



PHOTO: MONON MUNTAKA

BEHIND THE SCENES OF B FILMS

AFSANA AZIZ NITOL

Bangamata U-19 Women's International Gold Cup, a tribute to Sheikh Fazilatun-ne sa Mujib, is set to commence from April 22, 2019. The company, bfilms, produced the music video of the theme song, *Bijoy Moshal*, for the tournament. The video, featuring women artistes like singer Momotaz Begum, MP, Elita Karim, Kona, Porshi, Dola, Kumkum, and female footballers, created quite a stir recently.

A group of young and creative individuals have been working together in bfilms for the last two years with the tagline 'Do

what you can't'. The team includes Neev Rahman as Chief Assistant Director, Mehedy Hossain as Executive Producer, Rana Nasir and MH Rasel as Assistant Directors, Khalid Hasan Rakib as Line Producer, Shahina Jeny as Head of Accounts, Shuvo Bashkor as Assistant Casting Director and Tawfiq Nawaz as Post Supervisor. Ashfaq Uzzaman Bipul is the director of bfilms.

Along with the *Bijoy Moshal* music video, their recent commercials including the likes of Airtel Buzz's *number napalte chole asho Airtel e Rani Foods Limited's Kidofer wafer biscuits*, featuring Moshfiqur Rahman, among others, received a

positive response.

bfilms has a tremendously welcoming environment for young people. "In bfilms, we are constantly pushed to try things we think we are not capable of doing," says one of the team members, Khalid Hasan Rakib. "Our tagline, hence, is quite appropriate in that sense."

Members of bfilms believe that it is important to be supportive of each other while working in a team. "Each department needs to do their best for the team to stand out," says Rana Nasir. "This platform is a great place to learn and grow."

They further spoke about the hurdles

they have to overcome as a team. "Producing creative projects on a daily basis is not easy," says Neev Rahman, Chief Assistant Director. "Different members in a team will have conflicting ideas sometimes. However, we embrace these challenges and try to find solutions accordingly. Having a director and leader like Bipulbhui is a blessing. He is always there for us."

"We have had sleepless nights while working on a commercial of just 2-3 minutes," adds Mehedy Hossain, Executive Producer. "We intend to keep on working with good and authentic content in the future."


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YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Women MSME FinTech Innovation Fund 2019

UNCDF, in collaboration with UNESCAP, is launching this programme for digital solutions for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in Asia-Pacific. It seeks to co-fund companies to pilot digital and financial solutions that improve access to finance or enhance operational efficiency of women-led Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

DEADLINE: April 30, 2019 | **Grant**


Ashfaq Zaman's journey to LEAD

MAISHA ISLAM MONAMEE

Young entrepreneur Ashfaq Zaman is the founder of Leadership Excellence and Development (LEAD), an organisation that specialises in leadership training, research, digital influencers and leadership incubation. He harboured the dream of becoming an academician and bringing about institutional changes in Bangladesh from an early age.

Having completed his O and A Levels in Dhaka, Ashfaq pursued his Bachelor's in Accountancy from Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh, and completed his CPA in the UK. "I was never passionate about accounting but to achieve my goals, I needed a strong background in finance, which my CPA course helped me gain," says Ashfaq. After returning to Dhaka, he found a lucrative business in strawberries, collecting imported seeds, which further helped him earn the capital he needed for his future projects.

He also applied for a course in leadership and entrepreneurship at Cambridge University. "Top entrepreneurs such as the CEO of Jaguar, Country Director of Microsoft and Regional Director of Google were my classmates in that course," says Ashfaq. "I took that course so that I could apply the knowledge I gained from it to the situations in my country in a positive and practical way. It was a memorable experience."

LEAD, which focuses on skill development, was inspired from the lessons Ashfaq learned at Cambridge University. Initially, it focused on training corporate leaders and faculty members. Since its inception, LEAD has successfully trained over 1,500 teachers.

Ashfaq explained that university professors are not usually open to new ideas and after a stable career, they don't want to learn new things in life. "They are in a point of life where we cannot force them to start developing new skills. Yet, we were successful in bringing about some changes. For example, many universities have started to adopt more inclusive curriculums," explains Ashfaq.

Recently, LEAD organised a workshop for which they selected 30 young candidates from various schools across the city and trained them for free. "We attempted to fill in the gaps left open by our education system and incorporate some vital life skills in the workshop for the young students," says Ashfaq.

Apart from training, LEAD has launched Leadership Counselling for Policy and Research (LCPR), a programme aimed at creating youth-based think tanks. The programme, which is still in its initial stages, will include solution-driven talks, round table conferences and activities for research and critical thinking.

"Youth-related think tanks are the need of the hour. We need to cultivate young innovators for the bright future of our country," concludes Ashfaq.

Sasambo Greeneration Camp 4.0 in Indonesia

Sasambo Greeneration Camp is an event organised for youth who are concerned about the future of their environment and intend to contribute to preserving nature. It will connect them as young leaders from around the world with a shared passion to solve environmental problems in their community.

DEADLINE: May 31, 2019 | **Workshop**

Trust Conference Changemakers Programme 2019 in UK

The Trust Conference Changemakers Programme funds front-line activists and human rights defenders from around the world to attend the annual conference. This year, the programme will award up to 60 scholarships to applicants from diverse disciplines.

DEADLINE: May 3, 2019 | **Conference**