

# Breaking down stereotypes about THE MALE MODELLING INDUSTRY

Please don't confuse regular people doing random stunts with professional models working strenuously 10-12 hours a day and representing valuable brands of the country and beyond. We are extremely dedicated people living healthy lives. The media is so keen on tainting our names, that every time someone breaks the law, the word 'model' has to come up! If this negativity goes on any longer, the profession will collapse like a house of cards!

## MODELS AT THE CELEBRATORY SHOOT WITH STAR LIFESTYLE

Like every other profession in the world, being successful is the most sought-after goal in the modelling industry. But the catch lies elsewhere — who is to decide what success actually means?

Few of the top models in the country portray 'success' to be as straightforward as being enlisted in the extremely limited top runway shows of the country and securing exclusive contracts with high-end fashion brands. However, they also echoed one fact: the 'entire process' was scandalously short-lived and that before anyone could raise a glass to make a toast, they had every possibility to fall flat on their faces.

In this year's Exclusive Men's Issue, we particularly focus on the most recognisable male fashion models of our country and try to disclose how difficult it is for them to pilot through the fiercely competitive world they call their own.



## NIBIR ADNAN NAHID

"It all began with me borrowing clothes from my friends and trying to look chic and sophisticated," said Nahid, exuding the strength of a man who has gotten used to seeing his dreams come true.

"I won't say the journey wasn't rough at the beginning, but since I had the passion for it early on, the rest of the process became rather easy. I just knew I had to make it big."

The Dhakaite seemed confident in his proclamation and why shouldn't he be when Nahid had already mingled with the Big Stars of international repute.

"I worked both in Delhi and Mumbai and stars like Disha Patani belonged to my Agency: TOABH Talents."

"I trained with Samir Jaura, personal trainer of Farhan Akhtar for the movie Bhaag Milkha Bhaag.... So, I have met most of them — the stars I mean! These down to earth people helped me gather my pieces together and embed enough confidence within me to make me believe that I was able to achieve everything I ever wanted," said Nahid.

But the pandemic did disrupt the perfectly set out life of the reputed model and he wasn't too happy about it.

"What the pandemic taught me is patience. Maybe I was sky-rocketing with my life. And it was time to slow down a bit. But for what it's worth, I did get the time to reflect back on my life and would favourably try to make more calculated moves in the future," revealed the model.

Speaking about obstacles in his life, Nahid was quite clear, "I wish I had a guide who would show me the way; at the beginning I didn't even know how to get proper work-related visa, adjust tax papers and get linked with the right agency. Then with some hard work, everything fell into place. Now I think, it's better for the next-gen professional models. They would at least have 'the guide' in me," said an exuberant Nahid.

## ABDULLAH AL MAHFUZ (RAAZ)

"I started as an extra for TVCs! My friends used to work in the background and earn quick cash. This encouraged me to join them and make some money as I studied for my Bachelor's degree," mentioned Mahfuz.

Even though his beginnings were humble, this popular model made it to the pro-league soon enough. We wanted to know the ordeal behind his success.

"Today's models are quite lucky. They get to go to grooming school, and they get a thorough professional training before walking the ramp. For us it was quite the opposite. I remember a close friend explaining ramp walking to me: that you need to walk like a king in front of the audience. This message got through to me and I started walking 'majestically' on the streets, while crossing roads, on the pavements,



sidewalks etc., and that was the beginning of my training for the ramps," said the supermodel.

Hailing from an era that didn't understand the profession very well, Mahfuz did face a number of hiccups. But over the years he taught himself to accept life as it was. "Obstacles are everywhere, that is a given fact. I can't keep on whining about it. Whining won't solve any problem," relayed Mahfuz.

In fact, Mahfuz was quite proud with the fact that models from his generation had set the standards for the industry in a positive way. "Models in our time would accept payments as low as Tk 500 to Tk 2000 for brand representations. Today's kids don't discuss attachments until and unless they are paid Tk 10,000 or 15,000 at the least. I am proud that this was possible because of us. We fought for our salaries, we fought to maintain a standard and the 'next-gen' reaped the benefits."

Even though all seemed hunky-dory in Mahfuz's professional life, he was adamant on leaving it to pursue business.

"I think I am done with enough modelling for one lifetime. Now it's time to start something new. I want to venture into real-estate business and I am hopeful my face, my goodwill will only come to my benefit," claimed Mahfuz laughing.

## FAZLE RABBY

"My first stint in front of the reels will forever be etched in my memories — I paid for the portfolio by selling off my mom's earrings," confessed Rabby.

This was only the beginning to a life full of drama and anxieties for the upcoming model.

"At the beginning, I was even embarrassed of my height," confessed a beaming Rabby. "Today, I may be laughing at it, but this is probably the fact for a lot of people from my generation. When conforming to the norm was like golden standard."

Rabby seemed a little tense recalling the past and we had to intervene, reminding him that those days were merely a part of memories.

"You are right! Today, my parents are quite proud of what I do. When they see that I earn as much as any sibling or a friend, and that too by working comparatively less, they are amused. And that is success for me: being able to make my parents smile," said Rabby.

Inquired why he thought his life had more obstacles than most of his colleagues, Rabby grinned slightly. "Well! I wouldn't exactly put it that way. But yes, I did have to wait (perhaps) a bit longer to gain success. My mistake was that I was involved with the wrong agencies. Mishandled and not put into track in the right time. But lessons were learned, which helped me pave my way back into limelight and I am actually more thankful of the detour because it encouraged me to be more passionate and respectful towards my profession."

When the pandemic had halted everything from education, to marketing and business, the modelling profession had also been dishearteningly paused. This definitely placed a wide gap in Rabby's professional life or so we assumed. Rabby's affirmations only confirmed our guesses.

"Right when I felt secure about my profession, the pandemic happened, turning everything upside down. And you know what the worst thing is about our professional life? That it has an expiry date. We can't continue to be models forever. That is why I am actively looking into varied roles such as 'acting' for the future."