

COVER STORY

Mughal opulence

Such was the grandeur of the Mughal dynasty. In his biography, Sir Thomas Roe, an English diplomat of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, recounts that once he had the opportunity to steal a glance at the Mughal harem through a porthole and he was taken aback by the glitters adorning the ladies! According to his words, the harem would have remained lit even if there was no light present.

His words may seem slightly exaggerated at the moment but the Mughal miniature paintings depicting royalty at the Victoria and Albert Museum in England depict nothing less of a clarification.

So, wondering why are we stressing on Mughal royalty and their affinity towards glitter and gold? After all, they were the true patrons of expensive jewellery providing a historical significance to our inclination towards trinkets, especially in the Indian subcontinent.

According to Dr Abdus Sattar, author of 'Alangkar' and a noted specialist in the field; Mughal jewellery is unique because of the intricate designs engraved and carved on each piece. The ornaments were long, solid and many types of rare stones and pearls were used. Most of the designs incorporated the shapes of the moon and the stars.

The professor also recounts in his book that the chief reason behind the inclination towards astronomical figures was religion. Muslims tend to rely on the moon and stars for the computation of time, important months, years and hence the significance.

From the golden era of the Mughal royalty let us shift back to the present scenario in Bangladesh — a country which has witnessed numerous social changes, each having a significant consequence in its development, including the world of fashion and jewellery.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury

Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

Model: Meghla

Makeup: Farzana Shakil's Makeover Salon

Styling: Sonia Yeasmin Isha

