



# WHEN STRANGERS CLEAN OUR CITY

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How many times have you seen people litter proudly on your street? You've always thought about telling them off but did you ever do it? This is where "Clean Up Dhaka" stepped in, a team who dared to clean Dhaka against all odds.

"Clean Up Dhaka" are nothing short of superheroes. They're a team of students from the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) with a shared goal of doing something for the environment. That is how the founder of Clean Up Dhaka, Jawad Mubashwir, explained the initiation of the project.

He said, "It's not something that happened out of years of thinking but rather something we impulsively decided to do two months ago. We realised we wanted to help Dhaka which recently got labelled as the second least liveable city. We realised issues such as pollution and congestion are very complex, and we needed something simple to start with. That's when we decided that there's nothing simpler than a cleaning campaign that requires only a plastic bag and a pair of gloves."

The campaign started on August 21, 2015 when the team first began with cleaning Banani Road 11, one of the busiest streets in the city and also a hub for Dhaka foodies. At their first attempt, the team was met with confused stares from people. It was truly a rare vision for Dhakaites to see people actually getting down on the streets and picking up litter. Even though initially some laughed and even went on to filming the process without offering any help, Clean Up Dhaka had already begun gaining supporters. Moreover, seeing foreigners cleaning our roads, which is our duty in

the first place, incited a new sense of responsibility within the onlookers.

When asked why the Clean Up Dhaka team included foreigners and not the local people, Mubashwir explained, "We tend to have an ego issue when it comes to doing something like cleaning the streets. We think that it's beneath us to clean somebody else's litter. That is the exact mentality we aimed to change."

from all over Bangladesh. As per demand, when an online sign-up was launched, as many as 400 volunteers signed up to clean the streets of Dhaka.

Mubashwir continued, "There was a man who travelled 10 hours to and from Bogra and waited since 4 am just so he could be a part of our campaign. We wanted this to be just a trial run of our project but the amount of exposure we

South University and S.F.X. Green Herald International school who lent a hand in cleaning Asad Gate area. More promisingly, the Government showed its full support for the initiative when the Mayor of Dhaka North City Corporation, Annisul Huq, met with the team in person and congratulated them. Mubashwir informed us that Clean Up Dhaka will conduct their campaign twice a year and



It is fair to say their mission was a success. The next cleaning campaign was conducted at Gulshan 2 circle, followed by Asad Gate and the most recent one in Gabtoli. As the areas became more difficult to clean, the number of supporters for Clean Up Dhaka continued to increase with every passing day of the campaign. The team's Facebook page began receiving requests for volunteering

received has been overwhelming. This goes to show everybody wants a change, they just don't know where to start."

Clean Up Dhaka has taken not only Dhaka but Bangladesh by surprise and has been receiving requests from all over Bangladesh to visit their respective areas. The project has not only been supported by the general public but also by organisations such as the Earth Club of North

continue till a visible change occurs in Dhaka and beyond.

Clean Up Dhaka has ignited a flame to bring about a change; it's now our turn to join in and clean up our own turf.

*Labiba Mustabina is a biochemist in the making. A tree hugger, she also claims to be a closet artist. You can reach her at labiba.wish@gmail.com*

## ENGINEERING MINDS AT CENNOVATION 2015 BY IUT



Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEE) of Islamic University of Technology (IUT) has been hosting the country's biggest civil engineering festival for the last 2 years, titled "CENNOVATION". This year they organised it on August 29, 2015 at the campus of IUT.

Over 700 participants from more than 20 universities have registered for different events namely mechanics olympiad, poster presentation, project showcasing, case study analysis, CAD contest, environmental photography and short film contest. Participants presented their projects and posters on several important national issues like pollution, traffic problem, structural safety,

sustainability etc. The topic of this year's case study analysis was to propose a sustainable transportation mode for Dhaka city.

Dr. Shamim Z. Bosunia, President of the Institution of Engineers, Bangladesh was present as the chief guest. Prof. Dr. M. Imtiaz Hossain, VC of IUT was also present as the special guest. Prof. Dr. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, VC of University of Asia Pacific was present as the chief guest and Engr. M. A. Awal was present as the special guest at the closing and prize giving ceremony

This year's CENNOVATION was solely sponsored by Lafarge Surma Cement Limited. The Daily Star acted as the strategic partner of this grand programme.