

Apparition spotted in a Zamindar home in Ghorashal.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Brush with the paranormal

ANIKI HOSSAIN

Whether we like to admit it or not, most of us are fascinated by the existence of paranormal entities. Every religion mentions there being a higher power and in some, the existence of demons, demigods and spirits are acknowledged. Rafee Tamjid is one such person, who not only believes in such entities, but also seeks to find and make contact with them.

"My interest in paranormal entities began at the young age of 12, when I was in Hawaii," says Rafee. "I was fascinated by reality shows on TV that showed paranormal detection. I grew up in Hawaii which is a very spiritual place, where people believed every element on the islands had a separate god, and that they walked the Earth, from time to time," he relates. While this excited his interest a great deal, but it was not till High School, that he had an experience of his own that turned him into a true believer.

"A group of my friends and I were hanging out at a skate park, around one or two in the morning," he recalls. "Now there were roads around us

and a playground, but to one side of the park there was a ditch, which was fenced with barbed wire. At one point, we all saw a woman, in an Elizabethan dress, climb out of the ditch, which was extremely strange. Thinking she may need help, we called out to her, but it was as though she didn't hear us, and she started walking very fast toward the playground. When we followed her, she disappeared in front of our eyes."

Rafee attended the Community College Branch of the University of Hawaii, and hearing that his dorm may be haunted, he wanted to learn more about the paranormal. Fortunately, a fellow student told him about a few courses his college was offering on paranormal science and he decided to enroll. "The course taught us interesting things such as how our bodies should respond to elements we are not used to, how to use EMF readers, different cameras (eg thermal camera). They also taught us the etiquette of communicating with paranormal entities," Rafee tells us.

"After college I returned to Bangladesh after ten years, and since I studied film making and I loved paranormal shows, I decided I could make one of

my own," he relates. "That is when I founded the Dhaka Paranormal Society (DPS) in 2012. I decided to register DPS as a company and get started. I made a facebook page, and received hundreds of requests to join our crew." His core team now consists of Rafee himself, Sohan Ahmed Ami, Iffraz Chowdhury and Iftekhar and at times they have guest investigators.

"For our investigations we use night vision infrared cameras, audio recorders, a K2 meter, Electro Magnetic Field (EMF) readers, laptops etc," says Rafee. "What we do is, we set up stationary cameras and monitor them from a different room/area. We also usually take a medic in case someone has a panic attack or gets injured in anyway."

The DPS usually gets at least two requests for help a week and follow up on most of them. "About 25 percent of the time, the places are haunted," he says. "Our scariest experience was in Comilla at a farm house, where we saw an entity with our own eyes and heard through our audio tapes an indiscernible language," he remembers. "In one incident at a construction site, Ami's face



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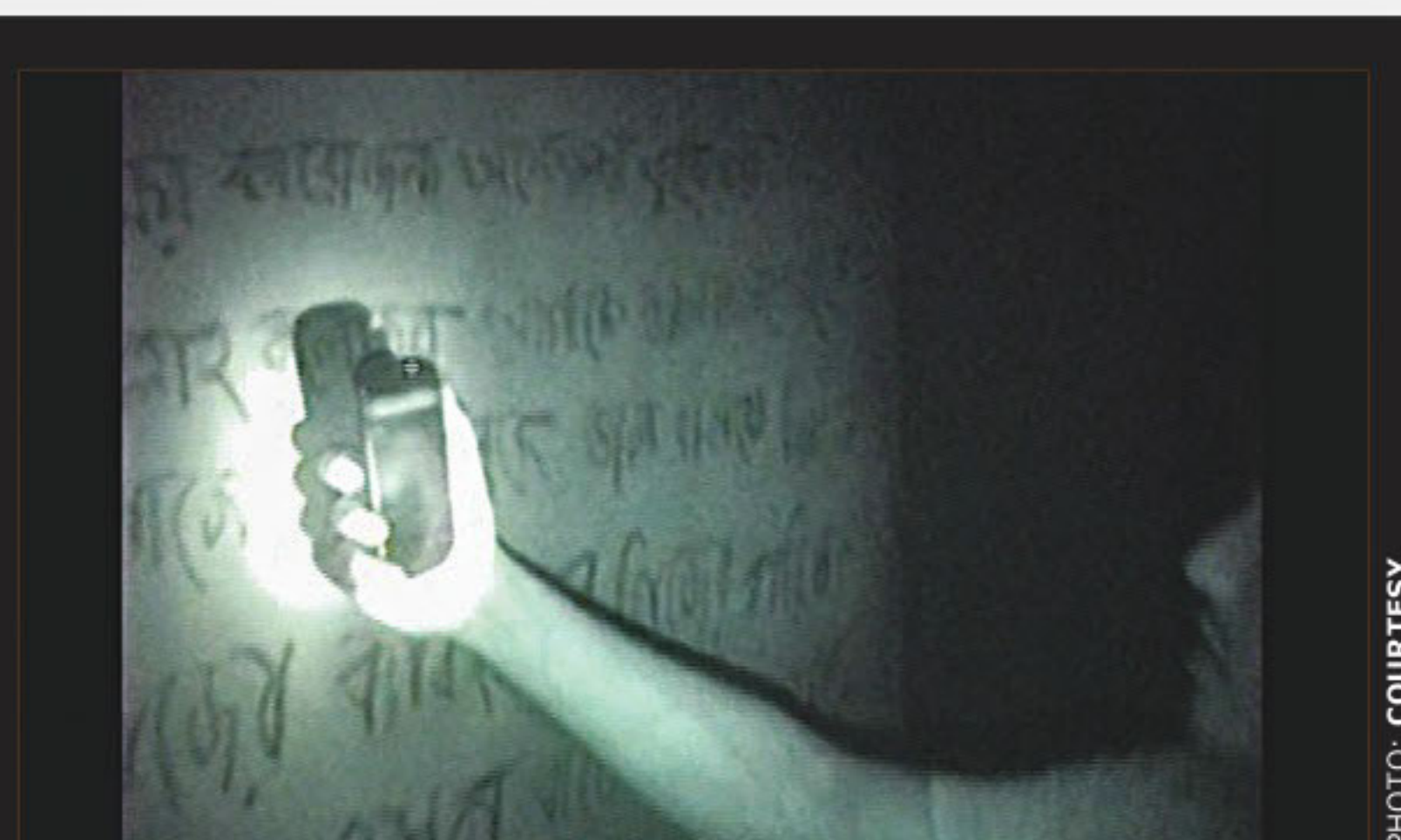
was severely scratched and in another incident in Ghorashal, I myself was scratched on the back right after our EMF meters picked up high readings. Usually, when a place is haunted we know by the readings, cold spots in certain areas and by the fact that our batteries drain out very quickly."

According to Rafee, there are usually two types of haunting, residual, where spirits come back to haunt places they once resided and demonic, which is the more dangerous type. "Once we discern what type of haunting it is, we give advice on how to deal with it. Usually, we will help the haunted get in touch with a religious figure to help cleanse their place," he tells us.

"I enjoy my work and I don't charge money for it," says Rafee when asked about his plans for DPS's future. "I would like to have my own show, if I can find a TV Channel and a producer who will do away with the theatrics and represent the facts, because that is what is important."



Image taken during an isolation session in a construction site.



Writings found about demonic possession in an abandoned home.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Soaring through the Skies

NAZIBA BASHIR

"Ever since my childhood I have been surrounded by aircrafts and pilots, since my Dad is a pilot himself. He used to be a fighter pilot in Bangladesh Air Force and later, after he retired, he opted to become an airline pilot. I used to watch him go for work in his uniform and I couldn't wait to have a uniform of my own someday," shares Rashik Bin Manzur.

Rashik joined Bangladesh Flying Club in August 2008, as soon as he was of age. While a member of the Flying Club, he completed his A-levels and joined North South University. At the same time he also appeared in the exams held by the Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh for his Private Pilot's License and his Commercial Pilot's Licence (CPL) and complete his flying hours' requirement.

He finally got his CPL in 2010. Rashik got his license to fly at the age of 18 and started flying as a full fledged First Officer when he was only 21 years old, which would be consid-

ered quite an early age to do so.

Right after receiving his license, Rashik applied to Biman Bangladesh Airlines, which was recruiting Cadet Pilots at the time, and was selected. "I am currently waiting for the final call from Biman and my training to start. Meanwhile, I am working for United Airways to gain some experience and it has been great," says Rashik.

Starting off at such a young age, Rashik still feels every thrill of being a pilot. "I absolutely love what I do. The destination changes every time, and that's what excites me so much. And most importantly, sometimes auto pilot can be my best friend!" shares Rashik.

But being a pilot also has its rough sides, "Sometimes I am not able to celebrate important occasions, including Eid, with my friends and family. And since ground-to-air calling is still not very easy, sometimes I receive important information really late and I am not able to provide my support in a family emergency," says Rashik.

Rashik got his license to fly at the age of 18 and started flying as a full fledged First Officer when he was only 21 years old, which would be considered quite an early age to do so

"If time permits, I would love to get a Masters degree from one of the top universities abroad, just to be able to compete globally on a larger scale," shares Rashik. "My plan is to become a successful entrepreneur in the future," he adds. Despite that, soaring through the skies is something he doesn't plan on giving up. "I want to carry on flying for as long as possible. One day, I want to be inside the cockpit of a 787-Dreamliner, flying it to different places across the world!"

PHOTO: SHAMS SHAHRIYAR

