



TARGETING CELEBRITIES

just for clout is wrong

NAZIFA TUSHI

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ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

Starting with “Ice Cream” in 2016, Nazifa Tushi’s focus has always been films. She went on to feature in one of the most successful OTT projects last year, “Networker Baire”. The joy-chorus turned into chaos when the cast suffered a deadly accident, leaving Tushi with a broken shoulder and a long recovery time. However, the actress is now back with Shihab Shaheen’s “Syndicate”.

We caught up with Tushi to know more about her recent endeavours, and upcoming projects.

You took a break after “Ice Cream”, despite being appreciated for your performance. Why did you stay away from the screen instantly after your debut?

I have always wanted to work in films, and after “Ice Cream”, I felt that I needed to dig deeper into the craft, and different shades of portraying a character realistically. I was also busy with my studies during that time, but never stopped working on myself as an actor.

I came back with Mejbaur Rahman Sumon’s “Hawa”. With the emergence of OTT platforms, I started to explore this new medium, and have thoroughly enjoyed working here.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NAZIFA TUSHI

You will be seen in Shihab Shaheen’s web series “Syndicate”, with Afran Nisho and Tasnia Farin. How was your experience of working with them?

I was approached for “Syndicate” a while ago, but I was unsure if I could pull it off, as I had to visit India for surgery after the accident in Gulshan. The team of “Syndicate” was kind enough to wait for me, and finally, we managed to shoot for the production.

This is the first time I worked with Shihab Shaheen and Afran Nisho, and they

were very helpful. Farin is one of the nicest people I have known so far, and I loved the experience.

Being my first web series, “Syndicate” left me with loads of good memories, new sides to discover in this line of work, and amazing friends.

You were recently caught up in an incident at the Ekushey Boi Mela, that stirred up a lot of controversies. However, the video violated your personal space... Shooting a video without permission violates one’s privacy, and the incident we

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are talking about was one such instance. I understand that we are public figures, but it is also unethical to only showcase parts of an incident for the sake of views.

That day, I had only demanded them to turn off the camera, but never said that I would not comply with them. Targeting celebrities just for clout is wrong.

What else are you looking forward to? I am already in talks for a few OTT projects and films. The viewers will know more when it’s the right time!

Excited to play Konkon Dashi: Mithila

SHAH ALAM SHAZU

Rafiath Rashid Mithila is all set to appear in Gias Uddin Selim’s government-granted film “Kajol Rekha”. Based on a 400-year-old Maimansingha Gitika, the actress will be seen donning the unique role of “Konkon Dashi”, for which the shooting will take place next month.

“Gias Uddin Selim wanted me to be part “Kajol Rekha” from a long time, and we spoke about it two years ago. When he asked me at that time about which role I wanted to play in the movie, I instantly told him that I wanted the role of Konkon Dashi, said Mithila.

“Konkon Dashi is quite a unique character. Her ambitions and her quick wit made her one of the most interesting characters in the film. She became known as ‘Konkon Dashi’, for being obsessed with konkon,” mentioned the actress.

“The 400 year old folklore tale is something that the Bengali has known for ages throughout their childhood. I feel truly blessed to be part of this movie,” added the actress.



Mithila with Gias Uddin Selim. PHOTO: COLLECTED

Aishwarya Rai returns to the silver screen after 4 years

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT DESK

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan is soon going to be back on the silver screen. Recently, the actress shared the first look of her character in Mani Ratnam’s upcoming period drama “Ponniyin Selvan”.

In the picture, she was dressed in a red and gold saree and kept her hair tied in a side bun.

As per reports, the “Ae Dil Hai Mushkil” star will be playing dual roles, Nandini and Mandakini Devi, in the upcoming historical drama, which is based on the novel, “Ponniyin Selvan” (The Son Of Ponni).

The film will release in two parts, the first part will hit cinemas on September 30 this year.



PHOTO: COLLECTED

SERIES REVIEW

The Fame Game: Madhuri Dixit deserved a better OTT debut

SHABABA IQBAL

In recent years, not only did OTT platforms provide us with some fresh new talents, but also initiated comebacks of several popular Indian actresses of the 90s.

From Karisma Kapoor in “Mentalhood” to Sushmita Sen in “Aarya” and Raveena Tondon in “Aranyak”, Bollywood queens of the 90s served us with unconventional roles that grabbed our attention. So, by no surprise, much anticipation surrounded Madhuri Dixit’s debut web series, “The Fame Game”, released on Netflix on February 25.

Sri Rao, creator-writer of the eight-episode series, in an Instagram post ahead of the show’s release, stated that he created it for Dixit. “My intention was to give her a platform that would do justice to her talent as an actress, and introduce her to global audiences to be dazzled by her star power,” he wrote.

However, with each episode, we realise that the creator is too heavily reliant on that star power, while everything else in the filmmaking crumbles.

The show has an intriguing hook: Anamika Anand (Dixit), a Bollywood superstar, goes missing. The next day, her family is confused, the cops are called, and a media frenzy follows.



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PHOTOS: COLLECTED



Intercutting the present day with the six months leading up to the incident, the story reveals the truth of Anamika’s seemingly perfect life, delving into the complexity of her relationships with her teenage children, ambitious and pushy mother (Suhasini Mulay), emasculated husband Nikhil (Sanjay Kapoor), and co-star Manisha Khanna (Manav

Kaul). As the police investigation furthers at a snail’s pace, the story unfolds lies, deceit, secrets, and tragic family bonds that have left the characters helpless in the present.

It is quite evident – right from the start – that “The Fame Game” is undecided about its tone.

It starts off as a thriller – with an amped up background score, the disappearance of

Anamika, the police investigation – but, in the subsequent episodes, the key investigator vanishes for long stretches, and we get subplots instead that point towards a domestic drama. The confusion among individual stories and unanswered questions fails to make the larger picture gripping enough.

Moreover, even though the show touches upon issues from mental health, to body shaming, nepotism, and the complexity of being a star kid to sexual orientation, it does so as vapid self-congratulatory exercises, rather than deep, nuanced portrayals.

As Anamika, Dixit does it all – she sings, dances, lights up the screen, gets wounded but recalibrates and comes out stronger, especially to protect her kids. The exploration of Anamika’s relationship with her children, who are experiencing their growing pains as star kids harbouring their own desires and ambitions, adds a sensitive touch.

Yet, from Dixit, the role demands nearly zero effort. There are flashbacks and flash-forwards that let her explore her acting range, but it is nothing we have not seen before.

As the police gauges suspects and digs into Anamika’s close ones, the suspense wears off soon too.

By the end, we are left feeling that even Dixit’s much-loved dance and eternal smile are not enough to salvage “The Fame Game”.

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SRI RAO
creator-writer of the eight-episode series, wrote in an Instagram post.