



# YOUNG INNOVATORS TO TRAVEL TO STOCKHOLM

AZMIN AZRAN

The Stockholm Junior Water Prize is an annual competition where young environment enthusiasts from around the world present projects trying to solve water-related environmental problems that ravage this planet. The competition is overseen by the Stockholm International Water Institute who presents the award at a ceremony held in Stockholm during the World Water Week. This year, a team from St. Joseph Higher Secondary School won the national round to earn the ticket to Sweden.

The team of Sheikh Rifayet Daiyan Srijon, Navid Haider and Labib Tazwar Rahman, all of whom have passed their SSC this year, is going to have the honour of representing Bangladesh and their institution at a global platform. They qualified through an initial stage where they presented a 20-page paper which explained the idea that they thought could be the solution to the ever growing water crisis in our cities, and they were selected to the regional finals held at BUET where they presented their project in front of a panel of professors, representatives from WaterAid and the



Embassy of Sweden. The panel eventually adjudged them to be the best of the lot from Bangladesh and their project "AquaProcessor" won the Bangladesh Stockholm Junior Water Prize.

"AquaProcessor" is an integration of rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling process which can be used by new building owners to improve water efficiency that will also help users to

reduce their water bills in the long run. It also saves rivers from being polluted to a great extent," says Labib Tazwar Rahman. According to him, this could tackle head on the issues we have in Dhaka with large treatment plants never seeing the light of day beyond proposition files. "We believe the targeted problems of groundwater depletion and lack of an environment-friendly water management system can be

sufficiently tackled by AquaProcessor," he adds.

This team of young innovators are scheduled to leave for Stockholm in August where they will fight contenders from all over the world to be called winners of the Stockholm Junior Water Prize. If they do manage to achieve that feat, what awaits them is a USD 15,000 scholarship and a blue crystal prize sculpture on top of the collective admiration from around the world for the talent produced from Bangladesh. Sheikh Rifayet Daiyan Srijon, one of the young men behind the idea, says, "Preparing for the international round has been daunting but all the effort will end in vain if local corporations don't sponsor our initiative financially. We hope patrons will come forward and help us financially to represent Bangladesh at a global stage." That is what we hope as well because young minds like them can help us move forward in the future, and it is at this stage that they need the most backing.

*When he's not obsessing over football, Azmin Azran spends his time devising ways of not getting mugged, only to fail miserably. Give him advice at fb.com/azminazran.*

# Team Bangladesh at World Schools Debating Championship

RAYAAN IBTESHAM CHOWDHURY

Bangladesh's reputation has been growing exponentially in the debating world. Just a few weeks ago, Wasifa Noshin from IBA-DU was ranked the 3rd Best Speaker in the United Asian Debating Championships 2015, Indonesia. And just last year, Summerfield International School reached the semi-finals of Asian Schools Debating Championship. They were coached by Taosif Amin Khan, also from IBA-DU. There is something Taosif and Wasifa have in common. They both come from a culture of school debating that has grown and flourished in the country over the past decade. They were both part of the Bangladeshi National Team that participated in WSDC in yesteryears.

This year again, the trend continues. Sheikh Rifayet Daiyan Srijon from St. Joseph Higher Secondary School, Asif Mehedi Adi from European School, Nawed Nafees from Summerfield International School, Wasif Khan from Academia and Kazi Ashfaque Haque from Maple Leaf International School will be hoisting the flag at WSDC 2015 in Singapore. The team is coached by Taosif Amin Khan and all organisational works are led by Fardeen Ameen and Aaqib Farhan.

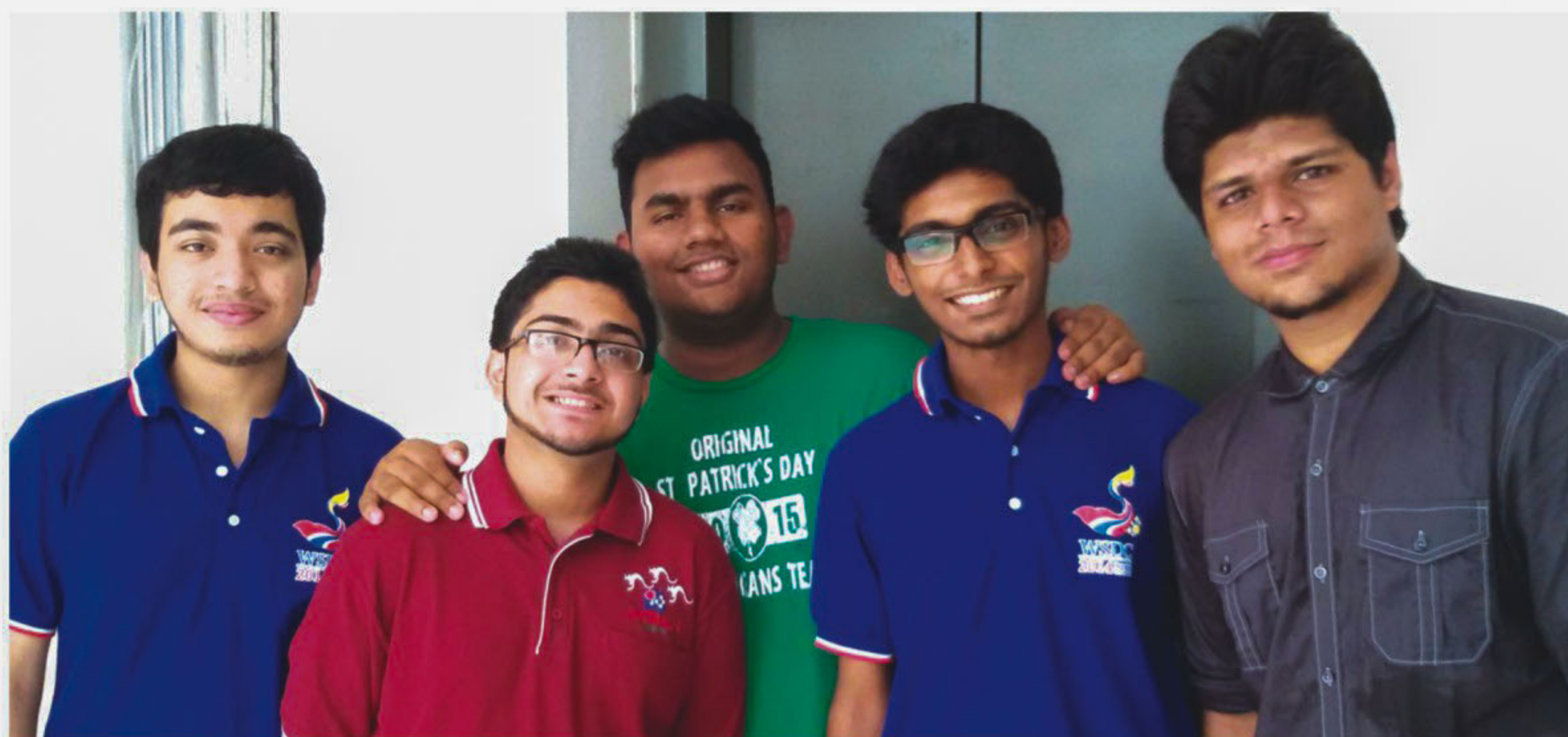
The team has been selected through a process overseen by Bangladesh Debating Council. The journey starts with the pre-WSDC Debating Championships each year. Last

year, it was at Viqarunnisa School and College in October. From there, the top 30 school level debaters of the country were selected to attend the National Debate Camp which BDC organised in early 2015. Through various stages of selection, and through gruelling training by other WSDC Team alumni, the 5 were chosen to represent our country. World Schools Debating Championship is the school

Bangladesh Debating Council in 2006. That started a new debating culture in Bangladesh and we are getting the fruits of that labour now. Bangladeshi teams constantly reach the latter stages of World University Debating Championship as well as other international tournaments. In the Asian debating circuit, names like Bangladesh's Wasifa Noshin, Taosif Amin Khan, Aaqib Farhan Hossain, Saad Ashraf, Ratib Ali are regarded with reverence. Wasifa Noshin herself will be a part of the adjudication core of Australasian Women's Debating Championship 2016 to be hosted by Griffiths University. Rishad Sharif of University of Dhaka will be a part of the adjudication core of United Asian Debating Championships 2016 in Thailand.

This is especially commendable considering that most of the Bangladeshi debaters don't have the financial support that other countries give their debaters. This is unfortunate since other young high achievers, say young scientists, inventors and such who represent our country

do get a fair bit of financial support either from the private sector or other organisations. With how the debaters are proudly waving our flag on the international stages, it's high time there was more support for them. Debate is the intellectual's sport. And growth in debate shows the intellectual growth of the country's new generation.



debate equivalent of the FIFA World Cup. Nearly 50 countries will be sending their school level national teams to participate in what will be a celebration of logic and engagement among the brightest young minds of the world.

There was a time when Bangladeshi teams struggled to establish themselves on the world stage. It was this struggle that encouraged a group of debaters to establish

do get a fair bit of financial support either from the private sector or other organisations. With how the debaters are proudly waving our flag on the international stages, it's high time there was more support for them. Debate is the intellectual's sport. And growth in debate shows the intellectual growth of the country's new generation.