# The off-beat BENGAI QUEEN SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED SHARMIN JOYA asked for permission to take a selfie with conclusion that the Bangla industry needs Paoli. Apparently, he had inquired about Paoli

The

the

beauty

smile,

magical

goddess

of her aura is indistinctive,

as if she were

of beauty, who

melts your heart

instantly. Paoli Dam

is not just a diva for her

looks, she is a powerhouse

of acting, who won the hearts

of millions with her portrayal of

some of the most unconventional roles. Some

of her remarkable roles include Madhobilata

in Kaalbela (2009), Komli in Moner Manush

(2010), Preiti in Kagojer Bou (2011), Ela in Elar Char Adhyay (2012), Meghla in Maati

The actress recently came to Bangladesh for

the shooting of Fakhrul Arefeen Khan's Neel

*Jochhona*. In an exclusive interview with The

Daily Star, she cherished the memories of her

first visit to Bangladesh, her career, and more.

still refreshes the memories of Paoli Dam's

first visit. "It was in 2010, during the shoots of

Gautam Ghosh's Moner Manush, the Indo-

Bangla joint venture," shared the actress,

whose origin is Faridpur. "I haven't had the

opportunity to visit Faridpur till now," she

we hold the premiere of *Neel Jochhona*, I wish

to bring my father with me, and we will visit

lobby of the five-star hotel where she was

staying, a Japanese man interrupted us and

While we were speaking, sitting in the

Returning to Bangladesh after four years

(2018), and Binodini in *Bulbbul* (2020).

"My mother hails from Jashore, and I haven't visited the place either. However, when we hold the premiere of Neel Jochhona, I wish to bring my father with me, and we will visit Faridpur."

from someone nearby at the hotel after being mesmerised by her beauty and then googled her. While confessing this, he said, "You have such a beautiful smile." The man bid us farewell, saying "Dhonnobaad" in Bangla.

As we got back to our conversation, Paoli  $expressed \, her \, excitement \, about \, working \, in \textbf{\textit{Neel}}$ *Jochhona*, an adaptation of Mostak Ahmed's parapsychology novel Neel Jochonar Jibon. "Interstellar and Everything Everywhere All at Once are two of my favourite films. Plots on the parapsychological genre have rarely been made in Bangla content. I have read the book from which the story has been adapted and it is fantastic. I am also thrilled that we will shoot on a green screen, and VFX is one of my favourite technologies.'

This project marks the second Bangladeshi film for Paoli -- she made her debut in Dhallywood with Hashibur Reza Kallol's Swatta (2017), starring opposite Shakib Khan.

She was wearing a maroon pure cotton saree with a black backless blouse. Her eyes were drawn with dark kohl, complemented by the tiny bindi on her forehead, and a pair of grey jhumkas—her classy look made it seem as if she had just stepped out of a romantic classical novel. "I brought all silk sarees, but the weather is very humid, and luckily one of my co-actors, Sushama Sarker, gave me this beautiful cotton one, which I am wearing so comfortably."

In recent years, Paoli has been selective "My mother hails from Jashore, and I about her roles, and many also assumed Mahanayak. "The resemblance is uncanny! haven't visited the place either. However, when that after she stepped into Bollywood, her Although I didn't feel that much in the appearance in Bengali films became sporadic. beginning. When I played her role, it felt "It is not like that; however, I have been too surreal." selective in the past few years, and when I reflected on it, I realised the reasons. Perhaps, farewell and made a promise to return soon. I am being too picky, or we are not producing enough quality content?" This took her to the both Jashore and Faridpur."

more good writers. "Before the actor's input, it is important that writers and directors can create such characters." She explained that her brief for the role of Binodini in **Bulbbul** was so good, that she could pull off the character so well. It will be considered as one of her landmark performances in her career. "At the same time, I cannot be a part of any mediocre regressive subject, especially when it comes to women, and I always want to be associated with subjects that are progressive and speak about human empowerment."

She feels that at this point, both Bengals should collaborate more often and the exchange of writers and directors should have equal participation as much as actors. "For instance, Humayun Ahmed is very popular in Kolkata, and we have seen his works, and read his books. However, we don't see any of his stories being adapted to visuals. Exchange of such collaborations is highly required."

Among the roles she portrayed on the screen, how many of them have stayed with Paoli for long or to date? "Every great character has empowered me as a human being. For instance, Madhobilota, an epitome of love, Ela, the role of Keya Chakraborty, Komli, Binodini, Suchitra Sen, and Sreela, and there are some more- such roles have depth, and they have helped me understand different perspectives

Paoli has a visible resemblance with legendary actress Suchitra Sen, and she has also played her role in the television series

After the heartfelt conversation, Paoli bid "The next time I return, I really want to visit

#### TRENDY STREAMS

**Netflix** Maharaja



Binge Ekti Khola Janala



Hoichoi Noshtoneer season 2



Bongo Kolkata Diaries



Hulu Hit Monkey



#### **OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA**

Faridpur."



#### Anuswar Sanglap: Mukhomukhi Ferdousi Majumdar

July 25 | 7 pm Studio Theatre Hall, Shilpakala Academy



#### **DUQS Pop Battle 2.0**

July 25| 10 am TSC Auditorium, Dhaka University



#### **Indigo Soiree: A Tribute to Bibi** Russell

Aug 2-Aug 3| 8:30 am Banyan View, Mohammadpur

#### STYLE STATEMENT

### Shah Rukh Khan and Gauri Khan

Anant Ambani, 29, son of Indian billionaire Mukesh Ambani, married his longtime girlfriend Radhika Merchant, also 29, in a lavish Mumbai ceremony on July 12. The event, widely discussed on social media, was attended by Bollywood celebrities, Hollywood stars, politicians, cricketers, and other distinguished guests.

Bollywood superstar Shah Rukh Khan attended the ceremony in a regal shade of olive green sherwani paired with a dhoti - accessorising the fit with a diamond and emerald necklace, tinted sunglasses, and brown shoes, to create a standout look.

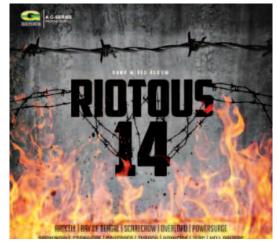
His wife Gauri Khan wore a shimmery golden and nude lehenga with complementary coloured purse

This renowned couple truly was the talk of the town among the slew of glitzy wedding guests.



#### WHAT'S PLAY

## Karar Oi Louho Kopat



Artcell's rendition of Karar Oi Louho Kopat in their album Riotous 14 breathes new life into Kazi Nazrul Islam's revolutionary anthem from 1921. The band's powerful music complements the fierce lyrics, creating a stirring contemporary interpretation of the classic protest song. Artcell's version maintains the original's spirit of defiance against oppression while adding a modern rock edge that resonates with today's listeners.

The song's enduring relevance is highlighted by Artcell's choice to include it in their repertoire. Their performance likely amplifies the raw emotion and call for freedom inherent in Nazrul's words, making the centuryold message of breaking chains and overcoming barriers feel immediate and urgent.

This cover serves as a potent reminder of music's role in social movements and its ability to bridge generations in the fight for justice.

#### **TV TALKIES**

### A well-done story of a 'Geek Girl' becoming chic

Fresh out of the fame she attained from starring as young Alicent Hightower in the HBO Max series House of the Dragon, actress Emily Carey helms her web-series as a lead in Netflix's Geek Girl.

Based on the novel of the same name, authored by Holly Smale, the show delves into the journey of personal growth of a neurodivergent teenager named Harriet Manners — resembling a modern Cinderella story.

Harriet, a self-proclaimed geek disliked by her peers, is discovered by a top model agent. Seizing the chance to reinvent herself, she takes her best friend's dream, angers her nemesis, embarrasses herself in front of supermodel Nick, and lies to her loved ones.

Smale and Jessica Ruston adapted the first book of the bestselling YA series into a screenplay, directed by Declan O'Dwyer, capturing their joyful spirit. Emily Carey excels as Harriet, supported by Rochelle Harrington as Nat and Zac Looker as

This onscreen adaptation retains the novel's charm, with vibrant energy and actors who perfectly capture the essence of the source

