Abed wins Leo Tolstoy Gold Medal

Staff Correspondent

Brac Founder and Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed has been awarded the Leo Tolstoy International Gold Medal by the Russian Children Foundation (RDF) on the occasion of International Children's Day on June 1, said a Brac press release yesterday.

He received the award at Moscow's historic Bolshoi Theatre after a gala concert for orphaned, disabled and disadvantaged children, where he was present as the guest of honour. About 11,000 children from all around the country gathered in Moscow to participate in the event.

The award has been given by the organisation's leader and famous writer, Albert A Likhanov. Every year, the Russian Children's Foundation awards this medal to an outstanding humanist who has made a significant contribution to the education and care of children.

Previous awardees include Mother Teresa, Albert Sabin (inventor of the oral polio vaccine), and Swedish children's writer Astrid Lindgren.

Upon receiving the award, Sir Fazle Hasan Abed said, "I thank the Russian Children Foundation for the honour they have shown me and Brac. Brac has been focusing on empowering people, particularly vulnerable women and children, and creating opportunities through education for the last three decades.

I have great appreciation towards the work of RDF by which they are protecting countless underprivileged children in Russia."

The Russian Children's Foundation, the country's first public organisation for the protection of children, was formed in September 1991. It currently has 74 regional offices actively working to provide social assistance to needy children in Russia in cooperation with public authorities, businesses and other community organisations.
Brac, established in 1972, is a development organisation dedicated to alleviating poverty by empowering the poor and helping to bring about positive changes in their lives by creating opportunities for them. So far its work has touched the lives of an estimated 13.5 crore people all over the world.