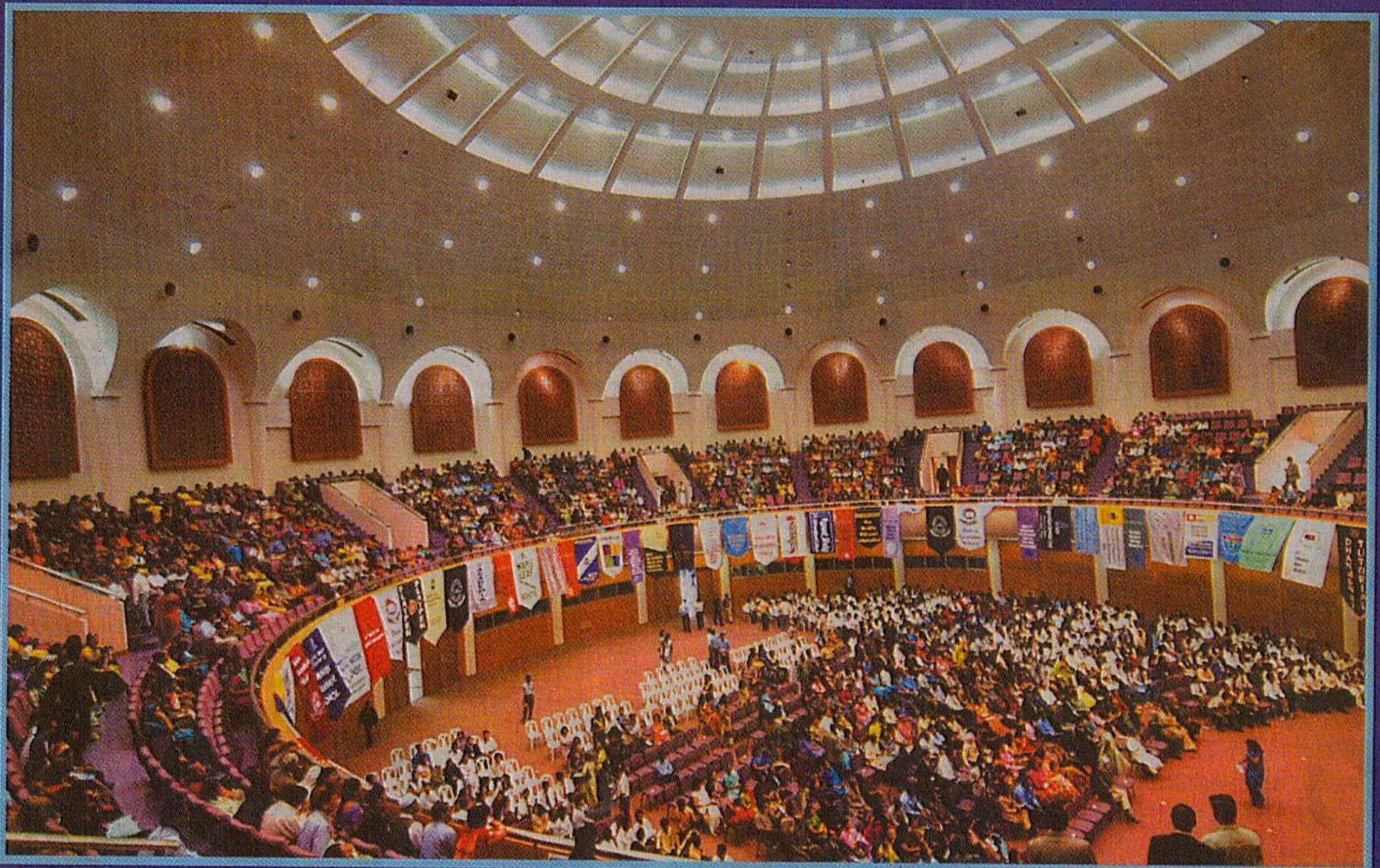


The Daily Star

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT ON O & A LEVEL AWARD (2003-2004)
WEDNESDAY JANUARY 12, 2005



Editor's Message

Give due recognition to our Best and the Brightest

Once again The Daily Star takes immense pride and pleasure in honouring the highest achievers in the O and A level examinations held under the UK based University of London and University of Cambridge. The Daily Star achievement award is given to students who get 6 or more 'A's in the O level and 3 or more 'A's in the A level examinations.

This year there was a total of 537 students who got our awards -- 443 in the 'O' level and 94 in the 'A' level. Of the 'O' level students, one student got 11 As, 11 students got 10 As, 41 students got 9 As, 97 students got 8 As, 125 students got 7 As and the rest got 6 As. In the 'A' level examination 22 students got 4 As and the rest 3 As. We also honour those getting highest marks in any particular subject.

The reason we mention the results in such details is to show the brilliance of our students. These results prove two important things: one, that our students are capable of getting excellent grades

given proper schools and a challenging environment; two, that we have schools and teachers who can produce the best and brightest of achievers. Here we must underscore the role of the English medium schools who are playing an exceptional role in Bangladesh. Except for a few, by and large, most English medium schools are providing high quality education which is fulfilling a felt need by the parents and guardians. Some of our schools can be compared to the best internationally whose quality of teaching is proven by the results that the students achieve. We would also like to pay our tribute to the teachers in these schools, who through their commitment, hard work and love for the children educate, inspire and motivate them for performing the way they do.

One thing about the 'O' and 'A' level examinations that we would like to underscore is that these are international level examinations held simultaneously in most English speaking countries and at the same standard as in the UK and

elsewhere. So those who do well in these examinations do so well internationally. Their achievements are comparable to those anywhere in the English speaking world. We have reasons to believe that the proportion of students who get such high number of 'A' compared to those who sit for it, makes results of Bangladeshi students among the best in the world. This means that we have both capable pupils and quality teachers to produce students of high international standard. This fact needs to be underscored as the future of Bangladesh truly depends on the quality of our education. It is true that English medium schools serve only a fraction of students of Bangladesh. Still, along with quality Bangla schools, they can make a significant contribution towards producing that critical mass of qualified human resource that Bangladesh so badly needs.

A question that looms large in the minds of our people is how many of these high achievers will ultimately return to

Bangladesh after they finish their higher studies abroad--assuming that most of the award winners will go out for higher studies. This is an important question.

Over the years Bangladesh had to bear a significant burden of the global 'brain drain' to the industrialised world.

However we would like to point out that it is not enough to expect our students to return home. We must also create the environment-physical, monetary and intellectual- to attract them back. There is already a tendency among our students to return home. However peripheral, we must do everything to increase this trend. Given the glimmer of positive realities in Bangladesh we have all the confidence that those whom we are saluting today as the Nation Builders of Tomorrow will return home and do their best for the growth and prosperity of Bangladesh.

MAHFUZ ANAM

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