Editors’ Note

Heartiest Greetings to the readers. Recently, an Adventurous Journey was completed by the underprivileged children of Jaago Foundation. The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Foundation Bangladesh enrolled 7.8% marginalized youth out of total till now. The readers must be happy to hear that the flag of The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Foundation Bangladesh is reached even to the remote hill tracks in Khagrachari Cantonment Public School. Congratulations to the Team DEA. Recently, in an Award Conferral Ceremony in University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, Nawab Khawja Habibullah Askari, Member, Board of Trustees of The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Foundation Bangladesh attended and graced the ceremony as Chief Guest. Awardees got more encourage and inspiration getting with the members of Board of Trustees. Likewise, other issues this newsletter will display to you some glimpse of the inspirational stories of the Awardees. Happy reading!
DEA Encourages Building Skills

I admit at Independent University, Bangladesh in 2014. After admitting here, I heard about the club name “The Duke of Edinburgh International Award Club” which is most active club in our University. I joined here and started working into three categories like: Social service, Physical recreation & skill development. Another is the adventure journey what is too attractive to all the all members of the DEA club.

After joining this club, I can increase my skills. I choose my skill “Photography”. It gives me enjoy. I always feel better to do photography. I basically do the street photography & event photography. I love to do this.

The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award club gives me this opportunity to increase my skill in that sector what I love most!! I increased my skills. My photo had been selected in many photography contexts. A photographer, from Qatar, liked my photos after viewing in my Flickr account and encouraged me to do well in the upcoming future.

I would like to give thanks to The Duke of Edinburgh International Award club because for this club’s skill development activities, I have increased my skill on photography. I have completed my Bronze & silver award activities and now I am working for the Gold Award. I hope this activity will help to increase my skills for more times.

Abode of The Clouds...

Walking into the Ena bus counter on the night of the 23rd of August, I was met with many beaming faces, some familiar, some completely new. What I failed to realise back then was that in the next five days, these twenty individuals would become my second family.

Due to visa issues, a few had to travel by flight to Kolkata, and then from there to Guwahati. Afterwards, they caught a taxi cab all the way to Shillong. The majority of us ventured by bus to Tamabil, Sylhet, crossed the border and set off by bus again to reach Shillong. Though apart, both of our groups experienced the same journey through the bumpy roads winding around lush green valleys. We felt as if we were leaping into the skies, the world beneath us as we kept going higher and higher.

On the way, we stopped at the Living Root Bridge in Chherapunjee. Soaking our legs in the crystal clear water while viewing the intricate bridge with the calming sound of the waterfalls in the background gave us our first taste of how amazing this trip was about to be.
We did, however, have to trudge up what felt like never-ending stairs to reach our bus again, but we knew the adventure had only begun and shedding a bit of sweat was all part of the experience. By the evening of the 24th, we had entered the busy streets of Police Bazaar. Mr. Faisal Hussain, one of our Award Leaders, navigated us to Zara Residency, our Shillong home. Our flight group arrived late at night and together with them, we had a meeting on the next day’s program.

Day 2 began in Ward’s Lake, a picturesque area where we boarded boats accompanied by our coordinator, Mr. Abdur Raquib who kept on giving us physics classes even when we were boating! At one point, storm clouds engulfed the entire lake and it began to rain cats and dogs. We were adamant on not letting any weather ruin our fun and so we equipped ourselves with umbrellas and raincoats and carried on paddling to our heart’s content. After lunch, we explored the town and the area nearby and then wandered off into the crowded streets of Police Bazaar for our first experience of street shopping in India. Everything was so affordable that all of us came back having bought bag after bag of goodies.

We then went on to have an underground adventure and explored the dark and slippery Mawsmai Cave. The limestone cave was damp and dark yet just enough light crept in for us to be able to tread along 150 metres of the cave. We were awestruck by the formation of Stalactites and Stalagmites in the cave. The feeling of triumph in our hearts when we had finally conquered the cave and stepped out into the light was incomparable. The next stop was the Seven Sisters Falls, where we were fortunate enough to witness a
Day 4 brought us to Don Bosco Museum, where we learned about the lifestyles of indigenous people living in North East India. We kept going up floor after floor of interesting artifacts, writing down as much information as we possibly could since photography was not allowed. We then travelled to Umiam Lake, where some of us were lucky enough to have gotten on speed boats that zoomed through part of the lake. After that, we found ourselves at the main attraction, Shillong Peak, the highest point in Shillong, where we got a bird’s eye view of the entire city from a high tower. A thunderstorm had brewed just when we had reached the 6,449 feet high peak but that didn’t stop us from taking in the breathtaking view. Our last stop of the entire trip was Elephant Falls, another beautiful waterfall.

Before we knew it, Day 5 had rolled in and it was time to say goodbye to our beloved Shillong. On the bus ride back, we all danced for one last time and reminisced the golden memories we had made. We knew we were going to forever Miss Masha and Abraar’s conversations in Kolkata’s accent, Arsin’s singing, Turash’s dancing, and the jolly atmosphere we created everywhere we went. No trip would ever be the same without the Shillong family, guided wonderfully by Mrs. Shaheen Khan and Mr. Faisal Hussain. I am grateful to Mr. Abdur Raquib, Mrs. Farzana Aziz and Mrs. Rahmatara for helping us throughout our journey. I am glad I joined the Duke Of Edinburgh’s Award programme that gave me the opportunity to experience an adventure like no other.

5 Questions to Jhuma Akter

(Jhuma Akter is a marginalized young sheltered in Jaago Foundation and studied in Grade 8 in Jaago Foundation School, Rayer Bazar)

How did you first come into contact with the Award?
Jhuma Akter: I came to know about this Award programme through Jaago Foundation. I am a student here.

What activities did you do as part of your Award? Were you doing these activities already?
Jhuma Akter: I am involved in music and sport as a part of this Award. I always like sports and singing.

How have you changed since doing your Award?
Jhuma Akter: I have been changed in many ways. Especially, I am more physically fit than before. My self-confidence has improved, and I have more stamina to do work than before.

What did it bring to your life which wasn’t there before?
Jhuma Akter: Before involving with this award I was weak and low motivated. After attending different lessons I have found self inspiration for doing more. My perspective has changed and I’m looking at things differently. I became enthusiastic about new things.

How would you describe the Award to your younger?
Jhuma Akter: I think, physical fitness is something special. One can learn new things by choosing and performing different activities.