

PENSIVE PUJA and a roaring comeback

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After nearly a year, Puja Chery returned with a powerhouse performance this Eid with her movie *Lipstick*. Despite the film's limited theatrical release, it has gained praise from many celebrities for its bold and unique concept. This was indeed a challenging year for the actress, as she tragically lost her mother just days before Eid. However, Puja was determined to fulfil her mother's dream by actively promoting her movie, despite being heartbroken.

Clad in a glamorous cream-coloured dress, later followed by a black sequined top, the stunning actress spent an afternoon at The Daily Star discussing her films, aspirations, and more.

"I feel like I'm finally making my comeback to the silver screen with a riveting story and script. I'm labelling it as a 'comeback' as none of my recent film projects have premiered until this Eid. Just last year, *Jinn*, a film I completed three to four years ago, saw its release. I've been on the lookout for a script that deeply connects with audiences, and *Lipstick* is precisely one of those stories. It's a fully loaded entertainer and holds a special place in my heart," revealed the actress.

Puja Chery has delivered most of her hit movies under the banner of Jaaz Multimedia, which includes *Poramon 2*, *Dohon*, and *Jinn*. However, apart from *Jinn*, the actress has not been featured in any of Jaaz's new projects.

Addressing this, the actress explained, "I wasn't involved in those projects simply because the roles or the narratives I was offered didn't align perfectly with my vision, or I didn't feel comfortable with the roles."

She further assured, "While I may not have been involved in Jaaz's recent films, I'm confident that I'll be part of their upcoming projects. Audiences can anticipate my presence in another engaging script."

While Puja Chery won the hearts of Bangladeshi audiences with her performance as Pori, she also gained love from Tollywood for her fantastic performance in *Noor Jahaan* (2018), an Indo-Bangla joint production film directed by Abhimanyu Mukherjee. Despite the growing presence of other Dhallywood actresses in Tollywood, Puja Chery's appearances in Tollywood are currently infrequent.

"I did receive two to three offers for Tollywood films, but I didn't feel they resonated perfectly with me," she said, citing the age difference with the roles as a primary factor for her refusal.

On another note, Siam and Puja Chery have undoubtedly established themselves as a superhit on-screen pair through their films *Poramon 2*, *Dohon*, and *Shaan*. With fans eagerly anticipating their next collaboration, both actors have been diligently looking for the perfect script that will do justice to their on-screen chemistry.

"After the success of *Poramon 2*, a fresh on-screen pair emerged, marking a significant milestone for us. We hold our audience's opinions in high regard and prioritise their feedback. After thorough deliberation, we are keen on maintaining this collaboration and are currently looking for the perfect narrative that will suit us," expressed Puja.

Recently, the actress made headlines when she said that she would be quitting showbiz after getting

married. However, while maintaining her stance, Puja clarified that she isn't getting married anytime soon.

"It's absolutely true. However, I want to clarify that I'm not getting married right now. Marriage is something I set aside for the future. As an emerging actress in the showbiz industry, I'm still in the learning phase and have much to glean from it. Once I do decide to get married, I intend to bid farewell to showbiz for good," asserted the actress.

This was the first time that the actress was seen promoting her upcoming movie without her mother's attendance. Puja Chery's mother, Jorna Roy, passed away on March 24 this year, after battling with various illnesses including diabetes. Her heartfelt post about her mother touched the hearts of audiences, as they were aware of the profound influence her mother had on Puja's life.

"Every time I think about it, my heart aches. My mother has been by my side since childhood.

I hesitate to say she's gone because I still feel her presence with me. Her blessings continue to guide me. Though I wear a smile for the camera, deep down, I feel shattered. Many of my peers might have noticed my recent shift to this quieter, and lonelier demeanour, and it might sadden them.

I dearly love my mother, and her absence is profoundly felt. I know I will continue to miss her until my last breath. She was the one who inspired me and encouraged me to pursue my passion, and now she's no longer here to witness me on my journey," shared an emotional Puja Chery.



PHOTOS: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

TRENDY STREAMS

Hoichoi
Rumi



Chorki
Last Defenders of Monogamy



Deeptoplay
Maya



Binge
Tiger Three



Netflix
3 Body Problem



WHAT'S PLAYING

Fade Into You

Mazzy Star released *Fade into You* thirty years ago - a haunting anthem of unrequited love that feels nothing short of a melancholic yet hopeful embrace. The song speaks of shared experiences—first loves, dusty afternoons, starry nights, forging connections amongst listeners, even introverts, across the globe.

While *Fade into You* is often remembered as a song about falling in love, in fact, it might be one of

the greatest songs about falling in love. But when consumed by it, one might find how it carries a darker undercurrent—a narrative of losing oneself to someone lost in their own shadows.

Hope Sandoval's tender yet powerful delivery externalises profound internal landscapes, offering solace amidst teenage angst. Her words echo the comforting sadness that binds people together.



Andrew Scott

Adding to his repertoire of incredibly memorable characters, Irish actor Andrew Scott is now evidently busy promoting his latest acting venture, *Ripley*.

Decked out in an all-black ensemble for his turn on the cover of a magazine, Andrew demands attention as he casually sits on a wooden chair for his outdoorsy photoshoot.

The sleek yet matte fabric of his blazer and flared trousers against the backdrop of matte green glass creates an intriguing concept.

The dangling breastpin and the perfectly polished square-toe oxfords as accessories encase the entire shirtless look. This understated yet suave look is undeniably a representation of the ongoing trends.

TV TALKIES

'Ripley' reimaged in monochrome mastery

Ripley, the Netflix adaptation of Patricia Highsmith's novel *The Talented Mr Ripley*, is a visual and narrative departure from its technicolor predecessors, offering a monochromatic meditation on Highsmith's timeless tale.

Directed by Steven Zaillian, the series is shot in striking blacks and whites by Robert Elswit - trading sun-soaked vistas for a chilling elegance, reminiscent of classic art house cinema.

Andrew Scott's nuanced portrayal

of Tom Ripley captivates, despite a departure from the character's traditional charisma. He puts every ounce of his talent, ineffable charm and lightly reptilian hotness on display in this noirish adaptation.

The eight-episode mystery thriller deftly navigates the novel's twists, enhancing believability while sacrificing some of its gritty allure. Yet, the series retains a mesmerising quality, drawing viewers into Ripley's world of deceit and obsession.

