



PEYA

BOLD & BEAUTIFUL

In 2007, a young girl from Khulna arrived in Dhaka. Her name was Jannatul Ferdous Peya. Soon enough, Piya made the city her own, winning the crown of Miss Bangladesh. She appeared on TV, the ramp and billboards - and so in our hearts. But her success did not stop there. She has been a hit overseas as well, bagging the Indian Princess International award, among many other credentials. Star Showbiz recently interviewed her. Piercing through the glitz and glamour, we found a strong and independent woman: Peya, the bold and beautiful.



Tell us something new that's going on in your life these days. Right now, I am very busy and tensed about my studies. I'm at the third year of my British Law degree. The courses are rather hard! And it's not that I just want a degree - I intend to practice law. I even hope to involve myself in politics at some point!

The last Miss Bangladesh
Unfortunately, this programme got discontinued. Concern was raised that when winners would be sent abroad for international competition, they would have to wear bikini, and many people were against that.

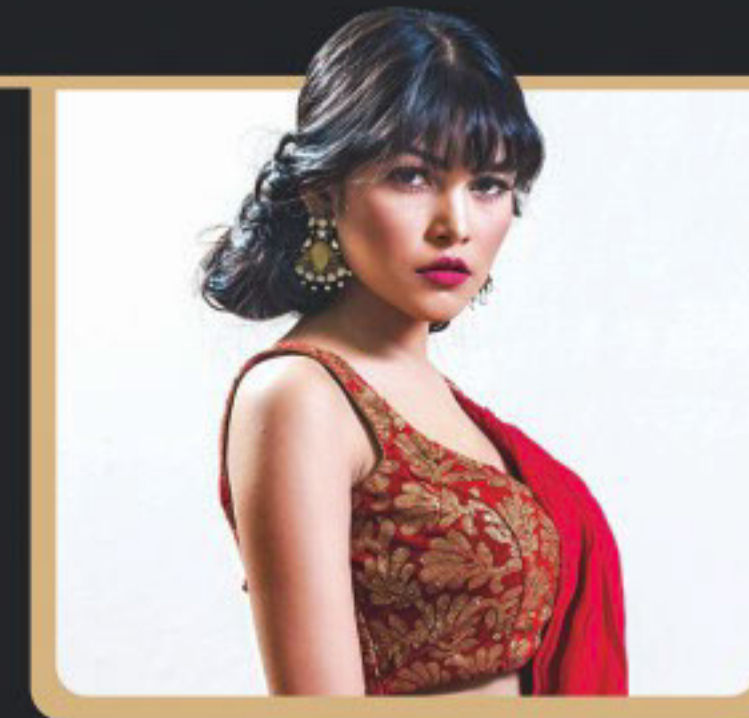
So there were groups who were against this whole thing, and they did a lot to stop the event. How it would have worked was that, the winner, Miss Bangladesh that is, could be sent to compete for the title of Miss World. But due to all these problems, it could not be done.

I did a few bikini shoots for some assignments. However, I never posted any on my Facebook. But there are models who post such pictures - of their bikini photo shoots which are done personally and not for any brand or contest. I get very offended when someone compares me with them, because what I do is for actual work, and what they do is to get attention.

You strike us as someone who is ambitious, and you have started your career quite early in your life and have taken big steps. How did you gather such confidence and courage?

When I wanted to come to Dhaka in 2007, I had to do the difficult task of convincing my family for allowing me to do so. I told my mother that I wanted to study in a good college and live in Dhaka. Questions were raised about how a young girl like me, who just completed her SSC, could possibly live all alone in Dhaka. But eventually I persuaded my mother: she is more of friend to me. I also said I did not like being dependent and wanted to at least earn my own pocket money, which I did, by doing different jobs.

A common perception is that the show business or



the glamour industry can be a dodgy place, especially for girls. How did you brave the world?

Let me give you an example. When I came to Dhaka and started attending college, obviously many people knew that I was living alone. So I took up the right kind of attitude - bold and strong.

When you are a doctor, you sometimes have to work at night shifts. If a girl, as a medical student or a doctor, spends the whole night in the hospital, nobody comments. But when a girl stays out for shooting, people come up with a lot of ideas. This is hypocrisy on so many levels.

Why don't we see more Bangladeshi models like you in the global scene?

Someone from Indian Princess International - the competition that I won - asked me once to send in a Bangladeshi girl for participation. I eventually found one, and when I offered her, she was very excited about it. Then I explained to her about filling up forms and that she had to go to Mumbai, and later to Dubai, where the finale will be held. She had agreed, but afterwards, her excitement died off. The guy from India called me and said that she did not yet enrol. So I called her, but she did not even pick

up the phone. I eventually had to apologise and say that she is probably not interested and that you can just cut her name off the list.

What would you call that? Lack of professionalism perhaps, or may be not being serious about your work? You need to think big. Moving on to movies now. Are there any of your projects coming up?

There are three films in the pipeline: Gangster Returns, The Story of Samara and Probashir Prem. I don't want to do a handful of movies simultaneously. I have a lot on my plate -- my studies, my family and a million other things. When I do a project, I want to take time for preparation.

I am doing a TV drama as well, Five Female Friends. It is rather autobiographical - about my life and my journey to where I am today.

You have worked in various mediums. Which one attracts you most?

When you are in the ramp, for that span of time, the spotlight - glamour, music and all the action - is focused on you. Then again, it is only for that time span, whereas in movies, you work for a few months and the output stays for the rest of your life. Both have their own charms, so it's incredibly hard to pick favourites.

Catch the uncut version of Showbiz's Cover Interview and more on Radio Shadbin 92.4 FM Every Saturday, 11 PM onwards.

Interviewed by Rafi Hossain and narrated by M H Haider

