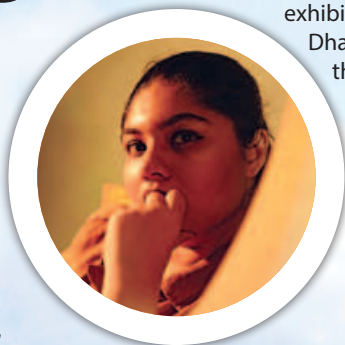


# From hobby to a career: Sheikh Suraiya Rehnuma's journey with photography



In Bangladesh, over the past few years, photography has evolved remarkably transforming from a beloved hobby into a thriving profession. For many, what started as casual snapshots has grown into a passion and ultimately careers in visual storytelling. Sheikh Suraiya Rehnuma is one such photographer, carving out her path in the industry. Rehnuma's journey, which began with a student camera and a friend's inspiration, is a compelling display of how imagination, hard work, and self-discovery unexpectedly influenced her career.

## A DECISION MADE

Before photography became her focus, Rehnuma was an architecture student relishing in the world of design principles and blueprints. Photography was not even on her radar and it was not until everyone in her course collectively invested in cameras for their studies that she was drawn into the art of capturing images.

Inspired by a friend who had a knack for taking portraits, Rehnuma began experimenting with photography and trying to understand the

techniques behind a well-composed shot. Soon, as she got a hold of comfort with her camera, she found herself framing and capturing moments beyond her course requirements.

By 2015, Rehnuma's passion for photography had bloomed. She took the bold step of hosting a solo exhibition at Beauty Boarding of Old Dhaka, showcasing her work to the public for the first time and introducing her professional brand, Lenzkraft.

This experience solidified her commitment to photography and by 2018, she had set

up a small, rented studio.

This was a humble start — informal, small-scale, and focused on a close circle of clients and personal

projects. However, this little studio marked her transition from amateur to dedicated professional, paving the way for her career.

For Rehnuma, the COVID-19 pandemic was a significant turning point. In 2021, with a newfound time to focus, she decided to fully embrace photography, making Lenzkraft a fully active venture from then onwards.

## CRAFTING HER NICHE

Rehnuma speaks openly. "It definitely is male-dominated. While that's not necessarily a bad thing, there's no denying the lack of balance."

Her observation is not just about numbers, but about perception as well. She points out that people often label her as a "female photographer" rather than simply a

"photographer." To her, this reflects the deeper societal belief that photography is primarily a male profession; a mindset that has limited the industry's inclusivity for years.

Breaking into an industry with few female peers, she navigated a space where her identity as a woman often overshadowed her identity as an artist. However, instead of letting this deter her, Rehnuma uses it as motivation, working to challenge stereotypes and prove that women are just as capable of excelling in this field.

Rehnuma's primary focus is on fashion, portraits, and fine art photography.

