

SUBLIME

SARIKA



PHOTO: SHEIKH MEHEDI MORSHED

Since childhood, Sarika Sabah has immersed herself in the world of art, taking classical dance lessons and specialising in Kathak. Over time, her dedication to dance grew, yet a deeper desire began to burn within her—a dream to one day find her place among the stars. She began her journey in the entertainment industry with TVCs in 2019, while she was a second-year CSE student at North South University, and quickly rose to prominence, winning hearts with her portrayal of Jhumur in Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Raz’s popular mega serial *Family Crisis*.

SHARMIN JOYA

Now, Sarika has delivered yet another standout performance in Syed Ahmed Shawki’s Chorki original web-series, *Gulmohor*, released on May 15.

“I dreamed of seeing myself on screen while growing up. As those dreams slowly began to take shape, I didn’t want to let any opportunity slip by. So, when the chance came to do my first TVC, I said yes—just to give it a try. I was lucky enough that after my debut, I got to work with Adnan Al Rajeev in one of his commercials, and within the following month, more offers started coming my way,” shared the actress.

Despite having no formal acting training, Sarika feels incredibly fortunate to be part of *Gulmohor*. “This experience has taught me so much—lessons I can carry into future projects. Without a background in theatre or formal acting studies, I’ve always thrived by learning from my co-actors and directors. I joined the team after an audition, and getting selected was just the beginning of an unforgettable journey. Although we shot in different locations, the shoot at Rajbari, where the house ‘Gulmohor’ is set, was something I’ll always remember.”

Reflecting on her time working with Shawki, Sarika said, “His expertise made the filming procedure a unique one. For instance, during shoot breaks, there was complete silence, allowing us to stay focused on our characters without being distracted. The team made sure we had everything we needed to give our best.”

“After the shoot, it felt like we’d been on a trip because we enjoyed ourselves so much. However, I also learned a lot about discipline, which is essential for any artiste. I also gained valuable experience by working closely with Mostafizur Noor Imran.” She laughingly added, “Even the child actors in the series had more experience than I did!”

Sarika’s portrayal of Jhumur was the turning point of her career—the role became so iconic that her name almost faded into the background. People on the streets

often call her Jhumur instead of Sarika.

“For any artiste, it’s a surreal feeling to be recognised by their onscreen character. I’d always admired how director Mostafa Kamal Raz’s characters felt so real, brought to life in a way that made them deeply relatable to the audience. So, when he approached me to play Jhumur, I was genuinely thrilled.”

Having played the role for over three years, Sarika admits it became a part of her identity. “Sometimes I would forget my real name,” she chuckled. “The entire *Family Crisis* team truly became like a real family. As for Jhumur, she’s a character who’s incredibly innocent. Despite enduring so much and facing constant taunts, she never complains. She also walks with a limp, which adds another layer to her vulnerability. Over time, I developed a deep emotional attachment to her, and this is one role that will always remain with me.”

Besides the serial, Sarika also appeared in numerous television dramas, with her last small-screen role airing in 2023 during Eid. “I chose to lessen my appearance on the small screen since then due to a lack of variation in the characters I am offered to play,” she divulged. In the meantime, she took a step back to focus on herself, losing 24 kilos over just seven months, as part of a personal commitment to fitness and well-being.

When asked if she transformed herself for a role, she replied, “Absolutely not! It was entirely a personal decision. Whenever I saw myself on screen, I felt I was overweight. I would also feel my energy levels dropping easily. That’s when I knew I had to start this journey for myself.”

Speaking about her transformative journey, Sarika emphasised that she reached her goal healthily. She intentionally took a seven-month break from work by choosing not to take on any new projects. “I stayed at home, ate homemade food, fresh fruits, and did zumba and yoga. It was easier to stick to a routine and maintain proper meal timings that way,” she explained.

“When we’re working, we often order unhealthy food, skip breakfast, or snack late at night. Staying at home allowed me to break those bad habits and focus on my well-being. Since I was also nearing the end of my degree, it was easier for me to step back from work.”

OUT AND ABOUT IN DHAKA



Nazrul Utsav
May 25-26 | 7-9:30 wwp
Chhayanaut Shongshkriti-Bhobon



‘Antaranga Joler Gaan’
May 30 | 6:30pm onwards
Jatra Biroti, Banani



Exhibition: ‘Debris’
May 17-31 | 3-9pm
Alliance Française de Dhaka, Dhanmondi

1-MINUTE REVIEW

‘Be Happy’ shines with emotion despite familiar eats

Be Happy, directed by Remo D’Souza, is a heartwarming tale of a father-daughter duo navigating dreams and grief through the lens of dance.

Young Dhara (Inayat Verma) is passionate about dancing, but her stern father Shiv (Abhishek Bachchan) wants her to focus on academics—until he finally supports her move to Mumbai to chase stardom.

Though the plot follows a familiar arc, the film’s emotional resonance lies in its evolving father-daughter bond. Abhishek shines as the reserved dad who eventually dances for love, while Inayat charms with both wit and talent.

Actor Nassar brings comic flair as the cheeky grandfather, and Nora Fatehi adds grace as the dance mentor.

Though the pacing drags in the first half and the runtime feels long, strong performances, soulful music, and touching moments make it a warm family watch. At its core, *Be Happy* celebrates chasing dreams with the people who matter most.



WHAT’S PLAYING

‘LOVE IN REAL LIFE’ by Lizzo

early-2000s indie sleaze with a radio polish—equal parts Strokes swagger and dance-floor defiance.

Produced by Blake Slatkin and Ricky Reed, the single arrives with a different kind of confidence: less affirmation, more assertion.

The music video, a surreal riff on thriller, imagines a nightlife unburdened by algorithms—zombies, sequins, and all. It’s a statement piece, both in sound and spirit, laying

the foundation for her forthcoming album of the same name.

Love in Real Life isn’t a reinvention, it’s a recalibration. Stripped of the sparkle but not the spirit, Lizzo re-emerges with a sound that’s louder, and defiantly her own. The track garnered 520,000 streams on Spotify within its first full day of release, indicating a strong initial reception.

TRENDY STREAMS

Netflix
Sirens



Apple TV+
Murderbot



HBO Max
And Just Like That...



Hulu
Nine Perfect Strangers



Chorki
Gulmohor



STYLE
STATEMENT

WES
ANDERSON

Amid a cavalcade of black-tie uniformity, Wes Anderson delivered a quietly subversive twist at the ongoing Cannes Film Festival press call for *The Phoenician Scheme*. The auteur—ever the architect of cinematic symmetry, stepped out in an immaculate white suit that was anything but neutral.

Cut with the precision of a 1960s Riviera silhouette, the look spoke in hushed tones of rebellion: crisp lapels, tailored ease, and an assured absence of fuss. True to form, Anderson let the suit do the talking, anchoring the ensemble with the minimalist accents nonchalance. Paired with his trademark calm composure, the white ensemble wasn’t just a fashion statement; it was a subtle declaration of creative individuality.

