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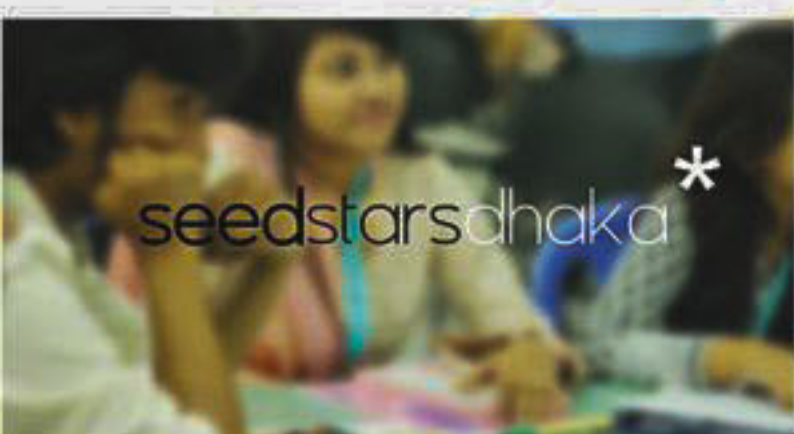
The Daily Star
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e-mail: nextstep@thedailystar.net

NEXT STEP

WHAT'S HOT IN THE DHAKA STARTUP SCENE RIGHT NOW

The startup scene of Bangladesh is hotter than ever now, with new startups popping up every day.

1. SEEDSTARS DHAKA



Seedstars World, the global seed-stage startup competition for emerging markets and fast-growing startup scenes, has come to Bangladesh for the first time. Its pitching competition will be held on November 14. So by the time you see this article it's already a bit late for applying. But you should definitely go there to see the best startups pitch in front of some of the hottest VCs and mentors in Dhaka. Seedstars primarily focuses on three major tracks: FinTech, TravelTech and StarTech. Each of these investment tracks will have a USD 500,000 equity prize for its winner.

2. GP ACCELERATOR



GP Accelerator is an accelerator program by Grameenphone and pow-

ered by SD Asia. This program will empower tech startups with the resources they need to build, grow, and 'go beyond'. During this program 4-month long bootcamp, the startups will be getting BDT 1 million+ seed funding, workspace at GP House, expert mentors, top-notch curricula, GP's in-house development resources, investor access and credibility to boost the startups' businesses by creating valuable partnerships with onboard key customers of GP. The first batch of the program will work with 5 startups only.

Apply:
<http://www.grameenphoneaccelerator.com/apply>
Deadline: December 31, 2015

3. FOUNDER INSTITUTE



Founder Institute has been operating here Dhaka for about a year now. It is a very popular early-stage startup accelerator. Roughly 1,850 technology founders have already launched companies with the help of this institute's company-building curriculum. So if you are building a technology company and willing to work hard on your startup then you are most welcomed to apply. Founder institute includes digital media, software, biotech, cleantech, ecommerce, advertising, consumer electronics, and more. Out of the first batch of 142 applicants who went through screen-

ing, two startups received USD 15,000 from Fenox Ventures. If you plan to apply this is what you need to know: all applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, so the sooner you apply, the better your chances to get accepted and the sooner you will hear our decision. After completing the application, you will be invited to take a Predictive Admissions Test. This test is continually calibrated to identify entrepreneurial personality traits. Apply: <http://fi.co/apply/2161>
Deadline: November 22, 2015

4. CONNECTING STARTUPS BANGLADESH

Connecting Startups Bangladesh is a state-sponsored program that wants to connect startups to markets and investors by providing mentoring and incubation to promising startups. In addition to that the startups will also receive workspace, logistic support, training, opportunities and exposure to meet multiple VCs and other funds. Following a verification process, the selected startups will be



called for an interview. From the applicants 10 startups with innovative ideas and international standards will be allotted operational space at the Bangladesh Hi-Tech Park completely free of cost for a year. Other startups with potential can also hire space in the Software Park.

Apply:
www.connectingstartupsbd.net/registration
Deadline: November 18, 2015

5. STARTUP BANGLADESH



Startup Bangladesh is an initiative to catalyse a startup revolution in Bangladesh. It aids in the creation of a connection between the policies made and their implementation or practice. By joining this program, your business can become investment ready, reach new destinations by scaling up your business, and convert to online to offline and vice versa. Apply: <http://bit.ly/1HBYa19>
Deadline: November 15, 2015

6. INNOVATION XTREME

Innovation Xtreme (IX) 2015, a startup contest, is going to commence on December 5, 2015 for the second time. The day-long event by Grameenphone will be held at Radisson Hotel Dhaka. SDAsia, the organiser of the event, plans to bring together the entire entrepreneurial ecosystem to showcase the potential



of innovators and entrepreneurs in Bangladesh. This year the top 5 participating startups will have the opportunity to win a Facebook startup package worth USD 50,000. Apply: goo.gl/MzZtll
Deadline: November 25, 2015

7. STARTUP WEEKEND DHAKA

Startup Weekend is a global grassroots movement of active and empowered entrepreneurs who are learning the basics of founding startups and launching successful ventures. It is the largest community of passionate entrepreneurs with over 1,800 past events in 120 countries around the world in 2014. This year, startup weekend is going to hold a



54-hour long event where anyone can join and pitch their startup idea. It will be held at Newscred, Inc. in Banani from November 19 to 21, 2015. Competition will be high as only 80 prospective entrepreneurs will be able to attend, and only 10 teams will be selected to work on their concepts. Apply: <http://bit.ly/1Lbw73J>
Deadline: November 18, 2015 (limited seats)

8. GET IN THE RING BANGLADESH

Get in the Ring is a global startup competition which is really popular



for their unique pitching concept. The most promising entrepreneurs fight with words for a spot in the National and Regional finals, to become the champion of Get in the Ring. During the competition, participating startups can connect to capital, talent, support, and expertise to help them on their journey to the top. For the first time, this event is going to be held on December 29, 2015 in Dhaka at Daffodil International University. To participate in the competition, you can register online free of cost. Initially there will be a knockout round in front of a jury board. Apply: <https://www.gitr.co/apply>
Deadline: December 7th, 2015
Compiled by: Shahriar Rahman Engineer-turned-writer, Shahriar Rahman is Sub-Editor of the tech publication of The Daily Star. He is also Head of Operations at HiFi Public.

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BUILDING POSSIBILITY

SAK Ekramuzzaman, Managing Director of Rakeen Properties, talks about his plans for the property business

There is a saying in modern day Bangladesh that if one inherits or buys a piece of land, then one can easily live a laidback life. This saying makes us think about how the property and developing business flourishes in our country. From high-rises to apartment buildings, developers have taken the business to a whole new level. Rakeen Properties is starting its journey in this business, but the projects they are undertaking are sure to amaze residents of the city.

SAK Ekramuzzaman, Managing Director of Rakeen Properties, started off collaborating with a big developing company in Dubai. Over time, the collaboration came to a halt and Rakeen started operating as an independent company. "Though we come from a business which produces ceramics and textiles, property development has become our focus right now," says Ekramuzzaman. Their first project, which has created a buzz all over, is Bijoy Rakeen City. The project is being developed in Mirpur on 16.06 acres of land. The city will include 36 buildings which will have a total of 1,950 apartments. It will also have schools, shopping malls, mosques, and a business area.

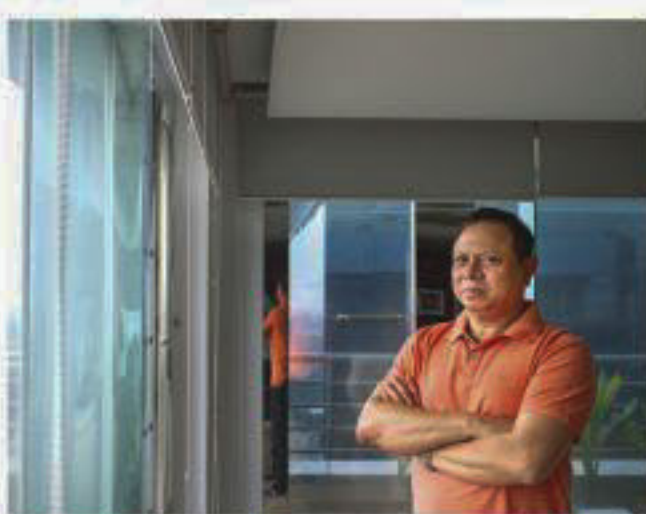


PHOTO: DARSHAN CHAKRA

This fully equipped mini-city will resemble much of the international market. "We plan on bringing in the aspects of property development that we see in countries such as America, Singapore, and Dubai. Bangladesh is a land of possibilities. No one in the world can match our manpower and resources. We want this project to showcase just that," said the Managing Director. He also added, "Rakeen Bijoy city will have everything that you'd find in cities like New York or Doha. We are working very hard to give a little piece of the American dream to our clients."

The business that flourished a decade back has gone down due to worldwide economic crises, which also affected businesses in our country. "Making profit in the property business is quite hard right now, but that is not our focus at the moment. This modern city will be our trademark project and the first of its kind. It will set an example for future developments," concluded Ekramuzzaman.

INTERVIEWED BY: APURBA JAHANGIR

NSU YES! at a glance

2015 saw North South University's business club host NSUers Meet Corporate Icons (NMCI) 2015. The new executive body behind the latest event joined YES! in spring 2013 as general members. Little did they know what they had signed up for. Composed of Mohammad Raafiu Hasan (President); Md. Mobasshir Aakif Chowdhury (Vice President- Logistics and Resources); Nuhin Yousra (Vice President- External Affairs); Rezwan Ahmed (General Secretary); Tanjir Bin Jamil (Joint Secretary); and Ahnaf Tahmeed Rabbani (Treasurer), the executive team is currently focused on organising Masters of Ideation 2016 and Ad Maker Bangladesh 2016.

Mohammad Raafiu Hasan, President of YES! for 2015-2016, started out as the In-Charge of Booth and Database in NMCI 2014. He went on to become the Program Support for Masters of Ideation 2015 and the Operations In-Charge for Ad Maker Bangladesh 2015. Raafi oversees all club operations, acting as the figurehead for the whole club.

Vice President of Logistics of Resources, Md. Mobasshir Aakif Chowdhury takes care of all the resources in the club and their proper upkeep—be it physical or human. He became the In-charge of Administration during NMCI 2014. He served as the Operations In-charge for Masters of Ideation 2015, and was the Head of Media during Ad Maker Bangladesh 2015.

Vice President of External Affairs, Nuhin Yousra represents the club in all external matters, be it sponsors, media and inter-university relations. She became the In-charge of Speakers in NMCI 2014. Later, she served as the In-charge of Media in Masters of Ideation 2015, and oversaw the entire Sponsors department during Ad Maker Bangladesh 2015.

General Secretary of YES!, Rezwan Ahmed's first major position was In-Charge of Logistics for NMCI 2014. He went on to become the In-Charge of Promotions and IT in Masters of Ideation 2015, and Program Support for Ad Maker Bangladesh 2015. Rezwan handles all matters related to the administration and is the spokesperson for the club.

Tanjir Bin Jamil, Joint Secretary of the club, was appointed as the In-Charge of Logistics for NMCI 2014. He went on to become the Operations In-Charge for Masters of Ideation 2015, and Head of Logistics for Ad Maker Bangladesh 2015. He deals with the development



and training of the member base, as well as the club's internal affairs.

Ahnaf Tahmeed Rabbani, Treasurer of the club, first served as the In-Charge of Administration during NMCI 2014. He was appointed In-Charge of Publication during Masters of Ideation 2015, and Head of Promotions and IT for Ad Maker Bangladesh 2015.

The club is presently working on a new website, which they hope will benefit the students like never before. The executive body plans to focus on member development and create future leaders out of them.

Making a DIFFERENCE

Bangladesh is rapidly moving towards middle income status by 2021. Our businesses definitely offer immense opportunities for the growing economy and this diversity needs a stage for the stories untold. See Bangladesh make its mark on the global map as Making a Difference brings you our proudest success stories from across the country.

BEFORE YOU PACK YOUR BAGS

The prospect of moving abroad is attractive to most regardless of age or occupation. But as someone might have told you, it's not all sunshine and rainbows. Despite our preconceived notions it's important to know exactly what you're likely to face. So here are a few facts for those of you wanting to work or study abroad.

CULTURE SHOCK

Change of culture is one of the major shifts that people experience abroad. And believe it or not many people return to their home country soon because of it. The culture an individual is accustomed to determines how he/she perceives the world. Being exposed to different ways of doing things can cause disparity in people's minds to the extent that it can lead to anxiety. Because of the internet and social media it has become easier than ever to learn about other cultures beforehand and reduce the shock. Maisha Huq, a junior at WVU said that she was taken back at first because of the way people dressed and behaved in her college which made her stand out from the crowd.

BLENDING IN

Socialising cannot and should not be limited to interacting with people from the same subcontinent. Travelling abroad is a great opportunity to meet different people and make new friends. Even though some people have a hard time blending in, knowing the native language can help immensely. Fraternities are a great way of meeting a lot of people at the same time and make lasting relationships. The benefits of having diverse social groups cannot be overstated as it can enhance your overall experience. Arif Mohammad another junior at WVU said 'If you befriend everyone they're going to be cool. But

they will hate on you if you make a part of a race.'

RECEPTIVENESS

Not every country will welcome you with arms wide open. Countries vary in their level of receptiveness to foreigners and although some are built on immigrants, others are xenophobic. Sometimes it even varies in different parts of the same country. Be sure to check out the immigrant policy of your desired destination and Google research can come in

that we have the required skill sets to perform tasks. And with globalisation and changing markets, it's tougher than ever to find a job let alone retain it. Naser Chowdhury an Associate at the Royal Bank of Canada had to say 'People here are more professional. They mind their business and like to maintain balance between personal and work life. If they choose you for a job then they expect you to deliver.'

In the end make sure you're



handy as well. Make sure you new address is suitable for you and your aspirations.

HARD WORK

If you think you can make easy money overseas, then there's more substance to it. The pay scale might be better but on other side you might have to work even harder. There's no doubt people in developed countries are more skilled and proficient, so to compete with them we'll have to work harder than we do. Before seeking work it's important to make sure

travelling for the right reasons. If your reason is to buy a sports car then you probably need to start all over again. Be open to the idea of adapting to new situations and embrace the change. Make friends, try new things but also make sure you have the right skills to survive and compete.

SHAHRIAR SHARIF

The writer is a freshman at the Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka