The next challenge took place in cyberspace. It involved promoting the web site Iamhungrybd.com, a site that is famous for its coverage of the cuisine and fast food outlets in Bangladesh. Each of the teams had to promote it and make people send sms to show their strength. The more the number of sms, the greater the promotion. It was a charming idea because the modern generation is really fast on its fingers.

The fifth challenge was in collaboration with Transcom Electronics Ltd., one of Bangladesh's largest electronics distributors. With only the leadership of their team captains, the groups had to manage the Transcom Electronics showrooms in Dhaka for one whole Friday. The idea was to see the disposition of the teams when put in the shoe of the everyday sales person. This was the Philips Transcom challenge and the teams only had a budget of Tk 5,000 to use for promotional activities. The teams also had to come with five promotional ideas to improve the retail sales, utilise the funds provided and justify their reasoning, analyse the existing clientele service and sales approach and finally, make improvements in the display set-ups. Transcom history states that Tk 30,000 to Tk 50,000 worth of goods are sold on average every day. Amazingly, on shift of our contestants, the amount of goods sold for each of the teams ranged from Tk 2.5 lakh to Tk 6 lakh and there was a total sale of Taka 23 lakh. Sadly, two of the six teams has to be knocked out.



Team Sobyosachi, one of the finalists of Project D Youth.



The contestants get their hands dirty while painting a room.

The last four teams to make it into the semi-finals were Laal, BUET Bugs, Lobdhi and Sobiyasachi. The next challenge involved decorating and redesigning a room in the Bottomely Home Orphanage. The four teams were grouped into two teams and they were made to garnish a room each, keeping the children in mind. The teams had a budget of Tk 35,000. This challenge tested not only their sense of creativity and money-management skills but put their team skill to the challenge. Using paints, toys, posters, etc, the groups had to make these rooms special for these underprivileged children. Imrul Karim, a member of Sobiyasachi, is quite excited about the competition and how it is bringing everything and everyone closer together. "We got two and a half days to finish decorating the room and the end result for both the teams were excellent," he said. "The main thing was that the children were overjoyed. We bought toys to go into the room and painted the walls with the theme of the cartoon character Meena. Since the children were not used to such a fete of colour, this challenge helped us give something really special to these children, a treat they will surely grow up to remember and cherish. Seeing the excitement of the children, we all felt like winners," Imrul concluded.

At the end of the tournament, Lobdhi and Sobyosachi are the only two teams remaining in the Project D Youth competition. They are going head on in the final challenge come Valentines Day. The final challenge is to formulate and arrange a concert for over 15,000 people. This D-juice event will take place at the Bashundhara convention centre, where Lobdhi and Sobyosachi will bring in their choice of bands, while managing the whole event, down to the last nitty-gritty.

And the prize? The winner will be chosen from the last challenge and that team will be crowned Djuice's Brand Ambassadors and Bangladesh's First Project D Youth Group. The tasks most of the teams have so far completed were not Herculean in nature in their physical sense, but the awareness that these students created through their works were truly noble. This project is the first competition in Bangladesh that puts in business and community service on the same measuring scale. From the teams' point of view, they got an excellent opportunity to work with people from many walks of life and give something back to the community. As far as the contestants are concerned, they are all leaving as the winners. ■