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LOVE *is* *our* MOTHER

ALL CHILDREN ARE SPECIAL **P3**
BEING A MOTHER TO A SPECIAL CHILD
SUPER MUMS UNITE **P4-5**
NAVIGATING PARENTHOOD
TALES OF WORKING MUMS **C**
IN CONVERSATION WITH...

PHOTO: SAZZAD IBNE SAYED
MODEL: MANWARA JOLY
STYLING: SONIA YEASMIN ISHA

Capturing Memories: Mother's Day PHOTO CONTEST

Motherhood is a precious undying bond that has a special place in everyone's heart. From the very first moments of our lives, mothers are always there to love, cherish and support us through the ups and downs of life. With Mother's Day just around the corner, what better way to say thank you to our mothers and celebrate the loving bond than capturing and cherishing our beautiful moments with them over the years?

That's why Connect-Kori and studio_picturerific have brought this opportunity to frame precious memories with mothers everywhere. They are collaborating to host a photo contest where people can upload a special moment in their lives with their mothers or motherly figures such as a loving teacher and grandparents; even single fathers are eligible to take part in this contest.

Ashna Afroze and Nafisa Tarannum, the two lovely and ambitious women who started Connect-Kori have said that they were inspired by how working mothers really struggle to find time for their children, especially in Dhaka where socialising with other mothers and their children is a luxury at this point.

"Mothers need a space to engage and mix with other mothers and connect with each other and have a fun and relaxing time," Ashna Afroze stated.

Nafisa Tarannum added, "We want mothers and their children to be able to interact and make new friends amidst

the hustle and bustle of this city. It is a good opportunity for the children as well because nowadays they are very lonely and mingling with their peers will also give them a fun and refreshing time."

Coming back to the contest, the ladies have said that the submissions can be any cherished memory, something like a past adventure, an activity, a very heart-warming tribute, something that reaches the emotional corner in our hearts. They explained that they are working on a polling process by which the best stories and posts will be voted on and the story with the most votes will be declared the winner!

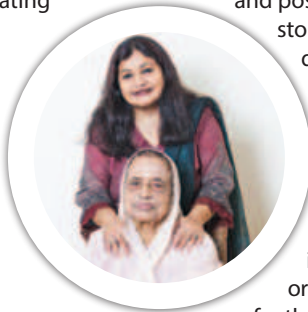
Studio_picturerific is pulling out all the stops when it comes to the winners.

They mainly specialise in mothers, new borns, and family-oriented photos so this is right up their alley. They will organise a 30 minute photoshoot for the winner and their family of up to five people free of charge!

Not only will this be an incredibly professional affair but it most certainly will be one of the most memorable ones for the winner and their respective family.

Make sure to follow Connect Kori and studio_picturerific on Facebook and Instagram to know more about the specifics of the contest!

By Abdul Warith Khan
Collaboration between Connect Kori & Studio Picturerific



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ঐতিহ্যের আর এক নাম আধুনিকতা
ঠিক যেমন রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য মানেই

স্যান্ডালিনা
সোপ

রূপচর্চায় আভিজাত্য...

KOHINOOR CHEMICAL

#INTERVIEW



In conversation with mothers of children with disabilities

Mothers are known for their strength and courage, and for more than just how they bring children into the world. Raising children is a struggle, especially when they are afflicted with ailments. Farha Hasan and Nazli Hussain are just two of countless such special mothers who have made mountains move with their love.

A battle against cerebral palsy

Farha Hasan, a teacher turned housewife, had a turbulent pregnancy. At seven months, her baby, Fayzan Hasan Raeid, came into the world, a little smaller, a little weaker but with oodles of strength and survivor's instinct.

After 12 days at the NICU, the little fighter came out into the world. In these 12 days, the young champ had battled breathing problems and seizures, due to which he would always develop a little differently.

At one year of age, when Fayzan was still unable to either sit or speak, his parents took him to a neurologist, where he was diagnosed with cerebral palsy.

"We started all kinds of therapy for Fayzan straight away — speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy — everything he needed. But we saw very little improvement," says Farha Hasan.

They travelled across the border to India, but the doctors there had the same verdict. Cerebral palsy has no cure.

It was undoubtedly a bitter pill to swallow but Farha and her partner had no choice but to accept it. Almost six years down, and several therapy experiences later, Farha feels that there are various centres that offer adequate forms of rehabilitation and treatment and a number of qualified doctors for this condition, but compared to first world countries such as USA and Canada, there are visible gaps.

"At first, it would at first feel very bad when people used terms such as 'protibondhi' for Fayzan. Because he is so

much more than that. He is remarkably intelligent; he is expressive and he is such a fun-loving child." Farha mentions that she never let his physical condition get in the way of life. "We have fun, we travel, even if we have to limit it to fit his convenience."

Raeid is his mother's pride and joy. However, that has not deterred people from saying rude things about him in front of him, or her. From being blamed for her son's condition to others taunting her son with words such as "autistic", she and her family have heard and dealt with it all. Despite this, she has not limited Raeid in any way. "The world belongs as much to my son, as it does to other children. And he has every right to enjoy it."

Farha believes that the Almighty has entrusted her and other parents like her with a most challenging task, but she feels that there are certain things that are beyond human control. "The world is not over for us, nor is it for our kids. Enjoy your children for the blessings that they are and would always be," she says.

Struggles of building a support system

Nazli Hussain is an architect by profession and a mother by heart. Despite a smooth pregnancy, her baby developed heartbeat irregularities and needed to be taken out via c-section. Upon coming into this

world, Nilia Ayleen Iqbal was found to have underdeveloped lungs and two large holes in her heart.

The doctors may have given up hope, but not little Nilia. She spent 22 days in the NICU, before finally coming into her mother's arms. "She was also diagnosed with Down's syndrome but ironically, that became the least of our worries. The first priority had become to save her life. We went to India, and Nilia had her life-saving open heart surgery in Bangalore when she was only five-and-a-half months old."

Upon recovery and Nilia's arrival back to Dhaka, Nazli and her family started to look for doctors who might be able to help her with Down's. She looked into various therapies but there were no visible results. "We tried many different places, but no doctor really showed us the correct way forward, even when they had previously handled special needs cases."

Around the time when Nilia was one, her neck had still not settled and she was unable to sit without support. Around the same time, she also suffered from infantile spasms, which further delayed her development.

She was prescribed high-powered medicines which bulked her up and made

therapy virtually impossible. Nazli tried to contact day-care facilities in Dhaka but most of these were unable to help her out.

"We finally found something in Gulshan which clicked for us — it was called the Sunshine Learning Centre. Nilia continues there till date," says Hussain.

Just as little Nilia was turning five, things took another bad turn. The spasms came back and she forgot most of what therapy had taught her. Dissatisfied with how neurological tests were run in Bangladesh, and judging by Nilia's deteriorating situation, Nazli and her family decided to take her to Bumrungrad, Thailand where they found out that Nilia had impaired hearing, forcing her to wear aides.

"We try to adjust Nilia's schedule according to her most immediate needs. Due to the seizures, her therapy sessions have taken a hit, but we are hopeful that she will bounce back because she is a sharp, fun-loving child."

Nazli thanks her support system for the sheer love they have for Nilia. "I take my daughter out with me on office picnics and outings, to family gatherings, and super shops. Not once have I come across an unpleasant soul. I love that people genuinely care about Nilia and her well-being, and I feel that more people should bring out their Down's babies into the open and let them live freely. It will work wonders for their development!"

By **Munira Fidai**
Photo: **Farha Hasan & Nazli Hussain**



#INTERVIEW

Navigating parenthood: The story of three inspiring single mothers



Single motherhood — a phrase that carries many stories of strength, perseverance, and resilience. It takes a village to raise a child yet single mothers are out there doing it all by themselves — juggling a million other responsibilities, and dealing with social stigma. Despite all these barriers and challenges, these mothers are shattering stereotypes and exceeding expectations.

This Mother's Day, we dive into the lives of these inspiring mothers who are rewriting the narrative of single motherhood, to learn about their triumphs, struggles, and everything in between.

Introducing our single mothers

The first of our trio, Razia Rahman is the CEO and founder of the NGO Protigga Foundation and Razia Rahman Consulting. With her work spanning over 40 upazilas, she is a mother of three and has dedicated her life to empowering women and youth.

Next up is Nudrat Nawar who is the deputy chief of Business Development

and Corporate Strategies at Index Group. She is also a prosthetic makeup artist and mother to a 3-year-old son.

Last but not least, Sheikh Suraiya Rehnuma is a fashion and portrait photographer with her own studio called LenzKraft Production. She is the mother to an 8-year-old daughter.

The challenges of single motherhood

When speaking about challenges, all three mothers detail somewhat varying accounts, which prove that motherhood is a unique journey for everyone. According to Razia Rahman, the biggest challenge or rather annoyance has to be dealing with unnecessary, personal, and intrusive questions from people.

She mentions, "When I joined the workforce, I would always face questions such as 'What does bhai (husband) do?'" In addition, she notes how the attitudes of people change, especially that of men, who cast nasty glances as soon as they come to learn of her single status.

For Suraiya, the biggest challenge was having to face constant criticism about her style of parenting. The constant disapproval made her second-guess her choices as they created doubts and dilemmas in her mind. In those anxious moments, she felt lonely as she had trouble finding someone to share these concerns with.

Nudrat details the struggle to manage work and motherhood, chasing deadlines, and taking care of her toddler's every need as the sole parent. Handling her own emotions while also managing her child's emotions does take its toll on her.

She has experienced "working mum guilt" for not getting to spend as much time as she would like with her son. In addition, it has proven to be a challenge to take out time for herself and manage time across all responsibilities efficiently. The frowning faces doubting her abilities to fulfil her motherly responsibilities along with career aspirations have certainly not helped.

The societal stigma, perception, and discrimination

Razia tells us that she had to experience character assassination and rumour-mongering in society. While she was in the early stages of her career, many in society discredited her achievements and deemed it unnecessary to invite her to social gatherings. Her children had to endure being labelled "children of a broken family" and deal with the barrage of questions that come with it, especially in school from the parents of their peers.



Suraiya adds the blame game that society indulges in with single mothers for every choice they make regarding their life and their children's life. In the eyes of society, no decision is ever sound coming from a single mother.

"The main issue I faced was during my daughter's school admission. I had to justify my status as a single mother, my income source, and how I'll be paying her fees. As a result, many of her school applications got rejected," says Suraiya.

Acknowledging the fact that everyone's journey is unique and many single mothers are struggling in their journeys, these inspiring women tell us that they refuse to be boxed into one identity of "single mother" or "damsels in distress". They have their own identities and achievements, which serve as a testament to their being all-rounders. These excellent mothers are achieving it all, demonstrating their competency and capability to raise happy and healthy children.

The financial challenges along the way

Shouldering the responsibilities of two people by oneself to raise their progenies does bring about its fair share of financial difficulties. Instead of giving up and submitting to their fate, our trio of mothers rose to the challenge.

Nudrat and Razia both mention adopting frugal lifestyle habits, reducing unnecessary expenses, prioritising wants over needs, and most importantly, working consistently hard to grow their careers ultimately increasing their earning potential.

"I create and stick to a budget that outlines my monthly expenses, including childcare, housing, utilities, groceries, and other essential needs. This helps me track my spending and ensures that I am living within my means," Nudrat states.

They all expressed gratitude for having a supportive family who was there to help them financially if and when needed.



"When I was still building my career early on, my parents supported me and my daughter financially. I had an unwritten contract with my father that he will cover our basic expenses including my daughter's

schooling expenses".

As her career has propelled forward, she has become financially independent.

Balancing it all, the 24/7 juggling act

For Nudrat, it is about prioritising and setting realistic expectations. While emphasising the most on her toddler's needs, she plans her office work to achieve maximum efficiency while also ensuring that she sets aside time for herself to recharge, in order to be more present with her son without any lethargy holding her back. She advises being organised to reduce stress and manage things better.

Razia and Suraiya tell us about raising their children to be independent, mature, and understanding which has led them to be mindful of their mothers' nature of work. According to Razia, she gets ample personal time as she has to travel all over Bangladesh by herself for work. The domestic help in her house, who are akin to her family, also provides tremendous support around the

household, pushing her that much closer to balance.

With Suraiya's studio being located upstairs in her house, her indoor shoots take place in close proximity to her daughter. She does her editing work while her daughter is next to her doing homework.

She adds, "I'm currently going with the flow and I don't think about balance. I'm also teaching and raising my child that way, that life is not always perfect and well balanced and that is okay."

How society can better support single mothers

All three ladies unanimously mention acceptance, equality, and respect as the crucial things that society must provide to single mothers. Single mothers should be respected all across the board and people need to stop asking irrelevant, unnecessary intrusive queries about their personal lives. People need to be less judgmental and more open-minded.

Counselling services for mothers need to be more widespread and easily accessible. Mothers with good mental health can raise emotionally adept and healthy children.

Single mothers should not be discriminated against in work, schools, or any other place in society based on stereotypes, gender, and marital status.

"Legal protections against discrimination, harassment, and violence for single mothers in the workplace and society at large would create a safer environment for them and their children," says Nudrat.

Nudrat and Suraiya note the utmost significance of having affordable and accessible community-based childcare or government-supported childcare for working mothers. Employers should also be empathetic and provide flexible arrangements for women so that they can be present for their children and have more of a work-life balance.

Society has to adopt a multifaceted approach to support single-parent households.

"Providing access to education and job opportunities for single mothers would empower them to gain skills, secure stable employment, and improve their economic independence. This could include scholarships, vocational training programmes, and job placement support," notes Nudrat.

Words of wisdom for mothers traversing a similar path

Razia and Suraiya note the importance of having faith and confidence in oneself. Working hard and smart consistently, tapping into one's potential is key to achieving success and balance as a mother.

Razia especially stresses the importance of having goals, attaining education, creating an identity for oneself outside the family, and being independent, particularly financially.

"Try to know yourself and respect yourself. If you don't treat yourself with respect, then others won't do the same", adds Razia. She strongly advises being wary of people and not trusting everyone with your woes and vulnerability.

They all note the significance of having a positive outlook and reframing the mindset to see the good in the bad and find the small joys in life. Being optimistic can push you a long way.

Leaning into your support network, be it family and/or friends, and fostering healthy friendships where everyone roots for each other's success can be a great way to stay mentally healthy and get rid of isolation. Collective success brings fulfilment like no other.

Most importantly, they ask all mothers to be kind to themselves. It is an uphill battle and taking it one day at a time, being realistic, being patient, and patting yourself on the back sure pave the way to make it easier.

By Maliha Arosha Hasan
Photo: Anik Chanda
MUA: Sazzad Hossin Piash



Being a working mum is a tremendous juggling act that calls for dedication, patience, and tonnes of mental grit. Having a successful career or a family to support comes with its own set of challenges, but when you combine the two, the trials can multiply significantly. Despite all the obstacles in her way, many working mothers are succeeding strongly in our society.

In conversation with CELEBRITY WORKING MUMS WHO DO IT ALL

Adiba Hussain is the Director of Tampaco Group, majorly looking after the human resources and the marketing department of the company. Adiba has a 9-year-old beautiful daughter whom she cherishes every moment of her day. Like all working mothers, she's maintained a balanced lifestyle between work and family.

Her daily routine always starts with getting her daughter ready for school. She then has about two hours of 'personal time' to organise her day, after which she heads off to work, occasionally visiting her factory to check up on activities.

"Working for a family business has definitely helped me enjoy a good work-life balance," says Hussain, who feels lucky to be associated with her own people.

Adiba's core value of motherhood shows at work as well as at home. She cares deeply for the workers at the factory, especially the females. She has always involved herself personally with them and is always open to their feedback about their physical and mental health especially when it comes to newlyweds and future mothers.

"I always make sure I'm available to them for anything they need," says Adiba. She also highlights her family's role in helping raise her daughter. Her husband, her mother, and her mother-in-law are always just a phone call away.

Samina Husain Prema is one of Bangladesh's most respected and esteemed classical dancers. Prema has worked exceptionally hard to make her name in the history books and has always said that dance is her identity.

"Dance has influenced every aspect of my life, especially when it comes to my daughter," states the artist. She is the Assistant Director and dance instructor at Shilpakala and has founded her dance school, Bhabna, with the sole purpose of teaching her desired classical dance forms.

She understands the obstacles of managing both work and family. Given that dance can be quite time-consuming and requires a lot of effort from many people. That's why she always tries to bring her lovely daughter along with her to dance lessons whenever she can. Prema also makes sure to spend quality time with her daughter teaching her about different art forms such as

dancing, drawing, and singing.

"I've always had a very supportive family who have backed me in my decisions to pursue art and I want to do the same for my girl as well," says Prema.

Her daughter, who is now in grade two, always had a knack for the arts from her infancy. Prema says that during her pregnancy, whenever she listened to music, she swore she could feel the baby moving to the musical rhythm. This theme continued after her daughter was born.

"We would play some music or perform some dance in front of her and she could always pick up the rhythm naturally!" says the loving mother.

The gifted daughter undoubtedly enjoys her mother's passion and has some of her own as well. She loves to dance and sing with her mum and is a very spritely artist as well.

"I have shown my daughter my passionate and fun world and at the end of the day, she is free to choose her path in life," says Prema.

Sabrina Alam is a Senior Lecturer of CSE department, at Independent University Bangladesh, and a proud mother of two children — a daughter who studies in class four and a three-year-old son. Sabrina, like any other working mother, faces the challenge of balancing work and family life.

"It's not easy to do work when you are thinking about your children all the time, but you have to work too," says the work-life juggling mum, who believes that work is an integral part of a woman's identity and independence.

Sabrina's day starts at 6 AM, as she manages the needs of her two children, making sure her daughter is ready for school and her son is taken care of. Her husband also helps out, and together they drop off their son at their parents' house before heading to work. Despite her busy schedule, Sabrina values family time and makes sure to spend quality time with her husband and children after work.

She emphasises the importance of discipline and time management, stating that 'discipline is key' to managing a busy schedule. Technology has helped her stay connected with her family when she is away at work, but the vigilant mother acknowledges the challenges of keeping her children safe online.

Silmat Chisti, the founder of NOBO Designs, understands the challenges of balancing work and family life. Silmat's love for the craft of textiles led her to form NOBO Designs, a company that specialises in designing and promoting textile-based products. She sees her work as a form of activism that helps identify and promote Bangladesh's national identity.

Her journey from an investment banker to an entrepreneur in the textile industry has been remarkable, alongside being a mother of three children, she had her first child when she was 37, she is a successful woman who is doing a remarkable job raising her children and giving them a role model to follow.

Silmat's experience taught her that life has to be flexible, and that goal-setting is crucial. She believes that there is no right balance; instead, life is a balance overall. She advises working mothers to set goals and to make time for themselves.

"Achieving balance is not a linear process, and it requires flexibility and adaptability to navigate the ups and downs of life," says Silmat.

The multitasking entrepreneur and heritage craft researcher's, office provides a nurturing environment for working mothers, where they can bring their children to work. She believes that motherhood is an essential part of a woman's identity, and it should not hinder their professional growth. Silmat emphasises the importance of guiding children to develop healthy digital habits, stating that technology has helped her immensely.

"It's a tool and how you use it depends, it frees me up to track my kids, how they are doing, I can plan things for them," says Silmat.



The stories of these four individuals serve as an inspiration for all working mothers out there. As we celebrate Mother's Day, their stories are a reminder that nothing is impossible, and with determination and hard work, we can achieve our goals, both professionally and personally.

By Abdul Warith Khan and Feda Al Hossain
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
Participants: Silmat Chisti, Adiba Hussain, Samina Husain Prema & Sabrina Alam
Fashion Coordinator: Sonia Yeasmin Isha
In collaboration with BackPage Pr and KrayonMag

Honouring Sajida Rahman Danny and the PFDA Vocational Training Centre

As Mother's Day approaches, we honour the women who have shown us love, strength, and resilience. Sajida Rahman Danny epitomises these qualities in her work empowering young adults with neurological disorders in Bangladesh. As founder and director of PFDA Vocational Training Centre, she provides skills training and opportunities to those who might otherwise be marginalised. Her efforts have changed countless lives and serve as a testament to a mother's love and determination to make a difference.

Who is Sajida Rahman Danny?

Sajida Rahman Danny herself is a mother of a son with special needs. Her son, Seeam UI Karim was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) at the tender age of two and a half years. He had exhibited a limited attention span of only 2.5 seconds, reduced sensory and motor skills, and communication issues. After diagnosis, the uphill battle began for the mother.

About 30 schools rejected Seeam and the one school that took him in faced resistance from the parents of the other children. He was abused and bullied in school. On the other hand, Danny's parenting was blamed for her son's autism. Despite facing these antagonistic and



discriminatory attitudes across society, she never gave up on her son and assisted in his development relentlessly.

How did PFDA Vocational Training Centre into being?

Back in 2011, when Saima Wazed Putul, daughter of our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina organised the South Asian Conference on Autism in Dhaka, Danny Rahman was given the responsibility to represent the parents of children with neurodevelopmental disorders (NDD). It is at that time she realised that there are thousands across the country who share a plight similar to hers. Hence, began the journey of the Parents Forum for The Differently Able (PFDA) in a small room at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU).

"While raising my son, I realised that children with special needs need to be prepared and trained in their areas of interest and talents so that once they reach adulthood they can be self-reliant and not be treated as a burden in society," said Danny.

She left her job at UNICEF, sold her property and started the PFDA Vocational Training Centre in 2014 at Mohakhali DOHS in Dhaka.

What are the services of the PFDA Vocational Training Centre?

PFDA Vocational Training Centre is aimed at exploring and training young adults and

adolescents with neurological disorders such as ASD, ADHD, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, dyslexia, etc. and training them accordingly.

After assessing the candidates for two weeks, the centre prepares a personalised curriculum for the students to better suit their individualised need for support and skills training based on interest. There is an effective job placement model in place to help these students earn a steady income.

Under this job placement model, there are three pathways for graduates to employment. Sheltered employment is for skilled students who require assistance due to behavioural, sensory, or motor skill issues. Hence they work in-house at the centre under supervision. Currently, 56 graduates within the sheltered employment programme excel in skills such as painting, singing, acting, baking at the Angel Chef bakery at the centre, cooking, sewing, block printing, batik work, crafts, etc.

The wages employment programme is for graduates who can work outside and work by themselves. Under this program, around 70 graduates are now employed in various companies such as Shwapno, Transcom, and Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation, along with many hotels and restaurants.

The third pathway, namely, self-employment, is for persons with disabilities (PWD) who have special skills but are unable to communicate properly. Hence

PFDA gives them the necessary support to ensure they can work from the comfort of their homes and be entrepreneurs.

The centre also offers counselling and one-to-one educational sessions for parents where the perceptions of the parents are continually changed to turn them more loving and affectionate to their children at all times.

How can society better support PWDs and their parents?

According to Danny, "Society needs to first accept and respect people with special needs. They need to accept them as part of society and respect them just like any other able-bodied individual. We need to increase transparent social support systems and put legal support measures in place to protect vulnerable mothers and children."

She further adds, "Parents need respite care (short-term break for caregivers) along with more readily available and accessible counselling support services and work around destigmatising counselling in society."

Sajida Rahman Danny is an excellent mother not to her child, but to hundreds across the country as she continues to work tirelessly to improve the lives of children with special needs and represent them all around. This Mother's Day we salute this triumphant mother.

By Maliha Arosha Hasan
Photo: Collected

HANGRY
SARIA SAGUARO

I have two moods.
Cooking helps both!



Mother's Day cake recipe

Being a new mom has been such an experience for me. The deeper I get into it, the more I sympathise and appreciate my own mother and our time together growing up. What I'm most in awe of is the vast amount of knowledge every mother needs to keep under her hat, from which is the best home remedy for reliving colds in babies, to which stores stock the right diapers, to how to make perfect plain cake to dip in your morning cha while the baby sleeps!

My mother loves cake. Regardless of how beautifully a cake has been made and the million frostings, techniques, and designs done she just prefers the cake part itself. She's simple and down-to-earth like that; just the opposite of extra. I love that about her.

But I also love a beautifully made cake. So here is my version of Ammu's plain cake with condensed milk buttercream, also known as Russian buttercream. The pairing is light and flavourful – a meeting point between Ammu and I.

PLAIN CAKE WITH CONDENSED MILK BUTTERCREAM

Ingredients

For cake —

- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2¾ cups sugar, grind a bit before using
- 1¼ cups butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 5 eggs
- 1 cup evaporated milk

For buttercream —

- 250 g unsalted butter – softened at room temperature
- 200 g sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence

Method

For cake —

Heat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour an 8" cake pan. Mix flour, baking powder, and salt in a bowl and set aside.

In a large bowl, beat sugar, butter, vanilla essence,

and eggs with an electric mixer on low speed for 30 seconds, scraping the bowl constantly. Beat on high speed for 5 minutes, scraping the bowl occasionally. Beat in flour mixture alternately with milk on low speed. Pour into the pan – do not fill more than 2/3 of the pan.

Bake for 1 hour 10 minutes to 1 hour

and fluffy.

Add the vanilla extract and beat for a minute. Add the condensed milk to the butter and whip them together for about a minute. Do not beat too much else you will incorporate a lot of air in the final frosting.

Ensure your cakes/cupcakes are cool before you start piping.

To assemble —

Once cooled, place the cake on a table and slice 3 separate layers to get 3 round cake layers.

Place a cake layer on a cake board, soak it well with milk and a brush, and add a dollop of buttercream to fill. Place the second layer on top and fill again. After the third cake layer and frost all sides of the cake. This is called the crumb coat.

Refrigerate the cake for half an hour before adding more cream and smoothing out the sides. Use fresh or plastic flowers for décor. Use a stamp to imprint message on a piece of rolled-out fondant. Colour with shiny edible gold dust. Stick on the side of the cake. And surprise your mothers!



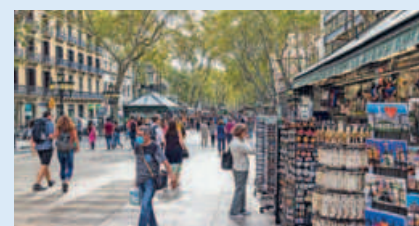
Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed

20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the centre comes out clean. Cool for 20 minutes. Remove from pan to wire rack. Cool completely, about 1 hour.

For buttercream —

In a large bowl, using a stand mixer/hand mixer, beat the butter for 3-4 minutes until it's light





#TRAVEL

Travelling with the mother and the family

Once upon a time, there was a young girl who loved to travel. That girl was me. My mother used to work for British Airways, a little detail I was very proud of because it meant we got free tickets. I remember the first time I encountered London. It was after a long flight from Dhaka which was overbooked. Somehow, my mother's gift of the gab got us on the flight — seated in aeroplane crew seats (shocking what they let you get away with in the '90s!). While my four-or-five-year-old self was delighted, I am sure my own mother was tired and stressed out from travelling with a child.

Back in London, that trip was the first time I remember seeing snow. My mother's friend met us at the airport and took us back to her tiny flat in London. Being used to the independent houses in Dhaka in the late '80s and early '90s, I was stunned that someone could live in a place that small. I named it the Dollhouse. The whole time my mum, of course, had to manage all the logistical work of travelling and managing me.

What I have not mentioned yet, is that my mother was a single mum. We used to travel every year, sometimes, several times a year until my mother married my stepfather, and after that the three of us would travel together.

But, I am also sure it was not as easy as I thought it was for my mum to travel with me. I remember throwing up on the plane, not once, but several times. I also remember one time that I was very sick and had a terrible cough. My mother and I were flying into JFK and she was very worried that they might deport us. So, she gave me a higher dose of my cough medicine, which I am sure she regretted



later. After we landed at the airport, I was so groggy and disoriented, I could not recognise my mother and threw a tantrum. Despite some of these hiccups, the travels with my mother as well as the following family holidays later on were some of the most formative memories of my life.

The young girl who used to love travelling with her parents has now grown up and now she has children of her own. Travelling with them and as a family is truly something I cherish. I must add, though, travelling with the children is not really a "holiday" by any means.

The first time my husband and I travelled together with my stepdaughter, she got sick and had to be taken to the hospital in Thailand. The kind nurses were trying to help her unclog her stuffy nose by doing a sinus wash and in her

indignance, my stepdaughter threw up on all of them. Cleaning up all kinds of messes comes with the territory of travelling with kids. It's basically karma for all the times we puked on our parents on holiday.

On that trip, I learnt how to manage a stroller for the first time. My husband always reminds me of how I almost dropped the stroller (and my stepdaughter in it!) while manoeuvring it on the escalator. That same trip, I also learnt how delightful children are as travel mates, with their curiosity and sense of fun. That trip allowed my stepdaughter and I to bond in a new way, and cement our relationship with each other.

By the time my son was born and the first time we travelled with both children, just before the COVID-19 lockdown, I was

already pretty experienced at travelling with a child but not with a baby. As a true millennial mum, I dutifully googled and made checklists and made sure I had everything but the kitchen sink. I was anxious about being that parent that gets dirty looks from all the passengers because their baby is crying.

My son was breastfeeding at the time and since babies usually cry because of ear pressure, to help them, you just need to give them something to suck on or drink. Bundled up in my BabyBjorn and makeshift nursing shawl, I breastfed and he truly 'slept like a baby'. I was also prepared with pacifiers which came in very handy.

Thankfully, even now, my son is an excellent traveller and usually sleeps on the plane or watches movies and is pretty flexible and easy-going. But, he is also extremely curious like most toddlers and manages to get himself into a lot of sticky situations.

Looking back, I cannot even imagine how I would manage him on my own at an airport. Whenever the four of us travel together, we divide up tasks — which includes making sure the little tot does not run away and we have a Home Alone situation on our hands. For any new parents who are planning to travel with your baby, fret not. Google and checklists really are your best friends. Trust yourself, prepare and plan as much as you can but be willing to go with the flow. Expect messes to clean up, naps in the stroller and some of the best memories of you and your children's lives.

By Namira Hossain
Photo: Collected



#TIPS

Mother's Day Gifts: Top ideas that your mother will treasure forever

A good Mother's Day gift demands something more meaningful than your run-of-the-mill chocolates. Ahead, we present a curated selection of 5 meaningful presents you can get your mother in addition to that bouquet of fresh flowers and greeting card.

An evening to unwind and pamper with a spa

Mothers work hard whether they are homemakers or working mums. To give her some respite, book an evening at a spa where she can get rejuvenating facials, relaxing massages, and stunning manicedis for a complete refresh and recharge. This could also be an excellent way for mothers and daughters to bond.

Scents with the power to evoke memories

An elegant and popular gift choice for mothers would be a bottle of perfume. If possible, choose Eau de parfums, eau de toilettes, or extrait de parfums over body mists as they have higher sillage and longevity.

Perfume gift boxes make the gift look that much prettier. But if you cannot get your hands on a box, then get creative and make a DIY gift basket or box with

perfume, face and hand creams along with a beautiful box of chocolates.

A getaway to give her the vacation she truly deserves

With so many resorts propping up around the country and around Dhaka, Mother's Day could be the perfect occasion for you all to have a weekend staycation. These resorts with their beautiful views, blue water pools and amazing

service can give your mum the vacation she has not gotten in years. If you have the time, then go for a trip around the country to places such as Sylhet, Bandarban etc.

Jewellery and its infinite possibilities

Jewellery as gifts are very long-lasting. They possess sentimentality and can be heirlooms for generations to come if cared for properly. You can let your creativity shine through jewellery. From antique-style jewellery with oxidised silver, and the modern-day understated gold trinkets to bohemian-style jewellery with beads, the possibilities are endless.

By Maliha Arosha Hasan

Photo: LS Archives/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

HOROSCOPE



ARIES
(MAR. 21-APR. 20)

Don't let family issues get in the way. People might treat you badly. Make sure new friends meet your expectations. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



TAURUS
(APR. 21-MAY 21)

Visit your doctor or dentist right away. You must complete critical transactions. The work you have done can be acknowledged. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



GEMINI
(MAY 22-JUN. 21)

It will be fun to travel. Be cautious when sharing your opinions. Observe how others are speaking. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



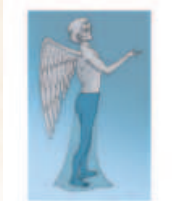
CANCER
(JUN. 22-JUL. 22)

When interacting with family members, use caution. Overindulgence may cause modest health issues. Attend seminars. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



LEO
(JUL. 23-AUG. 22)

Your skill will be acknowledged. Unless absolutely necessary, avoid travelling and be cautious. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



VIRGO
(AUG. 23-SEP. 23)

You should be thinking about family vacations. Don't allow your stubbornness rule your actions. Deception is almost certain. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



LIBRA
(SEP. 24-OCT. 23)

It is better to avoid major financial transactions. If you go out with friends, you can find yourself in a new relationship. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



SCORPIO
(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)

Opportunities for travel must be seized. Don't be angry. There will probably be fake friendship gestures. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



SAGITTARIUS
(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)

Spend some time catching up on unread mail. Don't push your ideas. Ask your friends to assist you with financial moves. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



CAPRICORN
(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)

Clean up around the house. You will find yourself in the middle of an engaging encounter. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



AQUARIUS
(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)

It could be challenging for you to communicate. Make an effort to spend some time alone. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



PISCES
(FEB. 20-MAR. 20)

Your inclination to waver will irritate everyone. Your path will change as you travel. Be courteous and truthful. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



Typhoon

Fabric Care



প্রথম ওয়াশেই কাপড়ের কঠিন থেকে
কঠিনতম দাগ দূর করে।

টাইফুন... লাগে কম, তাই সশ্রয় বেশী।



Fabric Care -এর
সুপার সাওয়ার



Revamp your home with these creative furnishing ideas

Have you ever stood in your fully-furnished living space and thought that it is somehow lacking 'something'? Maybe it was fine before, but lately 'home' has started to look a little...tired. If so, it may be time to bring in some new elements and discard some of the old ones to give your ever-known comfort zone a new look altogether.



When it comes to furniture, wood is a natural choice due to its durability as well as versatility. But with furniture fashion evolving constantly, you will realize that not all the pieces at home qualify as 'timeless beauty'. For instance, while a lot of us have grown up with heavy furnishing at home, that trend has now been replaced with slimmer, space-saving, minimalistic pieces.

The essence of minimalism is the removal of the unnecessary, leaving only the essentials that are functional and beautiful. This approach to furniture design emphasises the purity of form, the beauty of materials, and the harmonious balance of space. Simplistic designs with clean lines and geometric shapes result in a home that is not only aesthetically pleasing but also calm. There is no doubt that this is indeed the house you would want to come back to at the end of a tiring day.

With its understated elegance, minimalistic furnishing is a design trend that continues to captivate and inspire. Whether you are living in a small apartment or a spacious home, the right furnishings can make all the difference. In smaller spaces, it is important to make every inch count while in larger homes, the right

furniture can help to define and organise different areas.

Even small changes in furnishings can have a big impact on the overall look and feel of a home. A strategically placed side table, an abstract-shaped bookshelf, or a well-chosen accent chair can add a touch of personality and warmth, transforming a space from cold and impersonal to inviting and cosy.

A new piece of furniture is more than just an addition to the house. High-quality furniture is designed to withstand the test of time and can add value to your home in the long run. However, there is a bigger elephant to be addressed here i.e. the financial aspect of it. As exciting as a furniture project may sound, it is an expensive venture and naturally one may not have the financial flexibility to purchase furniture outright.

This is where purchasing on EMI (equated monthly instalment) comes in as a great way to ease the burden of expense. Many furniture stores offer EMI options that allow you to pay for your purchases in smaller, more manageable instalments over a period of time. This not only helps to spread out the cost but also allows you to invest in quality furniture that might



otherwise be out of reach. With EMI options, you can create the home of your dreams without breaking the bank, and enjoy the comfort and beauty of your new furnishings for years to come.

Remember, the key is to choose furniture that not only fits the space but also reflects your personal style and enhances your lifestyle. Whether you prefer a minimalist or a maximalist approach to design, the right furnishings can help to create a home that is beautiful, artistic as well as functional.

By Nusrath Jahan
Photo: Collected

১২ মাস মেম্বারশিপ
হেডমার্জায়ে সুবিধায়
প্রস্তুত ঘর মার্জান
HATIL-এর মার্জি

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HATIL

