Creating a path with our footprints

It was the time when women were hardly seen on the work front and taking up journalism as a profession would be the last thing they would think of. Nasimun Ara Haque had just joined The Daily Sangbad office at the news desk. She was asked after a few days whether she would be able to work the night shifts. There was just one woman before who had worked night shifts. Nasimun Ara, a brave woman coming from a journalism background, agreed unfalteringly.

Nasimun completed her Masters in Political Science from Dhaka University and joined them Soviet Embassy. She worked there for five years in the embassy periodical. During those five years it was always on her mind that she wanted to do something different. In 1979 she found the right break and joined The Daily Sangbad office at the news desk. She worked there for 13 years. For the last nine years she has been working at The Daily Janakantha as a shift-in-charge at the news desk.

Nasimun is very specific about why she chose such a distinct profession. "If a woman wants to work, she is expected to take up a teaching job. It's a safe job for a woman. I never wanted to stick to this tradition."

Over the years the security condition has hardly changed for the journalism profession. For women it is an even bigger problem. Nasimun was at an even bigger risk as she was working night shifts. Work at these night shifts sometimes concluded at 12AM and sometimes went on to as late as 3AM. "There was no particular time limit. I could only come back once the work was completed," she says.

This was during Ziaur Rahman's regime when there were regular curfews at night. She recalls when one day she was coming back from work with some of her male colleagues very late at night in an auto-rickshaw and a bunch of young men held them up with knives and daggers. "It was a very terrifying experience for me and after

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Nasmun Ara Haque- defying conventional expectations.