Budding Scientists on the Rise
CGSD Science and IT Festival

NIBRAS WADUD KHAN

On October 17, 2015, Chittagong Grammar School, Dhaka, hosted their CGSD Science and IT Festival, at their Gulshan campus. Students from Grade 6, up to Grade 10, presented their ideas and models at the fair.

Right from the start, an air of excitement enveloped the campus, with students willing to showcase their hard work of previous weeks. The school walls were adorned with colorful posters of great scientific minds and discoveries, alongside descriptions of the projects on display. Volunteers were running around excitedly, eager to help the parents and visitors flooding in.

The projects themselves touched a variety of subjects: from biology and human sciences, all the way to robotics and nanotechnology. Some students of Grade 8 prepared a basic DNA model, with a simple explanation on how DNA controls cellular activities. Grade 9 students built a prototype of their idea, "Android Eye", which used motion sensors to enable people with vision defects to see better. A couple of displays that garnered lots of interest were "Nanobots", presented by Joanna Khan and Faiza Haq of Grade 9, where microscopic biological robots, or nanobots, were used to deliver drugs to various affected parts of the body for quicker and effective treatment, and

"Robots Eating Food", presented by Grade 8 students, where a hand-made robot ate waste materials, and converted it to electricity.

"Such an event gives us the opportunity to think outside of the box and show what we have learned in our classrooms, while having fun too," said Joanna.

There were a host of simple projects executed well, such as the baking-soda volcano, water purifier and hydraulic crane. Then there were those, which demonstrated a bit more creative thinking: a "Sci-Fi Future City" run only on renewable energy, the "Robot Fire Extinguisher", and "Project Projection", where students used simple technologies to produce amazing 3D holograms.

The students were constantly supervised by their teachers, who also evaluated the project work and presentation of their pupils. Gulshan Ara Hossain, biology teacher, said, "The students have done an amazing job within a short time-frame, and come up with some ingenious ideas. The festival will improve their knowledge and confidence, and boost their interest in these subjects."

The festival was brought to a close with the IT projects, where students presented ideas such as "Hospital Admin", "Hotel Management" and "Digital Library", using software and programmes they had developed themselves.

Shadman Sakib, IT and Maths teacher, said, "Everything we use today depends on computers and software, so the skills we teach our students are very important. Since IT isn't a compulsory subject, having an IT fair can grow interest and encourage students to take it up."

At the end of the event, all the students were given certificates, and marks on their presentations. The entire school was thrilled with the way the festival had gone, and Head of the Secondary School, Khadija Afzal's words reflected such.

"CGS are a part of the international Round Square Conference for schools, which focuses enormously on extra-curricular activities. So, it was great to see participation from so many students, and we encourage this."

She added, "We plan to have science and robotics clubs for the students soon, and expect to host similar science festivals with other schools, in the upcoming years; this will help put CGS Dhaka on the map."

Nibras is a hopeful doctor-to-be and lover of murgi roast. He stalks you on Instagram when free, so DM @niibbzzz.

FOR THE LOVE OF SCIENCE
Holy Cross College conducts its 13th science festival

ANUPOMA JOYEETA JOYEE

With the mantra *"More questions, more possibilities"* the 13th Annual Inter College Science Festival 2015 at Holy Cross College, sponsored by Pran Mango Fruit Drink, kicked off on October 9. I had a wonderful time reminiscing my days at Holy Cross while watching the college lighten up with hundreds of young science enthusiasts, colourful banners adorning its pristine grounds, invitees appreciating the marvellous effort put forth for the last three months by its Science Club.

Along with Principal Sister Shikha Gomez, the inauguration ceremony was presided over by renowned author Anisul Hoque, and the Associate Professor at Bangladesh University of Science and Technology, Farseem Mannan Mohammedy. The guests asserted the importance of science festivals in shaping young minds. The two-day long event saw the extraordinary passion of the students of 16 colleges come to life through competitions on science, mathematics, physics, information technology, criminal identification, Rubik's cube, extempore speech, quizzing and wall magazine. Dhaka Residential Model College lifted

the champion's trophy after the nail-biting quiz competition that was conducted by TV personality Abdun Noor Tushar. Notre Dame College and Viqarunnisa Noon College respectively ranked as the first and second runner up. Visitors and invitees savoured every

moment of the project display sessions which were incredibly diverse in young scientists having come up with practical and impressive concepts. In categories of physics, chemistry, biology, IT, psychology and geography there were projects suggesting ideas varying from biodegradable plastic to tiny mechanical cars running on bluetooth technology. From building bricks in cheaper and eco-friendly way to ensuring data security – there were projects that simply left the visitors in awe.

The wall magazine display was a burst of colour on thought provoking scientific issues presented by students in the most aesthetic ways possible. The colossal basement was decked with magazines on topics starting from depression to alternate energy, DNA to wormhole and so on.

After months of all-nighters pulled by the panel members of Holy Cross College Science Club, its president Kaifi Sultana Kabbo and long-time moderator Indrajit Dutta, the event emerged as a huge success.

The Dhaka University professors, Dr. Anwar Hossain of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; Dr. Jesmin of Department of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology; BUET Computer Science and Engineering Professor Mohammad Kaykobad and Assistant Brand Manager of Pran-RFL Group, Giasuddin Sajeeb graced the closing ceremony with their presence. Handing out crests and certificates to the ecstatic winners, they commended the well-arranged festival and wished its further success in the upcoming days.

These two days of the epic festivity reminded me once again of the inspiration that Holy Cross College provides to aspiring young scientists, motivation that takes its students as far as the door of the tech giants in Silicon Valley.

Anupoma Joyeeta Joyee is a perpetually sleepy Law student who emotionally identifies with ducks and occasionally sets out on writing spree. Find more of her needless banters on https://www.facebook.com/joyee.anupoma