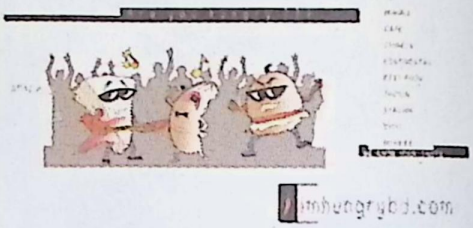
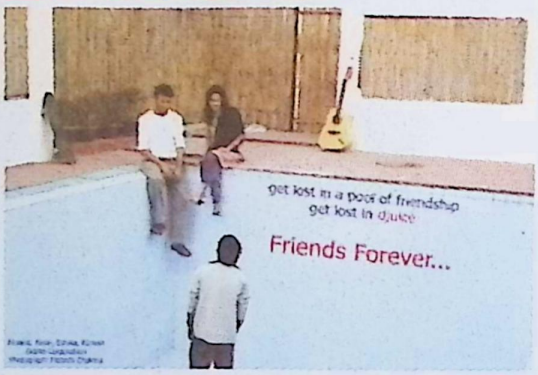
The Amazing Race



A Djuice ad (left) and a website ad (top) created by the contestants.

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The moment we turn on our television, some channels are sure to have some sort of a contest cum reality show on for its viewers, such as Fear Factor, The Apprentice or Who Dares Wins face challenges and wins prizes. Project Bangladesh Foundation and Djuice, Grameen Phone's new generation GSM provider, has come up with a similar competition for the youth of Bangladesh with the title 'Project D Youth'. Interestingly, this is a contest for students to prove what they are made of when faced with challenges, some requiring physical labour, some needing a creative touch and then some which just needs a big heart.



Project D Youth started in November of 2006 with over 700 teams participating in the preliminary round. The teams were told to make a business proposal to help the under-privileged people of Bangladesh. The top teams had a presentation and finally, only 20 teams survived to move on to the challenge phase of the competition.

The next phase consisted of the real challenges. The teams were not only competing with one another, but in certain tasks were required to team up and work together to complete tests set by the Project D Youth Team. This phase comprised of a concoction of business challenges as well as community service challenges. Each week, teams had to complete a challenge and each week, teams are eliminated.

The first challenge was a fund-raising event for the Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF), an organisation that helps rehabilitate victims of acid violence. The main objective of this challenge was not to just see who brought in more funds for the cause but to see which team could make more people conscious of the existing acid violence situation. Some of the teams even went to hospitals to try and manage free treatment for the acid survivors. With so many young minds putting their hearts into a cause, the result had to be remarkable as the teams managed to raise close to three lakh taka for ASF. Even though some teams had to make their exit form the tournament, they left with their heads held high. Everyone had made a difference that day.

The second task took place in the field of advertising to measure their creative fortitude as they teamed up with Bitopi, an advertising firm. The task at hand was to come up with a brand promotion for the DJuice brand. While most of the contestants' creative buds worked over-time, some teams just ran out of gas and had to exit from the competition. As the management of the advertisement firm put it, "the level of creativity and professionalism in these students were truly exceptional."

The next challenge took place in a sweater factory. Mohammadi Fashion Sweaters Ltd., one of the leading factories in Bangladesh, took in all the contestants and taught them the whole production chain process, namely the life cycle of a sweater. The teams got into the woolly business and were then asked to develop the existing process of the factory. This factory's annual turnover is over 12 million USD, producing over 250,000 sweaters every month. It was amusing to see the contestants handle themselves when working in a real production line. Their actions made the difference and the actions made the challenge.



A finished room of the Bottomely Home Orphanage should add some colour to the lives of the children.