



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

Engineering the best export idea for the future

In conversation with Rise High Bangladesh 2017 champions

MOHUA MOULI

Team Sept of Baelor – Rakib Rahman, Quazi Rushnan, and Swapnil Sayan Saha – from the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, University of Dhaka trumped all expectations and took home the trophy of 2nd instalment of Rise High Bangladesh on December 3, 2017.

Organised by The Daily Star and Crown Cement, the competition comprised of 3 rounds and 230 teams through which young, bright minds were brought together under one roof to present their export ideas. After 15 activation programmes in different universities generating an overwhelming response from all over the country, there was an array of brilliant idea submissions. The final round consisted of 10 teams who had to present a solid plan for the implementation of their idea and were evaluated by a jury and people voting on social media.

We spoke to the champion team and asked them about their experience during this journey.

SHOUT: What motivated you to participate in Rise High Bangladesh 2017?

Sept of Baelor: The theme itself made us feel like this isn't really just about case solving, it's more about having an idea that can bring real change for the country. Coming from an engineering background, we realised that this is where we need statistics to help us bring our idea to life. Rise High provided a great platform for that. We had a really good team, a really good idea, and we wanted to experience

something new.

SHOUT: Tell us about your idea and how you came up with it.

Sept of Baelor: We learned from a friend that you can make bio-plastic from shrimp shells. And when we did some research, we found that there was an endless list of materials that can be made from something we consider to be trash. The chemical derived from the shells,

idea but there were so many teams with equally innovative ideas. However, we were never intimidated. We believed in our idea, we had the numbers to back it up, and we just needed to make people believe in us too. There was something new to learn during each round. The top 17 teams received an overall mentoring session from Ayman Sadiq (Founder, 10 Minute School) on how to get votes,

would be to collect the data. Companies don't often share their data with us. We need statistics on the supply of Chitosan in Bangladesh. Getting raw information and convincing every one of our results would be a difficult task.

When we were researching for our idea and passing each round, it stopped being just about winning the competition for us – we really wanted to implement it. It wasn't about winning the trip to Malaysia or the prize money anymore. We knew that even if we didn't win, this idea was something that could have a positive impact. We really believe in our idea and our team, so we are definitely mentally prepared for any obstacles.

SHOUT: What were the best takeaways from Rise High Bangladesh 2017?

Sept of Baelor: The best part for us was the mentoring sessions. We learned how to convince people to believe in our idea. There were things we learned that we couldn't from sitting in a classroom but only from people who are actually part of the industry. Understanding problems from different perspectives is really something we didn't know how to do. Rise High gave us the platform through which we could learn and realise our potential.

Team Sept of Baelor has won a trip to Malaysia where they will meet people from different industries and get professional opinions on their idea. The first runner-up team was Third Dimension from Bangladesh University of Professionals who won BDT 100,000 in prize money, and the second runner-up team was Green Bees from University of Rajshahi who won BDT 50,000.



“Chitosan”, is used in various industries, including pharmaceuticals and water treatment companies. Given the supply gap of the chemical itself, we thought it would be a great idea to produce and sell it here and abroad.

SHOUT: How were the days like leading up to the finale?

Sept of Baelor: What we loved the most was the creative energy around us. We went in thinking that we have a winning

Mahzabin Ferdous (Head of Brand and Corporate Communication, IPDC Finance) gave us tips on the finance related issues, and Md. Azim Hossain (Head, Digital Media, PRAN-RFL Group) gave us an overall guide on digital marketing.

SHOUT: What challenges are you expecting in bringing the idea to life and how do you plan on overcoming them?

Sept of Baelor: The biggest challenge