

COVER STORY

## Musical Legacy

Over the years, the songstress, Samina Chowdhury lent her sweet voice to numerous popular songs and received honorable accolades. She is known as one of the leading exponents of modern music in Bangladesh. In this interview with Rafi Hossain, Samina Chowdhury talked about her journey into music, her father and captivated the viewers with some melodious songs.



**Rafi Hossain:** Welcome to Uncensored with Rafi Hossain. Today, we are here with the talented and internationally celebrated artist, Samina Chowdhury. Thank you for giving us your time today.

**Samina Chowdhury:** Thank you for having me here.

**Rafi Hossain:** How long has it been since you started your exceptional journey into music?

**Samina Chowdhury:** I started my musical career about 40 years ago.

**Rafi Hossain:** Do you want to start with one of your father's songs today?

**Samina Chowdhury:** Yes, of course. There are a lot of my father's songs that we have yet to work on or release. He, himself, composed his own music, which is a talent that my sister, Fahmida Nabi, inherited. Some of my father's songs are archived because of radios, and I have collected about 73 or 74 of them. I plan on releasing them online through YouTube sometime soon. I think that as an artist, there is always a sense of unfulfillment, and it is something I feel, just like my father did as well. I often feel as though I could have added more to a song, and that I have yet to work on a project that feels truly mine.

**Rafi Hossain:** When you were young, your father was already a celebrity. Did that affect your life in any way?

**Samina Chowdhury:** My father was a simple man who always sought after a simple life. I follow this philosophy as well. He never made us feel as though we were in the presence of a celebrity, or that he was an extraordinary person who deserved special care.

**Rafi Hossain:** Out of the four siblings, who was the closest to your father?

**Samina Chowdhury:** My father was generally a quiet person and kept to himself. But Numa was perhaps the closest to him as she admired him the most. On the other hand, I was closer to my mother compared to my father as I did not feel very comfortable sharing

things with him. This is something I truly regretted later. On the day that he passed away, I remember that his body was placed on our balcony. I rested my head near his and told him all the stories that I had always wanted to. This is why it gives me great joy when I see my children interact with my husband and share everything with him just like a friend. I don't want them to have the same regret as me.

**Rafi Hossain:** Growing up, did your father inspire you to pursue singing?

**Samina Chowdhury:** Not at all. It was actually the complete opposite. Numa used to sing, and since I would see so many people around me pursuing the same talent, I wanted to focus on a different one. I was particularly interested in playing the keyboard. I also enjoyed acting, dancing, and painting. Moreover, seeing the teaching style of certain *ustads* made me further uninterested. My father tried to teach me, but



he would frequently complain to my mother about my absent-mindedness.

**Rafi Hossain:** How do you think your father would have felt seeing all your achievements?

**Samina Chowdhury:** My father was never critical. Rather, it has always been my mother who is hard to please. She is a big fan of Lata Mangeshkar, and has an exceptional voice herself as well. She always strives and hopes for perfection as she wants us to maintain our father's image and respect. Oftentimes she would even advise or teach my father to sing certain parts of songs in certain ways.

**Rafi Hossain:** Tell us more about the start of your musical journey.

**Samina Chowdhury:** I began my career first with *No-tun Kuri*, after which I got an offer for playback. I sang two songs for a film which were very well-received by the audience. Following that, I began singing on television. My father then took me to audition for the radio. In this sense, my journey was quite the opposite from the general musician.

**Rafi Hossain:** Can you share more about your interest in acting?

**Samina Chowdhury:** I acted in two different films: one was alongside Taquair bhui, and the other was an interesting horror film. Acting is about portraying a role in a way that sends a message to the audience.

I don't enjoy the dialogues and the form of acting that is common in television shows nowadays. When I was in school, I did plays like Julius Caesar on radio. They would completely capture my attention. That is probably one of the reasons I became very mature at a young age. I might consider acting if I got offered an interesting role that suited me, but my life's vision has changed significantly now.

**Rafi Hossain:** How did it feel when your song first gained popularity?

**Samina Chowdhury:** I believe that my journey towards music was a gift from God as I, myself, wanted to pursue a completely different path, and rather avoid music. I remember listening to the radio one day, and hearing my song being played on different stations. It completely took me by surprise. But, like I said, because of my upbringing, the achievements or success never led me astray. Even now, I have immense appreciation for all the love and support I get, but it does not make me arrogant or prideful. I always try to remain down to earth. I also try to remain prepared for the future when my voice will undoubtedly be affected by age, so that I do not experience any kind of frustration later. That is one of the reasons I have immense appreciation towards Shahnaz Rahmatullah's life, as she organised everything to perfection, especially towards the end. Regardless to say, I really love her songs as well.

**Rafi Hossain:** Have you been recording on television and other platforms during this pandemic?

**Samina Chowdhury:** Yes, I have already began working again. I sang a song for Koushik's film recently, which had been postponed due to the corona virus outbreak.

**Rafi Hossain:** You once spoke against the use of a 'fake' voice to sing. Can you tell us more about that?

**Samina Chowdhury:** I always speak up on matters I believe are wrong, but this specific instant has been slightly exaggerated by the media and due to the politics of certain senior artists back then. There was a period of time when Hindi songs were being translated and sung in Bangla, and that gained popularity. I expressed my opinion and said that there were and are many talented singers, songwriters and composers in Bangladesh, and we should rather focus on them.

**Rafi Hossain:** Lucky Akhand bhui would often say that your voice was suited for both Bengali and western style of music. What do you have to say about that?

**Samina Chowdhury:** Lucky chacha's songs had a different style and classical based melody, and focused on Bangla itself. But, it also had western aspects that made it difficult to sing for some people. We had to practice extensively and listen to a lot of English songs to achieve that. Nowadays, children listen to a lot of English songs, and adjust their voice and accent accordingly. However, unlike us, they don't attempt to incorporate it into Bangla songs. Bulbul bhui was another such singer who had a westernised style of singing.

**Rafi Hossain:** Do you have any message for your fans?

**Samina Chowdhury:** Firstly, I want to thank you and The Daily Star. I also ask the audience to pray for me, and to stay safe during this pandemic.

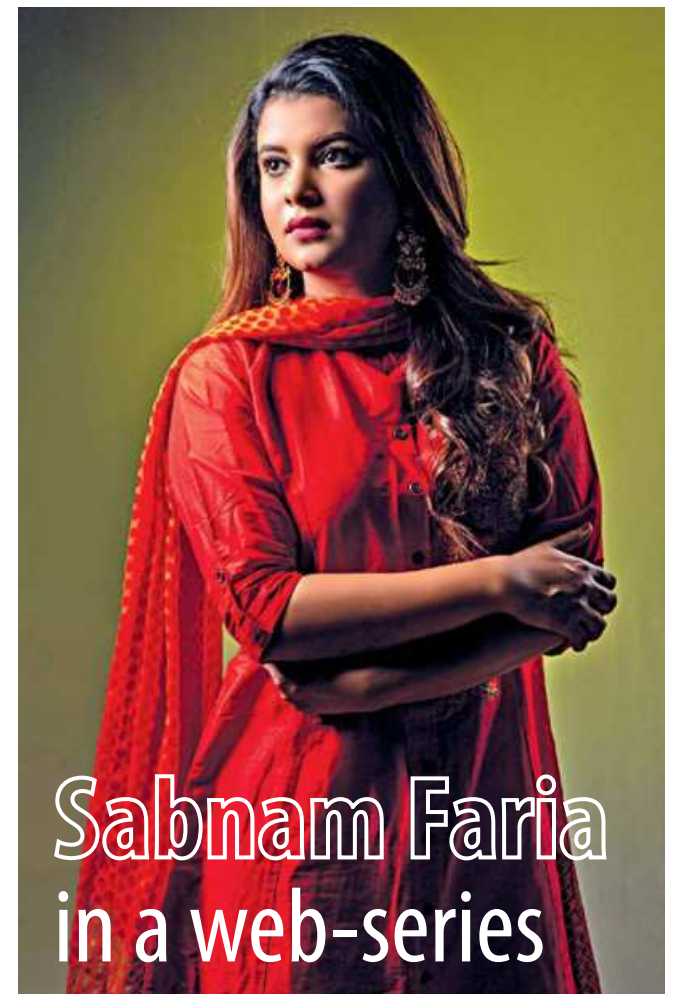
Shreya Shomoyeeta

GRAPE VINE

## JYOTIKA JYOTI RESUMES SHOOTING



Actor Jyotika Jyoti recently resumed shooting for Nurul Alam Atique's film, *Lal Moroger Jhuti*. The shooting is taking place at the actor's hometown, Mymensingh Gouripur. Jyoti will be seen playing the character of Deepali in the film, and starring opposite her will be Dipok Sumon. The project received a grant from the government in 2015. The film is based on the stories of people living in small villages during the time of liberation war. Jyotika Jyoti said, "Previously, half of the film was shot in March 2016, but the shooting was brought to a halt due to budget constraints. I am really happy that it has resumed."



## Sabnam Faria in a web-series

Sabnam Faria will be seen in the upcoming web-series *Bilap*. The production house behind *Mission Extreme*, *Cop Creations*, will be producing this. Regarding this, Sabnam Faria said, "This is a very different type of film, and it was a new experience for me to work in this. I really enjoyed working with this amazing team, and I hope that people will like this web-series." The cast also features Zakiya Bari Mamo, Shariful Raj and Masum Bashar, among many other talented actors. Sunny Sanwar not only wrote the script and screenplay for the web-series, he also directed this alongside Faisal Ahmed.

Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

## Bappy in a historical film

A film retelling the thirty-six hours following the brutal murder of the father of the nation, Bangabandhu, and his family on the 15th of August, 1975 is in the works. The title for it is *570* and it will be directed by Ashraf Shishir. Bappy Chowdhury is reportedly playing the leading role in the movie, and in the promotional picture for the movie, we can see his character carrying what seems to be the dead body of the father of the nation. Regarding this, he said, "This is a once in a lifetime experience for me. I am very grateful to be a part of this. I am putting my everything behind this role."



Ridwan Intisaar Mahbub

GUESS THE CELEBRITY

Guess who the celebrity is?

HINT: HE WAS FEATURED IN A DOCUMENTARY FILM



ANSWER FROM THE PREVIOUS ISSUE: "JENNIFER LAWRENCE"

POPCORN HIGHLIGHTS

Here are some binge worthy movie and series you can spend your time watching while you stay at home social distancing, keeping yourself, as well as others, safe.



### The Trial of the Chicago 7

*The Trial of the Chicago 7* is a legal-drama film, first released on September 25, 2020. It was written and directed by Aaron Sorkin, produced by Stuart M. Besser, Matt Jackson, Marc Platt and Tyler Thompson, distributed by Netflix, and stars Yahya Abdul-Mateen II, Sacha Baron Cohen and Daniel Flaherty, among others. The story, which is based in Chicago, Illinois, follows the lives of seven defendants with charges relating to anti-Vietnam War and countercultural protests.

### Jamtara – Sabka Number Ayega

*Jamtara – Sabka Number Ayega* is a Hindi crime-drama TV series, following a group of men engaged in a phishing operation, a morally corrupt politician who wants to be a part and a police officer who wants to destroy it. It was directed by Soumendra Padhi, written by Trishant Srivastava, and stars Amit Sial, Dibyendu Bhattacharya and Aksha Pardasany, among others. The show was first released on January 10, 2020 on Netflix.



### TharnType: The Series

*TharnType: The Series* is a Thai romantic comedy-drama TV series, aired on October 7, 2019 on One 31 and LINE TV. It was written by Orawan Vichayawannakul (MAME), Vichayaporn Sukkul and Wanna Kortunyavat, directed by Buntit Sintanaparadee, produced under the banner of *Me Mind Y*, and stars Suppatt Jongcheveevat (Mew) and Kanawut Traipattanapong (Gulf) in the leads. The storyline, which is based on the web novel *TharnType's Story: Hate You, Love You More* by MAME, follows the life of a homophobic college student and his journey of falling in love with his charming gay roommate.



Amina Hossain