



Star
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HERA

BEFORE THE NEXT STEP



Hera has often been lauded as Bangladesh's Kareena Kapoor. Despite having both beauty and brains along with all the qualities of a megastar, she has not quite been able to reach her potential. Even then, she is one of the most well known models and TV actresses in the country. Showbiz presents to you the sizzling Hera, who valiantly talks about the industry and some of the problems in it.



We know that there is a lot of dissatisfaction and loss of viewership in our media at the moment. What is your opinion on this?
I am quite aware of that, there has even been a movement/protest regarding this. We, as an audience are so obsessed with Indian Bengali serials that we are ignoring our own media, and all our artists have to pay the price for that. We have to prioritize our own media above all, we need the support from our own audience in order to survive as entertainers. Even in our own channels, dubbed versions of foreign TV serials are shown and people watch that ignoring the Bangladeshi serials, which is very harmful for our industry. This is why I think the protest was necessary and justified.

Don't you think that we need to improve the quality of our work in order to compete with foreign serials/films?
I agree wholeheartedly with that notion and I know that the quality has been dwindling for the past few years compared to foreign made serials or films. But you have to understand that technically we are still far behind what producers or directors outside our country have access to. Besides that, our scripts have become one-dimensional as there is not enough innovation to keep the audience interested. Another reason for the loss of quality is the selection of artists that is usually done by our TV channels. We can often see that the artists whom the producers know personally or have a good relationship with often get the roles, regardless of their talent and aptitude. Even if they do not fit the roles, they are given first priority and the director or scriptwriter does not protest to that. This becomes a vicious cycle and the ultimate victim is our serials.



You have worked in television commercials, serials and as a model for a long time. If I ask you what are the best parts of doing this? Also, are you perturbed by anything ongoing here?
First of all, I would like to talk about the current situation of television commercials. The commercials at the moment are operated on a very high budget, but we as artists do not get fair payment from them. This is primarily because many new faces are willing to do it for free, so they are cast instead of established and experienced actors/models. I get a lot of offers to do television commercials, but I usually see and judge the quality of the product and brand before doing them. Unfortunately, this is not the case for everyone. I say things in a very straightforward manner, so I might sound brash to many but what I said was the truth. I work on projects that have fair payment and

have a good brand involved in them, for example I have recently worked on Walton and RFL advertisements. I have done commercials in the past very frequently, but now the good directors have not been able to make advertisements due to various reasons.
We can see that many of our actresses and models are working outside the country at the moment. Do you have any plans of starting on such projects?
I did get a lot of offers to work abroad, but there are many factors which stopped me from giving it a serious consideration. My primary concern is that there is no proper agency from which I could contact them. To be brutally honest, I do not trust any of the third parties who are bringing in the offers from abroad and I am very cautious when those links are sent to me. If I get a direct offer, I will definitely consider it but those are very unusual and difficult to come across if it falls under my comfort zone. In this aspect, the Khadi Fashion Festival has helped me a lot as I have got a lot of invitations from abroad thereafter.
What are the current projects that you are working on? Have you gotten any film offers as of late?
I am working on television serials as of late. When it comes to films, I did get a lot of offers in the past but I am not willing to work on them until and unless it meets my expectations regarding quality.
Is there any message that you want to pass on to the audience?
What I want the audience to know is that as artists, we are putting a lot of effort in our craft. Even if the output is not perfect, I request them to stand by us as these are difficult times for our industry. If the audience is with us, nothing can stop us from achieving the quality that we desire.
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Interviewed by Rafi Hossain and Sadi Mohammad Shahnewaz

