

Tuesday Coffee with Rushmita Alam

When we think of our country and its positive aspects, the first thing that comes into mind, is its people. Always in good spirits and eccentrically optimistic, there is almost nothing that can break our spirit! Even through the most inhospitable situation, we know how to beat the odds and rise above! Along our struggles, whatever it maybe, there are countless beacons, guiding us. One such name is Rushmita Alam, a cheerleader for the expanding fashion industry of the country and the global arena. We had the remarkable opportunity to enjoy a tete-a-tete with the visionary, learning about her achievements and purpose.

Alam, a dedicated fashion educator with a solid commitment to social and community development has had almost 18 years of teaching experience at the university level. After heading the Fashion Design department of BGMEA University of Fashion & Technology, she moved abroad for higher studies. At present she is a full time professor at the School of Fashion Studies, Center for Art Design and Information Technology, George Brown College, teaching fashion, design, sustainability, inclusion, diversity and more to students from all over the world.

Fresh from abroad and revisiting her native country, Rushmita Alam opens up for the first time to Star Lifestyle about Bangladesh and her immense love for her former students, "Bangladesh is always in my heart, especially my students. The love that I have received from them is astonishing. More than anything else, I want to do something in return."

Soon after, we learn Alam's plan on opening an international fashion chain, as a part of inclusive design, a cause closest to her heart. "Fashion is for everybody; not only the young and beautiful! There is a misconception that fashion is only haute couture. Senior citizens to differently abled



Clarissa Bowers

- anyone suffering from autism to paralysis, deserve to be a part of the industry and be acknowledged as a valued consumer. My pursuit will be to develop and market products specifically for such exceptional cases. The special garments will be extensively researched and scientifically developed to be a perfect fit for the niche market and I hope to name the brand as Essential Edit."

So where does Bangladesh take part in this initiative aside from Alam being the mastermind?

And she reveals, "Since I am absolutely in love with all the talent in Bangladesh, my plan is to make the products entirely by my students, within the country, using as much local materials as possible. This will essen-

tially be a Bangladeshi product, labeled accordingly in the global market."

As we spoke about Essential Edit, we wanted to know more about her other ventures and how life kept her busy. She referred to attending international fashion shows, regularly; taking part in numerous social causes including a very recent one with 'Happy kids Foundation' and her friend Dr. Satish Sikha. At the event, the evening gown for Clarissa Bowers, Miss World America, 2017, had been entirely designed by Rushmita Alam.

Being an experienced multitasker, Alam always takes on several projects simultaneously, we learn about her busy schedule as she discusses her next venture to help



Rushmita Alam

the Maldives government set up a fashion school in their country. "I am open to helping anyone seeking my guidance in this sector. I am simply in love with working in the field of fashion and have dedicated myself in every way to develop the industry, sustainably, considering the global perspective. In the future, I hope people remember me as a fashion educator and a visionary," admits Alam.

We wish her all the success in achieving her dreams, bringing Bangladesh to the forefront, to the world media, and that too in a positive light.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo courtesy: Rushmita Alam

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