

L I V I N G

Bibi Holds it for Biman

On the Catwalk for a New Image

by Raffat Binte Rashid

THE rehearsals were exactly like the preparations for an opera, but with the musical instruments here, however, a motley

on air' for the past 22 years. Starting from the uniforms, to introducing new colours to mere accessories, Biman arranged a competition for the designers here. As Biman is carrying the image of Bangladesh to cities through-

show. However, these designs are all excellent and their initiatives are worth appreciating," she comments, encouraging new ones to the profession. "A young girl, hardly 18, and a fourth year boy from the Institute of Fine Arts are par-

the performance differs from every other catwalk shows. "I have to have only three girls always on the stage as they will be displaying three designs of each designers. This limits my variations," she elaborates.

But may be the most formidable task of this show will be the models for Bibi — they are all new and naive.

"Modelling is a performing art of movements and expressions. It's a drama where you don't talk but just convey the thoughts or ideas by physical expressions," she says continuing, "you have to have the will power and carry yourself well," stressing of course on understanding the rhythm of the music.

"Here we have no modelling agencies or schools where girls and boys are trained for this particular profession. And whatever we have, the teachings there don't help them much on the catwalk," she continues explaining the walk that models actually do.

Basically it is very simple yet extremely crucial, a wrong step or a wrong turn spoils the entire composition. Girls here have learnt and practised the walk in a '1,2,3, turn', rhythm fashion, but Bibi explains it to be natural relaxing steps, stop a little and a smooth turn. Very easy and nothing difficult, but the models do know the muscle-flexing practice to be just natural. "You listen to the music, catch the rhythm and walk straight and with big leaps.

There are actually no set directions, it all depends on the music you listen and the beat you get," she points out. But with *Tana Mana*, theme of *Pather Panchali* of Ravi Shankar, *Emoni Barosha* of Feroza Begum — only the models know how easy it will be to match the right steps with it. But that's the beauty of it all.

Being a model isn't an easy task, that we all have to believe. Catwalks are different from the ad modelling. In ads your face is exposed and of course becomes famous ultimately — but in catwalks it's the entire body, look, make-up that speak and not you. You have to present a different look in every picture or performance, otherwise you are typed and your viewers are tired of the same expression — and this is what modelling is about to Bibi.

"I am fighting every day to

establish this art as a career. Biman's show would definitely open up options for many. Models, in this shout, are mostly from middle class society here; they would get a break. These girls are serious and want to build this as their



collaboration of beauties. All gorgeous and spectacular.

Bibi Russell, the famous Bengali girl from the catwalks of Milan, Rome, is in fact orchestrating a symphony, where she is choreographing new designs of seventeen different designers with seventeen new models for the Biman's new 'airhostess' uniform.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, is all set for a new image altering the routine look that was

out the globe, every minutest detail as this competition which is being 'modelled' on November 24 at a city hotel, is all local with a 'made in Bangladesh' tag.

"Since I am organising the show, no designs of mine are on display," Russell clarifies edging the way out for others. "In fact Bangladesh is for sarrees and I was surprised when only 17 designers, each with three of their respective compositions approached the

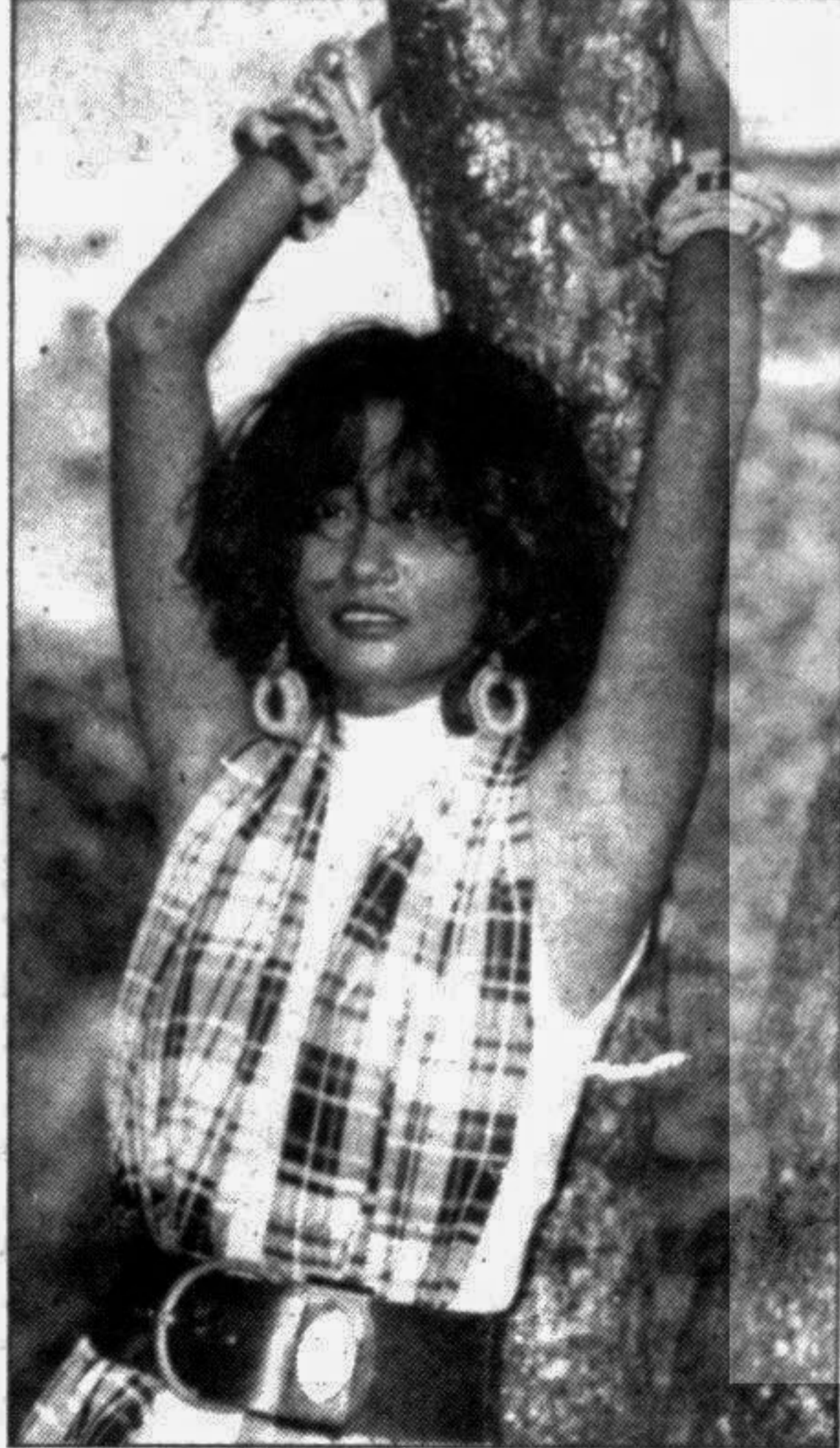
participating, besides other already reputed designers. This is a big leap forward for everyone," she thinks.

This particular show that Bibi Russell is organising is a challenge for her, as she admits. First of all, she has hundreds of restrictions and cannot do a lot of things she wants to do. Secondly, everything about it is new. She has selected 17 new models with practically no experience in such shows before.

Moreover, the dress to be displayed is saree and that too for a uniform. You cannot have air hostesses walking with their hair open or flowers on them — real flowers on a 12-hour flight would surely wither away. Air hostesses cannot be too fashionable, they have to be chic and sober. With right make-up but definitely precise, as little accessories as possible and with the right kind of hair-dos they ought to look right in. They cannot roam around the aircraft with a big bow on their bun, that's not smart.

"I have been watching all the Suchitra Sen movies for the last fifteen days. She was the only actress with an excellent style. Her *anchals* were always pleated and tugged at the waist or turned around the shoulder. Her *khopas* or buns were elegant and done with artistic skill. I have planned 17 different styles for the models. Biman carries part of our culture and tradition — things from our part of the world, so everything has to be considered," she explains her plans.

Then the choreography is just something very difficult to do. With classical music, tabla, sarengi, sitar, Tagore, Lalon, folk and Bangla modern music,



Bibi Russell

career. Moreover, volunteers who are working with me backstage are learning how to do backstage. I am trying to make good models, organisers, choreographers and not just anybody doing a quack's job of an excellent art like this," she relates the entire challenge and plan as well.

She is even trying to prepare good fashion photographers and bold designers and believes that there are endless scopes in these lines that are left unexplored and unchallenged.

"Textile and fashion, designing, choreography — these could be taken up as subjects

and these definitely help the country's economy as well. If neighbouring countries can do it so can we," she says, almost certain of the deeds that would happen ultimately in the years to come.

This particular display of tests is simply a pioneering step in standard fashion shows in Bangladesh. Let us all have the good wishes for these new talents as the models mix their rhythm and steps with *Omor Moyna Go of Lata*, *Hazar Tarar Bina of Shahnaj*, *Duranta Ghurnir of Hemanta*, *Tak Dum of S D Burman*, *Bangladesh of George Harrison*, and lead us to the grand finale of the opera.



A Break ... a Status ... Opportunity ... Knowledge

ALL dark, and pretty, Kwana is a girl from Chuadanga village in Khustia. She is a student of Agriculture College here in Dhaka and lives in a hostel and is one of the models for this show. "I was always interested in modelling and when I saw the ad in a paper that Bibi is looking for models, I applied and here I am, almost making it to the catwalk," Kwana beams.

Daughter of a pharmacist, she initially took part in a 10-day workshop arranged by Intimate agency. "What I learned there is of course different from what I am practising here," she explains the preparation for her first show. To her modelling in a catwalk is like acting. This is definitely the break she was waiting for and is extremely pleased to work with her famous mentor.

It is the same story with Sangeeta a 22-year old married woman. This is her first time also and she had no prior experience of such grand shows. Sangeeta's performance reflects her will power — where there is a will there is a way. Her family, in-laws or her husband, none react to her newly acquired status. "I think modelling is about creating something beautiful," she says and would surely make splashing waves when her time comes.

Nadia, a cute little thing, who has just appeared for the 'A' levels believes that this is the big opportunity she was craving for. "You learn every moment with Bibi, she is so systematic and gives every-

thing a second look. She arranges queues according to heights takes care of the make up, video tapes the rehearsal and later adjusts the faults. She is very systematic," Nadia informs.

However, things are different for Sania. She has done such shows before and thinks that with each different show she learns a little more. "This is really a tough job. You have to be confident, and determined in this line," she emphasises. She earnestly thinks that God has created each person beautifully, though all are not perfect with broad lip or almond eye but each person can be unusual in one's own special way. "Beauty depends on the person's personality or character — how she or he carries it. And models are no different. We have no teachers here to teach us, no choreographers. We are really lucky to have Bibi, a professional model, to help us out at the moment. We are learning things they teach in Italy or some other equally romantic place where modelling, fashion, designing are the essence of life," she relates enthusiastically.

For most of these talented, upcoming models this show is their maiden performance — and for others this is a real chance to do what they always desired for. "Let's all wait and see how their aspirations and hopes and Bibi's challenge intermingling to create an explosive performance we see ever."

— Raffat Binte Rashid

A GOOD diet is essential for a healthy skin. Your diet should ideally contain a good mix of vegetables, meat, fish, pulses and fruit. Try to eat food that is fresh and is prepared immediately before it is eaten. Remember that vegetables are at their most nutritious if they are eaten raw.

Drinking at least six glasses of freshwater a day will help to flush waste and impurities from your body and skin clear. Protein is essential for building up strong and healthy connective tissue, which is vital for keeping skin healthy. Vitamins C, A and D, which are present in fresh vegetables and fruit, are essential for the structure of the skin. Other important nutrients, such as calcium (which is good for teeth) and iron (which is essential for a healthy blood supply to the skin), are found in meat, dairy products and fresh vegetables; they may not be present in over-processed convenience and frozen foods.

When you are planning individual recipes, think about your overall dietary needs for the week ahead. If you consider

Healthy Diet, Healthy Skin

by Sidra Shaukat

that your evening meal is your main meal of the day, each week should contain the following evening meals, although if you are a vegetarian, vegan or have other dietary restrictions, substitutes for animal protein such as soya, tofu, pulses and cheeses can be used; one poultry dish, two meat dishes, one fish dish, two vegetable dishes and one recipe based on pulses. These dishes should be served with fresh salads as starters and fresh fruit for desert. Fruit juice cocktails or mineral water are the healthy alternatives to alcohol with your meal.

Applying these principles, a typical weekly menu is shown below. Leave your favourite recipes for the weekend, when you will have more time to enjoy them. Try to alternate between the light dishes, such as vegetables, pulses and fish, with the heavier dishes of poultry and meat.

The ways in which you cook and garnish the dishes can, of

course, be varied to suit your own individual taste, but you must stick to the rule of having poultry, fish, meat, vegetables and pulses every week.

If you have a cooked evening meal, your lunch should be light — sandwiches, perhaps, with salad, meat, poultry or fish fillings. Do not make the mistake of skipping breakfast; a quick cooked recipe should be a good start to the day. There are plenty of excellent 'healthy food' cookbooks on the market which should give you plenty of inspiration!

Remember to drink at least six glasses of water, preferably mineral water, every day. Avoid alcoholic drinks altogether and cut down your consumption of tea and coffee. The best drinks by far are natural, unsweetened fruit juices.

A Fat-Free Diet?

You will reduce the risk of becoming overweight by signifi-

cantly reducing your fat intake. By preparing food yourself, you will also eliminate the unnecessary fat content of processed and refined foods, which not only contain high levels of hidden fat but also high levels of salt and sugar.

Adopt the following tips to promote a healthier you:

- Trim off all white fat from chicken, beef and lamb with a sharp knife. Purchase lean meat; although it may be more expensive, cheaper meat will contain more fat. To be completely sure of using lean mince, buy beef or lamb and trim off the fat before placing it in the mincer or food processor.
- Try to use the grill or cook in a microwave to reduce fat. The fat converts into a liquid, which can be poured away. If you do fry, use low-fat, low-cholesterol oil. Always drain food on a kitchen towel before serving to mop up any excess oil.
- Cook by steaming to avoid additional fat and to help retain nutrients and vitamins.
- Use low-fat ingredients in your cooking, such as low-fat butter blends or substitutes.

Courtesy: Health Essentials