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JOURNALISM WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Build a society encouraging innovations

Speakers say at Anwarul Quadir Foundation award giving ceremony

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Winners of Anwarul Quadir Foundation award pose with the guests at the award giving ceremony at a city hotel in the city yesterday. Photo: STAR

Educationists at an award giving ceremony yesterday called for building a society where people would feel encouraged to develop rational thinking and make innovations in order to solve problems and improve their lives.



Winners of Anwarul Quadir Foundation award pose with the guests at the award giving ceremony at a city hotel in the city yesterday. Photo: STAR

The culture of innovation has not been developed in the country in the last few decades because of the faulty education system, which keeps students confined to only textbooks instead of encouraging them to think freely, they added.

At the ceremony titled 'Innovative Bangladesh', the USA-based Anwarul Quadir Foundation awarded four persons and a research organisation of Bangladesh in recognition of the innovations. Two winners of Global Essay Competition for Bangladesh were also awarded for their innovative ideas.

Sheikh Helal Uddin of Jhenidah was awarded for developing the process of manufacturing fertiliser with locally available raw components and Munira Begum of Rajbari for achieving great success in running a dairy farm and using cow dung for multipurpose use.

Hyder Husyn, an aeronautical engineer who is now a renowned singer, was awarded for developing innovative techniques for multi-surface cleaning, while scientist Dr Khalilur Rahman for promoting solar energy system.

Pi Lab, a technological research organisation, was awarded for developing a power technology. Each of them received a crest.

The global essay competition winners are Saifuddin Ahmed of Bangladesh and Anastasia M Telesetsky, an environmental lawyer of San Francisco.

Saifuddin was awarded for his proposal of managing and increasing productivity in agriculture by using absentee-owned land, while Telesetsky was awarded for her proposal of promoting the use of moringa oleifera (sazne leaves), an indigenous plant, to improve nutrition for low-income people.

"In order to restore human dignity, we need innovations in technology, agriculture, health, management and good governance," said Brac Founder and Chairperson Fazle Hasan Abed at the ceremony.

In his keynote presentation, Abed said whatever ideas people have must be practical and should have impact on people's lives. "Problems solving is a matter of great innovation."

Brac University Vice Chancellor Prof Jamilur Reza Choudhury said that in the traditional education system, teachers generally do not encourage students to ask questions beyond textbooks. As a result, students remain confined to only textbooks.

"A culture of innovation has not developed here in the last few decades," he said, adding that whatever innovative ideas are there should be promoted to solve problems and improve the lives of people.

Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, president of Bishaw Shahitya Kendra, said only freedom of thinking can make people innovative.

Anwarul Quadir's son Iqbal Quadir, daughter Samaria Quadir and granddaughter Anisha Quadir and Prof Robert I Rotberg of Harvard University also spoke.

The Quadir family established the Anwarul Quadir Foundation in 2004, inspired by the generous thoughts of Anwarul Quadir to promote economic and social progress in Bangladesh.

Anwarul Quadir (1920-1972) was born in Narail, Bangladesh, and practiced law in Jessore from 1954 to 1972. He believed deeply in a socially just and economically progressive country, and in the power of ideas and individual initiatives to achieve those ends.

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