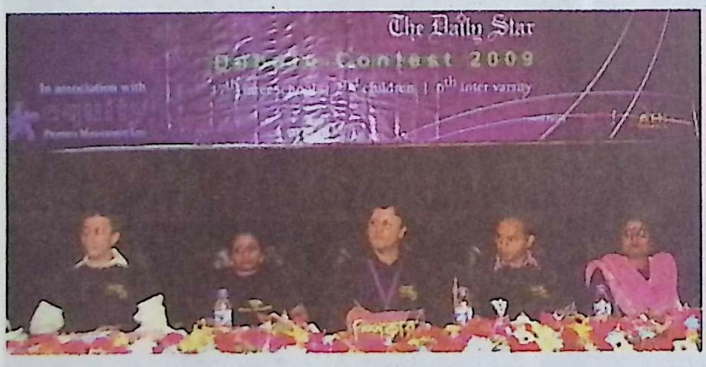
'Tensed' might be the best word to describe the mental state of the debaters and their moderators on Day 5, when the semi-finals took place at the TIC auditorium. The team from Chittagong Government High School beat B. A. F. Shaheen College to reach the finals to meet Silver Bells Girls' High School who defeated Chittagong Collegiate School to complete their journey to the inter-school finals. Having given their best shots, one of the teams of Agrabad Balika Bidyalay made it to the finals, beating Dr. Khastagir Girls' High School along with a second team of Chittagong Government High School, who defeated Nasirabad Government Boys' High School in that round. Adjudicators admit that it was one of those toughest of days for them, where each speaker exceeds the previous one in terms of debating skills.

**The Inter Varsity Rounds**

The non-Chittagong teams had arrived in Chittagong by Day 5. Starting with topics like 'THBT, EU is far more successful than UN'. Day 6 was a mere representation of what the debating arena can offer in the future. As the event was prolonged till the evening for the semi-final rounds, a fiery round was held, where Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology beat North South University to meet Jahangirnagar University at the finals, which defeated Premier University on their way.






**The Grand Finale**

Day 7 attracted so many audiences at the TIC auditorium that people had to literally stand on the walkway due to lack of seats, and still a hundred or two were waiting outside in the parking lot. The day kicked off with the final debate at the Children category, where Agrabad Balika Bidyalay beat Chittagong Government High School on the topic, "perseverance, not merit, is the key to a successful life." It was followed by the school level where Silver Bells Girls' High School was won over by Chittagong Government High School on the topic "THBT, Bangladesh should include itself in the Asian Highway without wasting time for the economic development of the country." Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology had a tough time in defeating Jahangirnagar University at the varsity level debate finals, on the topic "THBT, 2021 Bangladesh will be a materialisation of our dream." There was an overwhelming response from the audience throughout the entire debate. During the debate sessions, a documentary was played, themed upon the competition history and the participants of this year.

Terming the competition a training school for the young minds, Mutual Trust Bank Managing Director, Anis A. Khan, said that students could improve their skills by engaging themselves more in the extracurricular activities. Also speaking at the ceremony, Former Chairman of Chittagong Club and Equity Properties Limited Director, Dr. Moinul Islam Mahmud, Mutual Trust Bank Senior Vice President, Nazrul Islam, and convenor of the competition committee, Rashedul Amin, with Drishty President, Masud Bakul, at the chair. The programme was conducted by Drishty General Secretary, Saif Chy.

Mutual Trust Bank Managing Director, Anis A Khan, and The Daily Star Editor, Mahfuz Anam, both agreed to support Drishty in the future in organising an international level debate competition.

**Most Promising Debaters**

This year, a number of debaters caught the eyes of the jury, with names including Mottakin Chowdhury and Tahseen Mahmud (Chittagong Government High School), Safkat (Chittagong Collegiate School), Farjin Hassan Moumita and Fatema Imrose (Silver Bells Girls' High School), Umme Hani (Imaratunnesa City Corporation Girls' High School) and Meherun Saima (Agrabad Balika Bidyalay).

**The Panel**

The huge list of speakers and judges include the names of City Editor of Suprobhat Bangladesh, M Nasirul Haque, Ex-headmistress of Chittagong Government, Girls' High School Jahanara Begum, teacher of St. Scholastica's Girls' High School Bridget Dais, Drishty President, Masud Bakul, Drishty General Secretary Saif Chy, Ex-debater and Physician, Masud Rana, and lecturer of International Islamic University Chittagong, Muminur Rahman among others

The coordinator of the competition was Shahidul Islam, and the co-ordinator was Rezaul Karim, who are members of Drishty Chittagong. Also part of the 31-member committee led by Rashedul Amin included Saber Shah, Borhan Uddin Shaun, Saifuddin Munna, Partha Sarothi and Emon Dash.

The associate sponsor of the tournament was Equity Property Management Ltd. The media partners were Radio Foorti and ATN Bangla.

(Writer is a debater and member, Drishty Chittagong.)