

## A Changing Life story of Shewly Hijra

Shewly Hijra is a 45-year-old individual who was born in Chandnaish, Chittagong. From a young age, Shewly realized that despite being born male, she identified as a woman in her heart. However, due to societal norms and expectations, she tried to suppress her true self and behave like any other man in her family. As she grew older, the struggle with her gender identity intensified, causing depression and confusion.

Shewly faced numerous challenges trying to explain her feelings and feminine nature to her family and society. Despite multiple attempts to change her behavior, she was met with slander, discrimination, and hatred from her community. This resulted in the denial of her basic rights, including access to education. The stigma and discrimination became unbearable, leading her to leave her home one night and seek shelter Teknaf, Cox's Bazar, in the hopes of finding a new life.

During her journey in Teknaf, Shewly met a guru mother who provided comfort and understanding. The guru mother reassured her that there were others like her in the world, offering a sense of belonging and courage. With this newfound support, Shewly began to embrace her true self and find solace in her identity as a woman.

This is a story of resilience and self-discovery as Shewly navigates the challenges of societal norms and expectations, finding acceptance and hope in the face of adversity through the guidance of her guru mother.



**Conducted a session**



**Desk work at Office**

Shewly grew up calling another woman "Guru mother" and sought comfort in her presence. However, she grew older and faced prejudice and discrimination due to her gender identity, she felt isolated and unloved. one day she informed about Bandhu office which organization work for their community. Shewly initially disregards her friend's advice about seeking healthcare at the Bandhu office but eventually decides to visit. There, she discovers a

supportive environment for community of people like him. An employee explains the importance of sexual health education, especially for Hijra individuals, and how it can prevent sexually transmitted infections and diseases. Inspired by this knowledge, Shewly regularly visit the Bandhu office to educate himself. she eventually become a Link Associate at the office and advocating for the well-being of the Hijra/Transgender community. Now equipped with knowledge about hijra community healthcare rights and various sexually transmitted diseases, Shewly feels empowered to speak about community rights and fight against discrimination, gender-based violence, and sexual reproductive health issues that were previously unknown. Grateful for the Bandhu Social Welfare Society's support, now she trying to live with dignity and respect, and happy to contribute to their beloved community among host and refugee community.



Picture: Works at Office

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