



KHANDOKER ASEF SAFA KABIR UPAL

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# MY BRITISH COUNCIL TALE

The British Council Bangladesh's Tell Your Tale Contest

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After completing my S.S.C. exams I abandoned my formal studies for personal reasons. I was a college drop-out and was living a disarrayed life when my peers were enrolling for university courses. At that point, I came to know that I could complete A-Levels from the British Council as a private candidate. I registered for my A-Levels, and began to prepare for the exams. My reckless life found a new direction. I got all resources for my preparation at the British Council library. I also received exam updates through the British Council website.

Not only academically, the library also stimulated my literary passion. I got the opportunity to read illustrious Shakespearean dramas, Victorian novels by Austen and Dickens; poignant poetry by Keats, Yeats, and Plath; postmodern literature by John Fowles, and intriguing crime fictions by Agatha Christie and Rendell. The library exposed me to an exotic English culture that boosted my global and cultural awareness. An education is incomplete if it fails to develop creative skills and cultural sophistication into an individual. British Council facilitated my academic, creative and cultural grooming. It constructed the foundation of the man that I would become in future.

I successfully completed A-Levels after two years. The momentum that I gained during this period helped me excel in life. I got admitted into a leading university. After 4 years, I graduated with the highest distinction. After graduation I worked for a management consulting firm and a bank. Subsequently, I decided to receive a British post-graduate degree because I was deeply influenced by British culture. At the British Council, I met representatives from leading British universities. I successfully completed my IELTS from British Council with a band-score of 8.00. In 2011 I went to study M.Sc. at Queen Mary, University of London, which is a prominent British university. Before leaving for London, my small research at British Council made me familiar with London.

I completed my Masters in 2013 with a distinction. I stood first on my program. Subsequently, I returned to Bangladesh and joined a leading university as a lecturer. Today I am not only proud because of my British education, but also because of my ability to think broadly that I can pass on to my students. There was a time in my life when I was utterly hopeless. Today I have a prestigious profession. I have achieved financial success and social respect. The man, who was doubtful about his university education at a stage, has become a university lecturer today. "Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are gonna get"! Sometimes you get 'a little help from a friend', who shows you a way to grow and shine in life. British Council did exactly that for me. This is not only a story of my life; this is also a story about an institution that made me what I am today. This is a story about how the British Council changed my destiny in the scorching summer of 2002.