



SPECIAL FEATURE

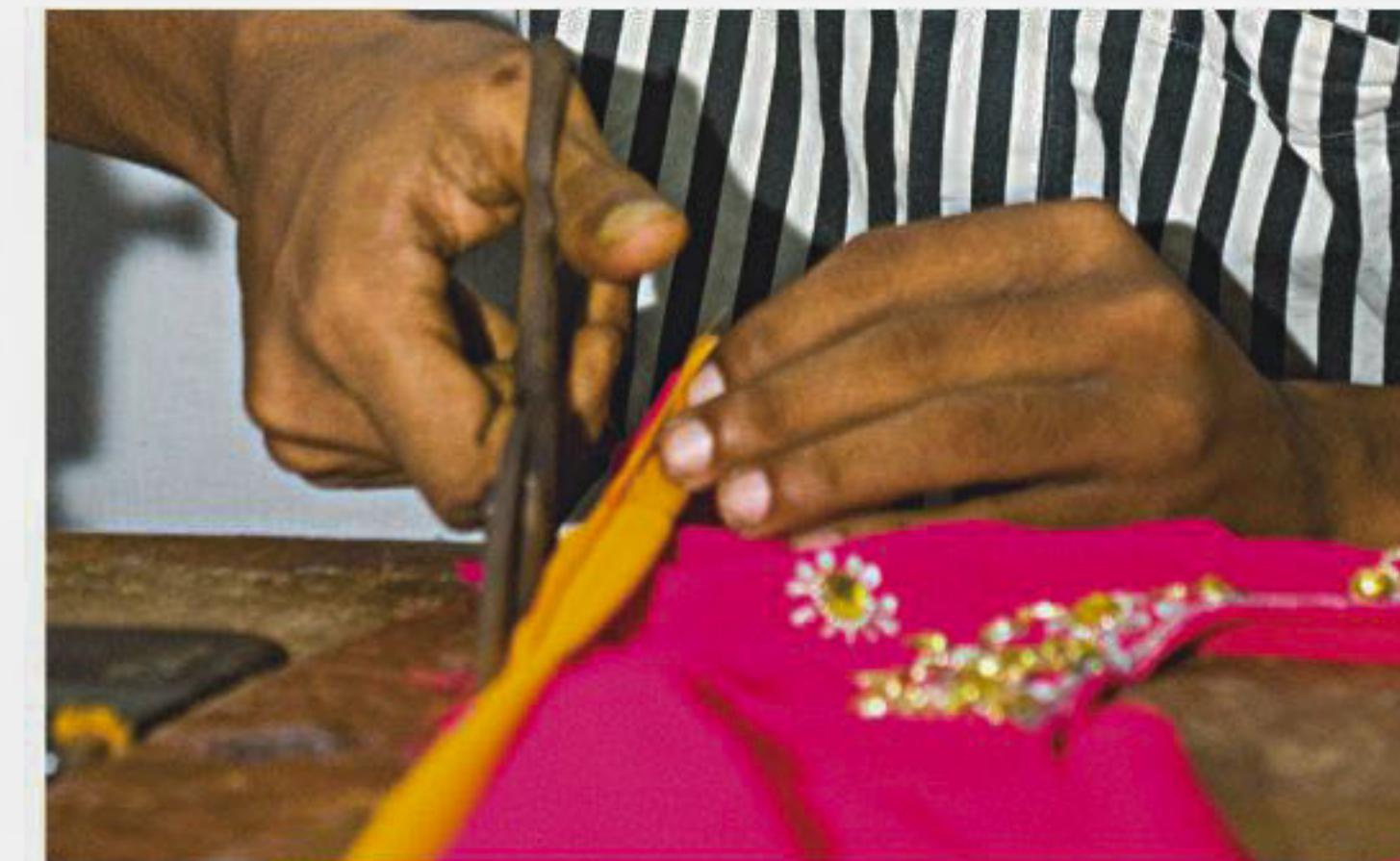
## Tailor made to your taste!

It is an interesting time for fashion in Dhaka right now. More and more people are becoming aware of their appearance, and there is a shift in perspective to that end. We want the hottest and the latest in fashion, and nothing less will do! Back in the days, we Dhakaites used to joke that trends that have become tired everywhere else in the world come crawling to Dhaka, but those days are behind us for sure. Fancy new shopping spaces are bursting at the seams with the most happening designs of the day. There is something for everyone, catering to every budget and whim. Demand begets supply; fashion has become a lifestyle for us Dhakaites, and we sure are keeping up! And a thriving social scene inevitably requires us to put our best foot forward round the year, not just during festive season. We Dhakaites now like to be at our stylish best, always.

It is a very positive change, for sure. However, wise fashionistas are well aware that quantity and quality are not always mutually inclusive. Major fashion houses work within a template of fixed designs which is then mass produced and distributed. Small boutiques don't really offer much variation and often do offer neither customisation nor alteration. And there is always the whole situation of fabric/colour/embroidery combination that takes com-

heart desires, you are likely to find in these markets, be it fabric for your dress, embellishments of all sorts and more. Workshops specialising in all manners are located in Gawsia and Priyangan market. There you will find stores that do block print, embroideries of all kinds, zardozi, karchupi and much more. A classic choice for women looking for a one-stop haunt, these are your go-to places.

A couple other places that have cropped up in recent years for dress making are Banani Super market and Pink City in Gulshan. The former is home to many tailoring shops and material stores that provide good quality service. Albeit much smaller in scope



and magnitude, it is North Dhaka's answer to Gawsia and Chandni Chowk related needs. Prices tend to be a bit higher compared to those places, so choose carefully. Tailoring shops in Pink City can be considered the most upscale ones in Dhaka City at the moment, featuring many stores that sell dress materials and a tailoring corner is located very conveniently inside the store. Prices tend to be the highest here, a regular set of kameez and shalwar will set you back by Tk 1,500-Tk 2,000, and it tends to go up depending on the style and embellishments. Service and overall experience tends to be good here.

Apart from these places, many other spots in the city have tailoring hubs such as Mirpur, Taltola in Khilgaon, Kalabagan and Mohammadpur. The best thing to do is to take a tour, and get the feel and vibe of a place. Here are a couple of tips to keep in mind if you are planning to get clothes tailor-made:

Prepare in advance. Choose the design beforehand and take a reference picture to avoid confusion.

Keep plenty of time in hand. Most tailors tend to take longer than promised, especially during the festive seasons.

Write your instructions down on a piece of paper and explain it well to the tailor. It is a bad idea to trust tailors blindly with designs and other stuff as most of them don't remember them.

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan

Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

CHECK IT OUT

## Attractive Nails

Polished nails create a pleasant first impression. An amazing pair of hands with gel nails can impress everyone and that's probably what a bride would like best for her hands on her special day! Gel nails not only suits the fashionable adult, but is also meant for teens and pre-teens, since it is trendy, chic and can be splendidly bright – if one wants it to.

The beautiful gel styling can be achieved following different techniques such as gel nail extension, acrylic nail extension, and gel polish. Gel polishes are different from ordinary nail polishes because they need curing with an ultraviolet light.

Only an expert nail technician can extend the nails using gels or acrylic. Once the shapes are beautifully created, the colours are applied. It is possible to do nail art or put stones when the shape is ready. Generally, it takes one hour to create gel nail extension. Different combinations of chemicals and techniques are required to achieve the best results.

Creating beautiful nails is both an art and science. If the preparations are not properly done, nail extensions can fall off within a short time. It is important to have the special nails done by an expert, usually called a nail technician. "Nails can instantly create an image of your personality," says Mousume Azad, who is an expert nail technician in Bangladesh. Mousume has received extensive training on nail art and nail extension from the United Kingdom and Denmark.

She also ran her own nail studio in Glasgow and Copenhagen for many years. Based on her international experience she says while the British ladies appreciate intricate designs, the Nordic customers welcome simplicity. The difference in preferences is really essential for a nail artist to know.

Mousume thinks there is a growing demand for nail extension in Bangladesh as well. However, she reflects that there are many misconceptions about the technique. Primarily, the customers associate nail extension with false nails. A nail artist would never use the low cost, manufactured, false nails because it cannot be customised. Genuine gel nail extensions require careful observation of one's individual nails and appropriate construction of the extended shape. Mousume has acquired this skill through serving many customers over the years.

The lack of quality nail art materials is also an obstacle in Bangladesh, articulates the expert manicurist. Due to the scarcity of materials and skilled professionals, gel nail extension has yet to become popular in the country. However, with proper knowledge circulation, it is possible that very soon the beauty addicts will begin to appreciate the charms of nail extension and fall in love with the latest trend.

By Khandker Md Nahin Mamun

Photo courtesy: Khandker Md Nahin Mamun

