

Peya Jannatul announced becoming a mother on social media with a progressive maternity photoshoot sometime in late 2020. In the picture, she was seen in a transparent, red-gown caressing her baby bump with her perfectly manicured nails. In a largely conservative country, where an open display of motherhood is still considered a taboo, Jannatul chose to break the stigma, simply with confidence. "There's nothing wrong in showing off the biggest blessing of my life," she said. When very few people in the industry were expecting Jannatul to be planning motherhood, she came out with the news with a certain pride. "My son Ares is my delight — my fulfillment."



Breaking the stigma *with a* supermodel

After the success of being able to put an important message such as 'progressive parenthood' and 'body positivity' through to the masses, Peya Jannatul decided to carry on with the ideology. "Motherhood doesn't stop with the baby bump. There's so much more in the process. I have had a C-section and that is a whole new journey on its own, especially for someone like me who is majorly invested in the business of fashion and beauty.

"With this new photoshoot, I want to put another important message out there: motherhood doesn't cause any hindrance in the natural progression of life; in fact, it is a major part of life itself. And the stretch

marks that we get in the process should be considered as warrior inscriptions and regarded as a symbol of pride and dignity," confessed the supermodel.

As we spoke, Peya Jannatul was clad in a neon-green dress. With her hair curled in the sides, and bare faced with literally no makeup on, she mostly resembles her teenage self, quite the compliment for a mother, who juggles between two separate full-time jobs; motherhood and entrepreneurship.

"Giving birth to a baby is a natural part of life. Some women choose to be mothers, some don't. I was one of the former. It has nothing to do with my professional life. In fact, if I consider reality, I have become much stronger, more affirmative and more respectful towards time and people around me."

In a ruthless world that considers anything above size zero outdated and

unfit, how does a supermodel wade through the turbulent waters?

"I am obviously not going to be size zero forever! Plus, it is only natural that I will grow older as time progresses. I need to accept these factors. Plus, I am all about body positivity and the progress of womanhood in general. I appreciate the celebration of all ages, skin types, body compositions etc., because in a time where we have made progress in so many fields, why should we hide behind the drapes of pure anachronistic attitude?"

When asked if Jannatul planned on instilling the values of respecting women onto her son, she responded promptly, "Oh Yes, sure. But more importantly, I am going to tell him to work really hard in life if he has to compete with a woman. Because women are fearless and extremely hardworking. Years of patriarchy have made them stronger and more determined than

ever, so if he has to level up with a woman, he needs to work really hard," said the assured mother.

With a walk worth its fame and a face that appeared on countless magazines, tabloids, and dailies, Peya Jannatul is in a league of her own. But what makes her more special is her blunt support towards the issues of diversity and feminism. "I may be Peya Jannatul to you, a supermodel with a degree in law. But I am also all the women in the world," trying my best to juggle between my professional and personal life to become the best version of myself."

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury

Photo: Rony Rezaul

Model: Peya Jannatul

Fashion Direction and Styling: Mahmudul Hassan Mukul

Hair and Makeup: Jumman Hossain

Location: Sheraton, Dhaka