

A photographer's journey



When you think of couple goals, quite a few names pop up. We are pretty sure Ava Gardner–Frank Sinatra, John and Jackie Kennedy are on that list, but what about our very own list with eminent people from the entertainment industry, or any other for that matter!

It's pretty easy to draw up a local list as there are so many couples, and perhaps one of our most favourite amongst them is the Chanchal and Raina Mahmood duo.

Chanchal Mahmood is one of the most accomplished photographers in the country. It is because of him and a few of his contemporaries' that photography in Bangladesh has advanced dramatically. Mahmood had realised the potential for this subject at a point in time when people could not see it as anything beyond a great pass-time or hobby.

Maybe that's what drew Raina Mahmood towards this amazing character; after which they bonded superbly well.

"I was just a simple person back in the day," mused Raina.

"Didn't think I had the mystics of photography in me at all! Then I met Chanchal, and my world was overturned. Slowly but steadily, I fell in love with the unique medium of art, realising later that I wanted nothing more than to be a part of it as well," remembered the ace photographer.

After the revelation, Raina understood

that there would be two ways to master the craft, one would be to get personal lessons from Chanchal Mahmood himself, or join his class and students to learn everything from scratch.

She chose the second option, because Raina wanted this entire affair to be as professional as it could get — with zero preferential treatment and equal amount of obstacles faced by all students.

"Photography had become my passion, and to reach the pinnacle of comprehension on the subject matter, I chose the hard way; the proper way!" explained the photographer.

Being in a field of profession not very common to the ladies, Raina took the craft as a challenge, and Chanchal Mahmood, a

spokesperson for women's rights, encouraged her decision.

Raina actually worked very hard to learn photography and passed through all the levels of training, like any other student, with exams and accomplishments.

"I wanted her to learn like a pro, so there was no partiality. She learned based on her dedication and prowess, and I am very proud of that," said Chanchal Mahmood.

But that was simply the back-story, the narrative of the beginning, if you will.

Today, Raina is a renowned wedding photographer, attending countless nuptials, trying to capture the essence of the occasion in its truest form. Being a woman, Raina believes she perceives the wedding in a different light — perhaps, even un-

derstands the requirements of the bride better!

"Weddings are special to both the bride and the groom, but the memories matter more to the ladies, and I understand the feeling very well, seeing as I am a woman myself," mused Raina.

"I try to capture all the emotional moments, including the sentiments of the people involved directly in the wedding, from the parents to the bride and the groom.

In Bangladesh, the entire process is very poignant; me and my team of photographers and cinematographers try to capture the essence in its rawest form so that when the couple looks back at their memories later on, they are left with a smile and a strong sense of nostalgia."

"I do all sorts of photography, from model to product shoots, but weddings are my most favourite," admits Raina.

In a world when women are breaking all sorts of barriers and getting into all sorts of profession, Raina Mahmood proves that passion really matters. As long as there is passion, no one in the world can stop a man or a woman to achieve their dream.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury

Photo: Raina Mahmood

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NEW IN TOWN

Bromley Bee Early Years — a boon for your baby

As most parents would agree, sending your precious little one to school for the very first time can be a daunting experience. Since birth, or actually since the moment of conception, we parents become selfless caregivers, putting the child's needs first, making sure they are loved, safe, happy and blooming. They become the centre of our universe; a form of love so deep and heightened that everything else pales in comparison and that little person becomes all-consuming.

We guard them with our lives, do not let them come in harm's way and hope to keep them cocooned with love and safety for as long as we can. Then, as the years pass and they grow older, we also need to let them spread their wings and fly, for just being a loving parent is not enough.

Every child needs to step out of their comfort zone to learn the ways of the world to blossom into a healthy, rounded individual. As he or she learns to adapt to new environments, meet new people and engage with challenging surroundings meaningfully, they are likely to grow up to be efficient, valuable adults.

This is where a preschool plays a crucial role.

A relatively new concept in Dhaka, a preschool prepares young children before they start proper schooling. Children from the age of two to three fall in this category.



'Bromley Bee Early Years' operates within the Early Years Foundation Stage, a British framework that focuses on developing the prime and specific areas of each child's learning before starting school.

The scope of EYFS includes seven areas of learning; the first three are communication and language, physical development and personal, social and emotional development. It further focuses on four more specific areas — literacy, mathematics, understanding the world, and expressive art and design. Experienced and qualified practitioners that have been trained following the British standard provide guidance to little learners who actively engage in various activities that are geared towards learning. Free flow is encouraged by Farhin Ashrafi, owner and director, who feels

toddlers should not be bound to a rigid structure that limits freedom of expression and playfulness.

Children are encouraged to explore and discover their new environment while teachers cleverly incorporate lessons within. It not only yields better results, but young minds remain open to learning new things every day. Day care is another service that is provided where children from six months of age to six years are cared for by hands-on professionals with certification in first aid, safeguarding, health and safety, and food hygiene.

Bromley Bee Early Years is the first of its kind in more ways than one. To begin with, all members of the staff have been handpicked by their British counterparts, who routinely and stringently monitor all

activities. They are all graduates from leading private universities; with background checks conducted before employment. The entire facility has been designed following strict British standards that focus on child safety. The whole property is under constant surveillance and parents can monitor their children.

Lastly, dedicated practitioners care for children with maternal affection. Every child is well-cared for, as the student-teacher ratio is small ensuring individual attention. An outdoor space offers children freedom to explore nature.

When searching for the right school, all parents face multiple challenges. Putting your precious one in the hands of strangers can be difficult. Bromley Bee Early Years offers trial sessions where both parents and children can get the feel of the place. You may enter as a stranger, but you are sure to leave as a friend! The staff are friendly, warm and kind, and immediately put your worried mind at ease. Located at House-23, Road-118, Gulshan Bromley Bee Early Years is, without a doubt, the best place for your baby!

Check them out on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/BromleyBeeEarlyYears> or give them a call at +88 01776-706343.

By Sabrina N Bhuiyan

Photo courtesy: Sabrina N Bhuiyan