

| STAR PEOPLE |

FOR OPPORTUNITIES APLENTY

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PHOTO: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO




Osama Bin Noor

Opportunities are treasured. Opportunities come by at random, at their will and wish. Our task is to recognise them and use them to their fullest potential. But good opportunities really are difficult to recognise and sometimes, they are the one thing missing from life- the one that can help you make your dreams come true. At times like this, you need to build opportunities for yourself. But there was one such individual who, at the lack of opportunity, thought of others instead of himself. This year, Osama Bin Noor, founder of Youth Opportunities, was on the Forbe's List of 30 under 30 Asia, for his outstanding work with his social enterprise.

Youth Opportunities is the largest opportunities discovery platform for youths across the globe. The purpose of this platform is to provide opportunities to young people to explore and prepare themselves to face the challenges and excel in their career growth. The platform works to bridge the gap between the youth and their scope to contribute to create a better world.

"I grew up in Narsingdi, where I studied in a Madrasa. I then moved to Dhaka, in Uttara, after which I enrolled myself into Update Dental College to study dentistry." Osama opted for dentistry at his parents will. What he really wanted to do was be an air force pilot. "I've always dreamed of being one. But what I had lacked was the opportunity and mentorship. That's pretty much what urged me to make Youth Opportunities."

Forbes 30 UNDER 30 ASIA SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURS
Leveraging business tools to solve the world's problems



Osama Bin Noor, 25, Bangladesh
Cofounder, Youth Opportunities

With the goal of tackling youth unemployment, Bin Noor and his cofounding friend created Youth Opportunities, a global platform that connects young people to valuable skill-enhancing and career-building opportunities such as scholarships, conferences, competitions and exchange programs. The portal has now got thousand users from 190 countries. This June, he will receive a Queen's Young Leaders Award for his initiative. Bin Noor also co-hosts a radio show for teenagers in Bangladesh, addressing their interests, problems and offering guidance.

PHOTOS: COURTESY



Osama was always involved in a lot of social activism. Having been a part of One Degree Initiative and Volunteer for Bangladesh, he already had a knack and a whole lot of experience in the field. Adding to that, he obtained stellar leadership skills when he joined BYLC (Bangladesh Youth Leadership Centre). After that, there was no stopping him.

When he first began thinking of Youth Opportunities (YO), no one took him seriously. "A platform for opportunities?" they snickered. In 2012, when he finally found some likeminded people, and his co-founder Makshud Manik, they set off on their mission to make magic for the youths of Bangladesh. Little did he know, this idea of his was one that would get the whole world's appreciation. "It started off only for our own locality, you know?" smiles Osama as he fondly remembers the first few days of this remarkable journey.

YO offers volunteering opportunities, fellowship opportunities, internship opportunities and basically any kind a

student would need to go further into his endeavours, from anywhere in the world, to anywhere in the world.

"Youth Opportunities began growing when my friends, scattered across South Asia, wanted to share opportunities available in their countries on my platform. I was more than happy to accommodate them. It then slowly began spreading to Asean and African countries."

There were a lot of hurdles faced in the process of making this hit big. "We were rejected from many places, for grants and other funding. From the beginning, till now, we've spent out own money on this. There are four of us, and we don't have an office. We meet here and there, make plans. We make a great team!"

YO's missions are to build social responsibility among youth, create equity among rural and urban youth through educational and career counseling, and encourage youths converting opportunities into achievements. YO aims at dissemination of information and

opportunities among the youths all over the world as a part of ensuring Right to Information while creating a global platform of learning and sharing.

The kind of success YO has accomplished is nothing short of noteworthy. "My friend in Sweden was telling me about how his Swedish friend gave him my website as a reference for fellowship and internship opportunities! My friend was quite ecstatic that even in Sweden, he's hearing of Youth Opportunities," says Osama. Another such case happened when a friend of his in the US heard of how people's lives have changed because of YO. "It really hits home, hearing all of that, you know?" In the middle of this year, Osama will travel to the UK to receive an award from HRM Queen Elizabeth for the Queen's Young Leaders Award from Commonwealth Countries. He will be the only one receiving the award from Bangladesh.

Right now, after getting into a partnership with Internet.org, YO is available in 16 developing nations, free of data charge. In the future, Osama plans to expand his enterprise. "We have many things planned for the future. We want to make it subscription based; we want to go into the villages for which we will use print media and Bengali language. We are also working on an app, and are going to launch a blog soon."

With the youth and all the youth-organisations packed onto one platform, not only can we expect a boost of accomplishments from this generation very soon, but we can already foresee a future where Osama Bin Noor is a key component in making the world a better place to live in.

Visit <http://www.youthop.com/> to check out Youth Opportunities!

| REMEMBRANCE |

On March 7, 2016, around mid-afternoon, the news of a strange case reached The Daily Star. Within an hour, televisions and social media were flooded with a horrifying video clip, and articles titled 'Khalid Mahmood Mithu Dies in Tragic Accident.' The country took a sharp gasp, everyone at once, gripped with shock.

"When I watched the video clip, it didn't look like a tree. It looked like Azrael, the Archangel of Death himself. There was a car there that nothing happened to, a rickshaw passed by seconds before, and the puller of the rickshaw Mithu bhai was on came out of the tragedy unscathed. Only he was the victim. It was like he was tragetted by Azrael, like he was supposed to leave, and that's how he was supposed to do it," says Bangladeshi actress, model and singer Tareen Jahan.

Renowned artist and national award winning director Khalid Mahmood Mithu, died on March 7, in a tragic accident as a tree fell on him in Dhanmondi, road 4. Mithu, husband of artist Kanak Chapa Chakma, was passing by on a rickshaw, when a tree fell on him around 2:00pm.

Tareen's memories of Khalid Mithu are aplenty. "I was in the media since my youth, and back in around 1993-1995, when I was still very young, I first met Mithu bhai as Director of Photography (DOP, or cameraperson). What was so striking even then was that we normally just see DOPs follow the director's instructions, but Mithu bhai had an artist's input in every one of his shots." With a background in Fine Arts from The Faculty of Fine Arts in Dhaka University, Mithu always had a way with creativity. "All of his shot selections were so artistic; you could tell they were done by him."

When he directed his first play, Dhushor Album, he asked Tareen to play a character. "I remember it so clearly. I felt truly blessed, not only to have worked for him in his first play, but also act alongside legendary actors Suborna Mustafa and the late Humayun Faridee." After a longer while, he had called on Tareen again one fine day and told her about his marriage to Kanak Chapa Chakma. "Ami toh tor Kanak apa ke biye kore phelechi. Amar shoshur bari ekhon Rangamati! (I have

REMEMBERING 'MITHU BHAJ'

THE STAR WEEKEND TALKS TO ACTRESS TAREEN JAHAN TO REMINISCE ABOUT THE LEGEND THAT WAS KHALID MAHMOOD MITHU.

NAZIBA BASHER

PHOTOS: COURTESY



Khalid Mahmood Mithu



Tareen

married your Kanak apa, my in-laws home is in Rangamati!) " he had said with joy.

He then began speaking of his plans for his first film, where Tareen would be cast. "It was on a true story of a Kingdom of Rangamati that went underwater." While shooting, Tarin remembers a near-death experience, that Khalid Mithu gave her the strength to overcome. "We were trapped in a storm, on a boat in the middle of the lake. I didn't know how to swim, and there he was, holding on to me with all his might saying "ami jodi bachi, tui o bachbi (if I live, so will you)." They were later rescued by a trawler. "I wouldn't have survived the incident if it weren't for him."

A week before his death, Khalid Mithu had made another phone call to Tareen. One of those 'half-adda, half-work' phone calls, where they would reminisce, make promises, laugh, and plan. He called to tell her about his newest film, and ended

up talking for a long while about life, past rendezvous, and so much more. She remembered telling him that she had never gotten the opportunity to buy one of his paintings. He said, "Just come over any time and pick out your favourite!" says Tareen, "The next time I went to his house was not to buy the painting. It was to give condolence to his mourning family. It was to mourn his death with them," Tareen's voice begins to shake at these words.

She fondly remembers the grace with which Khalid Mithu would exist. "I had never before met a man so soft spoken, so warm-hearted, or so calm. I barely ever saw him lose his temper. Even if he did, he would resolve it very fast. Maybe the worst thing he would say is 'oh dhut!'"

Some of our greatest talents, biggest names, and most respected people have

died in road accidents, more so in the past couple of years. "How much longer? When will the roads be safe for us? Look at the people we lost because of this carelessness."

Khalid Mahmood Mithu was near and dear to everyone he had worked with. Through his entire life and career, he was a loved and celebrated artist, director, creator, father, husband and friend. With his wife Kanak Chapa Chakma, a noted artist, his children Arjo Sreshtho and Shiropa Purna, they made the perfect family. "It's difficult to think that they won't be together anymore- all of them. It's difficult to believe I won't see him anymore. No more phone calls, no more plans. All I can do is pray for his soul, his lovely family, Kanak apa, and pray that we can carry on the legacy he left behind. Mithu bhai may have physically left the world, but his art, his creations will keep him alive among all of us for eternity." ■