

SCREENING OF DOCUMENTARY 'I AM KALAM'



Overview:

A poor boy derives inspiration from the former President of India, A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. He then decides to change his name to Kalam and harbours a dream of meeting the visionary.

Plot:

Chotu (Harsh Mayar), a small kid, is left behind by his mother at a roadside dhaba to work as a helper and support his destitute family. While delivering food at the nearby heritage hotel, he befriends a boy of his age, Ranvijay Singh (Husaan Saad) who is a descendant of an erstwhile royal family that now runs the hotel. The keen-observer and quick-learner Chotu is aided by his friend Ranvijay in his quest for education. Further, on learning that President Abdul Kalam too suffered several hardships in his childhood, Chotu rechristens himself as Kalam and aims to be just like him.

Though the protagonist is poverty-struck, the film at no point emphasizes on the poverty and inadequacy in his life but is rather focused on his pursuit for knowledge. The cheerful face of Chotu and the upbeat mood of the film never make the narrative distressing. Add to it, his tiff with a coworker (Pitobash Tripathy) makes way for some hilarious moments. The screenplay by Sanjay Chauhan is well-etched and keeps you riveted through its runtime. The writing is multidimensional yet the storytelling by director Nila Madhab Panda is absolutely simple and effective. He blithely establishes the innocent and unadulterated bonding between the two boys that goes beyond the divide of their social status.

Review:

“I am Kalam” is a beautiful film. It romanticizes friendships, loneliness, class divides, political borders, ambition and of course roadside dhaabas and the culture of Rajasthan too.” “I am Kalam” is mainly the tale of a young Chhotu who has given himself an alias - Kalam - after the former president of India. Dr. A. P. J Abdul Kalam who is this little boy's inspiration. This little boy works at a roadside dhaba cheerfully instead of grunting about going to school. He wants to go, but he can't afford to go to school. As expected, the film has emotional moments and a strong message. But the moments are endearing and the message is well-garbed in a basic, sensitive story.

