

TALKING TO TENZING CHAKMA

This week, Lifestyle sat down with the designer to talk about his life and his work.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE FASHION DESIGNING AS A CAREER?

There was never a fixed plan. I always wanted to study fine arts but my mother inspired me to get into the world of fashion designing. I was also very fond of drawing ever since I was a child and that helped me get into designing as well.

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF ECO-FASHION?

I think eco-fashion is very important. We should always look to use materials that are eco-friendly and does not hurt the environment.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PART ABOUT BEING A FASHION DESIGNER?

There are a lot of favourite parts but my most favourite would be creating new designs that are colourful and different. I am always eager to try out new things and designing allows me to work my creative muscles

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO GET INTO FASHION DESIGN?

I don't know about the past but now I think about the indigenous weaving. I am inspired to take our weaving and its fabrics to a whole new stage and level.

HOW DID YOU SELECT THE MATERIALS YOU USE?

I usually like using rayon, which is quite commonly used in our weaving. I am also very fond of cotton and silk.

DOES YOUR WORK REFLECT YOUR PERSONAL FASHION TASTE? CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE?

Personally, I dress pretty simple. I don't usually go for a lot of colours but my designing style is completely different. My designs are always filled with col-



our and personality. **HOW HAVE YOU INCORPORATED YOUR STYLE INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF BANGLADESH?** Currently I am trying to incorporate our 'adivasi' elements into my design and it has been working well so far. Back in the day, people would get married wearing banarasi but now that that has been modified, there's been a lot of change and traditional clothes are more often being used at weddings. So we are definitely making an impact. **WHERE DO YOU SEE BANGLADESHI FASHION HEADING IN THE NEAR FUTURE?**

I think fashion has developed quite well in the past 10 years, but it has to improve a lot more. We must also put in more thought into our designs instead of just going with whatever that works. I think where fashion is heading

also depends on the business aspects as well as the financial aspects of things. Fashion designing just for commercial sales does not always work. You have to look at fashion differently and not as just a commercial tool.

WHAT IS YOUR LATEST FASHION DESIGN PROJECT?

Currently, I am not working on any projects but I do have my personal brand called Sozpodor. I am always involved and working with Sozpodor.

WHAT IS THE MOST CHALLENGING PART ABOUT BEING A FASHION DESIGNER?

I think the hardest part is creating a new design. A lot of thought goes into duplicating your ideas into a real design and its always challenging to match the final design with what you imagined it to be on paper. You also have to keep in mind how it'll work as an outfit and how people will look at it.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?

There aren't any fixed goals. I will still keep doing what I am doing and work hard to support our indigenous weaving as well as to create colourful and innovative designs.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ASPIRING FASHION DESIGNERS?

Don't think too commercially. Try to be more creative with your designs and always work hard to create something new. You have to be brave and stick to your style and you'll make it.

By Naveed Naushad
 Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed
 Model: Isha and Suhnera
 Wardrobe, Jewellery, Styling: Tenzing Chakma
 Make-up, hair: Farzana Shakil
 Location: Pan Pacific Sonargaon

