



**Office  
of External  
Affairs**

# THE BRIDGE

**The Official Newsletter of the Office Of External Affairs**

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## *Editor's Message*

We celebrate the end of 2019 with multiple international visitors to NSU. The partnerships that are forming with universities around the world inspire us at the Office of External Affairs to work harder in 2020. We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities for research collaboration and exchange.

If you have created any relationships with institutions in the form of an MOU, kindly bring the hard copy to the OEA for safekeeping and so that we can upload it to the NSU website: <https://www.international.gc.ca/country-pays/bangladesh/dhaka-dacca.aspx?lang=eng>.

Happy New Year!

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## **International Student Orientation & Farewell Program Fall 2019**

On 6th November 2019, the Office of External Affairs of North South University organized an International Student Orientation & Farewell Program for the international students enrolled at NSU for Fall '19 semester and for the outgoing international students who are done with their journey at North South University. This time the OEA welcomed some 6 international students from different nations including India, Somalia, China, Nigeria, the USA and Pakistan who are enrolled in the programs like - MPH, MS in Economics, MBA, BBA and CSE. The OEA also invited the currently enrolled international students to attend.



Meanwhile, 5 international students graduated from different departments. They were asked to share their experience while staying in Bangladesh, the educational system and culture of NSU. As a result, the new students got to know how they might cope here. The new students were also given the opportunity to share their experiences and thoughts. During the event a nice collaboration took place between the outgoing and new international students. To conclude the session, refreshments were served to celebrate another successful international student orientation and also farewell program. The Director of the OEA, the Coordination Officer, OEA and the International Affairs Officer, OEA graced the occasion.

## **Director of OEA Visits Australia**



Dr. Katherine Li, Director of the Office of External Affairs of North South University visited Australia. She was invited by the University of South Australia to attend the "UniSA Partner & Sponsor Summit 2019" from 13th-14th November 2019. On the 13th they first took an Eco Caddy Tour of Adelaide. This was to show what Adelaide city is all about.

The next day they had academic meetings. On the first day the summit topics included:

- Samsung SMARTSchool
- Why UniSA is the Biggest Education Provider



- South Australia, Open for Business: Interview Panel Session
- Program Areas: What's New?
- Mobility: Opportunities for International Students
- Engaging with UniSA: Relationships, Articulations and Pathways

On the second day of the summit, the topics were:

- The UniSA Story: Where are we now?
- Unisa Online: Bringing UniSA to the World
- Driven by Industry: UniSA's industry & Enterprise Connection
- Supporting our Students: The Student Engagement Unit
- Bringing industry and Innovation to the Classroom

Present in the farewell dinner the Special guests were Provost Prof. Allan Evans, Hon. David Ridgeway, Minister for Trade, Tourism & Investment and Mr. Sean Keenihan, Chair of StudyAdelaide.

On the 15th, Director Li visited Flinders University. There she met Ms. Melissa Willoughby who gave her a tour of the campus. Then she met Sebastian Raneskold, Vice President & Pro Vice Chancellor of Flinders International, Zhibin Zhang, Lecturer of the College of Business, Government & Law and Brett Wagner, the Manager of International Recruitment & Engagement of College of Business, Government & Law. Dr. Li met with them to discuss possible future collaborations with North South University. Dr. Li attended a follow-up meeting with Julie Inglis, the Manager of International Recruitment & Engagement of College of Medicine and Public Health. This was a follow-up meeting of Flinders University Delegation to NSU back in September 2019.

Dr. Li also met with Alison Jones-Dean of Education, Voula Gaganis-Lecturer of Public Health, Koshila Kumar-Senior Lecturer (Clinical Education). They gave a tour of Tonsley and College of Science & Engineering. About the trip Dr. Katherine Li said, "UniSA is an Urban Campus, whereas Flinders University is a Residential Campus. UniSA gave me a professional and dynamic vibe, whereas Flinders University gave me a homely vibe."



## University of Edinburgh Delegation Visits NSU



Harish Lokhun, Regional Manager of South Asia & Central Africa of University of Edinburgh visited North South University on 12th November 2019. The purpose of his visit was to discuss a possible collaboration and opportunities for students of both NSU and UE. His motive was to promote the University of Edinburgh at North South University.

Mr. Lokhun met Dr. Dipak Kumar Mitra, Chairman of the Department of Public Health of North South University. They discussed collaboration opportunities between NSU and the University of Edinburgh such as joint research collaboration. Mr. Harish Lokhun also met with Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer of the Office of External Affairs of North South University. They focused on the further affiliation through academic collaborations and a Ph.D. exchange program.

Mr. Lokhun gave ideas of many other programs that students could take part in at the University of Edinburgh. The University of Edinburgh has short training courses, online courses especially for female medical graduates. He also introduced Poonam Malik, Global Partnership Manager of College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine of the University of Edinburgh to Ms. Alam for collaboration between the Department of Public Health of NSU and CMVM of University of Edinburgh.

According to their website, "The University of Edinburgh has consistently been ranked as one of the top 50 universities in the world. UE is 18th in the 2019 QS World University Rankings. University of Edinburgh was ranked 4th in the UK for Research Power, based on the 2014 Research Excellence Framework. They are associated with 24 Nobel Prize winners. UE is ranked in the top 10 in the UK and in the top 100 in the world for employability of their graduates. University of Edinburgh has been ranked 20th in the world's most international universities. Since 2010, they have taught students from more than 160 countries. EU is one of the largest providers of online postgraduate programmes in the UK. The University of Edinburgh, founded in 1582, is the sixth oldest university in the English-speaking world and one of Scotland's ancient universities. The university has five main campuses in the city of Edinburgh, with many of the buildings in the historic Old Town belonging to the university. It is ranked as the 6th best university in Europe by the U.S. News' Best Global Universities Ranking, and 7th best in Europe by the Times Higher Education Ranking. The Research Excellence Framework, a research ranking used by the UK government to determine future research funding, ranked Edinburgh (joint submission with Heriot-Watt) 4th in the UK for research power, and 11th overall."



## “Cloud Robotics & How It Relates to Smart Manufacturing” Dr. Akhlakur Rahman

**D**r. Akhlakur Rahman, Lecturer, Mechatronics & Industrial Automation, Engineering Institute of Technology visited North South University on Tuesday, 19th November 2019 in the Syndicate Hall. Prof. Dr. Javed Bari, Dean, School of Engineering and Physical Sciences (SEPS) and Faculty Members from the Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering were also present. Dr. Rahman was here to present his research and to connect it to Industrial Automation. As Industrial Automation is open to 12 congruent fields of practice, the presentation appealed to those with an interest among the Engineering students from Industrial Automation, Industrial Engineering, Instrumentation, Control & Automation, Mechanical, & Material Systems, Mechatronic Systems, Manufacturing & Management Systems, Electrical, Electronic & Communication Systems, Chemical & Process Engineering, Robotics & Production Engineering. Dr. Akhlak is a full-time Lecturer at EIT for the BSc and MSc programs in Electrical Engineering & Industrial Automation.

He also shared information about the Engineering Institute of Technology (EIT) which has been delivering industry-driven programs for over 10 years. EIT offers Australian-accredited engineering Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Graduate Certificates, Bachelor Degrees and Master's Degrees.

According to their website, “They also deliver non-accredited Professional Certificates of Competency, which are designed to impart skills that can be immediately implemented in the workplace making them ideal for ongoing professional development. All of EIT's programs are offered online, while their four bachelor degrees and their Master of Engineering (Industrial Automation) programs are also presented on-campus. EIT is a sister company of the reputable engineering training organization, IDC Technologies. The School of Electrical Engineering of EIT provides skills and knowledge that are also critical in a wide range of industries ranging from oil and gas, water utilities, process plants, mining, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing and defense. The Engineering Institute of Technology (EIT) provides electrical engineering courses for engineers and technicians of all levels and from all types of industry, be it mining, oil and gas or instrumentation. Key subjects in EIT's School of Electrical Engineering include power generation, transmission, distribution, rotating machinery, power electronics, earthing and safety regulations, electrical documentation and drawings, AC and DC machines, circuit breakers, transformers, energy efficiency, earthing and lightning, power systems protection, DC and AC emergency power supplies, electrical safety, electrical wiring regulations, high voltage supplies, and power quality. The School of Industrial Automation, Instrumentation and Process Control of EIT, they have developed industry-focused programs in the form of vocational advanced diplomas, all the way up to Masters' level in the higher education sector.”



## University of Texas at Arlington Delegation Visits NSU



**D**r. Adrian Parr, Dean of the College of Architecture, Planning and Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Arlington visited North South University on Wednesday, 20th November 2019. The purpose of her visit was to discuss a possible collaboration in Architecture and Urban Planning as part of the MOU between the two universities signed in November, 2018, because North South University is considering launching a Master's program in Architecture.

NSU also wants to convert academic programs into research. Regarding the MoU with UTA, Dr. Parr talked about the Master's Degree for Sustainable Development. Ms. Shaila Joarder, Associate Professor & Chair of Department of Architecture of NSU shared her plans for joint research in urban issues and policy. UTA's guidance will be helpful for NSU to create a research center and lab so that NSU can have research as well as grants coming in. Prof. Dr. Javed Bari, Dean of the School of Engineering & Physical Sciences and faculty members from the Department of Architecture were also present in the discussion.

According to their website, “The University of Texas at Arlington, founded in 1895, is a Carnegie Research 1 institution with more than 100 years of academic excellence and tradition. As the largest university in North Texas and the second largest in The University of Texas System, UTA is located in the heart of Dallas-Fort Worth, challenging their students to engage with the world around them in ways that make a measurable impact. UTA offers state-of-the-art facilities that encourage students to be critical thinkers.”



Through academics, internships, and research programs, students receive real-world experiences that help them contribute to their community and, ultimately, the world. They have more than 180 baccalaureate, masters', and doctoral degree programs, and nearly 60,000 students walking in the campus or engaging in online coursework each year. CAPPA is composed of the School of Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and the Department of Public Affairs and Planning.

In CAPPA, they work with their hands, heads, and hearts to change the world one place at a time. The College of Architecture, Planning & Public Affairs (CAPPA) interweaves the unique gifts and expertise of each person and profession to co-create urban, ecological, and social fabrics that unleash the inherent potential of places and communities and beyond. CAPPA offers the only accredited programs in Architecture, Urban Planning, and Landscape Architecture in the North Texas region.

CAPPA offers the Master of Architecture and the Master of Landscape Architecture as first professional degrees in the respective programs. The former is accredited by the National Architecture Accrediting Board and the latter by the Landscape Architecture Accrediting Board. The M.Arch. and the M.L.A. taken as second, or post-professional, degrees do not carry professional accreditation.

The Bachelor of Science in Interior Design program at the University of Texas at Arlington focuses on the commercial, institutional and large-project scale activities of the profession, a very appropriate focus in the context of architecture.



## University of Portsmouth Visits NSU



North South University arranged a meeting with Mr. Amran Mofiz, the Bangladesh Regional Advisor of University of Portsmouth and Bobby Mehta, the Director of Global Operations of the University of Portsmouth on 21st November 2019. There were two separate meetings – one with the Office of External Affairs and another with Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Chairman of Board of Trustees. The purpose of the meetings were to extend the network and make a collaboration with the University of Portsmouth and discuss the opportunities that our students might be offered. The University of Portsmouth will be offering postgraduate students the opportunity to enroll without having to sit for IELTS. Mr. Amran has already set up a local office of the University of Portsmouth in Bangladesh for serving Bangladeshi students.

The University of Portsmouth offers more than 20 subjects for the students to major in. Some of their popular subject areas are Accounting with Finance, Business and Supply Chain Management, Cybersecurity, Data Science and Analysis, International Business, etc. According to their website, “the University of Portsmouth is in the top 15% for student satisfaction according to National Student Survey 2017. The Economist 2017 ranked the university to be the number 1 for boosting graduate salaries.

Proposed educational agreements with the university will open greater opportunities for higher education for the students of NSU.”

After the meeting with NSU, the representatives of Portsmouth University invited the OEA members to join them for dinner. The University of Portsmouth community and the British Deputy High Commissioner attended the dinner. Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer of OEA, and Ms. Sumaita Shaira Hasan, Coordination officer of Vice-Chancellor's office represented North South University at the dinner.

## Chief of Global Affairs from Yuan Ze University Visits NSU

Professor Ching-Pu Chen, the Chief of Global Affairs, YZU visited North South University on 24th November 2019 and attended a short meeting with the Dean of the School of Engineering and Physical Science of North South University. Besides the Dean of SEPS, Dr. Katherine Li, Director of External Affairs, Dr. Shahnewaz Siddique, Assistant Professor of the Department of ECE, Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer and some Engineering students from NSU was present in the meeting. The meeting venue was the School of Engineering and Physical Science Conference room at North South University.

Yuan Ze University has organized their education structure under five colleges – Engineering, Electrics and Communication, Information Management, Humanities and Social Sciences. About 10.2% of the current students studying in the university are international students.







Yuan Ze University already has an agreement with North South University, so they will be offering some academic advantages for students from NSU who are interested to continue their further studies at YZU. They offer 100% tuition waiver for the students, specially the Engineering students enrolled under Masters' programs based on their academic records. Their courses are taught in English, but YZU offers free Chinese courses for the Masters' and PhD students. Moreover, a Taiwan scholarship is available for the students. The scholarship covers the living cost of 4,000 US dollars per year and 100% tuition waiver for the students studying under this scholarship program. Completion of graduation and 2 years' work experience in any Taiwanese company are the requirements for the students to achieve Taiwan scholarship.

The students studying in Yuan Ze University gets the working permission of 20 hours per week. The minimum wage for a student worker there is 5 US dollars per hour.

## Team OEA Visits the Edward M. Kennedy Center



To celebrate International Education Week (IEW) – 2019, the EMK Center organized numerous programs for students, parents, and educators from 18th November 2019 to 28th November 2019 to help them plan and prepare for U.S. education. Directors and faculties of international affairs from different universities of Bangladesh attended the program.

EducationUSA wanted to end their celebration of IEW – 2019 in Bangladesh with North South University Office of External Affairs as we have an immense impact on our students' decision-making and career paths. University faculties, International Affairs Officers and student advisers like us are essential for them to serve the Bangladeshi students better, because we are our students' primary mentors. Therefore, they invited the NSU OEA team to attend a special networking event held on November 26th, 2019, from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The International Affairs Officer, Ms. Samina Alam Miti and the Alumni Affairs Officer, Mr. Sk. Fardin Yaman represented NSU OEA at the event.

The speakers of the event discussed the programs offered by the EMK Center. Some of the aforementioned programs are CCI program, Global Undergrad Programs, Fulbright Foreign Student Program, Community College Initiative Program, Kennedy Program, etc. Students from all over the world highly prefer to receive their higher educational degrees from universities of the USA. Currently, the total number of international students in the USA is 10,529. Among them almost 8,249 are from Bangladesh; 60% of those students are studying at the undergrad level. The EMK Center suggested that students who are interested to transfer credits to any university of USA can contact them 4 to 5 months earlier than the starting date of their desired semester to enrol. They also proposed NSU to organize an open day, a day when NSU would allow the college students to enter and explore our campus to help the students have an idea of the education and teaching system.

## Dr. Dorothy Brown Dixon Conducts a Seminar at NSU

North South University Office of External Affairs arranged a seminar for NSU students on 26th November 2019. Dr. Dorothy Brown Dixon, the Communication and Policy Analyst, USAID Bangladesh Office of Population, Health, Nutrition and Education, was the chief speaker in the seminar. Dr. Dixon discussed the importance of non-cognitive skills for students. Faculties and students from different departments attended the seminar. Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Co-ordination Officer, Office of External Affairs, North South University was also present in the seminar.

The titled of Dr. Dixon's discussion was 'Surviving as a Student'. Through her speech she shared her knowledge and experiences about developing and utilizing non-cognitive skills throughout one's student life and professional life. She emphasized improvement in the soft skills during student life and application of them later on in every aspect of life. She encouraged students to practice and develop their non-cognitive skills or emotional intelligence by engaging themselves with different working groups, club activities, etc.

Dr. Dixon suggested some simple ways for developing communication and leadership qualities for students who are introverts and who face difficulties to open up around people. She mentioned that making an extrovert friend may help a reserved student to develop the quality of communication.

Dr. Dixon herself is a very communicative person. So in the seminar, she not only showed slides and delivered a talk to the audience, rather she wanted the present students to communicate with her and each other. So she asked the audience to form small groups, discuss their ideas and experiences about soft skills and emotional intelligence with each other and then called them up to the stage to share the summary of their discussion. That is how she showed an effective way to develop communication skills like emotional intelligence.



## Deakin University Visits NSU



A delegation from Deakin University visited North South University and conducted a seminar on 4th December 2019. Dr. Basek Chowdhury; the Student Manager of Deakin University, Professor Mangoo, the Head of School of Engineering and Electrical Engineering, Dr. Bhashkaran, the Associate Dean from Deakin University were present in the meeting. On the other hand, Dr. Katherine Li, Director of Office of External Affairs and several faculty members and selected students from NSU attended the seminar. The purpose of the meeting was to get the opportunity to have clear ideas about each other's educational system and opportunities for students, teachers and researchers to discuss the collaboration scopes between NSU and Deakin University.

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Bhashkaran, the Associate Dean of Deakin University presented a broad outline about his university. He talked about the numerous campuses, large number of national and international students, highly qualified teachers, high position in international ranking, etc. According to his presentation, "Deakin University is positioned at 271 in QS ranking. The university has six research institutes and four departments which are Arts and Education, Business and Law, Health, and Science, Engineering and the Built Environment. Deakin University offers undergraduate and Masters' program in several majors." The university is planning to conduct projects and open research opportunities for Data Analysis Science and Civil Engineering sectors.

North South University already has an MOU with Deakin University. We also have some institutional and departmental-level partnerships with the university. Proposals for some more research and exchange partnerships between both universities was brought up in the meeting and officials of both the universities showed interest in more such partnership agreements.

## Delegation from Universiti Teknologi MARA Visits NSU

Universiti Teknologi MARA is the largest public university in Malaysia. A delegation from the university visited North South University on 10th December 2019. The team attended two separate meetings with some faculty members and students of the Department of Engineering and Physical Sciences of NSU in the SEPS Conference Room of NSU. The purpose of their visit was to inform the students about their offered higher education program and catch the attention of Bangladeshi students who want to pursue their higher studies abroad.

Universiti Teknologi MARA sends their students to different universities of Korea, Germany and other countries of the world and receives international students from China, Indonesia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, etc. UiTM offers a 4-year Master's program and a 3 to 7 year PhD program. Their Civil Engineering Department is the most prominent one among all the departments. The requirements for students to get admitted to the Civil Engineering Department is a CGPA of 2.75 or above, TOFEL score 250 or above or IELTS score of 6 or above. They also accept students who have a CGPA of 2.50 with 2 years of work experience. The students of UiTM are allowed to work 20 hours a week besides studies. Universiti Teknologi MARA doesn't have permission to offer scholarships to students yet but they are hoping to get the clearance about offering scholarships very soon.



Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of Office of External Affairs raised the proposal of a departmental-level MOU between NSU and UiTM. The delegates of UiTM expressed their interest to discuss this topic further with their authorities.

## Professor Faisal Khan from University of Missouri Visits NSU



Faisal Khan, PhD, Associate Professor, School of Computing and Engineering, University of Missouri – Kansas City, MO, USA visited North South University and conducted a seminar in the Dean's Conference Room on 18th December 2019. Professor Salam, Chair of ECE arranged the seminar. Dr. Javed Bari, Dean of School of Engineering and Physical Science, Dr. Katherine Li, Director of Office of External Affairs, some faculty members and selected students of ECE and other departments attended the seminar. Before starting, the faculty advisor of IEEE student chapter briefed a little about IEEE, its events and prospects. The prime subject of the seminar was electric vehicle (EV) technology, its future and environmental impact in Bangladesh. Professor Faisal Khan started the discussion with narrating the history of electric vehicles. According to his analysis electric vehicles and driverless vehicles are the keys to the future. He is also hopeful about electrification of aircraft, wireless charging systems for electric vehicles and nuclear powered vehicles.





The discussion proceeded forward by talking about different electric vehicle technologies like BEV, HEV, FCEV, etc. The main difficulties with electric vehicles are longevity, safety, energy, cost and power.

Next, Professor Faisal Khan discussed the impacts of electric vehicles on grid, the upcoming challenges and research scopes in this sector. The current scenario, opportunities, barriers, necessities of implementation of using electric vehicles in Bangladesh were also discussed in the meeting. Therefore, Professor Faisal Khan's presentation was designed to educate the audience, things needed to create an EV industry in Bangladesh, the grid impact of EV charging, upcoming challenges and migration plans.

## Professor Prashanta Dutta from Washington State University Visits NSU



**D**r. Prashanta Dutta, Professor of School of Mechanical and Material Engineering, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington visited North South University on 19th December 2019. He attended a short meeting with the faculties and students of the Engineering departments of NSU in the SEPS Conference Room. The ECE Chair, Professor Salam arranged the meeting. Dr. Javed Bari, Dean of the School of Engineering and Physical Sciences (SEPS) of NSU, Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of the Office of External Affairs, NSU and some faculties and students of the Department of Engineering and Physical Science were present in the meeting.

Dr. Dutta's topic was 'Application of Machine Learning in Brain Drug Delivery'. His research area is focused on Micro Nano Bio Systems and throughout the discussion session he talked about the recent findings and inventions in this regard. He also deliberated on the doors of possibilities for further new scientific discoveries and inventions in the discussed field. The faculties and students from North South

University who were present in the meeting participated and asked? They asked questions about the research topic to Dr. Prashanta Dutta and shared their ideas about related topics with him.

Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of the Office of External Affairs of NSU raised the topic of creating a collaboration program with Washington State University. She discussed the possibilities of having a joint research program, a student & faculty exchange program, lab visits, Ph.D. and Masters-level education chances for the students of NSU at Washington State University with Dr. Dutta who agreed to discuss these proposals with the authority of his university and was very positive about having such deals with NSU.

## Representatives from NSU OEA Attend a Meeting with Special Branch of Police

**O**n 26th December 2019, Md. Manirujjaman (Special Superintendent of Police, Special Branch, Security Control Org. (SCO) Wing, Bangladesh Police; Dhaka) arranged a meeting with all the public and private organizations of Bangladesh where foreign students and staff study and work. The prime topic of this meeting was how to ease the process of extension of visa and the purpose of this meeting was to know the insights from different institutions who are facing trouble in this regard. This was the first time such an initiative was taken by the Malibagh Special Branch of Police (SCOwing). Representatives from several private and public universities of Bangladesh were present in the meeting. North South University was invited to join the meeting too, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of NSU were Dr. Hasanuzzaman, the External Affairs Officer and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer from the Office of External Affairs who are dealing with the visa issues of foreign students and faculty members.

Affiliates from different organizations raised their issues regarding visa extension in the meeting. The main issue raised was that the current visa extension process is very time-consuming and inconvenient. According to the current process, the foreign students have to be present themselves with their required papers at the SB office for completion of the extension process. The Security Control Org. (SCO) Wing of Bangladesh Police promised to consider the matter and offered a feasible solution for this problem. They asked for a focal point from each institution, someone who will gather all the supporting documents regarding the visa extension process for the students each semester and one staff member will submit those documents to the focal point of the SB office. Md. Manirujjaman, SP, SCO wing promised that after they have received the documents from the institution that they would process them within 5 working days.

Mr. Manirujjaman, SP, SCO wing and his team were very co-operative during the whole discussion session and assured the participants that he would try his best to make the visa extension process faster, easier and smoother. We appreciate this first initiative from the SB office and we are expecting this kind of discussion session more often; once or twice a year, so that everyone can discuss their issues and come up with convenient solutions.



## Faculty Feature



*Dr. Javed Bari, PE joined NSU in 2013. Later he joined as the Chair of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering on March 2, 2015 and as the Dean of School of Engineering and Physical Sciences (SEPS) on March 4, 2019. He is currently serving his second term in the NSU Syndicate. Dr. Bari has more than twenty five years' teaching, research and industrial experience in various fields of Civil Engineering. He obtained his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering from BUET in 1993 with a major in Structural Engineering. Later he obtained M.S. and Ph.D. in Civil Engineering from Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, USA with a specialization in Transportation Engineering. Dr. Bari is one of very few Professional Engineers (PE) of USA working in Bangladesh. He is also a Life fellow of IEB. Dr. Javed Bari is considered a USA South-Western specialist of transportation and materials. He was one of the key researchers who developed the globally known new AASHTO Mechanistic-Empirical Pavement Design Guide (MEPDG). He taught Civil Engineering courses at Arizona State University for a long time. Dr. Bari also worked in the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) as a team leader and Sr. Pavement Design Engineer from 2005 to 2010. There he managed numerous research projects as well as highway construction projects totaling more than 800 million dollars. In Bangladesh, Dr. Bari worked in all three major Civil Engineering Govt. Departments, e.g. RHD, PWD and LGED, between 1994 and 1999. After returning from USA in 2011, he briefly*

*worked in the IUBAT University at Dhaka as a Professor of Civil Engineering and also the Director of South Asian Disaster Management Center (SADMC). He has been involved with the World Bank in its Transport portfolio in Bangladesh and with Bureau Veritas in its structural assessment works of industrial buildings. Dr. Bari attended numerous professional training sessions such as EIT practitioner's training at EGIS-99, Government cadre's foundation training at PATC, BAETE Accreditation training, ADOT strategic plan and management trainings, etc. Dr. Bari has numerous publications in many international peer reviewed journals and conference proceedings such as the journals and proceedings of ASCE, TRB, AAPT, ITE, ASC, etc. According to Professor Javed Bari's North South University faculty profile.*

**Interviewer:** You have the experience of working in your field, Civil Engineering, both in intra-national and international sectors. According to your opinion, what is the difference between these two sectors?

**Dr. Javed Bari:** Well, I started my career in the public sector (LGED, BCS PWD and BCS RHD) in Bangladesh. In USA, I worked at both the Arizona State University (ASU) and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), USA. Back then (in mid-1990s), the intra-national job field was not large and the work environment in Bangladesh was much constrained by the so called “red-tape”, which now has improved a lot. In USA, I found the job field enormously large and the work environment to be very precise and target-oriented, which gives a professional more comfort.

**Interviewer:** You have worked quite a long period of time in Civil Engineering-related technical sectors and then joined NSU. What were your thoughts behind switching work areas from the technical side to teaching side?

**Dr. Javed Bari:** As the job market in Bangladesh is very small, I didn't have much choice when I decided to return to country after my 11-year stay in the USA. However, I knew my industry experience would be very helpful to the future engineers and that is exactly what I am finding now when I am fully in the teaching field.

**Interviewer:** In which area do you enjoy working the most, technical or educational/teaching? And why?

**Dr. Javed Bari:** Both. I am still in touch of the industry through consultancy work with the World Bank, USAID, ADB, RHD, LGED, etc. So, I can connect theory with practical experience, which makes my teaching more fruitful for students, I guess.

**Interviewer:** How do you feel about being at North South University?

**Dr. Javed Bari:** With an extraordinary pool of teachers and resources, NSU has enormous potential to contribute to the society, which it is already doing and it can do more in future.



**Interviewer:** Where do you see North South University five years from now?

**Dr. Javed Bari:** Within the top 100 ranked Asian universities.

**Interviewer:** What would be your advice for the current and future students of NSU?

**Dr. Javed Bari:** Be truthful to whatever you are doing, do not be biased to any particular field. Set your ambition high, but keep it as practical as possible and try your best to achieve your goals. Remember, every human being has equal potential and rights. So, do not undermine any human being's potential.

## Special Feature

*Mr. Sk Fardin Yaman is the Alumni Affairs Officer at the Office of External Affairs. He is the newest member of the OEA family. He looks after alumni issues including verifying and authorizing alumni registrations, building a strong alumni network, ensuring maximum alumni engagement, developing an alumni foundation and more. He is currently working on implementing the final steps to establish the first-ever centralized alumni association of NSU, which is called the North South University Alumni Association (NSUAA). The Office of Alumni Affairs (OAA) was established under the Office of External Affairs (OEA), with a view to expand networking and communication with the alumni of NSU all over the world. It aims to maintain sustainable and mutually beneficial relationships with its alumni. With that view in mind, the office is looking forward to the successful establishment and operation of NSUAA.*

*Fardin completed his Bachelor's in Business Administration from NSU in the class of 2016. Later he completed his Master's of Business Administration from the Faculty of Business Studies of the University of Dhaka. Before joining the OEA as the Alumni Affairs Officer, he worked in the Ministry of Labour and Employment, where he was an integral part of its International Organization wing. He coordinated development projects like the ILO-RMG Project and Social Dialogue and Industrial Relations (SDIR) Project. He also acted as the liaison between the Ministry and the International Labour Organization (ILO), which provides technical and financial support. Currently, he is enjoying his new role as the Alumni Affairs Officer. He says, "the Office of Alumni Affairs should always look forward to helping and supporting its alumni in every way possible. The best asset this university has is its students, a huge part of which is now former. For the students who have spent their time here once, it is our duty to never let them forget that they are always welcome here. I am also an alumnus of this beautiful university, and I will help and assist all our alumni the same way I would expect if I were asking for help from this office!"*



**Interviewer:** What attracted you to apply for this job?

**Fardin Yaman:** North South University has always been a home for me. The memories I have here cannot be compared to any other stages of my life. The organization had a big impact on my decision. I just didn't want to miss the opportunity to return to my beloved university. The position (Alumni Affairs Officer) also gained my attention. The job requires me to keep a strong connection with the alumni of NSU and work for their betterment. Not really a conventional job, but I loved the idea!

**Interviewer:** What is the one thing that you enjoy the most about your job?

**Fardin Yaman:** What I love about this job is that I get to meet a lot of people! I get to meet a lot of NSU alumni who are now in different places and stages of life. I get to hear their stories; I get to hear how NSU has impacted their lives, I get to learn from their experiences. It's really amazing!

**Interviewer:** What plans do you have to establish the NSUAA?

**Fardin Yaman:** The constitution of NSUAA has been finally approved. What I need to do now is reach the alumni and let them know about this venture. I need to let them know that the first-ever centralized alumni association of NSU is in the process of being established so that they can join and take this venture further ahead with the help of all stakeholders. I also need to ensure a proper election to form an Executive Committee for the smooth operation of this association.

**Interviewer:** What Expectations do you have of the NSUAA as an NSU alumnus?

**Fardin Yaman:** As an alumnus of NSU, I want the Alumni Association to be the most convenient medium of connection among the alumni. I want it to be the bridge between the former students and their beloved university. No matter how far life take everybody, NSUAA should remind us constantly we are always remembered.



**Interviewer:** What would attract NSU alumni to join NSUAA?

**Fardin Yaman:** NSUAA will be a beautiful opportunity to develop connections. It can help the alumni to build a strong network with fellow graduates. NSU always values their alumni and always welcomes them back here, whether it is any gala, social event or community service. Not only will it be a fantastic way to mingle and enjoy, it will also be a perfect opportunity to expand professional connection.

**Interviewer:** How can NSA and NSUAA both be benefitted from each other?

**Fardin Yaman:** The center of collaboration between the alumni and NSU should be the North South University Alumni Association. The image of NSU solely depends on its current and former students. So, when the alumni of NSU prosper in and outside this country, the image of NSU enhances with it as well. NSUAA can assist and provide necessary support on behalf of NSU to its alumni so their journey forward can have less obstacles.

On the other hand, alumni engagement is one of several qualities that is used to evaluate the quality of universities and rank across the globe. College ranking agencies like U.S. News and World Report have stated the importance of alumni engagement towards their own universities. So, when you join your university's alumni association, it actually helps to increase that university's reputation, which eventually ends up increasing the value of the degree. So, it is beneficial for the alumni as well!

## NSU Alumni Feature

***Saad Islam** is a 25-year-old Bangladeshi entrepreneur, book author, social worker and computer engineer. He is the author of the book, "Legend", published by Anyaprokash, the largest publisher in Bangladesh. Saad has a passion for helping people and has been involved with social work and business from an early age. In 2018, he co-founded the non-profit organization, Blessings Foundation Bangladesh, which started the Safe Roads Project in 2019. He is the Director of Student Recruitment of the Australian education agency, Study International Pty Ltd, where he helps students from Bangladesh manage scholarships and to go abroad to Australia, UK, Canada and USA for their Bachelor's, Master's and PhDs. He is also CEO of ElixSite and ShapnaTech, which has clients both in Bangladesh and internationally. Saad received his Bachelor's Degree in Computer Engineering from North South University. He completed his O and A Levels from Mastermind School and Maple Leaf Int. School, Dhaka. In July 2019, Saad received a \$20,000 scholarship from Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia to pursue his Master's Degree. As of December 2019, he is pursuing a dual Master's Degree, with a Master's in Business Management & Organizations and a Master's in Marketing at Macquarie University. Saad is also executive committee member and MacSync developer of Macquarie University Philanthropy Club, and is member of the Macquarie University Writer's Club, Business Society and Marketing Student Association. Saad's interests include playing football, practicing martial arts, Zen meditation and travelling to different countries.*



**Interviewer:** You are the youngest alumnus to be featured by NSU OEA and already one of the distinguished alumni representing NSU. How were you able to accomplish so many things and in such diverse fields?

**Saad Islam:** First, I would like to thank NSU OEA for featuring me. It is an incredible honor for me. North South University is very close to my heart. I am very grateful to have had the opportunity to study in one of the finest Universities in Bangladesh. I believe in fate; that everything happens for a reason. It is a funny story of how I got started at NSU (or how I almost did not). After completing my A-Levels, I had wanted to apply to the University of Manchester in England for my Bachelor's. Part of the reason why I wanted to go to England, and particularly to Manchester, was because when I was younger; I had dreamt of becoming a professional football player for Manchester United. At the time, I had thought that even if I did not become a player, I would be able to watch Manchester United play live. I had almost applied to the University of Manchester, but my mother had insisted that I complete my graduation from North South University in Bangladesh. The education that I received at NSU laid the foundations of what I have been able to accomplish in my life. As for how I have been able to accomplish them at a young age, it is because I utilize my time in whatever I do. That way, I am able to accomplish many tasks in a short span of time. I break down large tasks into smaller parts and then go from there. I have also understood how important it is to be able to work on a team in order to do great things. It is very helpful to have proper communication with others. I have realized the importance of being understanding and empathetic in whatever we do to have better communication skills. I believe that with the right mindset and work ethic, nothing is impossible. I practice Zen meditation every morning at 5am, which helps me keep my mind sharp. Keeping myself physically fit helps me to have more energy in doing lots of work. I hold a Blue Belt in Taekwondo from Royal Taekwondo School, Dhaka. I also kickbox regularly and go running at least twice every week.





**Interviewer:** You have become an author at a very young age. What was your inspiration behind writing the book, “**Legend**”?

**Saad Islam:** I had always been an avid reader from as long as I could remember. One of my favorite books is “The Fountainhead”, written by Ayn Rand in 1943. I read it on my Kindle when I was 15. The main character of the book, Howard Roark – an architect with a brilliant mind, fascinated me. The ideologies, philosophies in the story inspired me as well. I loved how the writer had made me feel like I was in the story myself, seeing the world through the characters’ eyes. From that moment on, I had always wanted to become a writer. On the 2nd of May in 2019, I had given my last undergraduate exam of NSU and only 2 months and 23 days later I was on a plane to Sydney, Australia. I left Bangladesh for Australia on the 25th of July, 2019 at 11:50pm. It was also the very same day when my book, “**Legend**” was published. I remember going to my publisher’s office at 5pm that day and then returning home as soon as I could in order to catch my flight. Even though my orientation at Macquarie University started on the 22nd July of 2019, I had missed almost all of it since I wanted to wait till my book got published

before leaving for Australia. The story in “Legend” centers on the main character, Angel Marki, a 32-year-old successful businessperson; it reflects on what had happened in his past to shape him to become the person he was today. I would like to thank my publisher, Anyaprokash, for taking a chance on someone so young. If they had not believed in me, it would not have been possible for “Legend” to do so well. I would also like to thank Rokomari.com, Bengal Boi, Boi Bichitra, Gyankosh, KIC Centre as well as NSU Book Shop for helping “Legend” reach readers all over Bangladesh. I was surprised to have received messages from readers from even outside Dhaka, who had said that they loved my book. I was honored when my publisher, Anyaprokash, gave ten winners of a competition three books as prizes and “Legend” was one of those three books, alongside a book from the popular writer, Humayun Ahmed. I had also decided to not take any profit I made from the book. All proceeds from the sale of “Legend” go to Blessings Foundation Bangladesh.

**Interviewer:** What was your motivation to shift your field of study from Engineering to Business? What is it like to be the CEO of ElixSite and ShapnaTech?

**Saad Islam:** I always had an interest in business. After completing my Bachelor’s in Computer Engineering from NSU, I decided that I wanted to pursue my Master’s degree in business. Even while I was a student of Computer Engineering at NSU, I was involved with start-ups. I had also started getting involved in social work. I wanted to pursue a degree that would broaden my horizons on the necessities of what it takes to run a business and an organization properly. That is why I wanted to pursue a Master’s degree in Business Management & Organizations and in Marketing. I had received a \$20,000 scholarship to pursue my Master’s degree at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia (ranked among the top 1% of universities in the world by QS World University Rankings, 2019). In 2016, I, along with three of my childhood friends, had started ElixSite and ShapnaTech. We were still students at the time and we were taking on projects and worked only part-time. We were developing web applications and websites for ElixSite, and selling software online, designing and printing cards and banners for ShapnaTech. Later on, ShapnaTech had started including services such as digital marketing to clients. Through ElixSite, we had also created three projects for NSU students: [WuperBooks.org](http://WuperBooks.org), [TutorYouNSU.com](http://TutorYouNSU.com) and [NSUBookShop.com](http://NSUBookShop.com). WuperBooks was the first online digital book library for NSU students. It had become very popular among NSU students in 2016 and was being used by more than 4,000 students every month. WuperBooks had later expanded to include resources for IUB, BRAC University and Medical College students as well. We had also collaborated with young student entrepreneurs from NSU to promote their businesses on WuperBooks’ site; we had worked with NSU students who founded businesses such as Banana Notebooks, Bits & Pieces, Finer Threads, Jode, Custom Mac BD and Miss Paintbrush. In 2017, we created TutorYouNSU.com, which was the first online peer-to-peer tutoring platform designed to help NSU students connect with NSU Tutors. NSU students were able to get both online tutoring and in-person tutoring. By 2019, we had built a portfolio, which included clients such as Luxury World Furniture and SAO26 Restaurant as well as international clients such as Cobuilds Australia Pty Ltd and MQ Philanthropy Club.

**Interviewer:** What inspired you to establish the non-profit organization, “Blessings Foundation Bangladesh”? What are the objectives and goals of the “Safe Roads Project” conducted by “Blessings Foundation Bangladesh”?

**Saad Islam:** When I was younger, I used to see my maternal grandmother cook and feed young street children on Fridays every week for many years. That had left an imprint on my mind. I was always interested in social work. I had always admired Dr. Muhammad Yunus, for his work on micro-credit and micro-finance. I had the opportunity of meeting Dr. Muhammad Yunus at the Social Business Youth Summit in 2016, when-



I was 22. I had spoken to him about social business and sustainable business policies; how we could earn a living while helping society at the same time. That conversation had sparked an interest in me to do something that would benefit society. In 2018, when I was almost done with my graduation at NSU, I, along with 22 others, registered “Blessings Foundation Bangladesh” as a non-profit Organization. We had decided to focus on major problems in Bangladesh that needed to be solved. The high number of road accidents was an important problem. Through Blessings Foundation Bangladesh, we will try to solve three major problems in Bangladesh: reducing road accidents in Bangladesh, reducing costs for patients with financial difficulties, and reducing illiteracy among underprivileged children. The “Safe Roads Project” is a pilot program where we will provide free driving training to would-be/current professional drivers, such as car drivers driving professionally, bus drivers, truck drivers by creating a free driving school and funding local driving schools in Bangladesh. It will teach new drivers how to drive safely in order to reduce road accidents. So that they understand the importance and are properly trained to drive safely. This will also increase the number of bus drivers for example. It will reduce their workload as they often times have to work for even 16 hours straight. The lower workload, proper driving training and ethical learning will help in reducing road accidents. We plan to provide training to at least 200 drivers by December 2020. We plan to develop a school health program and provide free grassroots-level health education to schoolchildren in Bangladesh. Educating children and their families, especially those who are not financially well off, about health will help prevent avoidable diseases, which would be more cost-effective than a cure. Many poor children are more likely to be uneducated as well. As of December 2019, we have sponsored the education of 18 underprivileged children, all of whom are now working in professional and medical sectors. Blessings Foundation Bangladesh will also provide relief and funds to refugees, people in poverty, people affected during natural disasters in Bangladesh.

**Interviewer:** How do you help students in Bangladesh who want to go abroad to pursue their higher studies?

**Saad Islam:** I work at Study International Pty Ltd as the Director of Student Recruitment. They are one of the largest Study Abroad agencies in Australia (they work with more than 200 Universities, TAFEs across Australia, UK, Canada, USA, and Europe). They also have offices in Bangladesh. When I had applied for my Master’s in Australia, I had myself done it through an education agency. Many students in Bangladesh do not know the procedures of application and which academic documents, files are required for University application, visa, etc. For example, many students think that taking an IELTS exam is mandatory to study in Australia, but when I had applied my IELTS was waived. My job is to help students manage scholarships, give them the proper information and help them with the whole application procedure. I can also help them in information regarding living costs, etc. specifically in Australia since I have been living there since July 2019.

In addition, any student from Bangladesh applying for higher studies abroad (Australia, UK, Canada, USA, and Europe) through Study International Pty Ltd with my recommendation will have their service fees and university application fees completely waived, which they would otherwise need to pay if they had applied by themselves. It gives me a lot of happiness to be able to help other students. More than 50 students (including more than 30 former NSU students) have already applied for higher studies abroad with scholarships, with my recommendation. There are many opportunities for Bangladeshi students to study abroad for their higher studies with a scholarship. The environment abroad is different and the teaching quality at universities is amazing. I am very proud to say that compared to universities abroad, NSU is at a similar level. I feel this is because NSU is the only university in Bangladesh, which has all faculty members with a foreign degree(s). Not only is the degree valuable in and of itself, but it also means that all faculties of NSU have been exposed to different environments in foreign countries, which helps broaden their minds. As NSU students, we are lucky to have studied at the best private university in Bangladesh.

**Interviewer:** How was your journey at NSU? And what would be your advice for current and future students?

**Saad Islam:** My journey at NSU was amazing. Remember when I said at the beginning that I believe everything happens for a reason? That one decision of studying at NSU set the course of how my life would turn out to be. If it had not been for my mother, who had insisted that I study at NSU, I would not have had the opportunity to be mentored by the most amazing of teachers and to have met people who would turn out to be my lifelong friends. I am indebted to my mother, Prof. Dr. B H Nazma Yasmeen and my father, Prof. Dr. Md Nazrul Islam for their unconditional love and support. Listening to them has helped me reach where I am today. I am grateful to all my mentors at NSU, especially my honorable teachers, Mahjabeen Hossain, Rashida Akhter Khanum, Nur Newaz Khan, Dr. M Abdul Awal, Dr. M Rokonuzzaman, Dr. Sharnali Islam, Dr. Shahnewaz Siddique and Dr. Katherine Li. I am also grateful to have made amazing friends from diverse backgrounds, each with their own unique stories. I made great friends like Afroza, Ahad, Avirupa, Bushra, Fableeha, Ifty, Junaid, Manoshi, Meem, Moham, Nehal, Rayhen, Sadia, Shakireen, Shama, Sharmin, Shumaiya, Tahmid and many others, who made my NSU journey wonderful for me. NSU boasts very gifted students, who have gone on to do very well in their respective fields. However, there is no such thing as an overnight success. My advice to students would be to work smart and hard.



We live in a generation, where anything is possible. We represent NSU no matter where we are in the world. Our success is NSU's success and vice versa. I will end with a quote for current and future students and ask them to always have faith in themselves. "When you know where you're going and you know what you want, the universe has a way of stepping aside for you." If students visualize themselves as becoming successful, have belief in themselves, stay disciplined and work hard, they will be able to reach whatever they want to in life.

*Saad Islam can be contacted by NSU students for any kind of help. To contact Saad, send him an email here: [m@saadislam.com](mailto:m@saadislam.com) or visit his site at [www.saadislam.com](http://www.saadislam.com). The North South University Office of External Affairs is grateful to Saad for sharing a bit of his life with us.*

## International Student Feature

*Mohamed Abdi Ibrahim (Gambool) from Somalia, student of the Department of Environmental Science and Management, North South University enjoys travelling, reading Anthology books, watching real life documentaries, and experiencing new things. He also likes playing football and watching it.*

*Hi, my name is Mohamed Abdi Ibrahim, but most of my friends know me as Gambool, I am from extended family of twenty-one siblings, which seems quite unique to Bangladeshi people but in our culture is normal. I was born in the capital city of the Puntland state of Somalia. I usually introduce myself saying that I am Gambool which means winsome in Somali language. Starting from elementary school till college and I studied in Somalia and now here, first private university in Bangladesh, North South University, center of excellence in higher education.*



**Interviewer:** You studied elementary school and college in Somalia, then why did you choose Bangladesh and North South University for higher studies?

**Gambool:** To answer this question, I will give you reasons why I choose Bangladesh and North South University for higher studies. First of all, I chose Bangladesh, but I have chosen North South University after I completed college in Somalia. My family and I had a plan for me to do my higher studies abroad, especially in affordable countries like China, Malaysia, India and others; but I couldn't find the subject I was looking for: Environmental Science and Management. After months I got the chance to talk my cousin who was a student of North South University Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences and he suggested that I come to Bangladesh and join North South University, because NSU is the first private university in Bangladesh. Online reputation and consulting with different people got me in to North South University. Moreover, NSU is offering my dream subject which is Environmental Science and Management.

**Interviewer:** Why did you decide to pursue your higher studies in Environmental Science and Management?

**Gambool:** Environmental Science is my dream subject; our world today faces serious environmental challenges such as pollution, climate change and species extinction. These challenges will require significant adjustments in the way we work, play, live, and govern. Everybody will need to become more educated about environmental issues, whether to learn how to adapt these challenges or mitigate them, and we will need some people who are particularly specialized. That why I decided to study Environmental Science. Moreover, I chose to be an environmentalist because I don't want a typical 9 to 5 job, I would rather have a career working outdoors that not only financially supports me, but benefits the environment. Also ENV gives me the opportunity to travel, discover and study amazing things that will help me to mitigate the damage that humans have done to the environment.

**Interviewer:** What is your future plan regarding higher studies and your career?

**Gambool:** I want to be recognized as a successful person who achieved all the goals and left a positive impression on people's lives. I will have to work as hard as I can to get that recognition and I am willing to do what it takes to get to that point. I approach everything in life with a positive attitude and lots of enthusiasm. I strongly believe that I will be a successful person in my life. I want to start making my dreams come true. You asked me about my future plan in higher studies, I had motivations to be an ecologist from my school teacher, so I am looking forward to do my higher studies in Ecology, but to reach that goal I have to be dedicated.



**Interviewer:** You have been studying in Bangladesh for quite a long time. What is your opinion about the people and culture of Bangladesh? How do you like the people and culture of Bangladesh?

**Gambool:** As an Environmental Science and Management student, I have been to so many places in Bangladesh for field trips, like Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, Bandarban, Kuakata Beach, Sylhet and so many other places. I can truly say that people in Bangladesh are so nice and they are very hospitable in every corner in this country, and every social class level. I'm very thankful to be DESM student. From my experience, Bangladeshi people have the richest culture in any sector of social life, such as food, dress, and architecture. I have been to many historical events like Kotila Mura in Comilla, Ahsan Manzil in Dhaka, American Church in Dhaka, and so many places. What I can say is that traffic is the worst, food is so yummy and people are the sweetest.

**Interviewer:** Anything you want to tell to the future applicants of NSU?

**Gambool:** For international students, if you are looking for the best quality education, North South University is here for you to guide you to become the best version of yourself. Take advantage of that which is available at North South University and that will help you to achieve your full potential. NSU offers many programs to keep you on the road to graduation and professional success.



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