

The story of social media communities

The recent pandemic has taken its toll on our minds and bodies. We are constantly obsessing about when and where it's going to rear its ugly head, and as a result, also getting unwarranted anxiety attacks.

While it's very normal for a sane person to 'want' to be updated on the state of affairs, it can also get hectic and unhealthy for the psyche.

In such circumstances, we let a few benevolent individuals enter our lives with good news. These people try to curb the complexities and make regular living as close to normal as possible by creating social media groups or communities that keep us as busy, interested and away from unnecessary tension.

One such group, Let the Music Play!, was created on 4 April, and it already has 2000 plus members in the community. This again proves how much people love listening to music and how it's the one thing in the world that helps communities connect, conferred Sabera Anwar, initiator of the mentioned social media group.

Anwar can be credited for few other groups on social media such as Phone-ography, where people share pictures taken by their personal mobile phones, Giggles and Tickles, a light-hearted group for sharing jokes and memes all in the hope of sharing some fun. Anwar can also be



credited for She for She, a well-thought-out platform to connect the urban female folk of our country.

According to Anwar, the long-term plan with the group is to build a non-profit organisation to assist the urban woman in need, helping them grow and sustain in the ever-changing socio-economic landscape.

Anwar also informed us that the groups she had initiated were established in the hope of creating a meaningful community,



one where like-minded people connected. And during the days of Covid-19, these groups added the benefit of relieving tension and normalise life as much as possible.

Upon inquiry whether these groups were all short-term or had the potential to become something bigger, Anwar nodded towards a brighter future.

"Of course, it's long term! These communities are hard to build, as they comprise of very special and reputable

people. With the 'Let the Music Play' community, I have learned that there is a pre-existing appeal towards music, especially Bangladeshi music.

"With this group, I hope to re-introduce maestros to the new generation so that they are able to assess the missing link — how it would have never been possible to appreciate contemporary music without its lineage. On a more serious note, without Azam Khan, it would have been impossible



to appreciate the young rock singers of today," said the enthusiastic deshi music lover.

Anwar added that she had plans on providing a platform for young musicians of Bangladesh through her community, which was ever-growing and also initiate a radio station someday.

Another popular group that has been doing the rounds is 'No Diet Today by Esha Rushdi'. Created during the days of Covid-19, this group provides home chefs a platform to showcase their food, culinary skills, food décor and also market home cooked food, if need be.

"It's an awesome group. I have had nothing much to do during the lockdown. So, I cooked during the better half of the day and let everyone else see my cooking. Their appreciations certainly helped boost my esteem and calmed my nerves during the pandemic," said an anonymous member of the group.

With a cult following of 58,000 followers, almost everyone on Bangladeshi social media already know about THOA or The House of Art. The most interesting fact about this group is that it only began a few weeks ago and already rose up the ranks in the shortest possible time.

Equally interesting is Art a Day by Sriya Sharbojaya, and the only reason she helped build the community was to stay positive and happy by sharing art in any form — from painting to photography to even cooking. Anything to keep calm, connected and less stressed during Covid -19.

The mentioned groups may sound light, but they help maintain mental harmony, while there are a few other groups that actually work towards keeping us safe during the pandemic. One such credible and notable group is PPE Distribution Network by Taslima Miji, Faiza Rahman, and few others.

"During the beginning of Covid-19 when there was a serious shortage in PPE, I was extremely worried for my fellow workers, doctors and other frontline warriors. I wanted to personally do something for them. Today, the group has become big and a credible place to order PPE. We make sure that no one in this group sells sub-par items or anything with exorbitant prices. We only allow a legitimate price range and products with materials approved by the health ministry. This group is my own personal way of contributing to the welfare of the society," said Miji.

There are so many other similar communities, from pet owners' groups to health groups, the rise of which, especially during Covid-19, only echoes one truth; they are not diversions but a stronghold to keep us united during these difficult days.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
Photo: Collected

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