

Desi Bhalobashi – wearing local with pride

Bangladesh, a country rich with heritage, brimming with art, and diverse in terms of culture, has traditional paraphernalia originating from every region. Deshi Bhalobashi is a platform that showcases these masterpieces that our artists have been creating since time immemorial, as a manner of passing down our heritage.

During the pandemic, these rural entrepreneurs' businesses came to a standstill. That is when about a year ago, Deshi Bhalobashi was formed to support these local artisans by selling their inventories via digital platforms. They are already providing training in terms of using website and photography to maximise online selling in various parts of the country.

"More than selling, it is about building capacity for rural entrepreneurs through digital transformation. If they are provided with the required amenities such as a device, Internet, and photography training, then they



will flourish with leaps and bounds while curating our heritage," explained Mantasha Ahmed, founder of Deshi Bhalobashi.

In order to celebrate a year of their inauguration and the golden jubilee of Bangladesh, Deshi Bhalobashi conducted a virtual campaign titled, "50 Years of Freedom and Heritage" spanning mid-July to August 2021, where iconic figures from various walks of life presented their thoughts via social media to celebrate this movement.

The campaign was held in collaboration with Durjoy Bangladesh Foundation that shares a common goal with Deshi Bhalobashi, which is to provide a platform to local artisans in order to exercise their full creative aptitude and build their identity, not only in Bangladesh but to also leave a global imprint.

His Excellency Naoki Ito, Ambassador of Japan who was part of the campaign stated, "Deshi Bhalobashi is doing an amazing job to promote folk arts such as handloom, cotton, and handicrafts with their impressive line-up of products that includes nakshi kantha, jamdani, muslin, and indigo dyeing."

Deshi Bhalobashi is playing an instrumental role in constructing the future while keeping in mind our history and heritage. It is not only providing a



springboard for trading, but is also bringing the work of craftspeople and artisans working in remote areas for several generations into the limelight.

In regard to the digitisation of processes, His Excellency Vikram Kumar Doraiswami, High Commissioner of India said, "Utilization of the online infrastructure is critical in reaching the mass market and platforms such as Deshi Bhalobashi create the connect and add a qualitative element, that would otherwise make it more expensive."

Building up on this, His Excellency Shiruzimath Sameer, High Commissioner of Maldives added, "The craftspeople may not have appropriate skills to communicate and reach a larger audience but Deshi Bhalobashi is facilitating this process and building capacity of rural artisans to be more financially independent by selling products online."

His Excellency Mustafa Osman Turan, Ambassador of Turkey said endorsing Deshi Bhalobashi as a necessary platform to promote heritage, "It is a great idea and initiative, especially in today's world where such platforms are essential."

In the last decade, the fashion scene of



our country has altered vastly, as we are no longer highly reliant on our neighbouring countries. While previously, the younger generation possessed a fascination towards foreign products, gradually they are growing a fondness for local garments and accessories, and initiatives such as Deshi Bhalobashi are offering such exclusive contemporary products that have a traditional significance.

The products of Deshi Bhalobashi hold a cultural value and yet are modern. It is not only revamping closets with a unique and fashionable twist, but their workmanship is promoting the rich textile of Bangladesh as well. Additionally, when urban people choose to wear local products, they are advocating for our country while creating a sustainable source of income for the people in rural areas.

Superficially, Deshi Bhalobashi may seem like an ordinary e-commerce platform, but it is much more than that. A movement that strives to bring forth our local heritage, crafts, and traditions on both a national and international scale, while adding a modern flair to traditional products, it is also supporting local artisans and craftspeople.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DeshiBhalobashi>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/deshibhalobashi/>

Website: <https://www.deshibhalobashi.com/>

By Fariha Amber

Photo: Deshi Bhalobashi

Wardrobe, Styling & Concept: Deshi Bhalobashi

Studio Courtesy: Durjoy Bangladesh Foundation

#PRESS RELEASES

Sharodiyo Collection by Rang Bangladesh

Keeping the upcoming Durga Puja in mind, Rang Bangladesh has released their Sharodiyo Collection, focusing on the themes of temple motifs, ornaments of the goddess, and shatranji.

The colour scheme is suited for the festivities of puja, as is the choice of fabric, which is perfect for the sultry autumn of Bangladesh.

Various offers are available for online purchases, and buying from their brick and mortar stores.

Essentials —

Visit their website, www.rang-bd.com or follow them on social media at <https://www.facebook.com/rangbangladesh>

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