

Knowledge isn't power unless shared



Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal
Eminent author and physicist

You will probably remember this day for the rest of your life.

The programme is being held during the month of February, when people of the country made supreme sacrifice for the right to the mother tongue, so I would like to say a few words about the language.

We can say that Bangla is a very flexible language. You can permute a Bangla sentence in different orders, and each combination is correct, which makes it very easy to write poetry. And there are so many beautiful songs. If you look into it, you will find that Bangla is the sweetest language on earth.

Rabindranath Tagore wrote in our National Anthem, "Ma, tor mukher bani amar kane lage sudhar moto [Oh mother mine, words from your lips are like nectar to my ears!]."

Renowned Bangla linguist, and writer Dr Muhammad Shahidullah said that a man has three mothers. His own mother, his mother tongue, and his motherland. So, try to serve all mothers.



Mahbub ur Rahman
Chief Executive Officer of HSBC Bank, Bangladesh

It is the 23rd instalment of saluting the nation builders of tomorrow. This reflects continuity and consistency.

The Daily Star has been placing great importance on the development of the country and the development of talents in the country. We are extremely honoured to have been able to be associated with this event.

On the development of talents, I want to highlight several points. Firstly, it is important for us to review from time to time what changes are taking place. And continue to remain a constant learner. Keep on learning new things.

Secondly, knowledge is not power, unless it is shared. So share your knowledge with each other, with your peers, with everybody around you, and with whatever capacity you have, and become more powerful.

Thirdly, the world today is much more globalised. So it is important to be international. We cannot be too domestic to be international beings.

It is important to reach out, and I'm sure the standard that you have achieved is a global standard. Already, you are exposed to international standards.

So you will have to reach out. It is important for you to develop a cross-border relationship, network, understanding, and knowledge. So continue to remain international.



Abdullah Al Mamun Liton
Regional Development Manager, Pearson Edexcel, Bangladesh and Nepal

If you and your friend exchange information, the information will double.

We need to know exactly what we need to know to survive in this new world. Education has changed.

Getting good grades is indeed extremely important. But in my opinion, it is more important to be a good human being. Because a bad human being with good grades is risky for society. So I would rather have not-so-good grades and be a good human being.

At Pearson, we do something exceptional. We share marked scripts with students the day we publish O- and A-level results. It helps the students to see why their friend got an A* when they got an A.

You are privileged to have the opportunity to educate yourself on the British curriculum. But there are millions of students studying in Bangladesh. Not in schools that have the facilities that you have. So, you should be grateful to the country for giving you this opportunity to have this wonderful education.

You are so lucky that you were born in Bangladesh. Because in this country, there are so many problems. Once you enter professional life, you can pick any problem, solve it, and become famous. So, take it as an advantage that you were born in Bangladesh.



Mahfuz Anam
Editor and Publisher, The Daily Star

I can tell you most sincerely and happily that, even as the editor of the most prominent English daily, honouring you is the happiest moment in my life. This is the occasion on which we celebrate you. It is you who are the chief guest and the VIP of today's event.

But we must remember that you could not have come here without the effort of your parents. Now, I take this occasion, to salute, the parents.

Dear parents, it is the values that you impart to your children that ultimately shape their lives. Your child must be inculcated with the courage to stand up and speak the truth. The second is tolerance.

And religion is a very important source for learning tolerance. Please remember, just as you have the right to be proud of your religion, everybody else has the right to be proud of theirs.

You all studied in English medium schools. But I would like to emphasise that please do not for a moment fail to realise the importance of your mother tongue, wherever you go, however high your achievement is.

My appeal to all of you, go to the best universities in the world but come back to serve the country, and that is where your ultimate success will lie.



Matt Cannell
UK Deputy High Commissioner in Dhaka

I worked in many countries, but I can say that Bangladesh is the country that I have been most proud to work in. And that's because I see a country that has a bright future ahead of it. And many of these dreams will be realised by the individuals in this room.

I also see there are two secret ingredients to realising your dreams.

I was lucky to have those two secrets. I had parents who supported my academic career and always believed in me. They taught me one important thing that, I could always realise my dreams and ambitions through hard work and study. The second ingredient was the teachers I was privileged to work with.

Academic institutions in Bangladesh have been producing world-renowned students like you in the room. I think that this also demonstrates how academia is growing and building here in Bangladesh. From the UK's perspective, we are also immensely proud to see our academic institutions support education here in Bangladesh.

When I was meeting some of the students just now, I heard a lot about their aspirations.

The UK has world-renowned institutions and universities that support academic achievements across the world. We are very proud that Bangladeshi students will come to the UK to study in future.



Shahin Reza
Country Manager, Bangladesh, Cambridge Assessment International Education

Students here are outstanding. This programme is organised to recognise their outstanding performances. Congratulations to the students, teachers, and their parents.

The future is filled with possibilities and opportunities to change lives, make a positive impact, and make a positive contribution to the world.

Quality education is the key to overcoming global challenges. I hope that today's event and Cambridge education will help you gain enlightenment and knowledge to do your part in shaping the world and making it a better place for all of us to live.

We are part of the University of Cambridge, a pillar of excellent educational outcomes and opportunities. It has 800 years of history. We are associated with 121 Nobel Prize winners, and we have countless leaders across the world who are alumni of this university. I hope that in the future, some of you will be in that place.

At Cambridge, we work hard to make sure that you also have the skills and attributes you need to be ready for the world of work.

We designed our programme to help you become confident, responsible, reflective, innovative, and engaged. And you have reflected on all those by coming here today.



Surid Ahmed
Achieved five A* in A-levels in one sitting, from BAF Shaheen English Medium School

In 2010, my family moved to Dhaka from Chattogram. When I had to sit for my school admission test, there was a question: Which is the largest among the Moon, Sun, and Earth?

So my six-year-old brain decided that the answer had to be Earth. As I have seen the sun and the moon, they are smaller objects above me. So with confidence, I replied, Earth.

I'm still made fun of for that dumb thing. But the funny thing is that the school picked me, probably thinking they would mould me in their ways and educate me.

Then a transformative journey began. The kid who could not answer that silly question is now solving countless equations.

It would have been impossible without the dedicated teachers I had and their constant interest in pushing me and getting the best out of me.

I'm grateful to all the friends I met on this journey.

And lastly, my family, whose endless sacrifices laid the groundwork for all of this. They have been my motivation from day one. And it's for them that I become better each day.

I'd like to congratulate you all for being the best out there. Not only did you survive Covid-19, but you also survived hours of coaching and endless study sessions.



Nawfa Zayaan Nawla
Achieved 10 A* in O-levels in one sitting from AG Church School

I would like to thank The Daily Star and HSBC for recognising our achievements and talents and encouraging us to do better.

We don't really get that often nowadays. I thank every parent, teacher, and guardian for raising us to be the individuals we are today.

When I was in 5th grade, I remember getting 12.5 out of 25 on a maths test. My mother did not scold me, and that made me feel worse because I could see the disappointment in her face.

I took that as motivation, and I scored 99 percent on my next maths test and eventually achieved the country's highest mark in my O-levels. This time, my parents were not disappointed, but I was. Because I compared my scores with those of my friends.

Like this, many of you are probably comparing yourself to someone who got more A* than you, and they're probably comparing themselves to someone who has done better.

We compare ourselves with others to motivate ourselves to do better. But we have to realise that we shouldn't do this.

So, I would like to ask everybody here, especially my friends and fellow students, not to compare themselves with others because we are all unique.

A day to be cherished FOREVER

AHMED DEEPTO AND ARAFAT RAHAMAN

Students recognised for their outstanding results in O- and A-level exams were buzzing with excitement yesterday. They said they wanted to become decent human beings and work for the country.

The Daily Star yesterday honoured 2,563 students for their extraordinary results in O- and A-level exams at the 23rd The Daily Star HSBC O & A Level Awards at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium.

The students' faces lit up when their names were called from the stage to receive the honours. They ran to get in line in front of the stage.

Naziba Rahman, a student from Siddiqui's International School, said, "Receiving this award is a tremendous honour!"

"It wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering support of my mother and dedicated teachers.

This achievement will forever be cherished and serve as a constant source of inspiration in my life."

Samin Yasar Ahmed, a student from Academia, achieved a remarkable result – the world's highest score in O-Level Mathematics – scoring 199 out of 200.

Samin, brimming with excitement, shared his aspirations: "I plan to pursue higher education abroad and eventually return to Bangladesh to embark on a fulfilling career in mathematics."

"Maths has always held a special place in my heart, and I'm incredibly grateful for my mother's unwavering support, especially since she's a math teacher herself," he added.

"I did not imagine that I would receive an award from such a big platform. This will inspire me to do better in future," said SM Tashfiq Hossain, a student of Alfred International School and College, who got the country's highest mark

in Economics in his O-levels.

Tahsin Rahman, from Green Hill International School and College in Moulvibazar, said, "I got the opportunity to study electrical engineering at New York University this year. I plan to study engineering and make a positive impact in research," he added.

Surid Ahammad, from BAF Shaheen English Medium School, who achieved five A* (A-Level) and became the country's highest number of A achievers, said, "This result would not have been possible without my teachers and my family."

Nawfa Zayaan Nawla, who achieved 10 A* in one sitting (O-Level) from AG Church School, said, "We always compare ourselves to others to motivate ourselves to do better. This is a toxic trend that stops you from being happy with what you have."

"We should not do so, as we are all unique ...," she added.



Seven toppers on stage with eminent author and physicist Prof Muhammed Zafar Iqbal and The Daily Star Editor and Publisher Mahfuz Anam during the 23rd The Daily Star HSBC O & A Level Awards held at the Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium yesterday. A group from Mastermind performing on stage, top right. Headteachers of high achievers pose for a photo with dignitaries.