

Without any window of his own

Sometimes an image or a word says more than an action. Sometimes things cannot be expressed as bluntly because of fear and stigma.

Growing up in Bangladesh, a small country in South Asia, we were taught that society is where men and women get married, and that's how a relationship works. But according to Wikipedia at least 10% of the total population of a country belongs to the non-normative gender and sexuality.

There is a British colonial law here, penal code 377, which prohibits sexual relations between people of the same sex, claiming they are "against the order of nature". The law has been repealed in the UK while it still exists in Bangladesh, and it is difficult to speak out in favour of human rights because of it.

The gay community in Bangladesh is generally underground and being out in public is uncommon. There is a culture of collective denial of the existence of the gay in Bangladesh - a fact attributable to social conservatism. Stigmatization and taboo have made the gay community, in particular, a vulnerable community. Unable to cope with social conditioning, they try to redefine a way of coherence.

This film speaks on behalf of the gay community in Bangladesh who are almost invisible to the wider society. The individual interviews tell the story of individual longing, belief, countless emotions and a silent resilience.

With this work, my intention is to begin a debate around this subject. I want to ask questions as to why gay community is so stigmatized, and why there is this culture of collective denial. I felt it is important to show the humane aspects of the gay community. At the same time, I want to show how the gay community in Bangladesh challenges the compulsory hetero-normative ideals upon which our conservative society is based.

The film was made in cooperation with The Goethe-Institut Bangladesh. For farther information on this production, please feel free to write at thecrowbd@gmail.com. More information about the gay community can be seen at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Boys-of-Bangladesh-BoB/155833047760496>

About the film maker

The film maker Tanvir Alim has started working as a LGBT rights activist in Bangladesh with a group called 'Boys of Bangladesh' since 2007 which works on social awareness building and LGBT rights issues. Apart from this he is working as a cultural program coordinator in a culture centre. He strongly believes that media can play a vital role to change social perceptions and norms.