

CEREMONEY



# RESPECT FOR TALENT

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PHOTOS: PRABIR DAS

In our country, it is not uncommon for a basic need like education to become difficult to acquire for the poor. However, in spite of all the difficulties, the inherent talent, the endless possibilities and indomitable willpower of these brilliant minds can make it possible to conquer all obstacles. To help them achieve their dream, recently, the BRAC Bank-Prothom Alo Trust has awarded 85 underprivileged talented students for their outstanding achievements in SSC and HSC examination and rewarded them with a scholarship, at the CA Bhaban, 10th floor auditorium.

"My father is physically ill and now has become completely unable to earn and support our family," says Chinta Khatun, a student of Alinagar Girls High School, Chapai Nawabganj, Rajshahi, who obtained GPA-5.00 in Secondary School Certificate Examination this year. Considering her miserable condition along with her merit, she was awarded a scholarship from the BRAC Bank-Prothom Alo Trust.

"I achieved government scholarship in class Five" she says. "In fact I did not face any problem till class Eight. But as soon as my father got ill, I did not know if I could continue with my studies. It became very difficult for my family to manage our expenses. On rainy days, my Headmaster and one of my friends would support me to carry on my studies with free schooling and study materials. I am very grateful to



Bangladesh who were awarded with scholarships, crests and medals at the reception programme. The most important fact is that the journeys of these underprivileged children are not smooth at all. Besides their school, most of them have to work hard to maintain their family or to manage educational expenses. Some of their parents work as day labourers while some of them earn their livelihood by fishing.

Tuhin Ali, an orphan student, from Lalpur Sree Shundari Pilot High School, Lalpur, Natore, is a van driver. Every day after school, he carries goods of others

and hence, with the money, he supports his family and his own school fees as well as study materials.

"He is the most modest student I have ever seen in my teaching experience. In future, he wants to be an engineer," says Mohammad Akkas Ali, a teacher of Lalpur Sree Shundari Pilot High School, Lalpur, Natore, with whom Tuhin came to receive the award.

For awarding the meritorious students from the remote corners of the country, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid welcomed this initiative of Prothom Alo Trust and BRAC Bank. "I think we have come a long way, but we need to go further, for our better future," hopes Nahid. "Today, the quality of education has developed compared to the past few years. The curriculum has been changed; the teachers are also given training to give quality education. With the combined efforts of all, we are able to go beyond", he believes.

To respect the willpower of such indomitably talented underprivileged students, Prothom Alo Trust officially started distributing scholarship among them in 2006. Later, in 2009, when BRAC Bank collaborated with the trust, their working area expanded. Till now, a total of 570 underprivileged students have been awarded with the scholarship, whereas 338 students are getting scholarships regularly to maintain their study expenses. This year they have given scholarships to 55 students who scored GPA-5.00 in SSC and 30 students who got the award previously and maintained consistency in the HSC exam for their higher education.

The guests of the programme, Dr Samanta Lal Sen, founder of the Burn Unit, Dhaka Medical College Hospital, Syed Manzoorul Islam, Professor of English at the University of Dhaka, actor Chanchal Chowdhury, singer SI Tutul, all have inspired the students to go ahead and make a better Bangladesh with their indomitable possibilities. They hope, one day these underprivileged students will represent Bangladesh to the international community by utilising their latent talents.

#RealTalk



# DON'T MOCK THE MAN-GOD

The Kfar Shaul Mental Health Center, a psychiatric clinic, located near Jerusalem is famous for being one of the lead researchers of the Jerusalem Syndrome. This is a mental condition, when people, especially tourists, start believing themselves to be reincarnations of important religious figures after a visit to the holiest of holy cities. Overwhelmed by the religious insinuations spread across one of the oldest city of the world, individuals often find themselves giving in to human's inherent yet mostly hidden delusions of grandeur. Given the current situation in Bangladesh, one would think it is right time to open such a clinic here to house the growing number of Man-Gods. What would putting men who think of themselves as being the reincarnation of the same man achieve? Isolation, of course. The Man-God, prevalent in every belief system, needs isolation more than anything else.

The Man-God, by nature, is a very curious creature. He believes Himself to be possessor of true knowledge; of ideas too grand for the mere mortal mind to understand on its own. Be it

any ideology, be it political religious or otherwise, the Jerusalem Syndrome manifests and infests in the Man-God, offering the confidence for Him to undertake the position of the vessel of God, if not God himself. In today's world, the essence of any message can never be more important than the vessel carrying it and so the Man-God makes it a point to mock those who do not understand such a simplistic notion. And why should He not? While you may have merely read the word of God in one of the few books that God himself wrote to explain his very own message with as much clarity as possible, the Man-God has read up to 80,000-700,000 supplementary manmade texts to explain the words that God himself hadn't managed to properly elucidate. At times, the additional texts may be riddled with outright contradictions and hypothesis, but the Man God is big enough to ignore those slight annoyances, nonplussed by the veracity of his claims.

The Man-God though is not always tolerant of all things. A few things really grind their gears; specifically, these include other people's lifestyle choices,

other people's use of logic, other people's opinions and of course the behaviour of women. In fact, it is this infatuation with poking their noses in other people's businesses that makes the Man-God so fascinating to study. The Man-God believes it is His responsibility to be answerable for everyone else's crime. He is selfless in nature in that respect. Of course, if there is some benefit to be made from His rhetoric, the Man-God seizes the opportunity like a man possessed. He thrusts Himself in the position of a maniacal spokesperson for all else. The Man-Gods are convinced of their ways and allow no other school of thought to form or even manifest in the most innocent of manners. Discourse or discussion is not in the Man-God's plans. His word is final. Yours is irrelevant, because let's face it, you were not chosen by Him like He was chosen by Him and by Him we literally mean Him, the Man-God himself. Kind of like our elections.

The Man-God eventually styles Himself to His god and his cultural upbringing as closely as possible. He can become vengeful, arrogant, and invincible in his eyes and beyond the

very words He Himself has sworn to protect. And rightfully so. A Man-God has a tough time adjusting to mankind because the concepts He explores are beyond our comprehension and He has to at times twist whatever narrative to fit his purpose. His voice tends to be the loudest and in a world that profits from stereotype, His voice is eventually the most amplified.

Throwing the argument of reading the book to a Man-God is a great insult too. The Book, the one that God himself has promised to protect and keep uncorrupted is an afterthought in the greater scheme of things. They'll tell you to consider the context. They'll tell you, you aren't capable of comprehending it. They'll say the language cannot be translated. They'll say this means this but it also means something else. So, what should we do? Abide by God's own words and believe in the clarity he promises of his book? Or turn to the Man-God for answers? Certainly unlettered men for thousands of years ago did fine without all the fuss but hey, whatever is easier right? Let's follow as convenience dictates. The Man-God can do no further wrong. At least, not when he is alone.

