

CitizenCredit's Awards for Academic Excellence 2016-2017

On Friday, January 19, at St. Andrew's Auditorium, CitizenCredit Co-operative Bank Ltd. applauded 295 students from across the Archdiocese of Mumbai and Vasai. Awards for Academic Excellence were a token of appreciation to PhDs, MS, MDs, MBBS, BEs, BTechs; as well as those who scored as high as 97% at the SSC and HSC... an encouragement from a 'proud' Bank to the students of CitizenCredit's community to keep going further and reaching higher.

The program began with the National Anthem, followed by a prayer. The Bank's MD & CEO Mrs Geeta Andrades welcomed the students and their parents, introducing the Guests of Honour & the Chief Guest, His Eminence Oswald Cardinal Gracias, Major Gen. Ian Cardozo (retd), Michael Pinto IAS (retd) and Royston Braganza, who were all Keynote Speakers. The Chairman, Anthony D'Souza and Vice Chairman, Donald Creado introduced the speakers.

Mr Royston Braganza, CEO of Grameen Capital, talked about the importance of being a job creator rather than just a job seeker. Capturing his audience's attention with a provoking anecdote, Mr Braganza's simple but effective advice to the students centered around having SWAG -- being alert to the Signs of the times, making the World their oyster, maintaining a positive Attitude, being Authentic and Adaptable, and above all, being a Good person and putting God first. He encouraged the students to be constantly aware of the people around them, to not just move forward but help their communities as well. He also highlighted the importance of creating an ecosystem that encouraged and helped young people.

Mr Roger C B Pereira, director of the Bank, followed, highlighting the challenges the students will face and the Bank's role in helping them surmount these, especially with the loans and services offered to students. Mr Pereira also spoke about the Take Charge Initiatives, which provide students with experienced mentors to help them choose career paths best suited for them and assists those who plan on joining the Civil Services and Armed Forces.

Major Gen. Ian Cardozo spoke about his choice to join the Armed Forces, and why he would make the same choice again, if given the opportunity. Major General Cardozo's gripping account of his actions and those of his battalion during the 1971 war was an unforgettable example of unyielding courage and strength, in the face of impossible odds. His humble attitude and loyalty towards the people of India set a standard for all his listeners to follow. He spoke of his choice to serve with love, of there being no greater honour and privilege, than leading a group of people and the importance of stepping forward to be an instrument of change.

Mr Michael Pinto, retired IAS officer, spoke about his choice to join the Civil Services. Mr Pinto intrigued the students by first telling them why they shouldn't join the Civil Services, and then proceeding to counter every point, his humour and personal anecdotes keeping them hooked onto every word. Posing the question of what India needed most today to his audience, Mr Pinto explained how devoted and dedicated women and men were the answer, people who would be willing to stand up and be counted. He stressed the importance of acting for the community and emulating Mahatma Gandhi's mission to wipe every tear from every eye.

His Eminence, Oswald Cardinal Gracias, imparted the final message for the evening, bringing out the themes of effective leadership through example, service with love, and the importance of serving the community that each of the speakers had emphasized. His Eminence concluded his message by reminding the assembled students that they were the ones who held their future in their hands, and it was up to them to stand up and take charge. He emphasised the fact that the Archdiocese is deeply and fully committed to the Take Charge Initiatives.

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