

**YOUNG ACHIEVER**

# The 14-year-old who crossed the Bangla Channel



Rabbi Rahman.  
Photo: Courtesy  
of Fortune Bangla  
Channel Swimming  
2020

PHOTO: STAR

**MOSTAFA SHABUIJ, FROM BOGURA**

Fourteen-year-old Rabbi Rahman, a tenth grader from Bogura, is the youngest Bangladeshi swimmer to cross the Bangla Channel in the Bay of Bengal. He secured the first place in the 15th Fortune Bangla Channel Swimming competition in November last year, amongst 40 contestants of differ-

ent age groups. It took Rabbi only 3 hours and 20 minutes to cross the 16.1 km channel from Teknaf jetty to St Martin's Island. In addition, he won the Sheikh Kamal Teesta Swimming Competition 2021 held in Rangpur in August, by swimming 46 km, the longest recorded distance in Bangladesh so far.

However, due to financial constraints, Rabbi's family cannot

provide him with adequate food, which is mandatory for an athlete like him. Rabbi also lacks the proper training and equipment.

His father, Alalur Rahman, is a bus counter assistant in Bogura. Rabbi started learning to swim when he was around 3 and a half years old at the Bogura District Sports Association swimming pool, as his father is a part-time swimming trainer of the associa-

tion. "Since 2016, Rabbi has participated in over 100 swimming competitions across the country. Most of the time, he secured the first place," said Alalur Rahman. "I dream that one day, my son will cross the English Channel too." "Watching my son's performance, a parliament member of Bogura fixed some monthly

allowances to run his educational expenses," Alalur added. Rabbi practices at least 4 to 6 hours a day in two ponds in Bogura, as the swimming pools of the district administration have been shut for years. "I want to continue swimming. I want to do something prestigious for Bangladesh by participating in the Olympics," he added.

**NURTURING DREAMS**

# Samannoy Ghosh's journey from radio to the commentary booth

**RAKSHANDA RAHMAN MISHA**

Knowing that sports was his passion, Samannoy Ghosh wanted to pursue it no matter what. Today, the multifaceted RJ and host is a promising name in the world of sports, with his appearances as a commentator on national television earning much praise.

In a candid conversation, Samannoy opened up about his journey as an RJ, his interaction with great names from sports, and how his dream came true when he got to visit the famous Lord's Cricket Ground, London.

Samannoy's journey as an RJ began in 2000 when he was called for an audition for "Radio Metrowave". He applied for the post when he was in the seventh grade, and got selected. His first radio show was "Close up top hits", where he got to interview famous bands such as Black, Artcell, Cryptic Fate, and many more.

"My most memorable incident has to be the Black interview with Tahsan and Jon Kabir. As I went to the studio straight with my uniform on, they were completely shocked that a school kid was going to interview them. The expressions on their faces were priceless," added Samannoy.

After that, he moved to ABC Radio in 2010, where he worked for 11 years. During his time there, he interviewed popular bands like Warfaze, rock icon Ayub Bachchu and International artistes Richard Marx and Liz Mitchell, among many others.

Samannoy grew up wanting to be a cricketer. His father, a former national-level footballer, inspired him to fall in love with sports.

"I used to go to Rafa's (Raef Al Hasan Rafa) studio to practice my commentary, and I would send the recordings to various channels," he says. "I got a call from Channel 9 for Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) coverage in 2016, and the rest was history."

Samannoy worked with the likes of Danny Morrison, Athar Ali Khan and Shamim Ashraf Chowdhury in BPL 2016



Samannoy Ghosh at Lord's Cricket Ground.

PHOTO: COURTESY

In 2018, he went for rigorous training for commentary training from an established ICC events broadcaster. The following year, he was one of the commentators for the Emerging teams Asia cup which was broadcasted on star sports.

His T20 International commentary debut of Bangladesh vs New Zealand became a memorable experience for him as he got to witness Bangladesh winning the fantastic series. Samannoy also revealed that he interviewed some popular faces in Bangladeshi cricket, including Mustafizur Rahman, Mahmudullah Riyad, and Mashrafe Mortaza.

Apart from cricket commentary, he also did commentary for a FIFA-friendly football match between Bangladesh and Nepal that was shown live on the T-sports channel.

Samannoy also hosted the player's draft for the 2019 Bangabandhu BPL.

Samannoy has become a popular face in the arena of cricket commentary in a short span of time. Yet, he feels he has a long way to go.

"Athar Ali Khan and Shamim Ashraf Chowdhury are both legends of the Bangladesh Combox. It is a blessing to be able to work with them. I still have loads to learn from them, and improve myself."

Samannoy added that he hopes to represent Bangladesh at World Cups and Lord's Cricket Ground.

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Shahin Alam conducts computer training sessions for physically-challenged and visually-impaired students online, free of cost.

PHOTO: STAR

**YOUTH IN ACTION**

# Shahin Alam's selfless pursuit of knowledge

**AZIBOR RAHMAN, FROM JHENIDAH**

When the University of Dhaka (DU) was shut down due to the pandemic, 24-year-old Shahin Alam, a Political Science student of the university, began computer training sessions for physically-challenged and visually-impaired students online, free of cost. Alam is visually-impaired himself. He is from Alampur village under Kotchandpur upazila.

Local and Indian students attend his computer classes via zoom. Besides, some students come to his house for in-person sessions.

Alam was diagnosed with typhoid when he was in the fifth grade. After that, he began to lose his vision. By the time he got to the eighth grade, he had lost his eyesight completely.

He went to Narail Tularampur Secondary School, where he mastered Braille, and passed his SSC exams with a 4.0 GPA. He also took computer training from the school for ten days. He passed his HSC exams in 2015 from Shamsul Huda Khan Degree College at Kotchandpur with a 4.58 GPA. Alam can operate all aspects

of a computer and smartphone.

During the pandemic, he trained 113 visually-impaired students in two batches. Now, his third batch is running with 45 students.

Sumon Buddah from India, who attends Alam's computer classes via zoom, describes him as a highly skilled teacher. Moreover, Falguni Rani from India has learned the basics of Microsoft Word and Excel from Alam.

Alam's father Abdul Kader and mother Minara Begum earnestly hope that the government of the country will assist their son in finding a job.

Currently, Alam is a final-year Master's student at DU. "I do not want to be a burden to anyone. I want to live as happily as I can, especially for my parents," he concludes.

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