

CHECK IT OUT

Training the path with light

On the 28th of February, Bangladesh's first fine perfume brand started its journey with the soft launch of "Jonaki fragrance by Nasreen Zamir" at the Grand Ballroom of the Westin. In a programme graced by top diplomats of the country, the event also offered the guests a chance to view and purchase the perfume itself. Named after the Jonaki, local firefly whose symbiosis with nature enchanted and beguiled Nasreen Zamir in her childhood growing up in the port city of Chittagong, replete with its beautiful hills and serene lakes and rivers. The perfume is inspired by the firefly and hopes to create something unique, focusing on the much-vaunted scent of Bengali flowers.

In her keynote address, Nasreen Zamir, a reputed interior designer and entrepreneur, spoke about the need to save the fireflies

whose population is decreasing due to environmental problems. A sizeable amount of the profits from the perfume will be channeled to saving the fireflies, which have for generations illuminated the world around us. She spoke of her dream of making the perfume wide and accessible to everyone in Bangladesh, giving them a unique and exquisite taste of nature.

The fragrance designed here in Bangladesh, inspired by France, and manufactured in Malaysia, offers the best cross pollination of art and design coupled with decades of experience. Jonaki is the joy of light that the perfume wants to permeate in the lives of its users.

The Ambassador of the Kingdom of Netherlands, H.E Harry Verweij, spoke on the importance of a perfume as it can bring to a person's nose the culture and aroma of



one's heritage and evoke a beautiful memory. He called perfume an art stemming from sophistry and harmony. Lamiya Morshed, Executive Director of Yunus Centre, expressed

her great pleasure at this groundbreaking work and hoped to see more female entrepreneurs making such leaps in the future. Anjan Chowdhury, Managing Director of Square Toiletries, and Director of Square, called Jonaki an international standard product that he hoped to see being sold beyond the country's borders.

There are three Jonaki fragrances for women and two for men. For women, it is Neroli Blossom, Freesia Nights, and Oriental Jasmine, evoking refreshing floral and citrusscents. For men, Amaretto and Santal Tabac offer serene aromas and beguiling musk.

The launch event, for the brand by Square Toiletries, was organised by Red Dot Multimedia.

By Israr Hasan

READER'S CHIT

My experience at Isha Foundation

I started my journey full of joy and excitement, as this yoga retreat was long awaited and I finally got the chance to attend it. Isha Yoga Centre is a concern of the Isha foundation. There are five kinds of yoga — Bhakti, Karma, Gyana, Raja, and Hatha — which contain physical postures and asanas. Most people are quite familiar with Hatha Yoga.

Isha Foundation works with all five areas of yoga with equal importance. It is almost entirely run by volunteers and almost no one is a formal employee. From cooking and cleaning to teaching and administration, everything is done by volunteers who come from different corners of the world. This is their form of doing Karma Yoga. At the same time, their services count as Bhakti Yoga, as they are doing the work out of compassion and love for everyone.

The founder of Isha Foundation is

Sadhguru, a mystic who is spreading knowledge about life and one's own self. Through Hatha Yoga, Isha Foundation also encourages its members to be intensely physically active.

I started following Sadhguru's work his work ever since I read his book, Inner Engineering, almost four years ago. I have been doing Hatha Yoga for a few years now. After reading it, I came to know that an Inner Engineering retreat is held at Isha Foundation in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu.

I always wanted to visit Sadhguru's self-made paradise, and managed approval, after many attempts, for then at the end of December, 2019. The Inner Engineering Yoga Retreat contains Hatha Yoga, Breathing, Meditation and a lot of theory-based lectures. I stayed the week on campus for the residential event.

After flights and road trips to Coimbatore, it took one and half hours to reach Isha

Foundation. Coimbatore is a beautiful city, and thanks to my amicable guide, I was able to see some of it before I began my retreat. Even at the end of December, the weather was warm and sunny.

Upon reaching Isha Foundation, I was awed. There were people everywhere, volunteers going about their chores, but everyone was completely silent. Without an urgent need, nobody uttered a word, and most worked barefoot.

There were some obvious formalities and long lines for initiation to the programme, but everyone waited patiently. I realised here, stressful tasks can be blissfully simple only if we have respect for those around us.

I wish everybody could visit this place just to see how something situated very much in the modern world can be made into a paradise, only with the essence of love, care and patience.

My programme was about the idea that

in order to know oneself, one should look inwards rather than outward. Yoga helps to make us aware of our own abilities. It is a lifelong journey, or a lifestyle. Though the programme itself helped me a lot in organising my life in a profound way, I believe that people should practice the teachings in their daily lives.

It is difficult to have the motivation or achieve the highest echelons of success, but I believe it is possible to be the best versions of our own self.

From all over the world, true seekers have found themselves at Isha Foundation, which truly makes it a multicultural celebration of life. The different backgrounds of the people and their life stories make Isha Foundation more vibrant and colourful. But from Bangladesh, I was the only one to experience the serenity.

By Faria Athar Khan

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