jholmolia - The Sacred Water” with you hoping that it will give you some idea to understand and connect the film with some important global issue. The film is an intimate observation and exploration of the life and living of people of rural Bangladesh. A visual story of togetherness in harmony, an example of co-existence, living and loving in and with the nature which may not be the same anymore.

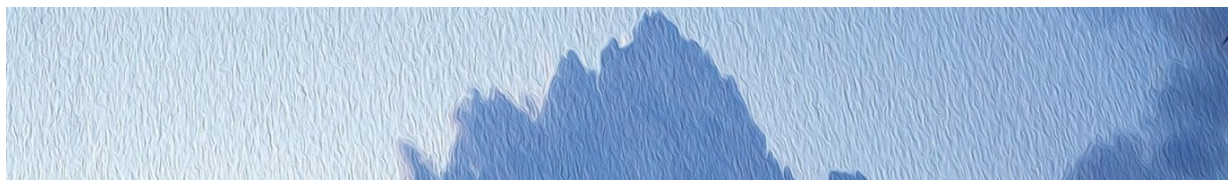
You may be aware that Bangladesh is a country with a delta land where water relates a great deal to its citizens. To Bangladeshi people river or water is mother to them. Today, according to various study and research the world and Bangladesh people are learning that because of global warming in near future if the sea level raises by one more feet then forty percent of the land will go under water by the year 2050 or so. A heavily populated country of 160 + million people will face a huge migration crisis. Researchers are alarming that more then 20 + million people may loose their land and will be the climate refuge by the year 2050.

Beside the carbon emission factor today the globe is getting warmer for various other reasons too. Such one reason is terrorism, which is spreading fast in the name of religion almost every corner in the mother earth. We all can feel and know that it's not the religion by itself but the politics of supremacy, power to gain control, greed for resource and various other known and unknown reasons which plays a big role for this global unrest. In this globalization era Bangladesh is facing and fighting to survive from this man made disasters like climate changes and terrorism. It is very unfortunate that Bangladesh has made hardly any contribution at all to create such a disastrous situation. A country which has long long history of co-existence and tolerance.

The documentary, is an intimate observation and exploration of the life and living of people in a coastal village of Bangladesh over a six year period in the aftermath of one Cyclone and continue shooting till the next Cyclone alert. Shooting this project is a lifetime experience for each member of our shooting team. We use total of 8 small camera to shoot the project over a 6 year long shooting time which includes 2 iPhone, 1 gopro, 2 crashcam, 1 flycam, 1 HDV & 1 Blackmagic pocket cinema camera.

Thanks for reading and best regards,

Saiful Wadud Helal  
(Director: Jholmolia - The Sacred Water)  
saiful@mac.com



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“JHOLMOLIA”

The Sacred Water

MUSIC SUPERVISION MUHAMMAD HANIF EDITOR WADUD HELAL CAMERA WADUD HELAL, FAHMIDA SUMI  
CO-PRODUCER AMINUR RAHMAN EXECUTIVE PRODUCER MUNIR HOSSAIN, SHAFIUL WADUD  
PRODUCED BY KAZI MIRA WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY SAIFUL WADUD HELAL



#JHOLMOLIA