



# TAILORING TOWARDS EMINENCE

## Battle of Minds 2015 by British American Tobacco Bangladesh

MYAT MOE KHAING

The world of corporate life remains a mystery to all university students. As the end nears in, a medley of thrill and anxiety takes over the soon-to-be-graduates. British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB) brings them an experience that recognises and bridges the gap between university life and corporate life: "Battle of Minds".

With the theme "What is your legacy?", "Battle of Minds 2015" had its first roadshow staged at the auditorium of Institute of Business Administration (IBA), University of Dhaka.

Rezaul Islam, Head of Marketing at BATB, triggered the audience's enthusiasm saying, "If you work in the same environment for too long, your creativity stops. BAT offers a cross cultural environment. You learn to respect cultures of others in a way that others respect yours."

Managing Director of BATB, Shehzad Munim, asked the students to dream big, stay hungry and to be always humble, and to keep pursuing new challenges. He also shared the dynamics of his professional journey.

In an interactive session at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) road show Q&A, S.M. Khaled, Head of Supply Chain, BATB advised, "You have to choose out of existing opportunities. Don't get confused. If you make a mistake, have the courage to reverse it."

Since 2004, "Battle of Minds" has been serving as a recruitment platform, and reaching out to students from a variety of disciplines. It began its journey with 64 applicants that year. Since then, through the BOM competition, BATB has recruited more than 100 individu-



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als. Some of them are now working at BATB and other BAT operations around the world. Many BOM alumni are working at various local and multinational companies and some of them are even leading teams as higher executives.

This year, 2,687 final year students applied from 18 universities. After thorough screening from online applications, top 170 applicants were selected for round 1. This round was about Focused Group Discussion.

Seventy-six participants moved on to the semi-finals. Twenty competitors qualified from semi-final to the final round that is yet to be held.

In was 10 o'clock in the morning of semi-final round and the partici-

pants were expecting to get serious with the big day ahead. Instead, they had an ice-breaking session. They were divided into teams of 6 and were asked to come up with hashtags that they thought described BOM best.

To the utter surprise, the newly formed groups were asked to present a 30 second synchronised haka dance performance. This synchronisation gave them an essence of real battle of job life.

The grooming session began shortly after that. While instructing a session, Naved Manzoor, Head of Total Supply Chain Finance, welcomed the audience to bring about their differences. He went on inspiring the gathering saying, "The satisfaction you get by seeing your idea



implemented is greater than the satisfaction of being yourself."

Adrita Datta, Talent Manager of BATB, explained that real life business scenarios are more effective than hypothetical ones in building every skill to adapt to corporate life. BOM participants go through such real life cases. Last year the students proved themselves by presenting the expansion plan for George's Café in Uttara.

"I have worked with my friends from other universities. This is the first time we got to work with participants from other universities," said Lamisa Faika Shahriar, a student of IBA, DU.

Sayera Sun-um, a final year student of Mechanical Engineering, BUET said, "I came to know about BOM from my friends and relatives. It's the job satisfaction at BAT I hear of that brings me here."

To Shama Shabab, a student from NSU, BOM stands out from other competitions for the diversity in participants and tasks the competitors are required to complete. Getting to network with executives that would have been otherwise impossible is what makes the platform more valuable in terms of experience.

As Rumana Rahman, Head of Human Resources at BATB, puts it, the participants could realise a difference between what they were before and after the semi-final. The finale is yet to take place and the winners are yet to be crowned, but BOM 2015 so far has been a simulation and an unforgettable learning experience for everyone who has been a part of it.

*Myat Moe is an occasional philosopher whose favourite pastime is confusing people with her nationality. Reach her at 145michelle@gmail.com*