

A new chapter for Tareen

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Bangladeshi actress Tareen, widely acclaimed for her roles in television dramas over the years, is set to make her debut in Indian Bengali cinema with the film *Eta Amader Golpo*. Tareen's popularity spans generations, and adding to repertoire, she is also a skilled dancer. Last year, she received applause for her role in the film *1971 Shei Shob Din*.

In an exclusive interview, Tareen shared insights about her debut in the upcoming film, set to release in Kolkata today.

You've ventured into Indian Bengali cinema for the first time. How did this opportunity come about?

Eta Amader Golpo has been directed by Manasi Sinha, a well-known actress. Manasi *dididid* had visited Bangladesh long ago, and that's when we first met. Later, she contacted me with a proposal to act in her film after our initial conversation. I liked the story she narrated. That's how it all came to be.

Audiences will see me portraying a Bangladeshi girl who gets married in Kolkata, which forms the central theme of the film.

The film is set to release today. How are you feeling ahead of its premiere?

I'm having a wonderful time in Kolkata. Yesterday, Mansi *dididid* and I attended a promotional event for the film at *Didi No 1* Studio. It's a new experience for me, and I'm enjoying the promotional activities.

What can you tell us about the story of the film?

It's a heartfelt love story involving two elderly people. It portrays their journey of love. The film touches upon the loneliness that elderly people sometimes experience when their children move away or become occupied with their lives. It emphasises that love knows no boundaries set by age. If an elderly person finds love instead of solitude during the later years of their life, it makes the moments truly precious for them. The film beautifully portrays the essence of family, loneliness, and love.

How was the reception from the local artistes and crew during your stay in Kolkata?

I've received tremendous love and support from everyone on the set. The hospitality extended to me was unforgettable. For instance, let me share a story: Kharaj Mukherjee, a prominent actor in India, shared the screen with me in the film. One day, he said, "You are our guest. You have come from Bangladesh. What do you like to eat?" I told him that I liked vegetables. The next day he cooked vegetables for me and brought it to the set.

Another day, I was shooting with Saswata *dada*, and suddenly, he asked me, "Tareen, do you have any shooting scheduled for tomorrow?" When I replied no, he said, "Come tomorrow. We all will have lunch together on the set." Despite my initial reluctance, I ended up going and having lunch with everyone. I will always remember these moments. I won't forget the love and warmth I received while working in Kolkata.

What can audiences expect from your role in the film?

Audiences will see me portraying a Bangladeshi girl who gets married in Kolkata, which forms the central theme of the film. The narrative highlights the dynamics of relationships within a family. I had the opportunity to portray the theme through my character. I believe the engaging storyline and the collective team effort will resonate well with the audience.

Could you share your overall experience of shooting in Kolkata?

The professionalism and punctuality on set were exceptional. If one had a call for a shoot at 7am, it meant the person would be there at that exact time. Everyone valued time immensely, which I truly appreciated. The collaborative spirit and dedication of the team made it a great experience for me.



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Censor board halts release of film allegedly based on Sagar-Runi murder case



The release of the Raihan Rafi's directorial film *Omimangshito* has been halted by the Bangladesh Film Censor Board as scenes of brutal killings were found in it. The board argued that there is a fusion of reality with the narrative, rendering it unsuitable for public viewing.

Shahidul Alam Sachchu, deputy director of Film Censor Board, conveyed this decision on Wednesday in a letter addressed to the makers of the film.

Following the teaser's release in February, some viewers speculated that the web-film was inspired by the infamous murder case of journalist couple Sagar and Runi. However, neither the film nor the censor board directly mentioned the couple's names.

Paoli Dam to star in Bangladeshi film



Indian actress Paoli Dam is set to star in the government-funded film *Neel Jochona*, adapted from Mostak Ahmed's parapsychology novel *Neel Jochonar Jibon*.

Portraying the female protagonist, Dam's casting was confirmed via an official agreement signed by the film's director Fakhrul Arefeen Khan in Kolkata on last Wednesday.

However, the makers are yet to cast the male co-star alongside Paoli in the film.

"Earlier in 2019, the film's production was halted due to the Covid and my involvement in *JK 1971*. However, we have now resumed the work, and hope to begin filming by the end of May," revealed Fakhrul.

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Citizen group calls for fair probe

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Prevention Act and holding the trial under Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunals. Additionally, they called for adequate compensations for Preeti's family.

They also demanded that the government turn the child labour policy into a law and raise the minimum age for employment as house help to 18 years from existing 14.

"We will not accept if the investigation changes course under pressure from any influential quarters," reads the statement.

"We call on human rights organisations, women's rights bodies,

social organisations and conscious citizens to be more vocal and active to ensure that not a single domestic help is subjected to torture."

Khushi Kabir, coordinator, Nijera Kori, said, "We don't want recurrence of such deaths in our society. We want an end to all kinds of torture and abuse of domestic helps."

She added, "We simply want a society where no one can go unpunished after committing injustice."

Tobarok Hossain, Rana Dasgupta, Rahnuma Ahmed, Prof Gitira Nasreen, Prof Zobaida Nasreen, Abul Hossain, Priscilla Raj, Nasimun Ara Huq, singer Shayan, among others,

were also present.

Ashfaque and his wife Tania Khondoker are currently in jail.

A day after Preeti's death, her father filed a case with Mohammadpur Police Station against the couple under Section 304(a) of the Penal Code, which deals with death caused by negligence.

The couple have been denied bail three times by the lower courts.

The High Court on April 22 issued a rule asking the government to explain in eight weeks why they should not be granted bail. The HC also granted ad-interim bail to Tania for six months.

Bangladesh won't benefit

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Energy to increase additional 3.8 MTPA terminal. In addition, the country has signed new contracts with Oman and Qatar for 1.5 MTPA each, as well as a 0.8-MTPA contract with Excelerate, which all will begin in 2026. Bangladesh currently has three long-term LNG contracts with Oman and Qatar for a combined capacity of 4.75 MTPA.

According to the report, new nuclear facilities, coal-fired plants and renewables may limit full capacity utilisation of gas-fired plants in the near term. Bangladesh may opt for gas-fired peaking plants instead of only base-load plants to accommodate more renewable energy.

"Bangladesh may seek to limit the LNG demand growth rate by

frontloading energy efficiency in industrial processes and captive generation," said Shafiqul Alam, lead analyst of IEEFA's Bangladesh chapter.

He said low spot market LNG prices resulted in a rebound in demand from Bangladesh by 17.9 percent in 2023 after imports fell by 14.4 percent in 2022, but sensitivity to volatile LNG prices, fiscal challenges, and competing energy resources in the power sector point to a moderate medium-term demand growth.

The power sector is the largest gas-consuming sector, accounting for 41.8 percent of total demand in FY23. The industrial sector, captive power generation and households account for a combined 47.6 percent of consumption.

11.3m Bangladeshis faced acute

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"This marked the highest food inflation for over a decade, stemming from the country's reliance on the Russian Federation and Ukraine for imports of fuel, essential food commodities like wheat, and fertiliser and livestock feed. The war in Ukraine disrupted supplies of these commodities, which, coupled with steep currency depreciation and decreased foreign reserves, drove up the cost of producing domestic cereals at a time of lower cereal imports," the report said.

Meanwhile, atypical monsoon floods in 2022 impacted over 7 million people and displaced over

2 million mainly in the northeast region of Bangladesh, the report said, adding that the victims claimed widespread asset loss and damage which weakened their households' ability to cope with shocks in 2023.

The report also highlighted the severe flash floods and landslides in Chattogram (including Cox's Bazar) and Sylhet divisions, which affected 1.3 million people.

On the other hand, "Rohingya refugees have no foreseeable prospect of return to Myanmar due to the country's protracted conflict that escalated in both 2022 and 2023.

Israel pounds Rafah

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investigate what it said were war crimes at a Gaza hospital, saying nearly 400 bodies were recovered from mass graves after Israeli soldiers departed the complex in Khan Younis.

Meanwhile, a top Hamas political official told The Associated Press that the Palestinian group is willing to agree to a truce of five years or more with Israel.

In the north, Israeli forces continued to pound Beit Lahya, Beit Hanoun, Jabalia and Zeitoun, with some residents saying Hamas and Islamic Jihad members were fighting Israeli ground forces with anti-tank rockets, mortar bombs and sniper fire.

Say 'no' to war, seek solution through talks

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"The origin of this crisis has been in Myanmar, and its solution also lies in Myanmar.

"As long as that solution remains out of reach, all our efforts at regional connectivity, integration, and prosperity will continue to be marked by a missing puzzle. Let us redouble our efforts to put that puzzle back in place," she said.

Hasina said when thousands of Rohingyas from Myanmar fled to Bangladesh in August 2017, Bangladesh offered them temporary shelter.

"With an ever growing population, this has now become one of the largest humanitarian situations in the world," she said.

In the backdrop of the ongoing armed conflicts in Myanmar, the Rohingya repatriation is also getting delayed, which is creating serious security risks within and beyond Bangladesh's territories, the PM said.

She called upon the Asia-Pacific countries and forums, especially ASEAN, to play a proactive role in resolving the volatile situation in Myanmar.

"We must ensure that Rohingyas can go back home in safety and dignity at the earliest possible time."

Hasina said that the Asia-Pacific region must stand united against its common enemies of poverty and hunger.

She said Bangladesh has reduced poverty from 41.51 percent to 18.7 percent between 2006 and 2022.

The country also reduced extreme poverty from 25.1 to 5.6 percent during the same period, the PM said. "We remain confident about eradicating extreme poverty by 2030."

Hasina said Bangladesh's current priority is to address inequalities through income distribution, asset ownership, and social protection.

She said Asia-Pacific region must put up a united front in tackling the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and transboundary pollution.

"We need to push for ambitious climate financing goals beyond 2025 at COP 29. We need to cooperate on cross-border water management and air quality improvement. We must all prepare for growing extreme weather events," the premier said.

In this regard, she suggested looking into Bangladesh's experience in reducing disaster risk.

Briefly describing various development programmes and achievements of her government, Hasina said much of the development gains are affected by climate impacts.

"As a low-lying delta, Bangladesh has no option but to invest heavily in climate resilience," she said.

She mentioned that Bangladesh has already been recognised as a global leader in climate adaptation.

Hasina said Bangladesh has urged the developed and emerging economies in the region to raise their time-bound emission reduction targets.

The premier invited UN-ESCAP to help build the capacity of climate-vulnerable countries to mobilise adequate international climate financing.

She said Bangladesh now provides critical links to the trans-Asian highway and railway networks.

"Our physical and digital infrastructures are being developed to foster regional trade and connectivity," the PM added.

US report undermines

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The report launched by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken on April 23 said there were no significant changes in the human rights situation in Bangladesh last year.

Seheli said that a thorough reading of the report would make it evident that it is replete with references to alleged incidents or events reported by individuals, which were used to draw broad, generalised inferences.

One of the grossly missing items in the report is the systematic campaigns that the anti-state and anti-government elements launched in the lead up to the 12th national election last year to create unrest, violence and anarchy, using diverse interest groups, Seheli mentioned.

Seheli said it is also apparent that the report mostly relies on assumptions and unsubstantiated allegations drawn from local and international non-government organisations, many of which are supported by the US government or related entities.

"As such, some of the inherent

biases in the reporting pattern are quite evident," she said.

The Bangladesh government, however, appreciated the continued interest of the US administration in the human rights situation across the globe.

"No matter how much we aspire, the human rights situation is not perfect anywhere in the world... socio-economic constraints often put limits to the pace of realising the rights," said the spokesperson.

She said the government of Bangladesh has been doing its best to uphold human rights of its citizens. "Indeed, under the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the human rights situation has significantly improved in Bangladesh."

Keeping in mind the areas that need further improvement, the government continues to make efforts to improve human rights situation.

"Any discerning observer would notice that such efforts resulted in significant improvement in women's

empowerment, gender parity, children's rights, rights of elderly persons, workers' rights, grievance redressal, access to justice, religious freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and so on and so forth," the spokesperson observed.

Admin, police wary

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"We all have to understand what is an election. If we fail, the example that we set advancing the cause of democracy through the January 7 national may be undermined," he said.

Talking to reporters after the meeting, the EC secretary said field level officials and police sought extra budget to send ballots to the polling centers in the vote-day morning.

"The commission has assured them that it will consider the matter," he said.

He said that the commission asked the field administration to remain neutral while discharging election duties.