

STORIES OF HOPE & STRENGTH



This year's Breast Awareness Campaign covered stories of courage, hope and strength from three brave women who won their long-enduring battle with breast cancer.

Noushaba Khan Ruby shares her own story which had begun with a trivial pain in her right arm during a family dinner. Upon visiting the doctor, she discovered the lethal disease had already spread out and several lumps had accumulated from her under-arm all the way to her right breast. Even though she was strictly advised to carry out her treatment abroad, her visa was denied thrice and she was unable to do so. As the last bait, she had no choice but to begin her treatment at Anwar Khan Medical College in Bangladesh. She had to undergo several heavy surgeries which left behind a broad stitch on her body permanently. A school teacher by profession, she recalls, 'My colleagues were my biggest support and my students were the ones who inspired me the most.' The long and

enduring chemotherapy sessions from her surgeries could not hold her back and she continued to visit her workplace despite her excruciating treatment. After a long and arduous treatment timeline, Noushaba Khan Ruby finally won her battle against breast cancer and is once back to her regular lifestyle. Farida Islam shares is another breast cancer survivor who discovered her symptoms very unexpectedly. One fine afternoon when she was getting dressed for an outing with her husband, she was alarmed by the unfamiliar and sudden discomfort around her armpits. Even though she shared her concern with her husband, she was quite reluctant about it at first. However, her visit for a breast cancer checkup at Ahsania Cancer Mission Hospital revealed she was already affected by it. 'My biggest support was my husband and he took care of me throughout my journey with breast cancer.' She shared how the entire treatment process was extremely draining for her

and took a serious toll on her whole body for months. Farida Islam recalls, 'This one particular moment will ring in my head forever, it was when I was unable to walk up the aisle of the hospital. I was sure I was going to die that day.' After a year-long treatment, she finally overcame all the struggles and was free of cancer at last. She wants to convey a message to every woman out there; "Cancer doesn't kill people. It gives them an opportunity to start their lives all over again." Mrs. Nazma was the third survivor of breast cancer who grew cautious of her symptoms when she felt a lump in her breast in the shower one day. Even though she shared her concern with her husband, no one paid much attention to her. Her husband was a garment worker by profession who was not very well educated. Since her husband was not exposed to such possibilities and lacked the proper knowledge, he seemed quite reluctant towards the concern of the survivor. Despite facing strong ignorance

from her family members who were not supportive to treat her, she mustered up the courage and went to Ahsania Cancer Mission Hospital for her treatment. The doctors welcomed her with open arms and walked her through the challenging and excruciating treatment process. After becoming cancer free, she had to face a lot of criticism and bad mouthing from the society as they believed she was not fit to breastfeed anymore. However, she overcame this struggle as well and now breastfeeds her own children. Above all, she is immensely grateful to the hospital authority who treated her and her elder daughter who was her biggest support system throughout her entire journey. These journeys do not only speak of survival, they speak of striking courage and powerful strength which can inspire so many men and women out there. These women are no less than warriors.