It's all for the Tigers

MD MIZANUR RAHMAN HIMADRI

Heritage, History, Flag. All this merged to form the latest design on the jersey of the national cricket team of Bangladesh. Such a unique design was the brainchild of Shejan Lincon – a young Bangladeshi designer. The willowy Shejan, who possesses an impeccable sense of style, spoke about his years of struggle that led to the distinctive jersey design.

A student of fashion design, Shejan came in the limelight when he won the Jersey Utsav Championship organised by Grameenphone in association with BCB in 2011. He became more optimistic about his career as he ventured to create a design that would effectively tell the story of Bangladesh's independence, its glory and the courage of its people.

The dream finally became a reality when the Tigers, donning the new team jersey designed by Shejan, stepped onto the field in Dhaka at the T20 World Cup 2014 on March 16.

The Jersey Utsav champion drew the attention of Akram Khan, chairman of the cricket operations committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), when he displayed his talent in designing the kit of the national cricketers at the primary level of the jersey championship. And that paved the way for his success.

On November 20 last year, on behalf of Texweave Bangladesh, Shejan sent a Computer Aided Design file that included the design for the different jerseys to be worn by the cricket team, including travel, practice and match jerseys.

As frustrating as it may sound, his first design was rejected by the board due to the CAD showing errors in colour combination on jerseys, players' measurement, and so on. The second one was not void of any error either. His design went through 15 such trials before it was finally approved by the BCB after over a month on January 6.

Asked what is so special about the kit, Shejan says, "The green colour on the jersey is evocative of our flag and symbolises the lushness of Bangladesh's landscape, while the red is representative of the sun of sovereignty that rises over the country. The isosceles triangular planes signifies the National Monument, thus, narrating the history of the country's martyrs who sacrificed their lives to liberate Bangladesh. Finally, the jersey also displays tiger paws, which I have used to symbolise the aggressiveness that will motivate our cricketers to play well and win."

Apart from that, the jersey has been stitched with great quality, comfortable fabrics that prevent it from wrinkling or shrinking.

When asked why he took such a risk as a business person when Bangladesh does not have a significant market for sportswear, Md Ashikur Rahman Tuhin, managing director of Texweave, says, "I did it because I wanted to; it came from the bottom of my heart. Our cricketers globally represent the country's culture, glory and history. But even while we hold the top position in exporting garments across the world, the jersey that our cricketer used to wear did not even meet the minimum international standard. I finally had a meeting with the BCB, and started working with Shejan to make the jerseys worthy of the Tigers."



No compromise was made on the quality, and the sportswear is really comfortable for the cricketers, says Sabbir Khan Shafin, cricket operation manger at the BCB.

"Bangladesh made kits for almost all noted international sportswear companies. Why not do the same for our players? I took it as a challenge to design a jersey for the Tigers with quality fabrics," said Shejan, a graduate from the Shanto Mariam University of Creative Technology.