

Sanjida Preeti’s desires

“**‘Koinna’ is one of the oldest productions of Prachyanat, and thus we have a set of audience who would always come to watch the play. The set, light, and props – everything spellbinds the audiences.**

RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA

Vivacious, pretty, and down-to-earth -- Sanjida Preeti impressed one and all with her performances throughout the years. From essaying the young and bubbly Titir in “Kacher Manush” to the doe-eyed Naila from “Bhalobashi Tai Bhalobeshe Jai”, the versatile actress has forayed all three mediums- Theatre, TV, and OTT, and has showcased her acting prowess in all.

In a conversation with The Daily Star, the flamboyant actress opened up about her web-film Café Desire, and many more.

Tell us about your role in Café Desire.

Human beings are full of desires and Café Desire reflects upon those desires. My character's name is Shoma, an Engineering graduate, who left her career to follow something completely different from her line of choice. She chooses a career which is considered ‘illegal’ by society, but it’s something that she chose on her own. I found the character really challenging, as it has many layers which makes her appear more realistic.

Do you remember any interesting incidents from you shooting?

It’s really tough shooting inside a car- there was nobody in the car except me and Shamol Mawla. We had to project this maddening



PHOTOS: COURTESY



journey full of conversations, and we had a plethora of cameras placed both inside and outside the car. It was a little nerve-wrecking, but I am glad we could pull this up.

After almost four years, Prachyanat has

returned with ‘Koinna’.

“Koinna” is one of the oldest productions of Prachyanat, and thus we have a set of audience who would always come to watch the play. The set, light, and props -- everything spellbinds

the audiences. I enact two characters in the play- “Koinna” and “Mostura” who are polar opposites of each other. Koinna is a delicate, fragile personality, while Mostura is this cold, bitter person but spiritual woman.

Do you think OTT has enough women-centric contents?

We don’t, actually. It’s such a shame that we have so many talented actresses in the industry, but their skills are still not being utilised.

How satisfied were you with your role in Taqdeer?

I basically had to act as a corpse most of the time in “Taqdeer”, so I wasn’t satisfied. I wish I had more screen time but still, I had this deep quench for playing bold characters and my role was quite interesting -- as she was a strong and confident journalist who pursued the truth.

What are your upcoming projects?

I am currently awaiting the release of “Café Desire” on Chorki and my upcoming performance for Prachyanat “Seven Steps Around The Fire”, directed by Azad Abul Kalam, will be staged this month as well.



Kanye West calls Elon Musk ‘Half-Chinese’

On Monday, Kanye or ‘Ye’ posted a long post on Instagram where he asked everyone to do a thorough investigation of Elon Musk ethnicity. Ye wrote, “Am I the only one who thinks Elon could be half Chinese? Have you ever seen his pics as a child? Take a Chinese genius and mate them with South African super model and we have an Elon.”

Sharing the note, he captioned, “On Jay Zs birthday Future president of the United States Ye uses Mark Zuckerberg’s platform to incite a mass investigation of Elon Musk’s childhood photos in the midst of Balenciagate I call this the theory of everything, Problem solved Praise God.”

Kanye West has been suspended from Twitter for violating the microblogging site’s rules against incitement to violence.

Will Popy finally return after three years?

National Award-winning actress Sadika Parvin Popy is all set to release her new film, “Direct Attack” on December 23. The actress will be seen acting opposite Amin Khan in this film. While the shooting of the film concluded three years ago, it only recently received a clearance certificate from the censor board.

Regarding the release of “Direct Attack”, director Sadek Siddique shared his thoughts, saying, “Promotional activities for my film will start in a few days, but my lead actress is nowhere to be found.

Prior to her disappearance, Popy had praised “Direct Attack” to the media on multiple occasions. Popy had stated that she really enjoyed the film’s storyline and enjoyed playing her character in the movie.

NEWS

2 toddlers burned

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about 15-20 days ago. His association with crimes like theft and robbery often triggered fights within the family, the OC added.

“We think Purnima set fire to her own house and fled. Her mother has also been absconding since the incident. We are trying to arrest them as soon as possible. We don’t know if Manik got out on bail,” he further added.

The bodies were sent to Madaripur Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

Australia starts

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aim, a telescope that could observe a one-square-kilometre surface, but the current South African and Australian sections will have a combined collecting area of just under half that, according to the observatory.

Both countries have huge expanses of land in remote areas with little radio disturbance -- ideal for such telescopes.

More than 130,000 Christmas tree-shaped antennas are planned in Western Australia, to be built on the traditional lands of the Wajarri Aboriginal people.

They have dubbed the site “Inyarrimanha Ilgari Bundara”, or “sharing sky and stars”.

“We honour their willingness to share their skies and stars with us as we seek to find answers to some of the most fundamental science questions we face,” said Diamond.

Enact law

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“Who are the real beneficiaries of these huge amounts of money? The countrymen have the right to know...”

Iftekharuzzaman called on the government to take prompt measures to ensure that embezzled money could not be laundered abroad.

He also urged the government to probe the embezzlement incidents with utmost importance.

Citing the Global Financial Integrity’s latest statistics, he said in the name of trade, an average of \$8,270 million is laundered from Bangladesh every year.

He added that instead of taking action to prevent money laundering, the government made an attempt to stop providing relevant data to the UN agency so that such reports are not published.

99 out of 361 trains

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Eight pairs of local trains and one pair of Demu trains operated on this route before the suspension.

BR Director General Dharendra Nath Mazumder did not respond to our calls or text messages yesterday, although earlier on Sunday he said he would comment on this once he was properly briefed about the facts by his officials.

PASSENGERS DEPRIVED

The BR operates four types of passenger trains -- intercity, local, mail and commuter trains.

Although costly, intercity trains provide the best services in terms of schedule management and seating arrangements.

The minimum fare of local trains is Tk 5/km, which is Tk 10, Tk 15 and Tk 45 for mail, commuter and intercity trains respectively, BR officials said.

At this rate, if a passenger can travel a distance for Tk 75 on a local train, it will cost him Tk 100 on a mail train, Tk 125 on a commuter train and Tk 300 in Shobhon chair in an intercity train.

This means, local, mail and commuter train services are affordable to lower income people.

Two BR officials said the suspension of the train services on different routes have affected their revenue income.

BR earned Tk 1,618 crore in 2017-18, which came down to Tk 1,199 crore in 2019-20 and Tk 1,166 in 2020-21.

In 2021-22, when train operations were almost normal, BR’s income rose to Tk 1,466, which has yet to pick up the level of pre-Covid period.

WHAT’S BEHIND THE SUSPENSION

Asim Kumar Talukder, general manager (west) of BR, blamed the lack of carriages and lockmasters for the closure of train services in different routes.

Projects have been taken up to procure 100 carriages and renovate 50 carriages, he said, adding that these coaches will join the fleet soon.

He, however, said some of the local trains are no longer required as intercity services have been increased there.

Jahangir Hossain, general manager (east) of BR, also gave

similar reasons for the suspension of some services.

He also said some of the suspended carriages have been repaired to resume operations, although most are beyond repair.

“So, we have to wait for new carriages and locomotives to revive services in other routes,” he told The Daily Star last month.

A BR official said local, mail and commuter trains are not a priority for their high-ups, as they do not generate revenue as much as intercity trains do.

Prominent transport expert Prof Shamsul Hoque said the BR authorities are giving priority on infrastructure development only, although trained manpower, rolling stocks (locomotives, carriages) and maintenance are also crucial.

“The railway authorities focus on infrastructure development only. This cannot be defined as a professional attitude,” he told The Daily Star.

There should be a synchronisation among infrastructure development, procurement of rolling stocks, recruitment and training of manpower and maintenance, he said.

“But the railway is a manifestation of unplanned development, and that is why it cannot provide expected services even after investment of huge money over the last one decade,” he added.

Between 2008-09 and 2022-23, the government allocated Tk 107,645 crore for BR under the annual development programme (ADP). The BR could spend Tk 71,113 crore till October this year, show BR documents.

Vested quarter out

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“Unless we can attain economic self-reliance, we won’t be able to uphold our independence and its spirit. So, we’ve been working to accomplish the goal,” she noted.

The PM said the Armed Forces always stand beside the people in any disaster and trouble. They earned public trust and confidence.

She also congratulated the fresh NDC and AFWC graduates on the successful completion of their courses.

Rab arrests

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while briefing reporters on the findings of their investigation at Rab’s media centre in Karwan Bazar.

The operative was responsible for the outfit’s activities in Gaibandha. He is the nephew of Shamin Mahfuz, the advisor and coordinator of new recruits, the official said.

With the arrest of the five operatives, 34 members have been arrested since the outfit’s activities came to the fore in September this year.

Replying to a query, Moin said they had earlier gotten a list of targeted persons from the outfit’s arrested members, including names of law enforcers and people conducting the trial process.

He said Rab was working based on the information given in the list.

He said the outfit has even managed to open a mobile accessories shop, Trust Telecom, in Gulistan and a cattle farm in Munshiganj from its funds.

The profits earned from these businesses have been used to meet the outfit’s expenses, like food, bomb-making materials, and other needs. It also sends new recruits for training exercises in remote hilly areas of the country.

The Rab official said they have recovered a register from the five arrestees’ possession, which contains an estimate of the cost of the products which the outfit sent to hilly area since 2021 as supplies for its members.

In the same briefing, Commander Moin said there was no scope for law enforcers to avoid responsibility for the escape of two convicted militants from police custody in Dhaka on November 20.

Replying to a query, he said it could have been easier to take action or prevent the escape if law enforcers had information in this regard.

Efforts are on to arrest the escaped militants, Moin added.

“We are examining their criminal records and CCTV footage of their movement in various places... We are hopeful that we will be able to arrest them,” the Rab official said.

Two Ansar al-Islam men, who were sentenced to death for killing publisher Faisal Arefin Dipan, escaped from the premises of Dhaka Chief Judicial Magistrate’s Court on November 20.

The last of its kind?

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Cup as being the best ever, or at least the best in recent memory? Well, it is definitely up for debate, but one that might take forever to resolve; and rightly so.

However, a bigger question is whether we see anything of this sort in the near future. The main reason for that question is the possibility that the next World Cups will follow a different format, at least in terms of how the group stages will unravel.

The 2026 edition, to be hosted in the American continent, will be expanded from 32 teams to 48, with tentative plans for 16 groups of three that will see the two top teams progress to the round of 32.

It is a pity that with an odd number of teams per group, it takes away the fascinating chain of thrilling events that is uniquely presented by simultaneous games.

Such moments were in abundance in the third round of the group stage, especially on Thursday as all teams from Group E and F, except Canada, battled it out to keep their World Cup dreams alive.

While high-flying Morocco were beating Canada, misfiring Belgium, ranked No. 2 in the world by FIFA, were presented a glorious shot at redemption on a silver platter in the final quarter of their match against Croatia. However, with an unfit Romelo Lukaku missing a flurry of chances from close range, all hopes faded for the ‘golden generation’.

Then came the double dose of dramatic affairs as Japan took on Spain while Germany faced Costa Rica. The Group of Death had generated understandable hype, but none could have predicted the scenario that unfurled in the three-odd minutes after Costa Rica had taken the lead in the 70th minute while Japan had maintained theirs, leaving both Spain and Germany on the brink of elimination. Finally, Germany equalised. They went on to win the game, but could not ultimately celebrate as they were eliminated alongside their opponents on the night.

The night before, in Group C, the odds were stacked heavily against Mexico, who had to beat a spirited Saudi Arabia while banking on Argentina to beat Poland, who were playing for a draw, secure in the

knowledge that a small loss would be enough.

But Mexico came out all guns blazing and so did Argentina. At one point, Argentina had doubled their lead in the 67th minute and Mexico had done the same, putting the latter level on goal difference with Poland. That meant a goal for either Mexico or Argentina would have taken Mexico to the last 16. Ultimately, it was not meant to be.

The entertainment of games played in parallel had escalated off the charts, beyond what anybody had signed up for, and the icing on this particular cake was provided by the South Koreans as they pulled off a last-gasp winner against Portugal, knocking out Uruguay who, like the Germans, were left heartbroken despite a win.

Simultaneous games, almost like a perpetual machine yielding exponentially increasing thrill, has perhaps spoiled many fans. They may likely experience symptoms of withdrawal in the next World Cup.

It is worth remembering that FIFA had introduced simultaneous games after what transpired in the 1982 World Cup in Spain, when West Germany and Austria played out the “Disgrace of Gijon”, where a 10-minute lead for West Germany was followed by two team apparently making no attempt to score further, knowing that they would advance if the result held. That result left Algeria, who already had played their last group game, distraught.

Now that FIFA seems set to ditch the format to allow a greater number of participants for globalisation’s sake, it makes the remaining action of the Qatar World Cup ever more special as the beginning of the end draws near.

All should work together for peace

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friends, do business, and make life better for our people,” Mannan said.

Differences can be resolved through talks.

“We don’t have to go to the extreme.”

China is now a global superpower for its good deeds and not for exploitation or oppressing others, he added.