



Celebrating the Power of Youth

Battle of Minds 2019 Bootcamp

BY A CORRESPONDENT

Battle of Minds was inceptioned in 2004 by British American Tobacco Bangladesh as the country's first corporate talent grooming platform geared towards university students hungry to embrace leadership positions of tomorrow. Over the last 16 years, Battle of Minds has built a legacy of directly grooming over 30,000 university students across Bangladesh, creating several hundreds of leaders now in leading positions across corporate, social and entrepreneurial spheres of the nation.

The bootcamp round is a signature ceremony of Battle of Minds every year, where a select pool of top participants are invited for a chance to interact directly with leaders and subject matter experts within and beyond BAT, and engage in a daylong series of challenges that test their cognitive and technical skills. After over 4000 initial registrations this year, the top



180 candidates across 21 institutions were invited for this year's bootcamp.

The day started with a unique ice-breaking session by Ghashphoring Choir. An entire hall full of candidates harmonised to the tunes of an energetic orchestra backed by organic body percussions, setting the mood of passion and enthusiasm for the day. Next, the candidates engaged in an interesting networking challenge where the task was to identify other fellow participants using clues in the form of interesting personality traits and unique life events exclusive to each participant of the bootcamp.

Following the networking and ice-breaking sessions, the event upped the ante by moving to its keynote session. Aligning with this year's theme of digital transformation and upskilling, the presentation was delivered by Mohammad Oli Ahad, Founder, Intelligent Machines and a veteran in the scene of digital an-

alytics and transformation. The keynote revolved around the enormous strides that the public and private sectors of the country have been making in the recent past to enhance digital connectivity in the grassroots, and the socioeconomic impact of enabling more access to digital tools and technology.

The session was followed by the addresses from the chief guest Mohibul Hassan Chowdhury MP, Deputy Minister of Education, and the special guest Muhammed Alamgir PhD, Member of the University Grants Commission and former Vice Chancellor of Khulna University of Engineering and Technology (KUET). Both speeches commended Battle of Minds for its remarkable impact in comprehensive management skills development of the country's youth and ushered young leaders to play a pivotal role in paving the road to a digital Bangladesh.

Following lunch, candidates had a

session with Saad Jashim, Head of HR, and Golam Safwat Choudhury, Head of Marketing — both members of BAT's Bangladesh Leadership Team. The interactive conversation revolved around the importance of building resilience to navigate through challenges in a dynamic and fast evolving socio-economic environment in the country, and the need to step out of the comfort zone to maximise the fullest potential of youth.

The final task of the day was a group activity where participants were split into mixed teams and given an impromptu challenge of crafting a solution to engage and upskill the grassroots Bangladesh population to embrace the benefits of digital technology. Candidates were groomed by former Battle of Minds alumni, who guided the teams to deliver on their strategy and presentation pitch. Thus followed the elevator pitches from the candidates who presented to an elite panel of judges, followed by a series of rapid fire Q&A. Teams impressed the judges with their innovative takes on bringing digital technology to rural Bangladesh, sketching their plans of leveraging the power of youth to fast track the strategic imperatives of digital Bangladesh.

Under the dreamy glow of ambient lights and house music in the backdrop, the evening marked a close to an energy packed day as more alumni and senior managers joined in the festive atmosphere. Another successful bootcamp saw its conclusion, only this time it happened to be the biggest ever in Battle of Minds history, consolidating its vision of reaching the masses with benchmark practices on corporate grooming to empower the youth for a better tomorrow.

