



Participants and honourable guests at the programme.

PHOTOS: COURTESY

Climathon Dhaka 2019 opens doors of opportunities for the youth

YOUTH DESK

On October 25 and 26 2019, over 122 cities started a solutions hackathon, aimed to tackle local climate challenges. The hackathon, which marked Global Climathon Day, is a part of Climathon, a global yearlong programme initiated by EIT Climate-KIC, to mobilise cities and citizens to take climate actions, together.

Climathon took place in over 122 cities worldwide. It brought together entrepreneurs, students, programmers and policy makers to work on new and creative solutions for local climate issues.

To tackle climate change and its devastating effects, the participants worked on the problems of Dhaka and formulated ideas to solve them with the help of mentors, coaches and experts from corporate, development and government organisations. The hackathon ran for more than 24 hours, in accordance with global rules. The jury board awarded the best ideas at the end of the programme.

This year, participants from Dhaka focused on solving the issues of food safety, waste management and energy consumption. Particularly, they presented proposals for making contamination-free food available in Dhaka, bringing positive behavioural changes in citizens to build an energy efficient city and changing daily behaviours to make Dhaka clean and efficient with waste management.



Mayor Atiqul Islam addresses the audience.

Climathon Dhaka identified local climate challenges in close collaboration with related stakeholders. The winning ideas will be incubated by Center for Entrepreneurship, BRAC University.

The programme was organised by Gen Lab, in partnership with IPDC Finance, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Torun Digital, Colours FM 101, JCI Dhaka North, BNO Lubricants, Save and Serve Foundation, Center for Entrepreneurship Development at BRAC University, Center for Sustainable Development at ULAB and International Center for Climate Change and Development, Independent University, Bangladesh, University of

Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) and Green Savers Association were also partners of the event. The winning teams were: Zero Tech, Waste Fixers and Nikhad.

Gen Lab aims to create a platform for the Bangladeshi youth to engage in the social development of the country by means of acting together to bring about positive changes. Sustainability is one of the essential values of Gen Lab and it resonates in the organisation's concern for bringing changes that would positively affect the lives of the future generations.

Waseqa Aysha Khan, Member of Parliament, Chattogram, was the chief guest at the opening ceremony. Khurshid Alam,

Asst Country Director, United Nations Development Programme, Dr Saleemul Haque, Director, International Center for Climate Change and Development, Independent University of Bangladesh, and Professor Rahim B Talukdar, Advisor, Centre for Entrepreneurship Development, were also present. Talukdar has been the Vice Chancellor of Eastern University.

The speakers expressed their concerns about climate change and discussed how Bangladesh is one of the most vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change. They spoke about the role of young changemakers in battling the issue. Khurshid Alam encouraged the youth to come up with innovative solutions.

Dhaka North City Corporation Mayor Atiqul Islam was the chief guest of the closing ceremony. Shamim Ehsanul Haque, Assistant Professor and Research Fellow, Center for Entrepreneurship, BRAC University and Momin U Islam, CEO and Managing Director, IPDC Finance, were also present. Nahim Razzaq, Member of Bangladesh Parliament, was the Young Ambassador for Climathon Dhaka 2019.

Mayor Atiqul Islam awarded each of the winning teams BDT 25,000 at the closing ceremony. He also awarded the return airfare to the team which will be selected to attend the global finale in Paris, France. He further spoke about his high hopes for the youth of Bangladesh and their work towards a cleaner, safer and greener Dhaka.



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YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES



Russian Government Scholarships 2020 (Full Scholarships to Study in Russia)

Global Universities Association, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, offers Open Doors Russian Scholarship for International Students. The scholarship is available on the basis of competition to pursue a master's degree.

DEADLINE: December 18, 2019 | Scholarship

Youth Opportunities Campus Ambassador Program 2019-20 in Bangladesh

Youth Opportunities is launching its Campus Ambassador Program for aspiring youth all over the country once again. The aim is to empower the youth as changemakers in their institution to promote different aspects of global and local opportunities to the students so that each of them can empower and create more leaders to work on greater understanding and appreciation of similar activities.

DEADLINE: November 02, 2019 | Miscellaneous

Global Goals Summit 2020 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Entering the annual session of their second year, GLOBAL GOALS SUMMIT aims to create new urban agents and to teach the urban youth how to join the SDGs agenda in their respective countries. With the grand theme of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), GLOBAL GOALS SUMMIT offers inspiring talks by renowned international experts on SDGs, exciting cultural exchange sessions and comprehensive leadership training that emphasises on leadership qualities.

December 15, 2019 | Conference



Project Tiktaalik: A different approach to science education

MADIHA ATHAR KHAN

Nasreen Sultana, the founder of Project Tiktaalik, is a cartoonist and an educationalist. She began her journey in the arts as an illustrator for the renowned magazine, *Unmad*, while she was a student at University of Dhaka (DU). She completed her bachelor's and master's education in science at Institute of Education and Research, DU. She kept up her passion for drawing comics throughout the years.

Looking back on her career, Nasreen recalls that she was not great at drawing when she first started out. However, under the guidance and mentorship of renowned cartoonist Ahsan Habib, the editor of *Unmad*, she worked on her illustrations till her comics were worthy of being published. Though she harboured an interest in comic books and pictures, she never had any educational training in art.

Upon graduation, Nasreen held many teaching jobs at several institutions, including Rajshahi University and BRAC University before she decided to blend together her two different areas of interest, which resulted in Project Tiktaalik.

The project is an online and a print based series of comic books for children, specifically on topics related to science. Additionally, the Project Tiktaalik website includes informative and attractive features, such as ideas for school science projects, science quizzes and fun facts.

It is no secret that science is perceived as a difficult, challenging and often times, scary subject for children. Soon after the early days of kindergarten, it is only by exception that a child looks forward to their science classes. Nasreen wants to break this notion through her comic books.

She feels that children who may have latent curiosities towards science are often discouraged through no fault of their own, to view science as a recreational, stimulating and imaginative practice. Just as they might play video games or enjoy listening to stories, children are likely to be enthralled by science experiments like building their own water turbine and observing the greenhouse effect.

So far, Project Tiktaalik has published three



Nasreen Sultana

PHOTO: SHANTO LAWRENCE COSTA

comic books, including *Jongol e Gondogol*, which came out last year. Alongside printed comic books, their website is filled with small stories on a specific topic or science jokes. Project Tiktaalik also focuses on connecting with schools and children's programmes. They have organised science talks, science and cartoon workshops and special programmes across villages and towns outside Dhaka, with selected kids who are interested in science.

Nasreen does not like to plan too far out ahead in the future. She believes in trusting her instincts and working on the content that she feels most attracted towards in the moment. Right now, Project Tiktaalik is a full-time job for her. Before she started publishing

comics, Nasreen realised that there are many issues in society that are yet to be solved. She was inspired to take a different and more creative approach to tackle the issue of education. Feeling that the quality of education in our country is dipping with an abundance of degrees and a dearth of knowledge, Nasreen took matters into her own hands to help our future generations through Project Tiktaalik.

It is inspiring to see that she has brought together art and science, two academic areas that are popularly considered the polar opposites of each other, to produce something that can increase the breadth of topics and ideas that children can explore and learn more about.