

## THE SMART BOOK FOR A SMARTER YOU

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PHOTOS: KAZI TAHSIN AGAZ APURBO

For over two years now, the 10 Minute School, a one-of-a-kind platform, has been helping out both children and adults to learn, study and excel in academia. Even though studying online is not an uncommon concept around the world, the 10 Minute School can be credited with breaking brand new barriers, with regards to the conventional schooling systems of Bangladesh.

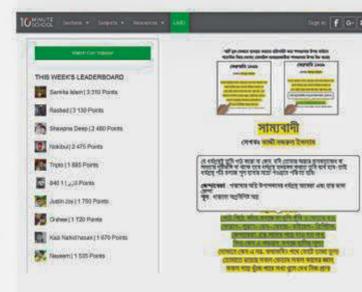


10 Minute School, best classified as a learning platform, was founded in the year 2015 by Ayman Sadiq. It is the only site in Bangladesh through which students can learn from tutorials (1,411 videos) and live classes, practice from given quizzes and model tests (28,455 quizzes), monitor their progress, compare with their peers and get all the information needed, which otherwise isn't available in the internet – all for free. "Currently, we cover JSC, SSC, HSC, Admissions and skill development courses," says the 24-year-old Founder and CEO of the 10 Minute School. "We have 1,411 videos with over 7 million views combined and 28,455 quizzes with over 150,000 students using our content every day. We also take live classes from our page every day."

Although the opportunity to learn easy to digest, bite sized courses has been a great help for students of all ages, Ten Minutes School wanted to take it up further a notch. With this in mind, they launched their brand new initiative.

The school has now come up with the Smart Book, an initiative which would

make the lives of senior school and high school students much easier than ever before! Through the Smart Book, the student will be able to comprehend, analyse and interpret the profundity of poems, literary texts, essays and much



more. In addition, students would also feel motivated to come up with their own interpretations and idea constructions upon working with the Smart Book; after all, that is what a student of literature is

expected to do!

In the case of math, physics or chemistry, not only will students be helped with derivations of formulas, equations and taught chapters the way a teacher would at school, the Smart Book would also show various practical experiments on its video platform, and thus assist the student to understand better.

The Smart Book is indeed a very sharp move taken by the 10 Minute School, mainly because culturally, students seem to always require private tutors after school, to help with understanding concepts and scoring better in exams. Many students also look for guidebooks to study for national-level exams. The Smart Book intends to fill a concerning gap and help students study and comprehend on their own, after school hours.

After all, what we look for amongst young students is the ability to interpret and arrive at conclusions on their own where bookish ideas and theories are concerned. The Smart Book might just be the instrument which will help these students to do just that!

## DonateBloodBD.com Stepping towards a solution

RASMA RAHMAN AMREEN

On the very first day of Bengali New Year, we bring to you the story of a youth who chased his dream of solving an ever going crisis.

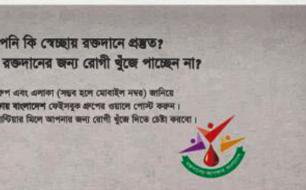
It all began in 2004, when a college fresher was denied from taking part in a blood donation campaign at his university campus. Enrolled in the computer engineering program of North South University, Mr. Subrata Deb was rejected for being underweight. "They did not even allow me to enter through the door," exclaims a smiling Mr. Deb, as he recalls old memories. "I made up my mind right



PHOTO COURTESY: DONATEBLOODBD

then and there. If I could not help first hand, I would definitely try to contribute in some other way." Mr. Deb's first rejection would spur him into making a promising and successful blood donation platform:

www.DonateBloodBD.com During his university days, Mr. Deb was schooled on web development. Utilising on this knowledge, he decided to create a website listing verified blood donors along with their contact details. This allowed patients in need of blood transfusion to find donors directly, easily and free of cost. After the launch of the website on



24<sup>th</sup> January, 2013, Mr. Deb went ahead and took a second initiative. He established a call center on 14th April, 2016, to assist patients and relatives looking for donors. DonateBloodBD Call Center thus became the first center of its kind in Bangladesh.

Till date, a staggering 3496 number of donors spread across 55 districts of Bangladesh are registered on the website. The website has amassed 1.5 crore hits in the past 4 years. Moreover, TheDonateBloodBD Call Center has helped over 1760 patients over the

last eleven months. The third platform, which is a Facebook group called "RoktoDaanerOpekkhay Bangladesh", currently boasts over 126k members. "A lot of people fear that if you donate blood, you might fall sick or feel lightheaded, faint or become weak. However, none of this is true. We have to raise awareness among mass people about these widely held misconceptions and eradicate the

myths surrounding blood donation" says Mr. Deb. "The rules are simple. One must be of 18 years and above, be at least 50 kilograms (both men and women) and must have passed seven days after ending any kind of antibiotic medication course so that all toxins have flushed out of their body. However, women cannot donate blood during pregnancy or menstruation or if they are breast feeding" he adds.

When asked about his own experience as a donor, Mr. Deb reveals, "I've had four rejections as a blood donor so far. However, I'm still waiting for my chance. I'm ready to help anyone when it comes to blood donation. The very thought that my blood would flow from head to toe in someone's body and would help them live is motivating enough. This is my passion."

These very rejections that Mr. Deb face, helps him constantly renews his vow to solve the blood donor crisis in Bangladesh.

Visit [www.donatebloodbd.com](http://www.donatebloodbd.com) to register as or find suitable blood donors. The DonateBloodBD Call Center operates on Sundays to Thursdays from 8:00 am -12:00 am and on Saturdays from 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The help line numbers are +8801756963308 and +8801748306027

To read more about Mr. Subrata Deb's journey, find more info at: <http://www.thedailystar.net/change-maker/stepping-towards-solution-1390267>

## RIDING THE WAVES: THE SURFERS COME TO DHAKA

OSAMA RAHMAN



PHOTO COURTESY: CRITICALINK

Often times when comprehending solutions for people, especially children from a less privileged background, the noble intentions lean towards ideas of sustainable employment. The underlying assumption is that the best way to empower an individual is by creating a source of income for them. While this itself is a great idea, sometimes the source of income does not align with an individual's interest or skill. Such a person would then find their development, financially or even professionally, to be stymied. A group of surfers in Cox's Bazaar, comprising of both males and females, from a less privileged background have made great strides in proving that empowerment doesn't always stem from a monetary gain to be made; it can simply be excelling in something that you love.

Criticalink, an organisation that fosters the building a network of volunteer emergency First Responders, realised that this brand new narrative of empowerment was one to be shared. Teaming up with the surfers, they brought the latter to Dhaka, where the boys and girls were made busy sharing their inspirational stories with a wide variety of people and groups and learning important life lessons themselves. Criticalink's purpose for this was to promote female empowerment, sporting for good health, emergency junior responder training and narrowing the growing gap between the so-called privileged and underprivileged societies of Bangladesh.

The surfers kick-started their journey at International School Dhaka, where they taught two batches of students basic skateboarding techniques. More importantly, they also got the chance to share their stories. Many of the surfers had previously resorted to selling trinkets on the beach. Today, through sheer will power and a good support system, they are on their way to becoming famous surfers and lifeguards of Bangladesh. Afterwards, they went off to The Daily Star where they toured the office, met the editor Mahfuz Anam and even got the chance to see a live performance by singing sensation Minar.

Born to Smile, a school started by a social organisation was next on the itinerary. Here the children had a lot of memorable interactions with the students and then it was off to another skateboarding practice session. Over the next two days, the children would go ZH Sikder Women's Medical College and Hospital, the Microsoft Office, attend yoga sessions with Shazia Omar, visit the parliament building, Liberation War Museum, Shaheed Minar, Dhaka University and many other places. The overall project was one rife with unforgettable experiences and helped the surfers boost their confidence and expand their horizons. The surfers of Cox's Bazaar are the changemakers in their own society. Through their own grit, they have shattered the many stereotypes. They have blazed their own trail and rode on the waves of the flame they set alight. The surfers, and Criticalink for their efforts, should both be applauded.