

# Tale of a visually impaired student

MOON MOON SULTANA

While moving with the crowd of students rushing to their classes, there is nothing to distinguish Nazia from the others. But when a classmate comes forward to guide her to classroom, her identity becomes apparent to an outsider.

Nazia is blind.

Like many others suffering from physical and mental disabilities, Nazia's resilience and strength symbolise their struggle to stand on their own foot with a university degree.

"I don't want financial assistance, but a job so that my mother can see me self-reliant during her lifetime," said Nazia.

Nazia Hossain, 24, a final year student of the journalism department of Dhaka University, became blind due to dysentery at the age of two.

Although she has to depend on her classmates for study, she can do almost all works on her own.

She noted class lectures with the help of her classmates and then she uses Braille method to make their transcripts for taking preparation for examination.

The lone Braille machine is the all-time trustworthy friend of Nazia apart from Nandita Tabassum, her classmate who helps her with notes.

Like other 40 visually impaired students of Dhaka University, sitting at the examination is another problem for Nazia.

Since there is no system of giving examination in Braille, the blind students have to look for a scriptwriter who must be junior than the examinees.

"It's very problematic to have a scriptwriter, sometimes it happens that I'm looking for a scriptwriter even at the eleventh hour," she said.

"The hassle is not over there, we've to take special permissions from different sections of the university apart from the depart-



PHOTO: STAR  
Nazia Hossain, a final year student of the journalism department of Dhaka University.

ment," she said posing a question, "Is not the approval of the department enough for sitting examination with the help of a scriptwriter?"

Despite these hurdles, Nazia managed to reach the final year of honours class without any gap since she started her schooling.

Nazia, who is the youngest daughter of five children of Mohammad Amzad Hossain and Hamida Begum, lost her father during her childhood.

Her mother has been bed-ridden for the last three years due to brain haemorrhage.

Nazia holds herself responsible for her mother's sickness.

"I know mother fell sick brooding over my future," she said, adding that the recent Sidr had caused much damage to their house in Shariatpur where her sick mother and sister live.

When asked by this correspondent about her feelings on the

'International Day of Disabled Persons', which was celebrated on December 3, Nazia said,

"I want a job after my final exam in January so that I can continue my MA course. I want to see my mother and aunt happy."

Nazia is very grateful to her aunt Nasima Begum, wife of her maternal uncle, who has been bearing all her expenses since childhood.

She passed SSC from Laboratory Institute Girls High School and HSC from Mohammadpur Mahila College in first division with letter marks in SSC.

She took training on photography from an NGO. Her photos were sent to an exhibition in London recently.

"I don't find extra time these days after my study, exams, prayer and cooking," said Nazia sitting at the waiting room of Rokeya Hall of Dhaka University.

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