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# NEXT STEP

## THE THUNDERSHIN MAN IN CONVERSATION WITH MARTIAL ARTS AND SECURITY EXPERT MAK YUREE



Grandmaster Dr. Yuree is a living legend of martial arts and psychophysical training. He was a student of Jhenidah Cadet College. He is called the "Thundershin Man" because of his world record of breaking three baseball bats with one kick. He has been featured on the cover of Combat Magazine in 2010 and has received various awards for his achievements. He has a line of security training organizations, namely Rangers and Combat Self-Defence, as well as his very own sports organization, International Butthan Federation. Dr. Yuree provides security training around the world and has been making the country proud over the years with his world-class achievements and breakthroughs.



**What were you like in Cadet College? Tell us some incidents.**

I started martial arts at the age of 9 – I'd been interested in it since childhood. In cadet college, we had societies like physics society and hiking society, which we participated in during the weekends. I was the first cadet to start a new society, the martial arts society. Fortunately our Principal Sir and Adjutant Sir at the time – Col. Nurul Anwar and Major Tareq Hamid – liked my idea and strongly supported me. At the annual athletics meet, cadets do a PT display, but the year I was graduating, we did a martial arts display - something that has happened only once in the history of my college.

**How did your friends feel about you at the time?**

Since I was into martial arts, I'd train any chance I'd get. I stopped using pillows, mattresses, blankets and even mosquito nets – I gave them away to my friends. I trained my body to resist from way back. Of course there were people who thought I was crazy and laughed at me and my training, but after all these years, I'm glad I went through with it all.

**What was on your mind after cadet college? Where were you headed after that?**

I'd always had a passion for the 'uniform', which was why I entered a cadet college. But I didn't like the idea of regimenting myself into the timetabled life of the army. I wanted to explore things my way. After my cadet college life, my interest in martial arts and self-defence increased even more so I went on a lot of trips for research. I'd stumbled across in an American journal that martial arts came from the Indian sub-continent. This struck strange to me – how was it that South Asians were the first in the field, but we knew the Shaolin Temple in China as the birthplace of martial arts? I suddenly wanted to find out the history behind it and till today I have visited many historical sites across India, China, Myanmar, and other parts of the world to unearth the history of martial arts.

**What did you study after cadet college?**

I graduated in Security Management from the NSA (National Security Agency, USA) and went on to obtain over 16 professional certifications from different universities, most of which are in the UK and US. To mention a few, there is the USA Standard-Commissioned Officers Course of Security Management and Law under the Texas Board of Private Investigation and

Security Agencies, and Fire Marshall, Bank Security, Aviation Security certifications..

**What types of martial arts have you mastered?**

After training for over 20 years year kicking trees trunks bound in ropes, I'm proud to say I have mastered 40 different types of martial arts.

**What is Butthan?**

Butthan is a Sanskrit word which originally meant 'defence with distinction' or 'spiritual defence'. People have a misconception about martial arts. They think of it only as physical prowess, a performance. But martial art is not just about physical skills; it requires a lot of meditation and spiritual consciousness.

**What have you been working on with the Butthan Foundation?**

We are trying to revive this lost heritage of Southeast Asia. That is why we came up with the International Butthan Federation (IBUF). It's an NSA-approved organisation that provides psychophysical training to people. We are promoting Butthan in Europe, America and South East Asia, and hope to participate in the SAARC Games and Asian Games.

**What projects does IBUF conduct in Bangladesh?**

We've done a lot of work on youth and women

empowerment in Bangladesh at the upazilla level. We're also promoting Butthan psychophysical training and providing training to our national security forces like the police force, SSE, RAB, as well as private security organisations. Annually, we are looking at two to three national level championships to promote sports. On the 28th and 29th December last year, we held a national competition at the Shaheed Tajuddin Indoor Stadium, in which participants from 28 districts took part.

**Why and how you were named a superhuman by the scientist team of Discovery Channel?**

Discovery Channel tracks down people all over the world with extraordinary skills in five categories - arm power, lung power, sound power, abdomen power and leg power. The requirement to participate was to have a world record in any of these categories. Primarily, 60 people were selected, from which 20 advanced to the semi-finals. The scientists interviewed us and conducted lab tests and research. Finally, they chose 5 people as 'superhumans' in the 5 areas. I was selected in the leg strength category. Following this, the Discovery Channel made a documentary on us named Superhuman Showdown.

**Tell us a bit about your world records.**

I have four world records. The first one is for breaking two baseball bats with one kick. The next one was for breaking three bats with one kick, after which I broke three baseball bats placed in a horizontal bundle (in a triangular position) with five kicks in 20 seconds. The fourth record is for having the highest neuro-engagement activity in the world.

**So, can meditation help one in improving performance, even in academics? How does it work?**

There is no replacement for focus and concentration. There are four frequency levels of our brain. Our brain functions best in the alpha-state. This state is very good for attaining learning skills, be it swimming, studies or even driving. We need to realise both our physical and mental compositions. We sometimes hear that saints and people who meditate often heal their internal organs via meditation. When I train, I can focus accurately on what I am doing and do it flawlessly. With enough practice, less deviation and patience, anyone can increase their concentration powers.

*For the full interview, check out Next Step on The Daily Star website.*

HASIBUL ISLAM

## THE FITNESS BUSINESS

A personal trainer is a fitness professional involved in exercise prescription and instruction. They motivate clients by setting goals and providing feedback. This is a great career path for people interested in body building and health spa. The increasing number of gyms and spas in Dhaka is a positive sign for people who want to pursue fitness as a career or a business.

Though this line of career is not well known in our country yet, it is very lucrative abroad. According to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, in 2012 about 267,000 fitness trainers were employed in the US. Grandmaster Dr. Yuree says the countries which are most suitable for taking up martial arts as a profession are the US, UK and Germany. Other than these, Australia, Brazil and Canada are also great places for a career in fitness training.

### WORKPLACE DESTINATIONS

There are a lot of places where people need fitness instructors. Fitness and recreation centres like gyms, exercise studios, country clubs, resorts/spas and even universities have demand for fitness trainers. Some trainers operate personally and see private clients in their homes. Corporate companies are also employing trainers for the employees. Another major money-making hotspot for trainers is cruise ships.



### CORPORATE FITNESS

If we look at the daily routines of highly successful CEOs, we will find that working out is a 'must-do'. Richard Branson, business mogul and founder of Virgin Group, once said to author Tim Ferris that working out gives him additional productivity in the day. And American President Barack Obama starts every day with 45 minutes of weights or cardio, 6 days a week, to stay in shape and keep focused.

### REQS OF THE JOB

While hiring trainers, employers prefer one to have a bachelor's degree in the health or fitness field, but the requirements vary per the employer's necessity. Personal fitness instructors work alongside expert trainers to gain experience. Besides this, there are

### HIGHEST PAYING COUNTRIES FOR FITNESS TRAINERS

- UNITED STATES: \$30,008 - \$130,000
- UNITED KINGDOM: \$20,266 - \$108,179
- AUSTRALIA: \$26,709 - \$96,268
- CANADA: \$18,259 - \$65,742
- GERMANY: \$31,215 to \$64,700

various professional certifications, which can boost one's career. Most of these certifications are obtained in the US and UK. Some of the certifying bodies include the ACSM (American College of Sports Medicine), ACE (American Council of Exercise), IFPA (International Fitness Professionals Association), and NASM (National Academy of Sports Medicine).

The prerequisites to enter most of these certification courses are being at least 18 years old and having formal first aid certification.

### UP THE LADDER

To advance to a management position in a health or fitness club, one usually needs, in addition to experience, a bachelor's degree in exercise science, physical education, kinesiology or a related area. Personal fitness trainers may become head

trainers while group exercise instructors may advance to positions as group exercise directors. In these jobs they will be responsible for hiring and training newcomers. The US Bureau of Labour Statistics predicted that employment will grow faster than average over the next ten years in the field of fitness.

### WORDS OF ADVICE

Fitness training is a very well paid job in western countries, but there are work opportunities for fitness trainers in Bangladesh that are increasing with time. For example, leading hotels like the Radisson, Westin, etc. hire professionals trainers for their spas and fitness facilities. While discussing body building as a career with Rafiqul Islam, popularly known as Hitman Hart AND Mr. Bangladesh 2014, says "Taking up bodybuilding as a serious career is not yet feasible in our country. Consistency is an important factor if anyone wants to have success in body building because it is not a sport but a life style" He adds, "Professional fitness trainers are not widely available in our country or rather there is not a matured enough market for them. In the near future, there will be a need of experts and then we will start to see more of such job opportunities."

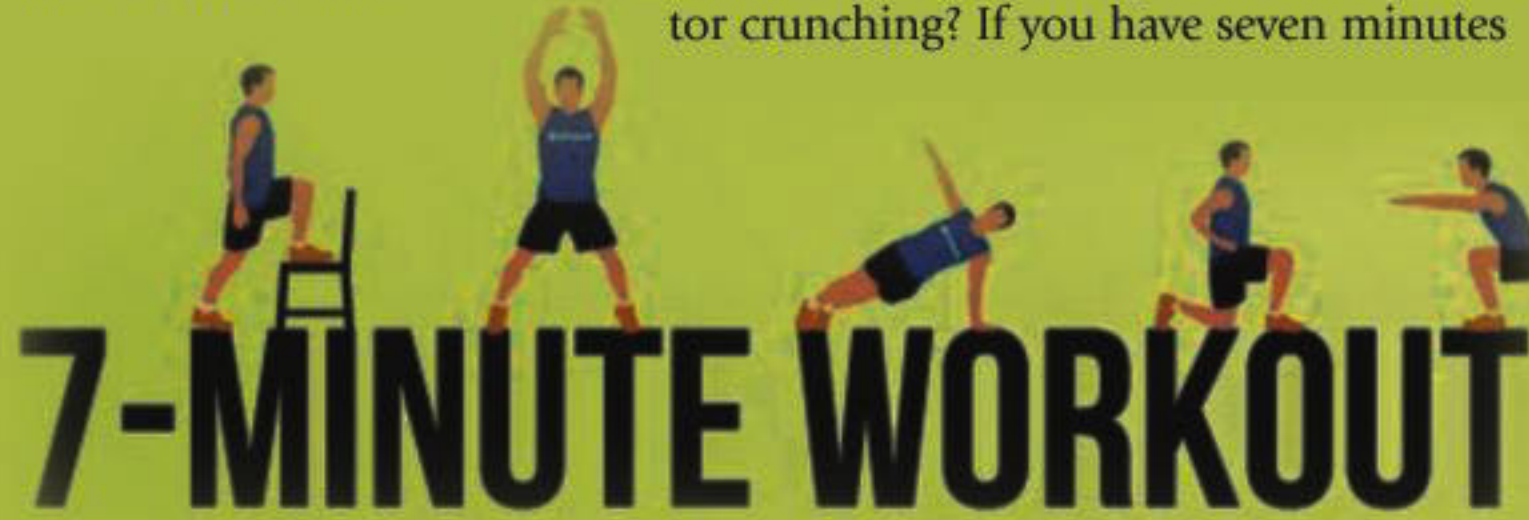
HASIBUL ISLAM

### WATER COOLER CHRONICLES

MOYUKH MAHTAB

I tried going to the gym once. I ran like a rat from my office cubicle, went in and stared at the contraptions straight out of an Iron Maiden album cover minus the spikes. As the old Woody Allen quote goes, "Eighty percent of success is showing up." And the rest twenty consisted of me squeezing into every one of those devices – I ran furiously, huffed, puffed and in 15 minutes could not move a finger. Which was a problem, since my boss called me back to my desk, and fingers tend to be useful while writing.

But exercise, as people in lab coats would like us to believe, is important. If not for keeping that extra piece of chocolate cake away from the waistline, then at least to be able to fit into a public bus when necessary. So what do you do when you need to stay fit but never manage to make time between that double beef cheese burger and the calculator crunching? If you have seven minutes



### 7-MINUTE WORKOUT

to spare, then the aptly named 7-minute workout is for you. The idea is simple. Instead of hours of running on the treadmill, you up the ante and push your body to the limit for seven minutes. No extra machinery needed, this regimen just requires a wall and a chair. The twelve exercises, each lasting 30 seconds with 10 seconds of rest in between, are designed to alternate between muscle sets. And all of this based on science.

This sort of interval training is, however, not designed to be comfortable. The seven minutes will leave you drained, but the intensity is the reason this works. For the full regimen, try searching for "7 minute workout" in both the Android and iOS app markets. You might not become the next heavyweight through this, but being able to walk up a full flight of stairs without stopping has its own perks.

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### Course overview

Some people seem to rise effortlessly through the ranks of the organization. You might equate this success with natural ability, talent, and business acumen. However, there's often another story behind this success: the challenges and the setbacks that had to be overcome, and the approach that led to achievement. Because setbacks are an inevitable part of daily life, you must develop an attitude of perseverance and resilience in order to reach your goals. This course gives you the tools you need for developing an attitude that allows you to bounce back from setbacks and forge ahead.