

Deshi Ballers hosts 3x3 Basketball Tournament

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Deshi Ballers International Women's Day 3x3 Basketball Tournament was held on March 9, 2019 at Gulshan Youth Club in Dhaka, hosted by Deshi Ballers. The event was sponsored by Save and Serve Foundation, with print partner SHOUT, The Daily Star; radio partner Colours 101.6 FM; and event partners Studio Dorset and Tanvir Ali Photography.

This year, the event welcomed a total of 12 teams, with a maximum of 4 members per squad to battle it out for the champion's title. The teams included women of ages 13 and above, starting from school students to working women and mothers. All passionate about playing basketball.

"Unlike last year, we received an overwhelming response from players. Within two days of opening registration, we reached our cap of 12 teams and we didn't even have to ask anyone to consider participating", said Ashreen Mridha, founding member of Deshi Ballers and the event coordinator for the tournament.

The matches were each 10 minutes long with three players on each side. Each team played in at least three rounds, bringing the total number of games



PHOTO: TANVIR ALI PHOTOGRAPHY

played to 26.

After an intense final match, Team Kawhi of the Tiger was crowned the champion of the tournament, while Warriors Black was the runner up. Jaden DeNeef from team Kawhi of the Tiger was awarded the title of MVP and Umama Zillur from team All Stars won the title of Free Throw Queen during the tournament by scoring 13 baskets in 60 seconds.

When asked about her experience

during the tournament, Umama said, "We have been in the basketball scene for about 10 years and even though we are all working day jobs now, we want to continue playing. We love the energy of the tournament and it's been a great experience overall."

The closing ceremony was presided over by Humayun Kabir, President, Gulshan Youth Club; Nihar Siddique, Basketball Convenor, Gulshan Youth

Club; Syed Tayabul Bashar, Jahangir Hassan and Naina Parveen from Save & Serve Foundation; and Mahtabur Rahman Bulbul, Former National Basketball Coach among others.

Deshi Ballers is a voluntary initiative by founding members Ashreen Mridha and Gulnazar Mahbub Monika. The group began its journey with the mission of empowering women of all ages through sports. Currently the group is providing training camps for basketball for young girls and is planning to host regular tournaments so girls can stay invested in the sport.

Save and Serve Foundation, is a non-profit organisation that aims to build peaceful and inclusive communities in Bangladesh by encouraging religious tolerance. They also engage in other charitable activities, like their Sports for Life initiative, which promotes fitness, discipline and a healthy lifestyle among the youth of our country.

Even though Deshi Ballers is training women in basketball, they hope to eventually start including other competitive sports in their training sessions. To find out more, visit their Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/deshiballers/>

VELC HOSTS NATIONAL LANGUAGE FIESTA 2019



A CORRESPONDENT

Viqarunnisa English Language Club (VELC) held 'Hatil presents VELC 3rd National Language Fiesta 2019', powered by SIBL, from March 8 - 10, 2019 at the Viqarunnisa Noon School and College (VNSC) campus in Baily Road, Dhaka.

The theme of this year's event was 'women empowerment', with hundreds of students from Bangla medium and English version schools and colleges, taking part in the 3 day-long programme, participating in 39 different categories.

The first day started with the opening ceremony, which was presided over by Suborna Mustafa, Member of the Parliament and cultural activist as the chief guest of the programme. Faye Nicholls, Teaching Centre Manager, British Council Bangladesh, was present as a special guest, while Golam Ashraf Talukdar, Chairman, Governing Body of VNSC chaired the event. Other members

of the Governing Body of VNSC were also present as guests of honour.

Poem Recitation, Poetry Writing, Spelling Bee, Intensive Reading, Extempore Speech, Language Olympiad, Quizzes, Script Writing, and Multimedia Presentation are a few of the 39 categories through which students competed for the first, second and third prizes. Each of the categories had both English and Bangla counterparts that students could choose to participate in.

The competitions took place during the first two days of the fiesta, and were divided into three different levels: Junior (Class 6 - 8), Secondary (Class 9 - 10) and Higher Secondary (Class 11 - 12). Participants joined in not only from schools and colleges in Dhaka, but also from institutions outside of Dhaka, like Sylhet Cadet College and from schools in Savar and Gazipur.

"We had a lot more participants registering this year compared to the previous



PHOTO: COURTESY

two instalments. I would say the event has been quite successful", said Saima Wahid, VP, Advertising Department, VELC.

The judges for the Junior and Secondary levels were teachers from higher secondary colleges that did not have a school wing, while university teachers were the judges for the Higher Secondary group. This was done to ensure fair judgement in all categories and levels.

Some of the winners of the most popular categories included: Shazid Hossain from Motijheel Ideal School and College, champion of Spelling Bee (Secondary Level); Omar Fardin Khan from Dhaka Residential Model College, champion of Script Writing (Secondary Level); Subaiya Rupkotha from VNSC, champion of Extempore Speech in English (Junior Level); and Raiyan Ibne Hossain from Notre Dame College, champion of English Olympiad (Higher Secondary Level), among many others.

The closing ceremony took place on March 10, and was attended by Dr. Abdur Razzaque, Minister of Agriculture, who was the chief guest of the ceremony. Special guest included Selim H. Rahman, Managing Director and CEO, Hatil, and other guests included Golam Ashraf Talukdar, Chairman of Governing Body, VNSC, and Hasina Begum, Principal, VNSC. After a speech from all the guests, crests were awarded to the winners on the stage.

When asked about the significance of this event, Jannatul Ferdous, Moderator of VELC said, "We organise this event to encourage students to learn English and their own mother tongue, Bangla. Through this event we want to make learning enjoyable."

After this year's success, the club hopes to have even more participation in the years to come.

The Daily Star was the media partner for this event.