Star: Where discipline leads to success

A Message from Mustafa Hussaini, Star’s Executive Director

At Star Educational Society, discipline is a part of our success. We expect Starians (teachers and students) to be on time for their classes, to complete their assignments on time, to check homework in a timely manner and to meet their other responsibilities. This leads to higher satisfaction of both students and teachers and develops skills that are very useful in applying for scholarships, seeking admission to competitive universities and in other professional settings outside of Star. Having managers and directors who are disciplined improves the overall management of Star and allows the needs of employers to be met on time and motivates them in their job performance.

A high level of discipline is needed in order for societies, businesses, schools, universities, educational centers and individuals to function effectively. When a person is disciplined, he/she has tenacity, self-control and resistance to temptations and distractions. Discipline allows one to act according to their thoughts rather than their feelings. A disciplined person lists their personal goals and responsibilities and follows them until those goals are accomplished. Discipline helps you to sacrifice your comforts in order to reach your long-term goals. With discipline, even boring days, duties and hardships will not stop you from reaching your goals.

I have experienced the pitfalls of a lack of organizational discipline at the university where I study. For example, when our first semester was completed, we waited for over three months to receive our scores. Every day we went to our department and asked about our scores, but they made new excuses all the time. On one day the teacher was absent, the next day they did not have the test papers. There were many times that I went to university and waited for one or two hours for the professor to arrive. When we sought guidance from our department, they just told us to wait. This is why at Star we expect our teachers and employees to be on time or to notify us early if they have reasons for being late or absent. We expect test papers and reports from classes to be submitted on time. General cleaning is scheduled at every Star branch on Thursday of each week. These are among the many ways that Star uses discipline in its management practices.

Organizations, companies, factories and educational centers also need to practice discipline to balance their productivity, organizational functions and extraneous activities. Discipline creates workplace satisfaction and encourages good time management, peace, loyalty, justice and commitment from its staff. It also reduces employees’ negative habits and laziness. Without high-profile management, control and oversight, it is impossible to attain a high level of achievement. Management is the backbone of an organization and is the fundamental action in a working system. Management includes planning, organization, guidance, control, hiring, and relationship-building. With great management, everything functions well, goals are achieved and hardships are overcome.

Star is committed to inculcate discipline and systematic management in order to improve social mobility, advance the traditional culture, and support youth’s demands for social change. Society expects a reputable organization to be attentive to social issues and to address social demands in their goals. Discipline and management can best be implemented and followed by having systems for constructive feedback and backup support. It is imperative that changes be assessed with feedback so decisions can be made to improve or abolish any new practices.

If you want to be more successful in reaching your personal and professional goals, be more disciplined. Take your plans seriously. Make a list of the things you want to achieve. It does not have to be a very long list – it can be very short, just a list for a day, a month, or a year. As you complete things, check them off your list. Be on time for work and school and social gatherings. Complete your assignments, fulfill your promises, have all the materials you need ready. Use your time wisely and finish your tasks before you will feel relaxed and will be free for other tasks. Developing these habits now will make you more productive and successful in the future. Follow the example we have set at Star and you will soon reap the rewards.

Star Reading Club

Star Reading Club is a group of committed individuals who master their critical reading and thinking by circulating a book for reading and meeting at the end of the week for two hours to discuss the book and express their opinions, likes, and dislikes. Please join our club to stimulate your interest in reading. The Book Club will provide you with a list of books and creates a social atmosphere to help you enhance your reading and thinking strategies.
Life-changing moments

Four years ago I was happy and strong. All the time, my father praised me saying, "My son, you will achieve great success. I wanna see that." From my earliest memories, my father advised and encouraged me in all aspects of my life. He protected me and told me to never fear because he was there for me. He brought me books to read and coached me along life's paths, I saw my success and happiness in his eyes. One evening, my father didn’t come home from his office as he usually did. All thought he might have stopped to bring fruit or something else. But after an hour he called us and said, "I have lost my way!" It was the most shocking news I had ever heard in my life. This was my father, the army commander, the patriarch, the pillar of our family. We took him to India for medical tests and I was optimistic about the result. I was dreaming to see my father as usual. Unfortunately, he was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, a disease that would destroy his memory and other mental functions. The doctor said that he would not remember us after six months. I was totally broken.

When I heard this news, I vowed to fight my father’s sickness because I could not bear to be removed from his memory, I gave up teaching and all my other social activities. I went to my office from 8 am to 4 pm and then returned home. Every day I took my father to a desert with fresh and wide space, far from the narrow streets and city noises and reminded him of all the past events in our life. This was my routine every day – my battle. My father’s sickness was the problem which really threw me aside.

I had always seen my success in my father’s eyes but when I got my new job and a few more achievements, he didn’t recognize me anymore. On the day my father forgot me, he looked at me with puzzled eyes and asked, “Who is your father?” I became totally static, depressed, anxious and hopeless. I became fatter and lazier and settled into a very small and totally ascetic life. I had no motivation to move and every day was the same as the days before it. My father’s sickness had no cure. Everywhere we went for help, the answer was a big and bold “NO.” It was as if all the doors to my future opportunities had been marked with an “X.”

In the past four years, my father’s condition continued to deteriorate and my life was at a stalemate. I watched my friends and former rivals building their careers and improving so much. But my life seemed frozen in time. I felt I had been thrown aside from all my friends and relatives. I had allowed myself to become ostracized from my community. I wanted to renew my perspective and developed a new action plan. I needed a change, a spark, a flame – something that could ignite my static life into a dynamic life, my hopeless life into a hopeful life. I prayed for a miracle to change my perspective and my whole life. I needed something to help me regain my energy and positivity.

A spark of inspiration came about three months ago when Star Educational Society began to publish the Intersteller Bulletin. I felt motivated to write an article and submit it to Star. The idea could be published. I started writing and when the story was finished my friend, Reza Sharifi, told me to send it to Kara Lozier, the editor. I was worried that my story would seem like nonsense to her. I typed and edited my message to her more than five times, sent it and quickly received a reply with many detailed questions about my story. While answering all of her questions, I was encouraged that my story would be published.

That was the day that gave me the rebirth I had been waiting for. I had been praying and asking for help and direction and that day I received both. For me, the rebirth is a true human and very honest and kind. She encouraged me with valuable advice and motivating words. I was inspired to write and write. When my story was published, it highlighted me in the community of Star Educational Society. Afterward, she encouraged me to begin writing a series of essays and really propelled me on this life-changing journey.

My new life brought many positive changes in my attitude and behaviour. Every day, I try to find a chance to make someone happy which brings me more energy and more joy. In my family, I try to do something to help all family members and I try to find good solutions for their problems. Sometimes, I laugh and joke in order to change their mood. I am trying to eliminate all negative views from my life, I want to love and not to hate, and remove the word “no” from my life. When I see someone who needs help or change, I offer encouragement and motivation. These simple changes have lifted the cloud of darkness from over my head and have enabled me to shine my light on the people around me.

I am indebted to Kara for her kindness and am repaying her by being kind to others. Her sincerity and positive impact are engraved in the deepest part of my heart. I learned from her how to live our lives fully and how to make a positive and eternal mark with our short time on earth.

Joseph Epstein said, “We do not choose our own destiny; it is assigned to us. Our birth is our own destiny which is what is meant by baptism.” This is the rebirth I celebrate and give thanks for today.

Remembering the battle in Qarabagh

Located in the northern part of the Qarabagh District of Ghazni Province, Naw-Abad Aieen was a peaceful village surrounded by mountains. The Pulchak and Qamararik rivers flow through the village quenching the thirst of the many apple, peach, and apricot trees. Ninety percent of the people in my village were farmers who worked hard from dawn to dusk to feed their families. At the end of 1380, the Taliban stole the quiet, simple lives from the people in my village and quickly extinguished my newfound bliss of being a schoolboy.

Many innocent people in my village were killed by the Taliban. ThePress was forcing us to obey whatever they demanded and they ruled over the village very tyrannically. The situation was depressing and people began to lose all hope. Fortunately, anti-Taliban militias stood against the Taliban and a battle ensued.

On the first day, the militias defeated the Taliban and drove them out of our village. But the next day, the Taliban returned, began new attacks and life in the village became extremely stressful and dangerous. People were shocked and worried. No one dared to be outdoors. My father worked at a grocery shop outside the village and was not able to return to the village because the ways were closed. Like many families in the village, we were forced to hide in our dark basement for several days.

An extended family of over twenty people was crowded inside the basement with our cow, donkey, four goats, two sheep and a dog. We were packed into the small, dark space with little food and no comfort. We cooked food with whey and sometimes yoghurt. The air was thick and we choked on the foul smells of the animals’ hair, sweat and excrement. The smell of gunpowder seeped in from the ongoing battles outside and the lack of oxygen made the situation nearly unbearable. The sounds of bombs, rockets and bullets were terrifying and reminded us that the fear of death was greater than what we suffered in the basement. The other small children and I cried and complained. I kept asking for my father. My mother was sick and very pregnant but did her best to hold me in her arms and try to give me hope. The elders cuddled and comforted us while people below asked God for help.

When we weren’t crying, we just sat and waited with nothing to do. Nobody could go outside. Occasionally my uncles went upstairs for a few short minutes to assess what was going on outside. Sometimes we dug holes in the earthen basement floor to bury flour, potatoes, onions and dishes with the hopes that one day we could escape we would have something to eat upon our return home at the end of the battle. During the daytime, weak beams of sunshine came through the small windows piercing the suffocating air and darkness.

The thin light was replete with feelings of hope and life helping me to forget the bad smells and tight spaces and dream about our grassy farm and the fresh weather outside.

In the evening of our third night, my pregnant mother went into labor. It was 10 o’clock at night and my uncles took me and my ten cousins out of the basement to my uncle Mohammad Ali who waited outside. He brought us to our closest neighbor, Haji Sarwar, and my cousins and I stayed in his basement until my mother gave birth to my second sister at 4 o’clock in the morning.

As the battle continued, the Taliban tried to approach the village while anti-Taliban militias shot at them from inside the villages and from strongholds on the mountains. But the militias were outnumbered and lacked weapons and ammunition. They slowly began to leave the village and begged the villagers to climb the mountains and go to safe regions. Soon afterward, my uncles decided to take all my family member to a safe place named Jangalak, a distant region in the northwest of my village. When the sky became dark, we gathered everything we could carry and began our journey to the relative peace and safety of Jangalak, leaving behind the sights and sounds of war, the fetid smell of our basement and my fleeting dreams of going to school.
Co-education or Separate education?

About the author: Mabed Hussaini “Westa” was a senior instructor at Star for four years, the co-founder of C Branch and C Branch’s director for one year. He is finishing the requirements for his bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from Ghajistan University and currently works as the personal assistant to the Deputy CEO of Afghanistan Independent Land Authority.

Believing in gender equality, we will absolutely discover that co-education mitigates the existing differences between girls and boys. Co-education, in addition, creates a mutually supportive environment. The overriding advantages of a joint educational environment are promoting confidence and encouraging healthy competition.

From my point of view, the aggregate number of self-assured alumni from co-educational institutions is eye-catching. If you compare students from both co-educational and single-sex educational systems, you can see that there are significant differences between them because in single-sex education, students are only familiar with their same gender and the similar ideas they hold although the society is composed chiefly of both genders and diverse ideas. The educational environment provides the first glimpse of society outside of one’s family and serves as an introduction to society and an opportunity to learn to adapt to society. However, a single-sex educational environment does not embody the real society which consists of both male and female. As a result, when students schooled in a single-sex institution interact with the opposite gender in society, the workplace or elsewhere they easily become embarrassed and lose their self-confidence. Conversely, students educated in a co-education system are much more confident in themselves in mixed gender situations and are, of course, more sociable. Therefore, co-education fosters the students’ self-confidence and self-belief and makes them more comfortable in realistic settings.

Secondly, sense of competition with opposite sex is inherent in everyone. Students all over the world, regardless of their ethnicity, race or even their religion have a tendency to show off their abilities to prove that men are more talented than women, and vice versa. Here, the co-education system steps in and provides them with a positive competitive educational atmosphere and allows them to learn that boys and girls are not superior to one another. Instead they should struggle to keep up with each other because their future is inextricably bound to one another. Consequently, it makes a win-win situation. In gender-separate education, on the other hand, almost all students think self-importantly and rather fail to form an unbalanced groundwork. Through joint education, students will be more attentive and submerge themselves into learning in order to make the most of it. Hence, a co-education system has the qualities required of a successful and competitive system.

All in all, being sure of oneself and having a competitive streak are the two main reasons that make any educational system reach the pinnacle of honor and such traits are mostly found in co-educational systems. Therefore, it is wise for all instructional centers, schools, colleges, universities and so forth to implement the co-educational system in their institutions.
China and Afghanistan signed three major Economic Agreements
Translated by: Zabina Amiri
Source: Etilaatrooz Daily, 944

Afghanistan and China signed three major economic agreements in Reconstruction, Security and Education. These agreements were signed during the visit of Li Yuanchao, China’s vice president, on Tuesday November 3, 2015 by Aklil Hakiem, Afghan Finance Minister and Miss Gawayng, China’s Vice Minister of Commerce.

According to these agreements, China will construct 10 thousand residential apartments in Kabul worth 79 Million USD from Chian’s Grant, will provide 1500 scholarships to the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and will equip Kabul security gates with security scanners. “After a long time, China and Afghanistan have resumed their friendly relationships, and this year is the year of cooperation between the two countries,” said Li Yuanchao.

President Ashraf Ghani said the signing of the three agreements is an important step toward further cooperation with China and that he believes the friendly relationship will be deeper and more beneficial in the future. Meanwhile, he added that the apartments will be available to the public in three phases. The families of soldiers who have died in war are a priority and will be distributed to government officials later. China’s vice president also announced about 1 million USD funds will be used for victims of the recent earthquake in Kabul and that much-needed relief supplies have been distributed to people affected by the earthquake. “China’s role in the Afghanistan peace process is essential,” said China’s vice president. In addition, after the visit of China’s vice president, on Tuesday, Afghanistan and the People’s Republic of China celebrated the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two nations. President Ghani said China’s policy is a policy of stability in the regions and he praised China’s contribution to Afghanistan’s peace and stability stating that China is a strong friend to Afghanistan.

The visit from China’s vice president and the celebration of the friendly relationship between the two countries happened after 14 years. The two sides signed three major cooperation agreements on security, education and reconstruction. China’s vice president also said China has planned to provide 1.5 billion yuan in the next three years to Afghanistan. He added that China will help Afghanistan in the defense and security sector.

Meanwhile, China’s vice president emphasized his countries continued support from Afghanistan, and stated his country’s readiness to counter terrorism and to cooperate with strengthened peace talks. President Ghani said Afghanistan should first cooperate with China and other countries in the region, and all countries can work together with Pakistan for peace and stability in the region. Mr. Li Yuanchao said next month, Afghan chief executive, Abdullah Abdullah will attend the Shanghai Summit where both countries will talk about further relations in different sectors. China has become one of the largest partners of Afghanistan. In past years, the country has invested more than one million USD in economic, agriculture and science in Afghanistan.

Pentagon spends $13 million to build compressed natural gas station in Jawzjan
Translated by: Zabina Amiri
Source: Etilaatrooz Daily, 944

U.S. Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) in a recent report states that, U.S. forces have constructed a compressed natural gas automobile filling station worth 43 million USD in Jawzjan province. According to the report, the compressed natural gas filling station is constructed by a group of U.S. forces that operated under the trite Business and Stability in Afghanistan. This project has been sponsored with funds from the United States of America.

According to the BBC, SIGAR said the construction of the gas station started in Sheberghan Province in 2001, near a natural gas reserve, an area which belonged to the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, and the work was completed on May, 2012. Meanwhile, SIGAR states that the project activity was stopped in June, 2015 and no one is able to provide the reason. SIGAR demonstrated that their research showed the same project in Pakistan would cost just 500 thousand USD. SIGAR added that there is no information as to how and where the project was awarded and how it has been implemented.

According to SIGAR reports, before construction of the compressed natural gas station, there was no study whether the project would be efficient or sustainable in the future. The U.S. Pentagon has not given any explanation about why the gas station was constructed at such a high cost.

A girl stoned in Ghor province
Translated by: Jawabkhana Rahyab
Source: Etilaatrooz Daily

According to reports from Ghor Province, a 19-year-old girl was stoned to death by the Taliban in the center of Ghor Province. The video of the girl’s stoning was shared on websites showing a girl in a pit and the stoning sentence carried out by several men around her.

Ms. Sima Joyenda, the Governor of Ghor, said that this incident happened 40 km from Firuzkoh City, center of Ghor Province, in the village of Ghalmian. People have said that the girl was forced to marry an old man. Since she was not satisfied with the forced marriage, she ran away with a boy to get married with him. It was said that people affiliated with the Taliban arrested the young couple during their escape, and the girl was stoned to death but the boy was released. Ms. Joyenda said that, according to information received by the local people, this brutal and barbaric practice has been executed by the Taliban. Ms. Joyenda, in a telephone call to Deutsche Welle, said that according to the people, the Taliban lashed the boy and stoned the girl brutally.

Ghor’s Governor said that in the village where the incident occurred, the security forces are not present and the Taliban are active in that area. Ms. Joyenda said that while this stoning is not the first and last event in Ghor, to avoid such an event, the government should launch military operations and government forces should be deployed in the region. This incident occurred after a girl and a boy were married with adultery and sentenced to 100 lashes each. The sentence was delivered by the court of Ghor Province in the presence of the president and members of the provincial council of this province. The sentence of 100 lashes was carried out on the boy and the girl in Ghor Province in the presence of more than a hundred people including the police and government officials.

50 terrorists killed and injured in Dasht-e-Archi District of Kunduz
Translated by: Zabina Amiri
Source: Open Society, 579

Kunduz police chief reported that 50 Taliban militants were killed and injured in Dasht-e-Archi District of Kunduz. He told reporters that the clearance operation is ongoing in some parts of the district. Qasim Jangal Bagh, Kunduz police chief, yesterday at a press conference in the capital of Kunduz, said that in the previous night in different parts of the district, 36 Taliban were killed and 12 others were injured. He said without providing details that amid the deaths were Chinese, Uzbek, Tajik and Pakistani militants. He said two security forces also were killed and nine others were wounded. He added that the central areas and the areas surrounding Dasht-e-Archi are under control of Afghan security forces, but still battles are ongoing between security forces and terrorists in some parts of the district.

Local police supplies stolen
Translated by: Taliba Arifi
Source: Hashid e Subh

Local police could not receive their logistic support and supplies on time, while other police got these sources. The Inspector’s office of United States (Sigar) for Afghanistan said that in some cases logistic sources and supplies of local police are stolen, or they receive these supplies in a lower quality. In the last report, Sigar said that they considered irregularities in attendance of local police. Without controlling this problem, corruption will increase. The chief of local police, Gen. Ali Shah Ahmad Zai, confirms some of these problems. On the other hand, he said that there is a huge change in formation of local police. As a result, eighty-five percent of these problems are solved. Rejecting the stealing of logistic supplies, Mr. Ahmad Zai said that not having good facilities can create many problems in transferring these supplies. Local police are security forces who are temporarily fighting for peace in villages and districts and are warned by the Taliban. These security forces are hired from the place where they live. In addition, they are within the Ministry of the Interior. Local police are able to prevent the extension of Taliban in some areas, nevertheless, there is fighting in the regions where the project was awarded and how it has been implemented.

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Failure in Kankor compelled Bamiyani girl to shepherd

Translated by: Ali Jan Tazarkhah
Source: www.bbc.com Persian

Amina lives in Bamiyan—a mountainous and poverty-stricken province, where majority of its families are poor and possess no lands, and most members of the families are busy in shepherding, and grazing the herds. Because of Poverty and lack of enough preparation for Kantor, she couldn’t find her way to the favorite faculties. Now, inevitably, she wants to be a teacher in the future and hope that someday the life may offer her a chance and her dream would come true.

In addition to grazing the herds, she become caretaker of her old and sick father who had been her teacher up to 12th classes as well, now she can’t abandon him alone.

The Bamiyani girl hasn’t come this way easily, she said: “I coped with several problems, my father was sick, up to 12th classes I worked hard to pass the school exams, I studied my lessons in midnight cold. I got 22nd position among 33 classmates in twelfth class.” Besides pastoral works, collecting firewood for heating her home in winter and farming are part of her job now.

Many years ago when Amina was trained about ‘First Aid Treatment’ her hand was healing and saved many women lives. Now she has no curative hands and due to intensity of chores her hand seemed rough and scrappy. She says that in last year, from 246229 participants in Kankor, just 118145 of them got admitted in higher, semi-higher and private educational institutes. In terms of ranking, Afghanistan is one of the countries that has the least amount of investment on education.

The amount of investment on each student in Afghanistan is $60 each year, in Pakistan $250, in Iran $500.

Though currently about 200000 students are studying in 32 state universities and 82 private universities, thousands of students, who can’t pass Kantor left in condition of uncertainty.

U.S. to sell advanced warships to Saudi Arabia valued at $11 billion

Translated by: Murtaza Quemeni
Source: Habib-e-Sabti Daily (2238)

A Bloomberg report shows that a high U.S. official has confirmed that the Pentagon approved the sale of four Littoral multi-mission combat ships, a deal valued at 11.25 billion dollars. The U.S.-Saudi deal takes place while Washington seeks to further reinforce the military forces of the allied gulf nations against Iran-U.S. nuclear deal.

The government official added that the Pentagon has sanctioned sale of warships to Saudi Arabia on the basis of the Foreign Military Sales. This warrant will enable Saudi Arabia to negotiate regarding sale of the advanced combat ships unless the sale is opposed by new legislations of the U.S. congress.

Sale of these Littoral combat ships is a part of the Saudi’s navy modernization program. This plan is a dispensation of Obama’s commitment towards escalation of Saudi defense capabilities, Saudi Arabia and other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council demanded adequate confirmation from the U.S. government before the Iran-U.S. nuclear deal reached an agreement.
My opinion about English as a medium of instruction

English as a medium of instruction (EMI) is a growing global phenomenon. More and more countries, for which English is not the mother tongue, are interested in introducing EMI in primary, secondary and university level education. However, opinions on whether this is a positive development are divided. While some point to research which shows English as key to development, others feel that EMI is a form of ‘Linguistic imperialism’ that undermines multilingualism and education opportunities. This is my opinion of the use of EMI in countries where English is not the mother tongue.

English is the most utilized lingua franca today that has gained a vital role and prestige around the world (Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1999). As English is the international language of the era, it is connected the world politically and economically. Moreover, according to Coyle et al. (2010), people can express themselves better and can communicate well by using their first language. As Professor Emilio (2012), mentioned that speaking Italian for their people is like watching color TV with clear pictures, and speaking English to them is like watching black and white movie with blurry pictures and is not understandable despite of lots of efforts (as cited in British Council, 2014). However, they don’t consider that we cannot use local languages to communicate internationally.

To sum up, English is considered as a tool of academic development, economic development and communication in this globalized world that connected all countries around the world. Although EMI is considered as imperialism in some countries and rejected to use EMI policy to protect their home language and culture. It requires a strong research to examine the EMI effects as imperialism. Still we cannot ignore the vital role which EMI plays in country’s development.

Reference
In Watan, the girls were never allowed to grow up. One day you were a child playing with your friends from the village, the next day you were wedded off and expected to live as someone’s wife, look after your in-laws, and become a family’s honor.

The men, the old men, would sit together and make all the decisions.

Your auntie Aabay Naeem was a child, only 12 or 13, when they came to ask for her hand in marriage. I saw the men exchanging smiles, and I knew what it meant. It made me very upset. Her husband-to-be, Nabi, was twice her age. Your other aunts had been wedded off young. I decided that I had to confront your grandfather this time; even if it meant having to endure a beating. I stood up to him:

“They aren’t all your daughters. They are mine too. You can’t just give them away like this.”

He stared at me. He didn’t say a word, and walked out. He paid no attention to what I thought. Consulting your auntie, the people whose lives were in question, was absolutely out of question.

That’s how it was done in the past. The parents would just give away their daughters to whoever they wished. It wasn’t that the parents didn’t love their children; the truth is that it had always been like that. People were bound by traditions. No one bothered to think differently; no one changed anything.

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“They aren’t all your daughters. They are mine too. You can’t just give them away like this.”

He stared at me. He didn’t say a word, and walked out. He paid no attention to what I thought. Consulting your auntie, the people whose lives were in question, was absolutely out of question.

That’s how it was done in the past. The parents would just give away their daughters to whoever they wished. It wasn’t that the parents didn’t love their children; the truth is that it had always been like that. People were bound by traditions. No one bothered to think differently; no one changed anything.

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Hamidullah: Best Student of the Semester at B Branch

About the interviewee: Adela Khurrami began teaching at Star in 2012 after studying English Literature and Accounting at Iqra College in Karachi, Pakistan and teaching English in Quetta. In addition, she is an excellent English announcer for Star.

Tell us about yourself. My name is Hamidullah. I am from Behshad District of Maidan Wardak Province. Currently, I am living in Kabul. He is also a student of 10th grade in Sayed Ismail Balkhi High School, and I am studying English language at Star Educational Society as well.

Do you have any siblings? Tell us about your family. I have four sisters and one brother and my brother is elder than me. He is 20 years old. He is also a student and unfortunately he works outside because of our economic problems. Three years ago my father passed away. Losing him was very bad and my family has struggled with illnesses in our life. Moreover, there was a black cloud that made our life dark. After my father’s death, everything changed in my family and with my dreams. On the other hand, our problems increased. Now we don’t have anybody to support us financially to continue our life. To be frank, this situation is very difficult for us and I am trying to study hard and learn more to become a very good and useful person for my family and for those who are around me.

Recalling your achievements in your life, which one of them do you consider the greatest one? Getting the 1st position in Star’s speech contest, I consider it my greatest achievement. Last semester there was a speech contest in Star, A Branch, which was, of course, great. I participated in that and, luckily, I won the 1st position. A special thanks to my great teachers who encouraged me a lot. When the panel of jury announced my name as the 1st position holder of speech contest, I really became very happy and excited in that particular moment. When my name was announced as the 1st position holder of Star’s speech contest, I felt that my father’s soul is in peace. Returning back home, my mother also became very happy.

You were recently selected as the top student of the semester at Star’s B Branch. Why do you think you were chosen? To be a student at Star is good, but becoming the top student of the semester at Star is wonderful and great! Being an active, hardworking, and punctual student are qualities that helped me to become the top student of semester.

Would you please tell us about your goals? Honestly, everybody has goals in his/her life. My goal in my life is to build a great future for my mother and, in order to do that, I want to become a businessman in the future. Since there was no one to support and finance us when my father passed away, I want to give her back the love and affection I got growing up. I really want my mother to be proud of me.

You said you want to be a businessman, can you elaborate on that? It belongs to God; if God helps me I have plans for this purpose to be a businessman in the future. After I finish my school I want to study economics and become a businessman and then I will remove the economic problems from my mother’s life. When I graduate from Star Educational Society, I want to finish computer programs as well. I want to have enough information about computers. Then after I graduate from high school, I will graduate from economics faculty and I become a successful businessman.

What is one thing you would do to improve about yourself? I would like to improve in every facet of my life. Everyone has high goals as I have and also I am trying for my goals to improve in myself.

Who is your favourite teacher at Star Educational Society and why? Frankly, Mr. Zahir is my favourite teacher at Star because he is a hard-working man. I am very happy that I was his student. I am really proud of Star and its teachers. The teachers are very professional and talented.

Who is your role-model at Star? Mr. Zahir Sarwari is my role model at Star and I would like to be like him. He is the greatest man I have ever seen in my life. He has many good qualities which make him a great role model. For example, he has excellent behaviour with his students and family. He is the only teacher of mine who helped me with every difficulty I faced. He encouraged me to learn English. I can say he is the best.

Can you recall a time that you failed at something and tell us how you handled that or how it affected you? The key here is to acknowledge where I went wrong and to show that I have learnt from my mistakes, took a positive lesson from it and moved on. Of course it was at Star - at the beginning I was not studying very well. Later on I understood that English language is very useful for my life. I started working hard with the help of my great teachers at Star and my school and I have learnt many things from my mistakes.

How do you think English will benefit you in the future? I am sure English will benefit me in the future; English is the language of communication and that is how this already. In my studies in the future I will need English. Maybe I will go to other countries for my studies and will need to speak their language. So now I have the ability to speak with them in English and it will also benefit me in reading and writing and understanding people’s thoughts and so on.

What was the most difficult moment in your life and how did you deal with it? My father was the one who always supported me in every step I took in my life. After his death, I was worried about our future and I was always wondering how my family and I would deal with that devastating situation. After my father passed away, I really found myself in a quandary. It was really difficult for me to decide whether to continue my studies or to start working. My mother has been so supportive of me. When I talked to her about it, she encouraged me to continue my studies and to become a great man in the future.

Do you have a favourite quote or any advice you would like to share with Star readers? My favorite quote is “Sometimes your heart needs more time to accept what your mind already knows.” My advice for my friends and for Starians is that we should work hard and study well for our future, our family and for our country and I think Star is the place of for us to learn English and improve ourselves and let’s help each other to bring lots of improvements in our life and our country.