

Could Shabnur be returning to work?

December 17, 2023

Online Desk: Shabnur, the '90s film heroine, has been residing in Australia for the past decade. While she used to visit Bangladesh every six months, she hasn't returned to Dhaka for more than three years. The popular actress, feeling a sense of unease thus had an eagerness to return home. However, she managed to return to the country discreetly. Today, December 17, marks her birthday. In celebration of this occasion, she spoke with The Daily Prothom Alo, last Friday.

Shabnur revealed that she chose to keep her return to Dhaka a secret, only informing family and close friends. After three years away, there was a lot to manage for her return, and she preferred to handle it quietly. It has been disclosed that discussions about a new movie are in progress, with Shabnur actively participating in the creative process. Meetings are taking place almost daily in a production company's office in Banani, where new story ideas are being developed through consultations with the director, and rehearsals are underway.

The actress gained fame in films at the age of 14, acting continuously for about a century and a half before becoming less active in the industry. Her last film was "Pagol Manush". While there have been reports of her considering roles in various films, nothing has been finalised to date. Shabnur is currently in Dhaka to attend to some family matters. When interviewed on Friday, she mentioned, "Being away for a long time, I have a lot of pending tasks in the country. There is a multitude of work. I have been silently managing it without informing anyone."

While Shabnur has not officially announced it, multiple sources have confirmed that she will be returning to the film screen during one of the two Eids next year. Mahfuz Ahmed is set to star alongside Shabnur in the film, directed by Chayanika Chowdhury. The trio is currently in discussions about the project.

During the period when Shabnur was not actively involved in films, she did not prioritise fitness, being occupied with family and children. However, with the recent discussions about her return to cinema, Shabnur has turned her attention to fitness. It's reported that she is working on regaining full fitness, a process that is expected to take a few months.

Despite ongoing discussions about the story and characters with director Chayanika Chowdhury, Shabnur is actively working on her fitness. She emphasised the importance of being fully fit before making a return to acting, stating, "We are discussing the story ourselves. We like the story, and the characters, and that's been dealt with. But I will not return if I am not fully fit. No way. The news of the return should mirror the return itself."

Today as Shabnur celebrates her 45th birthday, her popularity remains unparalleled amongst other heroines. Directors continue to contemplate various stories for her, and fans eagerly celebrate this special day for the actress who has maintained peak popularity year after year.

In spite of rarely sharing stills and video clips on social media, Shabnur has been inspired by the overwhelming response from fans. The outpouring of love on her birthday has made her realise the depth of affection from her followers. Shabnur expressed, "Everyone still loves me so much; this day reminds me of it. No sooner than midnight in the night, my phone gets flooded with SMS, and many people reach out. Numerous beautiful words are written on Facebook too."

"I am also moved by the love of my colleagues. Despite not being actively involved in work for a considerable time, none of them makes me feel as if I have been absent for so long. I have succeeded in securing a place in the hearts of the people of this country. The selfless love that everyone still shows is an

even greater achievement. Reflecting on the life I left behind, I've received much more than I ever asked for. This love from the people truly touches me," added the actress.