

SPIKES ASIA: A Platform for Creative Young Minds

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Festivals promote diversity, creativity breaks established patterns. Spikes Asia is where the region's creative communications community come together to celebrate advertising talents, debate the industry's key issues, update their knowledge, network with industry professionals and be creatively inspired. I had the opportunity to attend this year's festival as a "Young Spikes Competitor" for being the champion (Team The Daily Star) of Cannes Lions Edit Competition Bangladesh 2015, organised by Bangladesh Brand Forum.

From avant-garde seminars by the industry's most inspiring speakers to splendid networking events, training, and showcasing of the region's best creative work – the spectacular three-day festival (September 9-11) was held in Singapore. It was all about discovering new and interesting perspectives that influence current advertisement trends.

The content programme of this event was divided into three stages: inspiration, discovery and silent.

The inspiration stage focused on getting a fresh perspective of driving creative communications with varied talks from some of the world's most inspiring speakers. Sessions in this stage included speakers from YouTube, Facebook, Grey Group, Google, Twitter, BBC and many other top brands of the world. Facebook's head of



Creative Shop, APAC said that a three second attention span in Facebook can be vital for advertising in his session on "Creativity in a mobile world". The head of brand strategy, Asia Pacific of Twitter, Steve Kalifowitz asked the participants to stand out by fitting in, while describing the power of #now.

The discovery stage was an innovative one, where the region's most exciting innovators gave unique insights into the future of tech and biggest creative leaders shared their experiences and lessons that drive creativity.

The most creative stage, however, was the silent one, where one discovered practical take-home tips covering industry's biggest challenges and trends through headphone sessions. Some interesting sessions in the silent stage were "Smart solutions driven by data insights," "Creativity matters – for business, for change, for good" and "Understanding your client's zodiac and find happiness."

Best advertisements of the region including press ads, outdoor communications, integrated marketing campaign and digital marketing contents were showcased at the event. Moreover, there were out of the box kiosks

from Instagram, Ogilvy & Mather, Panorama Stock, etc. At the Instagram booth one could take photos manipulated by optical illusions that showed your rotated pictures at 90 degrees. SoftBank Robotics introduced "Pepper", the world's first personal robot to the delegates of Spikes Asia at their stall. Pepper is the first humanoid robot designed to live with humans. Young Spikes competition on media, integrated, Facebook Hackathon and digital marketing was also held during the festival where participants had to solve real marketing cases. At the end of the festival, the prestigious Spikes Asia Award ceremony was held.

Spikes Asia is a huge platform for young creative minds of Bangladesh to meet inspiring leaders and other young delegates from around the globe. As Manuela Garcia from University of Navarre, Pamplona, Spain, whom I met at Spikes, said, "The festival allowed me to engage with different ways of creativity, given the fact that participants came from all over Asia and the Pacific."

The writer is a young marketing professional who is living in this world because there are brands everywhere.

Chittagong Express Open 2015: Debate by the Sea

MYAT MOE KHAING

Imagine debating against finalists of international debate tournaments. Get out of your comfort zone, team up with someone who might not be from your school, face your idols and drastically improve your debate skills. That's the experience that open debate tournaments give you.

Chittagong School Debaters' Association (CSDA) organised their first ever signature tournament named "Chittagong Express Open 2015". Merak was its title sponsor while Shout was the strategic partner. The tournament was held on September 11-12, 2015. The aim was to bridge the gap between debaters from Dhaka and Chittagong. The tournament had 22 teams participating, of which 5 were from Dhaka.

An excellent panel of adjudicators, both from Dhaka and Chittagong, were present to ensure the excellence of the tournament's judging quality. The Chief Adjudication Core was led by Shadmaan Ahmed Siddiqui from Institute of Business Administration – Dhaka University, Asif Mehedi Adi from North South University, Tausif Ahmed from University of Chittagong, Symum Ossharohi from Premier University, and Pavel Mohammed from Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology. The tab director of this tournament was



Tanvir Ahmad Siddiqui from Premier University.

The tournament consisted of 5 preliminary qualifying rounds followed by a break to semi finals and a grand finale. The debaters debated on a wide range of topics such as "This House would ban opinion poll", "This House believes that children who weren't vaccinated by their parents due to religious/cultural reasons have the right to sue them". It was extremely rewarding for all judges to see how deeply debaters could think critically on such complicated issues that have often baffled the highest experts in their

own work.

"There is a lack of initiative to organise English debate tournaments in Chittagong where school kids can take part. We want to debate on the same scale as university students do, but we lack debate coaches and opportunities," said Marjuck Raiyan, a debater from Cantonment English School and College Debating Club. As a co-host of this tournament, he looks forward to more debate tournaments in Chittagong.

The motion of the grand finale of Chittagong Express Open 2015 was "This House believes that the ICC would prose-

cute countries that have the capability but unwilling to take refugees". The motion was hotly contested by the teams 'Modern Family' composing of Aaqib Farhan Hossain, Fardeen Ameen and Zefroon Afsary, and 'Independent University of Bangladesh' composing of Tahsin Islam, Sabbir and Monowar. The round was chaired by Shadmaan Ahmed Siddiqui. Eventually Modern Family was declared the champion and Aaqib Farhan Hossain was named the best speaker of the tournament. The winning team and the best speaker of the tournament were awarded with prize money.

On asking how debating outside Dhaka felt, Mukitur Reza, a debater from North South University said, "I needed a break from the hectic life in Dhaka. A weekend spent debating and exploring Chittagong in this chilly weather was the perfect package."

This tournament gave the opportunity for many new young debaters from Chittagong to come across legends of the Bangladesh debate circuit. If not any, this event ignited the enthusiasm for debating at an early age. CSDA promises to come back with more such events.

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