

Helping the Hungry



PHOTO: COURTESY

APURBA JAHANGIR

One of the most common phenomena amongst the current generation is to fall head over heels for good, mouth-watering, proteins and carbohydrate filled food, especially in a city like Dhaka where there're so many choices of restaurants. But in a busy, not to mention jam-packed city like ours, it's hard to find time to travel to these eateries. That's where Hungry Naki.com makes an entrance.

Hungry Naki.com is, by far, the most popular online food delivery service in Dhaka right now. With a very straight forward ser-

vice and a simple website, they have won the hearts of many food enthusiasts. Founded by Ahmad A D, Sazid Rahman, Ammar Bin Yehea, Irtezar Ur Rahman and Tausif Ahmad, the website first began operating from October, 2013. "Everyone loves good food but, more often than not, we don't have much time or energy to go to the restaurants, so we thought of Hungry naki.com to mainly bring the restaurants to the customers," says Tausif Ahmad, co-founder and COO.

Since their inception, Hungry Naki.com has been affiliated with more than 120 popular food joints located around more than twenty neighbourhoods in Dhaka. "When we

started to approach the food joints, we had a hard time convincing them of how this service can widen their revenue stream, especially with the owners who are from an older age-group. But we kind of knew it was coming, because online businesses is something which is still new to most of the people in our country," says Tausif. "But as we are growing, the owners now understand how it's helping them make more profit.

The service hour of this site is 11AM-10PM and during this time, their delivery men are always ready to bring your mouth watering treat to your doorstep within 60 minutes.



PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

From Business to Tech

NAZIBA BASHER

Hasan Tanvir Mansur completed his BBA and MBA from American International University, Bangladesh (AIUB) and his SSC and HSC before that from Government Laboratory High School and Dhaka Imperial College, respectively. Mansur, to avoid bad grades and facing academic pressure, was told by his parents to not get a part time job even though he wanted to find a way to spend his free time. So, like any young man with free time in hand and a motivated mind, he learned, he created and he amused.

In the year 2008, Mansur had applied to become a Microsoft Student Partner (MSP). Two years later, along with 14 other students from AIUB, his application was approved and he became an official MSP. "I was always very passionate about technology, which is exactly why I had applied for the programme. This particular passion led me to spend my free time learning about Smartphones and applications and eventually, diverted my interest to creating my own apps," says Mansur.

The first app that Mansur created was 'Surahs of Quran', in the year 2000, which he is currently updating. Since then, he has been making apps for Microsoft Smartphones. Some other apps that he has successfully launched are 'Nail Art app' for girls who are into the art of decorating nails, 'Lumia 520' - an app that displays the unique features of Lumia 520, 'How to wear a Hijab' app. He has also created a Bengali browser for Microsoft Smartphones called 'Minibrowser' which has already been downloaded by 20,000

users.

In the year 2013, Mansur was selected to do an internship at Microsoft Bangladesh which finished in January 2014. During the internship, Mansur learned more about creating apps for Microsoft Smartphones and made upto 10 to 12 apps in an hour. He was eventually awarded the Best Performer title. Mansur also plans to launch a game for Microsoft Smartphones called 'Space Attack' very soon.

With a knack for tech and the passion for creating, Mansur plans to continue along this path. "I went to Malaysia for a family trip in 2012 where I met with the former president of Microsoft Malaysia. He inspired me and told me that I could work for Microsoft one day. That was when I realised that that was exactly what I wanted to do." Mansur dreams of working with Microsoft Malaysia and then soon climbing the ladder all the way to Microsoft's head office in Washington DC.



PHOTO: DARSHAN CHAKMA

inspired by life

ANIKHA HOSSAIN

Farah Ghuznavi has been writing for most of her life. During her childhood and youth, she explored satirical play writing and poetry and as an adult she wrote opinion pieces and newspaper articles on politics, humour, travel and social issues. "I'm a Bangladesh-medium product, very much 'made in Bangladesh!'" she says. "Growing up in a family where social issues were often discussed, I decided to study development economics. I had always wanted to be a writer, but didn't think I was good enough. When I finally ventured into fiction, I found that my development experiences strongly influence my writing."

In the development field, she worked for the British NGO Christian Aid, Grameen Bank and the United Nations. Her career as a fiction writer began much later, "I read a newspaper headline about an employer who killed a child domestic worker, and it made me so angry that I sat down and wrote my first story," shares the writer.

Farah Ghuznavi's stories are mostly inspired by her life experiences. "Anything and everything inspires me, really," she says. "Memories, experiences, or something I witness on the streets. I'm inspired by the desire to tell the stories of those whose voices are less often heard. I also want to provide a more accurate picture of contemporary Bangladesh than the tired, negative stereotypes prevalent in the international media."

Farah's written work has been published in the UK, US, Canada, Singapore, India, Nepal and ofcourse Bangladesh. When asked which of her stories is her favourite, she says, "That's like being asked to pick favourites among your children! 'Getting There', which appears in my short story collection 'Fragments of Riversong' (Daily Star Books) is a story I like, because it has universal elements (family conflict,



PHOTO: COURTESY

misunderstandings, regret and redemption), despite being firmly set in modern-day Bangladesh."

Farah has received several awards for her written work, "Having my story 'Judgement Day' awarded in the Commonwealth Short Story Competition 2010 was amazing, as was receiving a wonderfully encouraging note from the judge after 'Getting There' placed second in the Oxford University GEF Competition," she shares. "The nine posts I produced as Writer in Residence for Commonwealth Writers also constituted a very personal journey."

Her writing to her is intensely personal, "Though that doesn't mean it's autobiographical," Farah says. "What you write says something about who you are, how you view the world, and what's important to you." Farah has just recorded a personal essay for BBC Radio 3, "And I'm finalising a second short story collection," she tells us. "I generally prefer to let creative initiatives develop organically, though discipline is important!"

