



PHOTO: WAHID HOSSAIN

# Rendezvous of East and West: TigerBow

**SANJIDA CHOWDHURY**

"Ever since I was a university student, I wanted to do something for the community that would distinguish me from the rest," says Wahid Hossain, the CEO and Founder of TigerBow.

TigerBow started its journey in 2013, with the hope to bring a positive change in social and financial condition of Bangladeshi artisans. Upholding Bangladeshi heritage and tradition in the foreign market through active participation in different international competitions, TigerBow has paved its way to be one of the best social ventures of Bangladesh. This company produces bow ties using traditional 'Katan' fabric, while taming the production process and empowering Bangladeshi female

artisans. It not only empowers our artisans, but also, recognises them as one of the indispensable assets of the country.

The beginning of TigerBow was not

as smooth as it seems. Wahid, with only one artisan, Sabina Chowdhury, by his side, embarked upon the journey to show the world what Bangladesh can do. "Apart from the

garments industry, we have many more ways to bring sustainable solutions for the greater good. We can involve different NGOs in facilitating our artisans to have improved strategies for product marketing and customer service" - this was the idea that Wahid pitched in Social Venture Challenge, organised by Social Incubation Centre: The Resolution Project, based in New York. Wahid was announced as one of the winners. Consequently, Falguni Desia and Mave Wang, the Director of IBM and the Director of Deloitte, were there to mentor him. Besides, Wahid was also fortunate to have the mentorship of Laura Ries, one of the top professional consultants of the West. With the guidance of and lessons learnt from these people, Wahid has been able to branch out his company

in USA and Canada. Now, his products are being worn by models like Dylan Hoffman from Grand Junction, Colorado. TigerBow now has admirers across the globe with official ambassadors in Barcelona, Germany, Toronto and USA. Even in Bangladesh, his products are securing their place with the help of companies like Emotion films.

Wahid is full of hope and encouragement. He calls for innovation and initiatives from all the youths who are out there trying to reach their goals. "The main push behind the expansion of TigerBow is a constant zeal and the determination to make the dream come true. This is what is needed in our youths to gain sustainable solutions to the ever-increasing problems of Bangladesh," Wahid believes.



PHOTO: AKIB ABDULLAH

## Myths and misconceptions regarding menstruation in rural areas

**AFSANA AZIZ NITOL**

The whole process of abnormalising menstruation, a natural process, is not new. Things are changing gradually in the urban areas; the privileged have started to talk about it and we see advertisements of sanitary napkins in television. However, the scenario is quite opposite in the rural areas of Bangladesh.

Menstruation is considered many things other than a natural process in the underdeveloped areas. While talking about menstruation to the adolescent girls of Kushtia, Project Konna, an initiative to raise awareness regarding menstruation in rural areas, gets numerous astounding replies.

For example, Rafia Khatun, an eleven year old girl, who still has not gotten her period, thinks menstruation is a curse. Her family members have not yet informed her about it. She knows about period, from a book she once borrowed, from one of her cousins. The story of Eve eating the forbidden fruit and then getting her period intrigues her. Rafia then comes to the conclusion that



women get menstruation as a form of punishment.

There are plenty examples of such. Few young girls even think it is a form of disease. One of them says, "People often tend to use the term *Shorir Kharap*. Hence, it must be a disease." People are ashamed of using the word menstruation and it is not surprising that these girls do not feel comfortable talking about it.

Whereas some girls get help from their

families, especially from their mothers, some still believe in the myths that are taught to them by the elders. In school classrooms of these villages, teachers hardly read out the chapters on menstruation from the book. These chapters are told to be read at their homes.

When institutions are not making them aware of the topic, when family members do not inform the girls until

they have their period, when they come across such topic elsewhere (like Rafia did), they get a completely wrong idea about the subject. Through proper education in the text books and through ensuring that teachers teach them in the classrooms, we may be able to change the scenario gradually.

In order to raise such awareness, we must get out of Dhaka because rural areas need them more.



PHOTOS: COURTESY

## Scholarships from Monash University Malaysia

Monash University Malaysia is offering 'Graduate Research Pathway Scholarships' that covers 100 percent or partial course fee for all honours degree courses, Master of Biomedical Science, and Postgraduate Diploma in Business and Commerce. Graduates who are interested in research have even more exciting news! Monash University Malaysia offers 'Graduate Research Merit Scholarships' that covers 100 percent of tuition fees plus a living allowance. This scholarship is available to all research degrees in priority areas of research.

Since 1998, Monash University Malaysia has continued to strengthen its research capabilities to become a leading research-led education institution that nurtures, develops and sustains knowledge and innovations that can positively impact diverse communities. The university has 5 multidisciplinary research platforms and is committed to research that matters. At Monash Malaysia, the researchers are working hard in such fields as health, social and economic transformation, and the environment. It is also aligned with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

For more information, please visit [www.monash.edu.my](http://www.monash.edu.my). If you would like to find out more, speak to Monash University Malaysia counsellor and academic at Malaysia Education Lead Meet 2017, by FAST TRACK EDUCATION SERVICES LTD on 6 and 7 October, 2017, Four Points by Sheraton, Gulshan, Dhaka. Contact No: +88 01946 109 160.



PHOTO: SUSNATA CHAKMA

## New Horizon for Toastmasters in Bangladesh

**SIHINTA SABEEN SHEMBIL**

Toastmasters International is a non-profit organisation that teaches leadership and public speaking skills throughout the globe. Currently, Bangladesh has five Toastmasters clubs.

For the first time in history, the Bangladesh clubs are participating in an international Toastmasters contest. To decided who would represent Bangladesh in the international level, "Toastmasters Area K5 Humorous and Evaluation Speech Contest 2017" was hosted by North South University Toastmasters Club at their premises on September 15, 2017. The outstanding speakers who formerly won in their respective clubs competed against each other.

Three humorous speeches took place, each making the audience bellow with laughter. The winner of the Humorous Speech Contest, Md. Salam Bin Shawkat from North South University Toastmasters, gave a speech titled 'You Fill Up My Senses'. His captivating speech was embellished with lyrics inspired from his wife. The runner-up, Nafees Kausar

from Dhaka Toastmasters, gave his speech 'Trust is a MUST' where he shared an amusing story about nobody trusting the mischievous child that he was.

Toastmasters emphasises the importance of listening skills too. The Evaluation Contest required three contestants to productively evaluate a prepared speech delivered by a fellow Toastmaster. The winner of the Evaluation contest, Ashhab Manzoor, from North South University Toastmasters, and the runner-up, once again Nafees Kausar, addressed the strengths and areas of improvement for the prepared speech.

The event also consisted of an interactive leaders' panel discussion revolving leadership and communication, and a demo Toastmaster meeting to show the audience how Toastmasters clubs conduct their regular meetings.

The two winners, Shawkat and Manzoor, will be representing Bangladesh (Area K5) at the division K5 contest in Calcutta, India, on October 8, 2017. The final competition, for District 41, will be held in New Delhi, in November, 2017.



[www.youthop.com](http://www.youthop.com)

## Youth Opportunities

### 1. Gates Cambridge Scholarship Programme 2018 in University of Cambridge

Scholarships are awarded to outstanding applicants from countries outside the UK to pursue a full-time postgraduate degree in any subject available at the University of Cambridge. The aim of the Gates Cambridge programme is to build a global network of future leaders committed to improving the lives of others.

Deadline: October 11, 2017 | Full Scholarship

### 2. Global Climate Law and Governance Student Essay Competition 2017

Are you interested in researching the legal and governance challenges posed by climate change? Do you have ideas for how legal instruments and institutional reforms can contribute to addressing climate change challenges?

Then enter the 2017 Global Climate Law and Governance Essay Competition!  
Deadline: October 15, 2017 | Awards

### 3. ADB Internship Programme in ADB HQ

The Internship Programme is a project-oriented learning opportunity for graduate students to gain experience through research assignments based on ADB's current operational needs. ADB advertises internship assignments twice a year and welcomes motivated, open-minded, and self-directed individuals to apply.

Deadline: October 15, 2017 | Internship

### 4. EDUFI Fellowships Programme in Finland

The EDUFI Fellowships Programme is open to young Doctoral level students and researchers from all countries and from all academic fields. Master's level studies or postdoctoral studies or research are not supported in the programme. The scholarship period may vary from 3 to 12 months. The monthly allowance is 1500 euros.

Deadline: Ongoing | Fellowship

### 5. Paid Internship Opportunity 2017 at AplombTech BD Ltd.

AplombTech BD is one of the fastest growing High Tech Companies in Bangladesh that produces various electronic products and services like Civil Drones, Smart Home Automation, Smart Digital Meter, Indoor Positioning System, TeleHealth Care etc. It is a paid internship. People with a strong desire to learn along with professional drive are encouraged to apply.

Deadline: October 13, 2017 | Internship