



**Office
of External
Affairs**

THE BRIDGE

The Official Newsletter of the Office Of External Affairs

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Editor's Message

Welcome to the 23rd issue of the official newsletter of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) at North South University (NSU). This issue covers events that took place during January – February, 2022 and includes Alumni Talk Shows, NGO Talk Shows, What's Your Story? episodes, Information Sessions for students with our partner institutions and collaboration meetings that took place during this time. As always, we welcome you to follow us on the OEA Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/>.

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NSU Students Selected for Bangladesh Alumni Foundation Scholarship

North South University (NSU) and Bangladesh Alumni Foundation (BdAF) have selected three candidates to kick off the groundbreaking NSU-BdAF Scholarship Program starting from Fall 2021.



BdAF Board conducted online interviews with 9 candidates that were forwarded by the NSU Financial Aid Office which reached a conclusion to grant aid to 3 students – Tamjida Tarin Tripti (BBA), Mariya Sharmin Tisha (CSE) and Jarin Tasnim Saba (ARC). The selected candidates are all promising students and were able to demonstrate their talent and vision clearly and in alignment with the original vision of BdAF. BdAF is excited and looking forward to assisting and working with these brilliant minds in the upcoming days.



NSU and BdAF both strongly feel that education must be accessible and that the alumni network must play a role here. NSU and BdAF have been coordinating closely for some time to structure a scholarship program towards that goal. Finally, students will now be able benefit from it.

The "NSU – Bangladesh Alumni Foundation Scholarship" is being offered to talented young students of the university. NSU and BdAF jointly determine the right candidate for the scholarship each year. The scholarship covers partial or the entirety of tuition and other fees of the university. Bangladesh Alumni Foundation will also mentor selected candidates in helping them to achieve their dreams.

Bangladesh Alumni Foundation, a California based non-profit organization, believes that a key to bringing positive societal change would be to make quality private university education completely free through offering 100% scholarships over a sustained period of time.

Congratulations to the first recipients of this prestigious award!

Collaboration Meeting with Dr. Mahbub Ahmed, Southern Arkansas University, USA



**SOUTHERN
ARKANSAS
UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Katherine Li and Tasnia Azmeri Madiha from the OEA had an exploratory collaboration meeting over Zoom with Dr. Mahbub Ahmed, Associate Professor and Interim Chair of the Engineering and Physics Department at Southern Arkansas University on January 3, 2022 to explore a possible future collaboration with the engineering programs at NSU. Their four-year engineering program is accredited by ABET. Junior and senior engineering students from NSU could possibly transfer to their engineering program and could graduate with the ABET-accredited degree by completing the remaining coursework. With this possibility, they can look into the NSU engineering curriculum. Conducting collaborative research, teaching summer courses at NSU, exchanging ideas, are some other ways proposed to connect the two universities.

NSU Signs a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with CWCS

After thorough discussion and comprehensive evaluation of common interests and objectives, North South University (NSU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Center for Women and Children Studies (CWCS) on January 4, 2022.

The MoU commences the scope of joint research and training activities through academic collaboration between NSU and CWCS which is expected to be beneficial for both the respective parties. It agrees upon taking joint capacity development initiatives to encourage, sponsor and promote multidisciplinary basic and action research aimed at the burgeoning socioeconomic development in Bangladesh. According to the MoU, both the institutes will collaborate in organizing training programs for research methodology, grant proposal writing, etc. and internship opportunities will be offered in the areas of potential collaboration. The MoU also states that both NSU and CWCS will encourage research collaboration in areas of mutual interest. The agreement will remain effective for five years and will automatically be renewed at the end of five years unless one or both of the institutes proposes otherwise.

The MoU was signed by Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU, Prof. Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences and Professor Ishrat Shamim, President, Center for Women and Children Studies (CWCS). The points of contact for this agreement are Dr. Mohammad Bulbul Ashraf Siddiqi, Department of Political Science and Sociology and Director, Confucius Institute (CI), NSU, Ms. Nasmin Jabin Noor, Senior Lecturer, Department of Law, NSU, Professor Ishrat Shamim, President, CWCS and Ms. Nusrat Sultana, Treasurer, CWCS.



NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 64



The sixty-fourth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 6, 2022. As our guest for this episode, we had Mr. Parvez Karim Abbasi, an alumnus of North South University from the Department of Economics, Batch 1999. He completed his undergraduate studies from NSU in 2003 and received his postgraduate degrees from York University, Canada. In his professional life, Mr. Abbasi is associated with academia - both teaching and research activities. Currently, he is working as an Assistant Professor of Economics at East West University.

The show started with a discussion about the guest's academic and professional journey and interests. During the discussion, Mr. Abbasi mentioned that from his early academic life, he was interested and curious about the global economy and considers himself lucky to get the opportunity to pursue his area of interest both in higher studies and as a profession. In

this context, Mr. Abbasi briefly discussed his research interest areas which are geopolitics, geo-economics, international political economy, etc. and mentioned that his most current research projects are regarding the relationship between international politics and the local economy.

As a veteran economist, Mr. Abbasi shared some insights about the current situation of the local and global economy with the audience. He briefly discussed the position of developing countries in the current global economy. Moreover, based on the recent economic trends, he also shared his insights about the socioeconomic effects and aftermath of COVID 19 pandemic.

Later on, the focus of the conversation switched to Mr. Abbasi's academic life from his professional life. As he has the experience of studying at both NSU and York University, Canada, he shared his opinion about the similarities and dissimilarities regarding the academic structure and cultural aspects between local and international universities based on his experience and observations. According to him, NSU matches the international standard of education quality, diversity and outreach. He appreciated the role of the highly qualified and dedicated faculty members of NSU behind such excellence and reputation.

As the discussion furthered, Mr. Abbasi also shared some fond memories of his favorite teachers, friends, classmates, seniors from his student life at NSU. In this context, he mentioned that his bittersweet journey with North South University shaped his ethics and faith, taught him optimism and influenced him a lot in his fundamental growth as a person.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/236283911967651>

Second Follow-up Meeting with Badabon Sangho



The second follow-up meeting between Badabon Sangho and the Office External Affairs (OEA) of North South University (NSU) was held on January 9,

2022. The meeting attendees included Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA, NSU, Ms. Lipi Rahman, Executive Director, Badabon Sangho, Dr. Helal Mohd. Mohiuddin, Professor, Dept. of Political Science and Sociology, NSU, Dr. Abdul Wohab, Asst. Professor, Dept. of Political Science and Sociology of NSU and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, OEA, NSU.



The meeting focused on discussing the working areas and operation of Badabon Sangho towards the integrated development of our country and evaluating the possible collaboration opportunities between NSU and Badabon Sangho on relevant projects like joint research, publication, research funding, student internships, training opportunities, etc.

While discussing common interests, representatives of NSU proposed the involvement of students and faculties in collaborative research projects and publication. They also agreed upon a modified research ToR and the organization of training workshops to proceed with collaborative actions. After a detailed discussion, the attendees agreed with the proposed suggestions and confirmed that more discussion would be needed before finalizing any academic collaboration between NSU and the Badabon Sangho. After more discussion through email, both parties hereby agreed to create a new MoU between Badabon Sangho and NSU.

What's Your Story? Episode 7

The seventh episode of 'What's Your Story?' was held on January 11, 2022 and for this episode we had Dr. Quamrul Haider as our guest.

Dr. Haider is the recipient of the Bangladesh Government's 2012 Shadhinota Podok (highest civilian award) in the category of Science & Technology and NASA's 2002 Faculty Fellowship. Prior to joining Fordham University in January 1988, Dr. Haider was a Research Associate at University Laval (Québec, Canada), Los Alamos (New Mexico) and Lawrence Livermore (California) National Laboratories. He was Chair of the Physics and Engineering Physics Department of Fordham University from 2006 to 2012. Haider's research interests encompass the theoretical study of intermediate energy nuclear physics, with an emphasis on formation of eta-mesic nucleus, pion double-charge-exchange reactions and role of rho-meson in nuclear physics. Another area of his research is nuclear reactions, particularly fusion between two light nuclei at energies of astrophysical interest. He also studies the structure of elementary particles from the point of view of quark-gluon confinement inside a "Soliton Bag" and formation of "cold" stellar matter (soliton stars).



In 1986, he along with Dr. L. C. Liu of Los Alamos National Laboratory predicted the existence of eta-mesic nucleus – an exotic form of nuclear matter. The papers on eta-mesic nucleus, which have been cited in nearly 800 scholarly articles, triggered many new fundamental studies in nuclear structure theory and created a new sub-field in nuclear physics called “basic nuclear physics.” The eta-mesic nucleus was detected in 2008 by a team of about 30 physicists from Germany, Poland, the United States, India, Bulgaria and Slovakia. The experimental discovery was made at Forschungszentrum, Jülich in Germany, one of Europe’s largest interdisciplinary research centers. Haider has authored numerous papers (100+) in high impact refereed physics journals, some of which includes Fordham students as co-authors.

Dr. Haider is one of the authors of the book Nuclear Fusion – One Noble Goal and a Variety of Scientific and Technological Challenges, ISBN 978-1-78985-788-7 (Intech Open, London, U.K., 2019). He is a regular contributor to the Op-Ed section of The Daily Star and The Independent. He is a member of the Editorial Board of Turkish Journal of Physics (Ankara, Turkey) and International Journal of Recent Developments in Sciences (Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, Punjab, India). He is also a member of the International Ph.D. Studies Program of Jagiellonian University (Krakow, Poland) and Foundation of Polish Science (Warsaw, Poland). He was a visiting scientist at seven international research institutions (Bangladesh, France, Italy, U.S.A.) and invited speakers at eleven international conferences (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Finland, France, Mexico, New York, Pakistan, Poland).

He is a referee of research articles for several professional journals, reviewer of Post-Doctoral applications to universities associated with Oak Ridge National Laboratory (Tennessee) and proposals for the National Science Foundation (Washington, D.C.). He also reviewed textbooks for the publishers Wadsworth Publishing (Brooks/Cole), W.H. Freedman and Allyn & Bacon. He has been interviewed by several newspapers and news magazines (The Journal News (N.Y.), Nuclear Intelligence Weekly (N.Y.), Weekly International News Magazine (CA), The Daily Star, The Independent, Dhaka Tribune) for his opinion on Pollution, Environment, Climate Change, Geoengineering, Nuclear Energy, etc.

Throughout the event, Dr. Haider shared his life journey starting from early childhood through academic life, professional pathway to current stage of life and career. From his narration, we could understand that he had a very diverse childhood and school life as he moved around different towns and cities of the country; hence, has the experience of studying in both nonresidential and boarding schools.

As he grew up, he felt deeply connected to, and immensely interested in, the subject of physics mainly because of the analytical character of the discipline. The clarity of logics of physics backed by experimental results and its correlation with every branch of science amazed him. Therefore, he chose Physics to pursue his undergraduate studies in, but became very disheartened by the way of teaching the discipline in his respective institution. Yet, he didn't give up on the subject and acquired much higher degrees specializing in it from abroad.

Later on, Dr. Haider found his research interest in astrophysics – a less explored branch of physics and conducted intense research activities in that subject area. He has a number of remarkable research publications in the respective fields. About his career, Dr. Haider said, “I am getting paid for pursuing my hobby”. To know more about the event, visit <https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/903408633653697>

Second Follow-up Meeting with Tauri Foundation

The second follow-up meeting between the Tauri Foundation and the Office External Affairs (OEA) of North South University (NSU) was held on January 11, 2022. The meeting was attended by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA, Mr. Ashfaq-UL-Kabir, Executive Director, Tauri Foundation, Dr. Mohammad Delwer Hossain Hawlader, Associate Professor & Chairman, Dept. of Public Health, NSU, Dr. Nadira Sultana Kakoly, Assistant Professor, Department of Public Health, NSU and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA.



The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss the present work of the Tauri Foundation for the development of Bangladesh and to explore

the possible collaboration opportunities between NSU and Tauri Foundation in terms of joint research, publication, research funding, student internships, and training opportunities. During the meeting, the attendees acknowledged their desire to have an MoU between the Tauri Foundation and NSU for conducting effective joint research projects and most importantly internship opportunities for the students of the Public Health Department of NSU. The MoU will facilitate the two research groups to start research collaboration, joint publication, research projects, submitting joint research proposals for funding as well as training and internship opportunities for the students of NSU.



NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 65



The sixty-fifth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 12, 2022. The episode showcased Ms. Tasnuva Ahmed, an alumna of North South University from the Department of Business Administration, Batch 2002. Ms. Ahmed completed her undergraduate studies from NSU in 2005; afterwards, she received a Master's degree from EADA Business School, Spain and her MBA degree from the Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand. She specializes in the marketing sector and has 12 years of working experience in this field. She has worked with renowned organizations like Banglalink, Celestial Tech, Colors FM, etc. Currently, Ms. Ahmed is working as the Director and Chief Operating Officer at Astha IT. Besides that, she is associated with another two youth-based organizations: Thought Maker Ltd. and JCI Dhaka Independent.

Despite having an academic background in Business Studies, Ms. Ahmed has been associated with technology oriented companies for a major portion of her professional journey. As the reason for such a dynamic career choice, she mentioned that with the rapid development of the IT sector, she developed an urge to explore the technological field herself. As an active associate of the information technology sector, she shared her insights about the evolution of IT during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. According to her, the pandemic caused massive technological innovation which eventually resulted in increased job opportunities, income scopes, entrepreneurship opportunities, etc. for everyone. It also popularized convenient concepts like working from home, telemedicine systems, etc. among the public.

Besides information technology, Ms. Ahmed also works with youth and women's empowerment and leadership. While talking about this aspect of her life, she mentioned that although Bangladesh has come a long way regarding female leadership, still there is a lot of work to be done. In her opinion, negligence of gender equality is one of the prime reasons for the aforementioned backwardness. To eliminate these barriers, cumulative efforts like acknowledgement of the contributions of women, availability of equal opportunities, etc. are important. As Founder President of youth-based organization JCI Dhaka Independent, she provided a brief overview about the activities and goals of the initiative. She mentioned that the organization mainly targets its effort on the development of our country focusing on concerns like gender equality, advancement of transgender, employability of underprivileged people, etc.

During the event, Ms. Ahmed also shared some of the experiences and memories from her NSU life. She became nostalgic while reminiscing about her fond memories with close friends, classmates and faculties from NSU. She especially appreciated the teaching methods, curriculum and outreach opportunities that NSU offers to the students. According to her, NSU trained her to maintain balance while multitasking and handling pressure.

As a senior alumna of NSU, she shared some valuable insights for the current students and recent graduates of the university. She emphasized self-learning, self-development and self-motivation for ensuring growth and success both in personal and professional life. She also stressed the importance of passion, dedication, honesty and integrity for one's overall development.

To know more about the event, visit <https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1106826630069140>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 66

The sixty-sixth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 19, 2022. The episode showcased Mr. Md. Sharfuddin Newaz, an alumnus of North South University from the Department of Business Administration, Batch 2001. Mr. Newaz has been associated with the hospitality industry since he completed his graduation and entered his professional life. He has 14 years of experience working in the hotel and tourism industry. Currently, Mr. Newaz is associated with Radisson Blu Water Garden as the Director of Sales & Marketing.

The event started with an overview of the trade and travel industry from both a global and local perspective by Mr. Newaz. Alongside that he mentioned the roles and responsibilities he carries out as



the Director of Sales and Marketing of a renowned multinational five-star hotel. He currently leads the sales and revenue generation units of Radisson Blu Water Garden, Bangladesh. His main responsibilities are to meet sales targets, participate in designing long term strategic plans and generate revenue and expenditure budgets for the company. He also acts as an Executive Body Member of Radisson Blu Water Garden.

As the discussion furthered, Mr. Newaz elaborated on the current overall situation of the trade and travel industry in brief. He mentioned that the industry has faced a huge interruption and revenue loss during the recent COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of this huge loss, there has been massive job loss and employment opportunity reduction in the hospitality sector. During a large portion of the past two years, there was zero income but regular expenditures in the industry. Nevertheless, Radisson Blu Water Garden took every possible initiative to minimize the job loss of its employees throughout the pandemic. Mr. Newaz mentioned that despite a huge setback, the hotel industry is gradually recovering from the losses, building itself back and gaining its previous strength back.

As Mr. Newaz is associated with an industry that is not commonly popular among the graduates of NSU, he shared the interesting stories behind his association and journey with the sector during the show. He received an opportunity to join the hospitality industry right after graduation and took the chance to start here. Later on, he grew fond of the industry, found interest and passion in it, thus never looked back and carried on with the profession. He mentioned that there is huge diversity and plenty of opportunities to flourish in the sector. In this context, he also shared some structural and strategic aspects of the hospitality industry with the audience. To mention a few of the obstacles and difficulties of the industry, he named higher taxation rate, lack of promotion regarding intra border tourism, negative and inaccurate perceptions of professionals in the sector, etc.

In the latter part of the event, Mr. Newaz talked about his student life at NSU. He shared that the academic atmosphere and culture of NSU influenced him to get admitted here. His undergraduate life here was diverse with tons of memories with friends, classmates, faculties, extracurricular activities, etc. The impact of the education and learnings from NSU is widespread in every single aspect of his life. For juniors of NSU, he gave some suggestions throughout the show. He advised the young graduates to follow their passion, look for opportunities and utilize every given chance throughout every step of life.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/226619666340393>

GIM-NSU Exchange Program Discussion

A meeting was held with colleagues from NSU and the Goa Institute of Management (GIM) on January 19, 2022 to expand our academic collaboration. From GIM, Prof. Ajit Parulekar, Director, GIM, Prof. Divya Singha, Chairperson - Centre for Social Sensitivity and Action (CSSA) were present. From NSU, Prof. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Quazi Tafsirul Islam and Md. Asif Hossain, Dr. Katherine Li, Dr. Hasanuzzaman, Samina Miti Rahman, Tasnia Azmeri Madiha were present to explore the possibility of starting a GIM-NSU Exchange Program. With the agenda set by both Prof. Chowdhury and Prof. Parulekar, we discussed and taking forward the International Consulting Bootcamp (ICB) to NSU, Bangladesh.



The Bootcamp is a 2-week collaborative program between GIM and its partner institution. Students from both institutions work together on real-life practical issues faced by organizations at the host institute. Students take part in mini-consulting assignments that spread across various industries. These can be tailored around business problems of firms.

The participants also explored the idea of an immersion program for the postgraduate and executive students from NSU. The immersion program exposes the participants to the various dynamics related to doing business in India. This comes from understanding trade, politics, and society. The participants will be taken on industrial visits to various business establishments in Goa. Participants will also get to interact with various business leaders. An Indian immersion program is incomplete without experiencing the rich cultural heritage of our country. GIM stresses on the Indian culture and ethos through classroom lectures and cultural visits. Such an exposure enables participants to appreciate the art and science of doing business in India besides sensitizing them to different cultural values and practices.

Both these programs are well suited for participants with or without work experience.

NSU Signs a MoU with University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji



North South University signed an MoU with the University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji on February 20, 2022. The departments of main concern in the agreement are the School of Information Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Physics (STEMP) of USP and the School of Engineering and Physical Science (SEPS) of NSU, as the partnership particularly focuses on the Engineering and Physics subject areas including Computer Science and Engineering, Information Technology, Electrical and Electronics Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Civil and Environmental Science, Mathematics, etc. The MoU includes collaboration activities regarding scientific and technological research and innovation, student, faculty and researcher exchange, educational activities in subjects of common interest, document and information exchange, research paper and publication sharing, internships and study visits.

The MoU was signed by Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU from NSU and Professor Pal Ahluwalia, Vice-Chancellor and President, USP from USP. As witnesses, Professor Dr. Javed Bari, Dean and Professor, SEPS from NSU and Mr. Iresh Lal, Manager, Development Cooperation from USP signed the documents.

NGO Talk Show Episode 9

The ninth episode of the 'NGO Talk Show' aired on January 20, 2022 with Local Environment Development and Agricultural Research Society (LEDARS). The keynote speaker for this episode was Mr. Mohon Kumar Mondal, Founder & Executive Director, Local Environment Development and Agricultural Research Society (LEDARS). From North South University Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs was present as a Special Guest, and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA hosted the live talk show.



The event started with a brief overview of the organization including its foundation and primary activities. The NGO started off as a local club in the South-west coastal areas of Bangladesh in 1998. It received a golden opportunity to be associated with the Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change (RVCC) project of Care Bangladesh. Eventually, in 2003, the organization started to function at an NGO level. The organization's head office is located in the Shatkhira District, about 70 kilometers away from the Sundarbans. As mentioned, LEDARS works around the coastal and mangrove areas of the Southwest side of the country, so its basic activities are related to disaster management and rehabilitation, climate change, salinity increase, agricultural improvement, drinkable water supply, etc. Alongside achieving success and remarkable impact in its areas of operation, the organization has also received international awards like the Kyoto World Water Grand Prize, the Water Showcase prize in the 7th World Water Forum, etc. for water management.



As Mr. Mondal has been working in the development sector for a long time, he shared his insightful opinion about the contribution of NGOs in the overall development of Bangladesh during the event. He believes that the socioeconomic development of our country since liberation is the result of joint endeavors between the government and NGOs. He discussed the role of local NGOs in matters like constantly growing per capita income, introducing and popularizing microcredit, raising awareness about climate change, sanitation, human rights, etc. at the grass-roots level. Furthermore, Mr. Mondal highlighted the impacts of the research activities conducted by the local organizations on integrated development. He especially emphasized research on climate, constantly increasing sea level rise, drought, salinity, agriculture, disaster management, etc. According to him, both action and commission research methods are credible depending on the research topic, hence, LEDARS is working with both the prospects of research conduction.

In the latter part of the event, Mr. Mondal discussed the collaboration and partnership opportunities between NSU and LEDARS by identifying common research interest areas and sharing resources. In this context, he mentioned that LEDARS has established a knowledge management center with the intention to facilitate their research projects and researchers regarding data collection, field visits and other practical activities. He also introduced the 'Technology Park' which has been set up for the convenience of research activities and for researchers. Under this facility, the organization provides necessary support and assistance to the guest researchers regarding data collection, field visits and other primary activities of research work. He invited further discussion and critical evaluation about joint research opportunities involving the specialists and researchers from his organization and expert faculties and students from NSU.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1289260518208117>

NGO Talk Show Episode 10



The tenth episode of the 'NGO Talk Show' was aired on January 25, 2022 with 'Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK)'. The keynote speaker for this episode was Dr. Khandaker Alamgir Hossain, Founder & Executive Director, Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK). The Senior Director of GUK, Dr. Md. Mahbub Alam was also present in the event as our guest. From North South University Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs was present as a Special Guest, and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA hosted the live talk show.

The discussion session was mainly focused on the growth and contribution of Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK) and the entire development sector in the economy of Bangladesh. Throughout the show, the guests shared the history of inception, journey and

core activities of GUK. Our first speaker for the event, Mr. Hossain started his speech by introducing himself and his organization. He mentioned that from his early undergraduate study life, he was really interested and later involved with a social development organization as a volunteer. That is where his interest and motivation grew towards contributing to the development sector of our country. In that continuity, he founded his own development organization 'Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK)' in 1993 with the intention to help the underprivileged people and increase the involvement of youth in development activities. He also mentioned that the initial investment for founding GUK was only 26,000 BDT which was made available to provide non-formal primary education for underprivileged students. The journey of this school started with only 30 students and one teacher.



GUK has come a long way and has made tremendous progress compared to where it started. Currently, the organization has 500 offices in 56 separate districts of Bangladesh with a head office situated in Bogra. Around 5,000 employees work for the organization at both the field and corporate levels to fulfill its targeted development goals. Mr. Hossain also proudly mentioned that the current yearly budget of his organization is nearly 400 crores which is primarily spent towards the

development of different sectors like education, agriculture, health, water resources, microcredit, etc. GUK has managed to ensure primary health services and inexpensive eye treatments for the rural people around the country. The organization has also been providing costless training opportunities for practical skill development of unemployed rural people to increase their employability. It also promotes, encourages and facilitates self-employment by motivating people towards entrepreneurship and offers them microcredit to start their own businesses. So far, the organization has facilitated nearly 1 lakh entrepreneurs and indirectly created employment opportunities for approximately 3 lakhs people through these small businesses. Other than these, GUK has also involvement in social development oriented research activities. The organization has vast experience in conducting action research through collecting and analyzing real-time data. Their research projects are mainly focused on social issues of rural Bangladesh.

Besides talking about the activities and future plans of GUK, Mr. Hossain shared his observations and thoughts about the contribution of the NGOs in the integrated development of Bangladesh. He mentioned that, statistically, about 11 to 12 percent of the total development of our country is directly influenced by the private or development sector. Moreover, around 60% of the total population has been brought under the services of NGOs and is being directly benefited from the actions of NGOs. Overall, the development sector has been playing a vital role in poverty alleviation of our country since liberation. Currently, NGOs are working hand-in-hand with the government in almost every area including education, health, banking, employment and entrepreneurship, human rights, women's empowerment, relief and disaster management, etc. Such projects and actions carried out by NGOs are positively impacting the growth of GDP of our country to a great extent. In fact, the improvement of the development sector of Bangladesh and its powerful impact on the entire economy has been established as an example for the developing countries of the world. The concept of microcredit and its impact on decentralization of funds and wealth has been highly applauded in the global context and is being implemented in many of the economies of the world.

At the end of the event, the attendees discussed the possible collaboration opportunities like joint research projects, internship programs, etc. between NSU and GUK. In this context, Mr. Alam, the Senior Director of GUK expressed his earnest interest in collaborative programs and highlighted the mutual benefits of working jointly. The guests invited the members of the OEA present in the meeting to visit their corporate office in order to get a clearer glimpse of their actions and research. They also mentioned their proposed head office being established in the Bashundhara Residential Area, Dhaka, the construction of which is in progress. They hope to shift their office to Dhaka within the next two years for better functionality and convenience.

The event ended with a remark from Dr. Li, Director, NSU OEA. In her speech, she proposed moving the conversation to the next level and initiating a collaboration through further follow-up meetings and discussion.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1352668488526320>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 67

The sixty-seventh episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on January 30, 2022. The episode showcased Ms. Taslima Jaigirder, an alumna of North South University from the Department of Business Administration, Batch 2003. She completed her undergraduate studies with a dual major in Human Resources Management and Marketing. As for her professional journey, she chose to develop her career in Human Resources Management. Ms. Jaigirder has the experience of working in HR Departments in different roles at renowned national and multinational organizations like GrameenPhone, Unilever, Philip Morris International, etc. Recently, she has joined Coca-Cola and is currently working as their Cluster Head of Talent & Development.

As Ms. Jaigirder's academic background and professional expertise both are in human resources management, she discussed her role as an HR specialist and shared her insights about the recent HR trends in Bangladesh throughout the event. While describing her current responsibilities at Coca-Cola, she mentioned a few crucial activities like creating platforms for talent management, grooming of recruits, etc. As Ms. Jaigirder is closely associated with recruitment and talent management, she shared some interesting insights and suggestions about the preferred qualities and interview skills of applicants that may secure them an edge during recruitment and also increase their chances to be recruited easily. She emphasized doing research and homework about the company as well as job description of the position that is being applied for before attending any interview. As an expert interviewer, she admitted the existence of unconscious bias of the first impression; hence, she stressed carrying a positive attitude and confidence during an interview. Alongside these, according to Ms. Jaigirder, the qualities that make a candidate competent are interest in learning, creativity, enthusiasm and motivation.

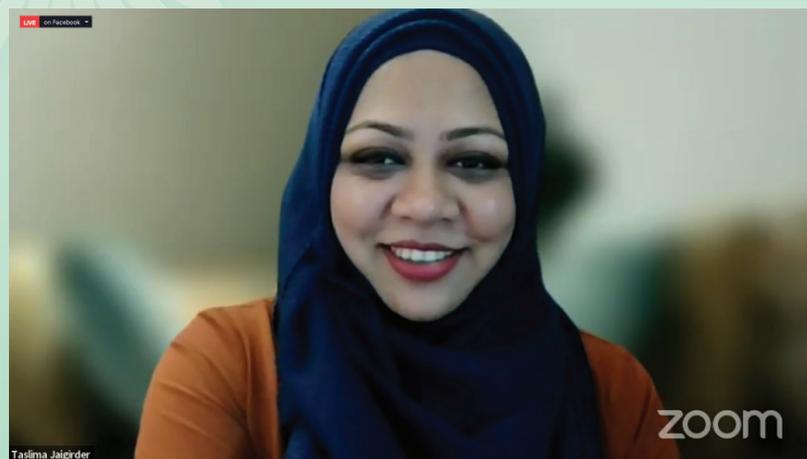
As the conversation furthered, the discussion turned towards the recent trends and practices in both global and local human resources management sector. Ms. Jaigirder informed the audience that the fundamental practices in multinationals in our country are world class. Throughout her career in the human resources management department, she has observed a strong difference and possible gap between tertiary curriculum and the practical industry of HRM. Moreover, she talked about the current status of female leadership in the industry. She mentioned that there is still backwardness and hesitation regarding female employment and leadership in HRM departments. Moreover, the sustainability rate of women in the sector is insufficient. Yet, considering past trends, there has been tremendous progress in corporate HRM over the past few years. She is hopeful that with integrated effort, balanced distribution of resources and proper understanding of equality can omit all the obstacles and establish healthy gender equality in the corporate sector.

In the last segment of the event, Ms. Jaigirder shared some memories from her student life at NSU. As the reason for choosing NSU for her undergraduate studies, she mentioned the quality and brand value of the institute. But once she started studying here, the cooperation of the seniors, classmates and faculties mesmerized her. She truly cherishes the bonding and memories that she has from NSU. Ms. Jaigirder also mentioned that she was involved with several extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Her most precious learning from her NSU life is to work efficiently under pressure. NSU has groomed her perfectly to fit and function in the corporate environment. The institution had a major influence in shaping her resilience, confidence, communication skills and curiosity of exploration.

To conclude, Ms. Jaigirder shared some suggestions for the current students and recent graduates of NSU based on her experience and observations. She encouraged them to try being their best selves, challenge and compete with themselves to upgrade in terms of knowledge, experience and skills constantly. She also emphasized practicing patience, building networks and acquiring analytic skills to achieve success in every area of life.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/4725569054165492>



Exchange & Study Abroad Programmes with O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU), India



O.P. Jindal Global University
A Private University Promoting Public Service

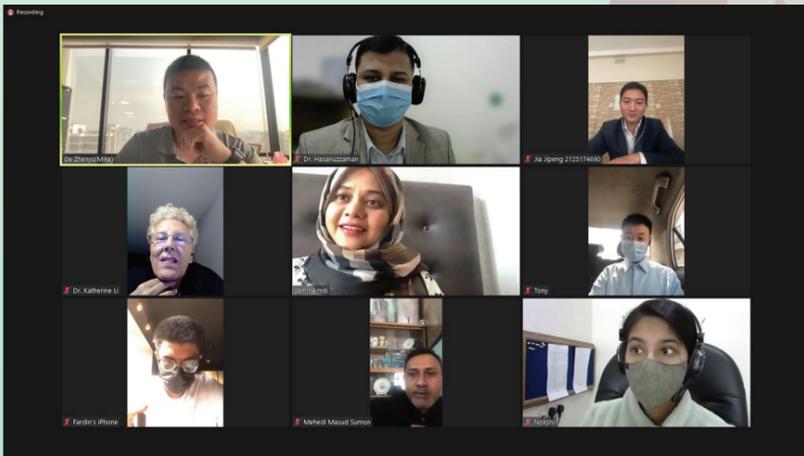
To further the existing relationship between NSU and GIM, a collaboration meeting was held on February 1, 2022 with colleagues from O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU), Office of International Affairs & Global Initiatives India to discuss Exchange & Study Abroad Programmes.

The student exchange implementation plans to begin with exchanging five students and push this number up later depending on how our exchange programmes run over the years.

Prof. Mohan Kumar, Dean, Office of International Affairs & Global Initiatives; Prof. AN Brijesh Nair, International Affairs & Global Initiatives; Kanak Mishra, Assistant Director, International Affairs & Global Initiatives; Akhil Bhardwaj, Joint Director – International Affairs & Global Initiatives. From NSU Prof. Abdur Rob Khan; Prof. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury; Prof. Hasan Mahmud Reza; Prof. Javed Bari; Dr. Katherine Li; Dr. Hasanuzzaman; Samina Alam Miti; and Tasnia Azmeri Madiha were present in the meeting.



International Students' Orientation Program – Spring 2022



The orientation program for international students of the semester Spring '22 was held on February 2, 2022. Due to the ongoing pandemic situation, the program could not be held on campus, rather it was held on Zoom with the organizers from North South University Office of External Affairs and international freshers of Spring 2022. The students from different countries like China, Canada, Somalia, USA, etc. attended the program. From the organizers' side, Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of Office of External Affairs; Mr. Hasanuzzaman, the Assistant Director; Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer, Mr. Fardin Yaman, the Alumni Affairs Officer, Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer were present in the program. Furthermore, the student employees of OEA, Nusrat Naila Nokshi and Md. Hafizuzzaman Tuhin also joined the event.

In the beginning of the event, the International Affairs Officer, Ms. Samina Alam Miti briefly introduced North South University and the Office of External Affairs of the university through an informative slide presentation. She talked about the foundation, mission, vision, activities and the two wings (Office of International Affairs & Office of Alumni Affairs) of the OEA. Afterwards, she provided the newcomers with the necessary information about OIA (Office of International Affairs) such as partner universities and organizations, international students and alumni, contact details both virtual and physical of the office.

The following segment of the event was the introduction session. The new students from different countries present in the ceremony introduced themselves one-by-one. Afterwards, the members of OEA present in the event introduced themselves as well and each of them conveyed short messages to the freshers. At the end of the event, Dr. Li conveyed her regards and presented a short ending remark welcoming the new students onboard.

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 68

The sixty-eighth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on February 6, 2022. For this episode, we had Mr. Iftekhar Ahmed (Rony), an alumnus of North South University from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Batch 1994. After completing his undergraduate studies from NSU, he moved to Australia for higher studies in 2001 and pursued postgraduate studies in Information Technology (IT). Afterwards, Mr. Ahmed settled in Australia and has built his career in the field of his expertise, Information Technology. He has been professionally associated with ANZ Bank, one of the most renowned banks of Australia, for more than 16 years and is currently working as the Lead Business Analyst and Agile Delivery Lead of the organization.

The event started with cordial appreciation from Mr. Ahmed for initiating a platform to reunite the alumni base under administrative authorization of NSU. Afterwards, the discussions



turned towards his professional journey in the IT sector so far. He informed us that he has devoted his professional attention to the technological field throughout his entire career. In fact, he has been working for the IT department of ANZ Bank for the last 17 years of his career. Although his workplace remained constant, his role and responsibilities have been greatly diversified throughout the journey. Mr. Ahmed started his professional journey with the bank in a technical support role, afterwards, was promoted to be a software engineer in 2006. According to him, he could explore an extended area of opportunities and gather extensive knowledge and experience by switching roles between different departments under IT. Currently, he is working on the implementation of a digital platform in about 23 countries around the world. This platform intends to achieve ultimate automation in every functional unit and service provision of the bank. Hence, Mr. Ahmed's role is to ensure the fulfillment of the requirements for establishing and operating their global digital platform.

The discussion reveals that ANZ Bank implements an agile policy for their functional units. As the lead of agile delivery, Mr. Ahmed shed light on the concept of agile delivery, fundamental differences between agile software development and traditional software development/waterfall projects and the implementation process of the concepts practically in ANZ Bank. He mentioned that at the time he joined the organization, most of its projects were running waterfall; hence, the operations were running comparatively less efficiently. On the other hand, the agile method is more effective and responsive; it is rather feedback and implementation oriented. The method promotes working closely with consumers, teamwork, fluent communication and empowered decision making.

Based upon Mr. Ahmed's experience of association with the Information Technology field, he shared some insights about the integration of IT with businesses. He emphasized the influence of information technology in the growth and competence of businesses of all kinds. He also discussed the implementation of technology in a wide range of sectors, like education, healthcare, communication, etc. As the IT industry is booming, he suggested the young IT professionals to keep up with the evolution of the industry. He mentioned that interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence are as important as the hard skills in the current technological industry. He stressed communication skills, empathy and teamwork as some of the crucial soft skills required to survive in the industry. As the conversation about information technology furthered, Mr. Ahmed discussed some of the challenges and contributions of IT during the COVID-19 pandemic. He explained the dynamics and situation referring to his personal experience of initial hardship to adjust to the new normal and quick adaptation of digitalization with time. According to him, such trends of intense implementation of information technology is cost effective, saves time and increases productivity.

In the latter part of the event, Mr. Ahmed shared some of his treasured memories and experiences from his student life at NSU with the audience. While deciding on an institute for his undergraduate studies, NSU caught his attention because of its academic structure, environment and culture. The alignment of the curriculum of NSU with North American university standards also amazed him. He also reminisced about his memories with his friends, batch mates, seniors and especially mentioned the unique and sincere teaching style of the faculties of NSU. He acknowledged the influence of NSU on his growth and evolution of both hard and soft skills.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/634584281095121>

What's Your Story? Episode 8



Conference in Brighton, UK and also at the ASCENT International Conference in Malaysia.

The eighth episode of 'What's Your Story?' was held on February 6, 2021 and for this episode we had Dr. Muhammad Moshfique Uddin as our guest. He has been teaching for a number of years now at both the undergraduate and postgraduate level at University of Leeds. Earlier, he taught at the University of York and Leeds Metropolitan University before joining the University of Leeds. He has also taught in Bangladesh and China. Dr. Uddin has been active in doing research in the area of Accounting and Finance. He has published a number of research papers in various internationally reputed journals. He also has published a book on Cross-border Mergers and Acquisitions. Dr. Uddin regularly presents his research at various international conferences. He won best paper award at BAM

Throughout the show, Dr. Uddin shared the inspiring story of his academic and professional journey along with practical insights based on his experiences and observations so far. Dr. Uddin informed the audience that he grew up in a family and surrounding where education was highly prioritized. In fact, from the beginning of his professional journey he has been associated with teaching and research. His undergraduate life at Dhaka University paved the way for his entering academia right after graduation. He mentioned that, alongside his family, both his professors and acquaintances influenced his career choice.

Like Dr. Uddin's career direction, his decision to pursue higher education abroad was also influenced by one of the senior professors of Dhaka University who was his colleague and advisor in the early days of his teaching career. Even after moving to and settling abroad, he didn't switch his career path because he found passion in teaching. According to him, continuous effort, determination and patience have impacted both his academic and professional journey till date. Thus, for the younger students and professionals, he advised them to find passion, set precise goals and put hard work towards acquiring the target. Moreover, he encouraged the youth to produce knowledge through research alongside implementing existing knowledge practically.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/337180494985751>

NGO Talk Show Episode 11



ব্রাইট বাংলাদেশ ফোরাম
Bright Bangladesh Forum

The eleventh episode of the 'NGO Talk Show' aired on February 9, 2022 with 'Bright Bangladesh Forum (BBF)'. The keynote speaker for this episode was Mr. Utpal Barua, Founder & Chief Executive, Bright Bangladesh Forum (BBF). From North South University Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs was present as a Special Guest, and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA hosted the live talk show.

The talk show started with an overview of Bright Bangladesh Forum (BBF) including its foundation, activities, focus areas and goals. The organization was founded in 2001. Mr. Barua, the founder of the organization had no prior experience of working professionally in the development sector; nevertheless, he was associated with several voluntary social development activities and projects since his student life. His interest in serving the development sector emerged from those voluntary activities, as a result of which, after entering professional life he decided to start his own development organization along with few of his acquaintances.

BBF is currently working in several sectors and is associated with a number of national and international NGOs operating in Bangladesh. The organization works in diverse dimensions with a huge workforce of dedicated employees. During the event, Mr. Barua informed the audience that the focus populations of BBF are children, adolescents, youth, women and people with disabilities. The organization is mainly working with a target of helping the integrated socio-economic development of our country. So far the areas that they have worked in are health, education, child labor reduction, women's empowerment, etc. The organization has worked with several community clinics in their operating areas to ensure cost convenient healthcare for deprived people. Moreover, it operates microcredit and women's entrepreneurship related projects to accelerate women's empowerment and purchase capacity of the rural people. The organization also provides legal support to the underprivileged population upon necessity.

BBF basically conducts their development operations based on foreign grants. They have already run some funded research projects regarding different socio-economic issues and are interested in conducting more such projects with funding. The organization basically focuses on action research as the method is highly appropriate for working with first-hand data. As the organization has interest in research activities, Mr. Barua mentioned that they would like to collaborate with NSU regarding joint research projects. He assured the attendees to cooperate existing and future primary data collection. He also encouraged the participation of students in field research regarding the aforementioned projects.

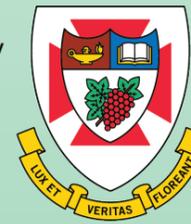
To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1814109872113836>



NSU Signs an MoU with University of Winnipeg, Canada

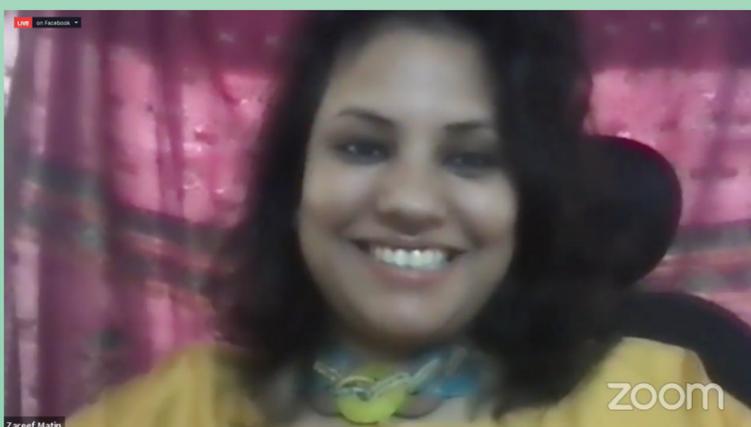
North South University signed an MoU with the University of Winnipeg, Canada on February 14, 2022. According to the MoU, the area of cooperation will include any program offered at either institute as deemed desirable and feasible on either side. The aforementioned collaboration may include student and faculty exchange, academic material, information and resource sharing, joint research and publication, seminar arrangements, etc. The MoU will remain effective for five years from the date of the last signature and may be terminated by appropriate authorities of either party giving twelve months' notice to the other party in writing, unless an earlier termination date is mutually agreed upon.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

The MoU was signed by Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU, Professor M. Ismail Hossain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, NSU, Dr. James Currie, Interim President and Vice-Chancellor, University of Winnipeg and Dr. Jan Stewart, Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic, University of Winnipeg.

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 69



The sixty-seventh episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on February 14, 2022. The episode showcased Ms. Zareef Tamanna Matin, an alumna of North South University from the Department of Environmental Science, Batch 2000. She completed her undergraduate studies in 2005 and pursued her postgraduate studies at East West University. Ms. Matin started her professional journey with a USA-based project working on forest conservation. Later on, she was associated with the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants/CIMA Global, Centauri Limited Education Service for a long portion of her career before the companies wrapped up their operations in Bangladesh. Currently, she is working as the Chief Operating Officer at ZTM Training & Consultancy.

The event started with a detailed and informative discussion about the professional journey and

and experience of Ms. Matin. Although her academic expertise and initial job experience are in the field of environmental science, she didn't limit her career and working area to that sector only, rather she explored diverse sectors for her career development. As mentioned before, the guest is currently associated with training and teaching operations at the organizational level. As she worked very closely with CIMA Global, she holds a clear idea about the structure and requirements of the program. Therefore, when the organization shut down their operations in Bangladesh, Ms. Matin along with her partner, decided to start a new venture named SSPA to provide training for CIMA and other professional degrees. Unfortunately, the organization is not operating actively at the moment because of the pandemic situation, but Ms. Matin has plans to shift it to an online platform in the near future.

The discussion about Ms. Matin's career pathway led to her current role and activities in ZTM. She informed the audience that the core project of the institute is to provide corporate and certification trainings in different skills. The training programs and courses arranged by ZTM are mainly for practical skills and communication expertise.

As Ms. Matin has been associated with professional skills development training programs for a while, she has noticed a tendency of hiring foreign professionals in the higher managerial levels of corporations in our country. During the event, she mentioned some of the limitations of local professionals and suggested some skill development strategies to overcome the obstacles. In this regard, she highly encouraged acquiring skill-oriented certifications along with proper training. She also mentioned that the young professionals have been acknowledging this issue in recent times and have thus taken initiatives in this regard. Hence, the trend has changed and now large corporations are preferring local professionals for their top management over foreign ones.

In the latter segment of the event, Ms. Matin reminisced about the golden days of her undergraduate student life at NSU. She said that her department was a very small and cozy one, hence the bonding among the students of every batch was strong. Both the faculties and students of the department were friendly, cooperative and caring. She especially mentioned the intense guidance and support of their faculties in every aspect during her undergraduate life. Alongside departmental bonding, Ms. Matin had great attachment to the extracurricular clubs as well. From her experience of clubbing, she gained a great number of genuine friendships, understanding and networks as well as grew an interest in eco-tourism and traveling. Through her active appearance in extracurricular activities, she also had the opportunity to represent Bangladesh and NSU at the International Young Students' Project during her NSU life.

As a senior alumna of NSU, Ms. Matin shared some suggestions based on the experiences and observations. She emphasized the importance of any extra professional degree/certification alongside graduation and stressed developing interpersonal skills, gathering experience and setting long-term targets. She also highly encouraged carrying confidence, a positive attitude, curiosity and enthusiasm to succeed in both personal and professional life.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/331960615531665>

Information Session on "Higher Studies in Australia" with Macquarie University, Australia



MACQUARIE
University
SYDNEY · AUSTRALIA

North South University's Office of External Affairs hosted a virtual information session with Macquarie University, Australia on February 15, 2022. As the guests of the session, we had Mr. Tanveer Shaheed, Associate Director, International at Macquarie University and Mr. Alkayet Hossain, Country Manager (South Asia and Middle East), Macquarie University, Australia with us. From North

South University, Dr. Kathrine Li, Director, OEA and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, OEA were present during the event. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and streamed via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.

The session was mainly focused on the higher studies opportunities in Australia as well as at Macquarie University. The event started with a brief introduction of the guests followed by an overview of Macquarie University from the host Ms. Alam. Afterwards, the floor was passed to Mr. Shaheed, who delivered an informative presentation about higher studies in Australia. During the presentation, he mentioned that Australia is a very culturally diverse and cosmopolitan country; it has recently been ranked third in the world for attracting international students. Currently, around 570,000 international students are studying with student visas in different renowned universities of Australia. Most of the universities of the country are highly ranked according to the world rankings; statistically, 60% of the Australian universities are ranked among the top 500 universities around the world. Most of these renowned universities offer several special scholarship schemes for international students. Moreover, the government of Australia ensures favorable policies for the international citizens living there. In fact, the rights of international students are legally protected under the ESOS Act which has been passed in the Australian parliament recently. Being one of the global economic hubs, the country avails ample well paid employment opportunities – both part-time and fulltime for the students as well as the graduates.

During the presentation, Mr. Shaheed also briefly discussed the foundation, location, higher studies' and research opportunities, facilities, etc. at Macquarie University, Australia. The university is a public university which was established in 1964. The institute is well known not only in Australia but also around the world for its excellence in interdisciplinary teaching and research activities. It is one of the best 200 universities of the world and is ranked among the top 1% educational institutions worldwide. Furthermore, three programs of the university have been ranked among the top 50 subject areas according to the QS subject ranking. The university maintains a practical approach to learning a result of which it prepares highly skilled graduates and has a high employability rate of these graduates. Macquarie University offers different scholarship opportunities for their international students. Because of having close collaboration with NSU, the university is offering 25% scholarships on tuition fees for the NSUers studying at Macquarie.

In the latter part of the session, Mr. Shaheed provided the audience with some necessary information including the deadlines, requirements and procedures for the admission application. He also presented an overview of the expenses and cost structure for studying in different programs in Australia. The event ended with a short speech by Mr. Hossain, who is an alumnus of both NSU and Macquarie University. He shared his experience of studying as well as working with Macquarie University.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/494173028735826>



Collaboration Meeting with Payap University, Thailand

A collaboration meeting was held on February 17, 2022 with Dr. Tony Waters, Director of the Institute of Religion, Culture, and Peace and also a Lecturer in Peace Studies at Payap University, Thailand and Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA for the purpose of exploring the possibility of creating an MoU with the Center for Peace Studies (CPS) at NSU that would include joint supervision of PhD students in Peace Studies.



Second Follow-up Meeting with Local Environment Development and Agricultural Research Society (LEDARS)



The second follow-up meeting between Local Environment Development and Agricultural Research Society (LEDARS) and the Office External Affairs (OEA) of North South University (NSU) held on February 17, 2022. The meeting was attended by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, External Affairs (OEA), NSU, Mr. Mohon Kumar Mondal, Founder & Executive Director, LEDARS, Dr. Saiful Momen Assistant Professor & Chairman, Dept. of Environmental Science and Management (DESM), NSU, Dr. Mohammad Moshir Rahman, Assistant Professor and Former Chairman, Dept. of Environmental Science and Management (DESM), NSU and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, External Affairs (OEA), NSU.

The focus of the meeting was to discuss the current working sectors of LEDARS and to explore possible collaboration opportunities between NSU and LEDARS regarding joint research, publication, research funding, student internships, and training opportunities following the recent NGO Talk Show that aired on January 20, 2022. As a non-profit organization, LEDARS works for the social, economic and environmental development of poor and marginalized people of rural Bangladesh; and, as NSU has been looking forward to opportunities that can impact the development and social corrections of the civil society through connectivity and collective effort, some of the goals of these two institutions turned out to be closely corresponding. The discussion revealed that the interests of both faculties and students of the Dept. of Environmental Science and Management (DESM) of NSU correspond to the operations and activities of LEDARS. Thus, the attendees of the meeting agreed to start an academic collaboration through an MoU for the greater interest of Dept. of Environmental Science and Management (DESM) as well as of NSU. These will help both the institutes for successful research collaboration, joint publication, research projects, submitting joint research proposals for external funding as well as training and internship opportunities for the students of NSU.



NSU Signs an MoU with KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden

An MoU was signed between the KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden and North South University on February 22, 2022. The MoU includes agreements about joint curricular activities in education and teaching like summer school programs, diploma programs and joint extracurricular activities in academic and scientific fields such as certificate courses, conferences and symposia. It also mentions collaborative research programs, joint academic and scientific publications, exchange of researchers and faculties, exchange of academic publications and scholarly documents, etc.

The MoU was signed by Prof. Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU and Prof. Stefan Ostlund, Vice President for Global Relations, KTH Royal Institute of Technology.



Information Session with University of Adelaide, Australia



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

North South University's Office of External Affairs hosted a virtual information session with University of Adelaide, Australia on February 22, 2022. The attendees of the meeting included Mr. Daniel Tackage, Business Development Manager, International Business Development, Mr. Nischint Vora, Regional Manager (South Asia, Africa & Middle East) from the University of Adelaide, Australia and Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer, OEA and Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs from North South University. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and streamed via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.

The event started with a brief introduction of the guests followed by an informative slide presentation by Mr. Vora about the University of Adelaide. Through

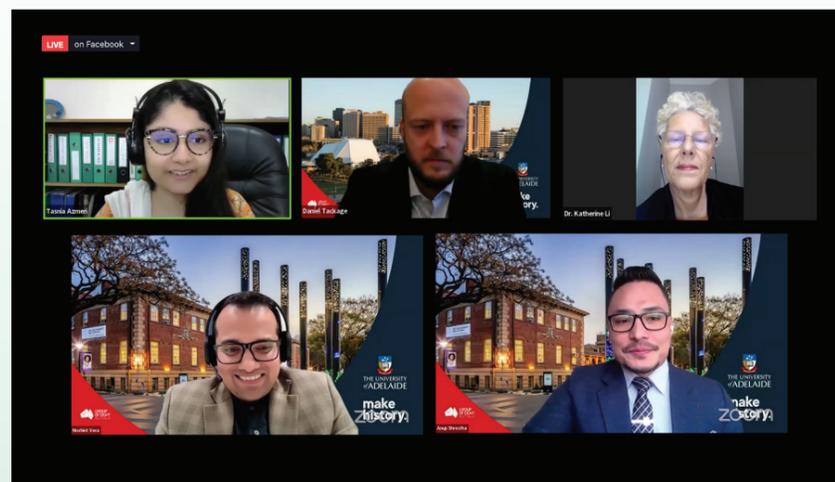
the informative presentation, he presented an overview of the university including its foundation, location, academic structure and facilities. He informed the audience that the University of Adelaide is the third oldest university in Australia; it was founded in 1874. The university has three campuses all of which are located in Adelaide, South Australia, the most livable city in Australia and the third most livable in the world. The city is affordable, safe, clean and diffusely populated. It also has a very comfortable climate and weather and is culturally diverse and vibrant. Furthermore, the cosmopolitan place has a high employment rate and great career opportunities because of the existence of every possible mature industry.

Alongside being one of the oldest universities, University of Adelaide is one of the highest ranked universities in Australia, in fact in the world as well. The university is a member of the 'Group of Eight' and has constantly ranked among the top 1% of universities of the world over the years. It offers a variety of programs and subject areas both for undergraduate and graduate students. Among the offered programs, 16 subject areas are ranked in the top 100 globally, six of which are placed among the top 50 in the world. The University of Adelaide is a research intensive institute that promotes and emphasizes practical learning and includes industry visits in most of their academic programs. During his presentation, Mr. Vora also proudly mentioned that the university is the first to admit women in academic courses.

The University of Adelaide currently has a student pool of nearly 23,000 students among which about 33% are international students. The university avails a number of support facilities especially for international students which includes accommodation, counseling, career support – career workshops for skill development, etc. International students also enjoy a post-study work visa of three years after graduation from the university. Mr. Vora's presentation also informed the audience about the accreditations, postgraduate offers, credit transfer agreements and procedures, scholarship opportunities that the University of Adelaide offers to NSUers. He ended his talk by describing the requirements and process of applying to the different programs and courses offered by the university.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1355984411497643>



Second Follow-up Meeting with Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK)

The second follow-up meeting between Gram Unnayan Karma (GUK) and the Office External Affairs (OEA) of North South University (NSU) held on February 24, 2022. The meeting was attended by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, External Affairs (OEA), NSU, Dr. Khandaker Alamgir Hossain, Founder & Executive Director, GUK, Dr. Md. Mahbub Alam, Senior Director, GUK, Mr. Raihanus Saadat, Director, ICT & Digitalization, GUK, Dr. Asad Karim Khan Priyo, Assistant Professor & Chairman, Dept. of Economics, NSU and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, External Affairs (OEA), NSU.



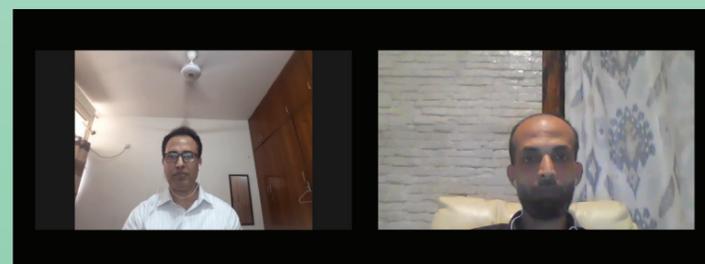
The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss the present work of the GUK for the development of Bangladesh and to explore the possible collaboration opportunities between NSU and GUK in terms of joint research, publication, research funding, student internships, and training opportunities following the recent NGO Talk Show hosted by the OEA on January 25, 2022. During the meeting, the attendees from GUK specified some common areas for joint ventures such as health, education, etc. and proposed several projects related to these areas. Based on these proposals, the attendees from NSU suggested some possible collaboration opportunities between NSU and GUK relating to the curriculum and academic structure of the relevant departments. After a detailed discussion, all the meeting participants agreed to arrange another meeting for further discussion which may help the two research groups to establish a partnership regarding research collaboration, joint publication,

research projects, joint research proposals submission for external funding as well as training and internship opportunities for the students of NSU through an MoU.

Collaboration Meeting with University of the South Pacific, Fiji



A collaboration meeting was held with Dr. Kabir Mamun, Senior Lecturer, School of Engineering & Physics, University of the South Pacific, Fiji and Prof. Mamun Molla, Research Coordinator, SEPS to find possible projects after having signed an MoU on 19 January 2022. Dr. Katherine Li and Tasnia Azmeri Madiha were also present in the meeting representing the OEA.



NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 70



The seventieth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on February 24, 2022. The episode showcased Mr. Samuel Mursalin, an alumnus of North South University from the Department of Business Administration, batch 2012. He completed his undergraduate studies in 2015 and acquired his postgraduate degree specializing in Marketing from Johns Hopkins University, USA. In his professional life, he has been associated with academia since the very beginning. Currently, Mr. Mursalin is working as a lecturer of the Department of Management at North South University. Alongside teaching, he is also closely involved with NSU Startups Next, the entrepreneurial incubation platform of NSU. Moreover, he has a venture of his own named 'Bolstar Career'.

Throughout the event, Mr. Mursalin shared the events, experiences and insights from both his student life and professional journey. He informed us that, neither his preference of topic for higher studies nor career path was ever preplanned or rigid. Therefore, his decision to join academia and start his career as a teacher was not predetermined, rather it was somewhat experimental and greatly influenced by the suggestions of his elders, especially his teachers. However, after joining academia Mr. Mursalin found his passion for it and has been enjoying this profession to the fullest so far. He is involved with NSU not only as a faculty member but also as one of the coordinators of NSU Startups Next. During the show, he discussed the activities, events and goals of this entrepreneurial incubation platform as well. He also mentioned that the platform enables first-hand grooming and guidance for the NSUers and NSU alumni who are already or who aspire to be entrepreneurs. According to him, despite having limited reach and structural limitations, the initiative has already achieved some notable success regarding its goals and expects further remarkable growth in the near future.

As Mr. Mursalin has adequate experience of working closely with young entrepreneurs, he shared some suggestions with the audience for successful entrepreneurship. First of all, he stressed acquiring sufficient knowledge and firsthand experience about the targeted market and industry. The second thing he emphasized was an executable and sustainable business model or plan. The final suggestion, and one of the most important aspects of successful entrepreneurship is a stable founding team with not necessarily similar but complementary skillsets.

As he is something of an entrepreneur himself, Mr. Mursalin briefly discussed his foundation 'Bolstar Career' during the event. According to him, the conventional recruitment process of Bangladesh is outdated and complicated. His organization intends to simplify the crucial operations of recruitment processes like CV screening, shortlisting candidates based on specialization and qualities, interviewing, etc. by implementing an improvised and systematic approach as oppose to the role specific assessment approach for interviewing applicants. The guest mentioned that so far the institute has received a great response and is progressing towards achieving greater goals steadily.

At the end of the event, Mr. Mursalin shared some memories and experiences from his student life at NSU. He mentioned that his student life was mainly very academics focused. Alongside studying, he was involved in several part-time jobs from where he acquired ample experience and practical knowledge about the actual industry and its functionality. These real time experiences helped him to link academic theories to actual operations which increased his practical understanding to a great extent. He especially mentioned the influences of the faculties of NSU on his academic and professional journey. As an alumnus of NSU, he shared some valuable suggestions for the current students and recent graduates of NSU. He encouraged them to seek guidance from the elders wherever available, be they faculties or alumni. He also emphasized gathering some professional experiences alongside studies for better understanding.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/489026606223212>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 71

The seventy-first episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on February 27, 2022. For this episode, we had Mr. Sabih Ahmed, an alumnus of North South University from the Department of Business Administration, Batch 2003. He completed his undergraduate studies in 2005. In his professional life, Mr. Ahmed has worked with a number of renowned organizations including Ogilvy, Robi Axiata, Rogers Communication, Definitely Financials, etc. He has experience with not only diverse organizations but also with diverse roles and departments. Currently, he is working as the Director of Digital Product Management at Scotiabank Canada.

The event started with a conversation about the journey and experiences of the professional life of Mr. Ahmed. Initially, he started his career as a marketer, but eventually switched to product development and technological upgradation. As a reason for such a shift in his career path, he mentioned that his interest in brand management influenced him to start his professional journey in the respective field. Nevertheless, later on he found a passion in digital marketing, thus switched to relevant fields of work and continued career development in that area. Furthermore, as Mr. Ahmed has experience working in the corporate sector of both Bangladesh and Canada closely, he drew a comparison regarding his workplace experience between these two



different work cultures during the show. He mentioned that the Canadian work culture does not necessarily require affirmation all the time; rather, it often appreciates correction if the proposal or task is beyond the employee's capacity. They are more focused on quality and prioritizes it over quantity. Moreover, Canadian corporate culture highly emphasizes accountability and commitment of the employees to ensure the best outcome.

Alongside his career, Mr. Ahmed also shared the current roles and responsibilities of his current position at Scotiabank. He described that his prime responsibility there is to develop and market banking products such as digital support experiences, virtual branch operations, online collaborations, etc. In this context, he emphasized integration of business and technology to cope with the modern business and corporate trends acknowledging the intense digitalization that has happened in every sector across the entire world during the COVID-19 pandemic. As to the merits of such digitalization, the industries and corporations have achieved more transparency, cost and time effectiveness.

In the latter part of the event, Mr. Ahmed reminisced about some of his fond and cherished memories from his NSU student life. The reason he mentioned behind choosing NSU for his undergraduate studies is the international caliber of highly qualified faculty pool of the university. He believes he had the good fortune to pursue his education with a gifted batch, as most of his batch mates are doing excellently in their professional lives currently. The guest also shared his experiences and memories about friends, acquaintances and faculties. He especially appreciated the teaching method of the faculties and acknowledged their impact on his further professional journey. Mr. Ahmed was closely involved in extracurricular activities during his undergrad life. He was an active member of AIESEC where he developed youth leadership and corporate engagement skills to a great extent. Overall, the wider exposure and connection that NSU availed him during his early student life was incomparable.

To know more about the event, visit
<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1115451882642467>

Alumni Feature



1. Jabeen Mozammel a Bangladeshi-born Canadian, is currently embracing the best that life has to offer even during these difficult and unprecedented times. My favorite quote: "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful" ~ Albert Schweitzer ~ I have an interesting combination of qualifications and experiences.

Enumerated below is a synopsis of my background:

- I was a student of St. Francis Xavier's Green Herald, Grade 1-GCSE O'Levels - Completed GCSE A Level Exam from ISS International School of Singapore - Completed BBA from the North-South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh - Completed M.Ed and B.Ed from the University of Toronto, Canada - Started working as a teacher for the Provincial Government of Canada at the Toronto District School Board from 2007-present- Taught overseas in International Schools in Bahrain and Shanghai, China

Currently, a part-time faculty (Lecturer and Program Coordinator of the English Department), University of Bahrain. I got married to Dr. Soleman Mozammel while I was a third-year student at NSU. My life has been blessed with an amazing and only daughter who is now studying LL.M in the United Kingdom. I believe in gender equality and empowerment. I wanted to be more than a wife, mom, daughter, and sibling; I wanted to contribute to the greater global community. The knowledge and education acquired in the Business School at NSU piqued my curiosity to apply the learning in the real-world context. Hence, the global adventures began. . . .!

Trip down the Academic Memory Lane: Time decides the path we choose to take. I shall epitomize my happiness and contentment in threefold- academics, skill-driven interest, and social aspects. Coming from a noble and loving family, I was taught to value the reciprocity of love. This love is a variable of time that takes different forms and shapes based on time. Love symbolizes the zest for academics, career, and/or intrinsic happiness. After completing my high school from ISS International of Singapore, I returned to Bangladesh to pursue a Bachelor of Business Administration at North South University in January 1993. This was an exciting beginning to a new chapter of my life- undergraduate studies in the first private university in Bangladesh. Social life at NSU rocked. Learning was made easy due to the team spirit where the ultimate goal was to support each other to bring out the best from within us. Friends like Simily, Nahid, Samia, Shehrin, Niva, Shumi, Zarmin, Zeenat, Marina, Prema, Kanta, Vani, Farhana Sadek, Kashfi, Hasib, Nayon, Mamun, Udoy, Faham, Deedar, Dip, Kamal, Rounak, Biplob, Rusho, Kamal, Tomal, Tim Babu, Sarkar Kabir, Shuvo, Tokon, Pinu, Titu, Joy are few names that I remember with a smile as they have impacted my life. I capitalize on the beautiful memories NSU carved keep in my heart never to be withered.

Interviewer: What motivated you to choose North South University to pursue your Bachelor's degree?

Jabeen Mozammel: The initial plan was to study abroad in the United States. In 1992, only two private universities launched undergraduate programs, North South University (NSU) and Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB), that provided opportunities of pursuing a foreign degree locally from Dhaka, Bangladesh. My choice was limited. I chose NSU as the session started in January, 1993 and it was affiliated with Illinois State University. The goal was to complete two years at NSU and then apply for credit transfer to the United States. The structural framework of the learning environment at NSU was solid which is why I decided to stay back in Bangladesh and complete the four years of my Bachelors of Business Administration degree.

Interviewer: You mentioned that you are a believer in gender equality. What are a few ways that you think can help achieve that in today's professional workplaces?

Jabeen Mozammel: No country in the world has yet achieved full gender equality. Global statistics in 2020 show that less than half (46.9%) of all women participated

in the labor force as opposed to 74.0% men. Gaps exist. Women continue to be accosted by disproportionate barriers which is worse in patriarchal societies. COVID-19 has worsened the inequalities. I cannot change the world, but I can certainly take a step forward in the educational setting, my workplace. In the university student admissions, we need to actively promote gender balance and also reserve a certain criterion for exceptional and underprivileged students - male or female. Other pertinent factors could be equity in gender employability and balance in work life.

Interviewer: Who inspires you the most in your life? What is your life's motto?

Jabeen Mozammel: I believe inspiration is a transitional word that equips one with skills, attributes, and desires. In my lifetime, I was inspired by a number of people- my Grandma (Dadi), my parents, and my husband. My Dadi and my parents helped me aspire. They are like the protoplasm - building blocks of who I am today. I would also like to talk about my husband, Dr. Soleman Mozammel, a former Professor of Independent University of Bangladesh. He motivated and inspired me to grow academically and professionally. We believe that our life is composed of projects, we complete one only to hope to succeed in the next. And this HOPE epitomizes my HAPPINESS!.

Interviewer: How did North South University help to shape the person that you are today?

Jabeen Mozammel: I was one of the 69 students in the first batch of classes. The classes comprised of rooms on the two top floors of a seven-storied building in Banani, Dhaka. This floor space may sound small but the mindset and stride of NSU students and faculty members were phenomenal. We were like "One Big Happy Family". The rich classroom discussions, theoretical knowledge, and interactions with intellectual Professors were galvanizing. I am particularly indebted to Professors, Dr. Habibur Rahman, Sir Muslehuddin Ahmad (first Vice-Chancellor), Sir Hafiz G. A. Siddiqi, Kazi Sir. They have motivated and supported me academically and in extracurricular activities.

Alongside learning in the classrooms, my drive to continue with skill-driven passion worked dichotomously. I enjoyed visual arts-painting. NSU was a platform that nourished the interest. Joy Kumar Roy, Pinu, and Titu shared similar interests; hence, in 1994 we orchestrated and anchored the first Art Exhibition with the support of our beloved professors and administrators. A number of us volunteered during the 1993 SAF Games and I was one of the Bangladeshi Flag Carriers. I was also assigned as a Liaison Officer to the Minister of Sri Lanka. The pictures below depict those moments. Extra-curricular activities embedded soft skills that also worked as a catalyst in our learning. Soft skills acquired during our NSU Uni Days such as public speaking skills, confidence, and problem-solving attitude, proved to be assets in my present professional career.

Interviewer: What are suggestions for the current NSUers and the fresh graduates?

Jabeen Mozammel: Time decides the path we choose to take. Proactively take the right decisions at the right time with guidance from people who add value to your life. You don't want it to be a missed opportunity.

International Student Feature

My name is *Dr. Nikita Koirala*. I am from Nepal and I am currently a student of MPH in the Department of Public Health, North South University. I enrolled in this program for the Summer 2020 session and this is my sixth and the last semester. Beforehand, I had completed my MBBS from Bangladesh itself. So, I have already spent eight long years in Bangladesh. After spending so many years of my life here, now I feel like I am also a part of this beautiful country. During my stay in Bangladesh I went through so many ups and downs, especially in the beginning days, it was really difficult to adjust; but the continuous support of my friends helped me settle down to the point now where the locals deny to believe that I am a foreigner here. In a nutshell, my stay in Bangladesh has always been a good one and I would like to thank each one of them who made it possible for me.

Interviewer: What inspired you to choose North South University for your MPH degree among all other universities in Bangladesh?

Dr. Nikita Koirala: Well, the MPH has always been a degree that I wanted to do since I joined my MBBS. However, throughout all the years of my medical life, I was trying to figure out the best option for that. During my internship, I got to know that one of my friends back in Nepal had started doing an MPH at NSU. That is when I searched for NSU and loved everything



about it. After that, I didn't think about any other options and joined MPH at NSU soon after completing my internship. So, basically, rather than using the word inspiration, I would say I was impressed by everything about NSU. That is why I chose it.

Interviewer: From your bio, we know that you have completed an MBBS from Bangladesh. What factors motivated you to study medical science?

Dr. Nikita Koirala: Being a doctor was my dream since my childhood. However, it would not have been possible without the continuous support of my parents. Preparing for medical entrance was one of the toughest phases of my life as far as I can recall. There were times when I felt like giving up, but my parents were always there to remind me that it was my only dream and they motivated me to get through it. So, I would say, it was self-desire and motivation as well as my parents' support to fulfil my dream that finally made me able to study medicine and here I am a medical doctor already.

Interviewer: What are your future plans for your career once you complete postgraduate studies?

Dr. Nikita Koirala: I would love to work as a researcher after completing my MPH. At the same time, being a medical doctor I would not like to leave the clinical side. So, I have a plan to complete my postgraduate degree in a clinical subject as well as keeping it parallel with the research side so that I can balance both.

Interviewer: What is your opinion about the academic structure, education quality and campus culture of North South University?

Dr. Nikita Koirala: I started my MPH online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and it's still ongoing online in my final semester, so I could not experience much of the campus culture of North South University so far. However, I got a chance to participate in various programs on several occasions virtually even during the pandemic which I really liked and appreciated a lot.

Talking about the academic structure and education quality of NSU is the best in these and I guess no one can deny that. In my opinion, the excellent faculty that NSU provides to its students is the reason that it is getting even better in its education quality day-by-day.

Interviewer: What do you think about the virtual academic continuation of NSU to cope with the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic? Please share your experience of online and hybrid classes with us.

Dr. Nikita Koirala: As I mentioned before, my whole MPH degree has been conducted online. It has really helped me to complete my degree despite the fact that the world was facing a lot of problems during the pandemic. Online classes undoubtedly helped me to utilize most of my time and I could also finish my postgraduate degree without any delay. But at the same time, I personally believe that offline classes would have been much better in terms of understanding the course in-depth, relationship building with teachers and classmates as well as overall performance.

Interviewer: You have been staying in Bangladesh for a long time now. Kindly share about your experience of staying here. How do you like the people, language and culture of Bangladesh?

Dr. Nikita Koirala: Bangladesh has people with golden hearts. They definitely know how to welcome their guests and keep them loved. The language is so unique and powerful that anyone would love to learn it. I personally didn't struggle that much learning Bengali, because I was so very interested in it. Talking about the culture of Bangladesh, the diversified culture is one of the best parts of the country. I love to celebrate festivals like Pohela Baisakh, Pohela Falgun, Sakrain and so on. Although these special days are also celebrated back in Nepal, the way of celebrating it in Bangladesh, I must say is so vibrant and colorful which I absolutely love.

Interviewer: Anything you want to share with or suggest to the future applicants of NSU?

Dr. Nikita Koirala: To all the future applicants, all that I would like to say is Bangladesh is a country of beautiful people and NSU is even more beautiful whether it be academics or campus culture. NSU, located in the heart of Dhaka city in Bangladesh, is undoubtedly one of the best universities for foreign students like me.



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