



**Office
of External
Affairs**

THE BRIDGE

The Official Newsletter of the Office Of External Affairs

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Editor's Message

Welcome back to the 15th edition of the newsletter of the Office of External Affairs - The Bridge. COVID-19 did not slow us down at all, as you will see in this issue. The OEA has been busier than ever after having moved to the online platform. We've been hosting two programs per week: the newly launched Alumni Talk Show series and information sessions with our partners. Perhaps this is the silver lining of the pandemic. Now, the videos are available on the official OEA Facebook page for later and repeat viewing. We hope you find the sessions informative and useful. NSU also managed to finalize 15 more MOUs during the last four months (July - October, 2020). Thanks to everyone who actively participated in all of the OEA activities during the past few months. The International Faculty, Student and Alumni Features are particularly delightful.

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EducationUSA Conducts a Web Information Session for NSUers

EducationUSA initiated a web information session for the students of NSU with cooperation from North South University Office of External Affairs on August 6, 2020. Mr. Razoun Siddiky Tohin, the Team Leader of EducationUSA at EMK Center conducted the session discussing higher studies opportunities in the USA. The event was conducted via Google Meet. Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer of the Office of External Affairs was the host of the event. The meeting was linked to the official Facebook page of NSU Office of External Affairs through Facebook Live to make it easily available for NSUers.



The focus of the web information session was to inform students about application requirements and criteria for US universities, advice about techniques of shortlisting universities and suggested strategies for securing funding or scholarships. Mr. Razoun informed the participants that the number of international students going to universities in the USA from Bangladesh is comparatively low and the probable reason is deficiency of accurate information about the application and enrollment processes for universities in the USA. EducationUSA is working to provide students with exact and comprehensive guidance about admission procedures in renowned universities of the USA. The first thing that Mr. Razoun mentioned to be important for the students wishing to pursue higher education in the USA is selection of a university matching their interests, majors and career goals. The next thing to consider after selecting a university is researching detailed information about the application procedures and requirements of the selected university thoroughly. Mr. Razoun emphasized being informed and updated about the application deadlines of any targeted university and to keep pace with it. Another thing he mentioned to be important is proceeding with a solid application and presented some guidelines for establishing a noteworthy application. Consistency in previous education history, a satisfactory score in language proficiency tests, recommendations and testimonials, participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, working experiences – proper and organized presentation of such documents is needed to bring attention to forming a perceptible application.

Mr. Razoun assured the audience that for further information about applying or finding funding, students are always welcome to contact EducationUSA. Interested students can contact the organization directly through both online and offline courses, or they can contact NSU Office of External Affairs for assistance and information about reaching EducationUSA. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/307354000482716>

Office of Alumni Affairs Launches Pilot Episode of 'NSU Alumni Talk Show'

The Office of External Affairs of North South University has recently launched a new event titled 'NSU Alumni Talk Show'. This is a weekly web-based talk show program arranged and managed by the NSU Office of Alumni Affairs which aims to reconnect the alumni from previous batches of NSU with current administration and students and thus broaden the alumni network. The talk show is conducted using Zoom and is made available for everyone via Facebook live from the NSU-OEA official Facebook page.

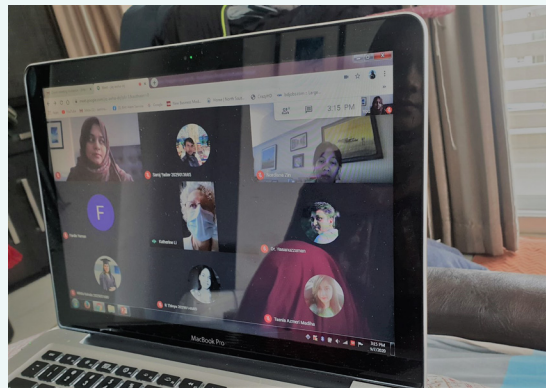
The very first episode of the 'NSU Alumni Talk Show' was successfully broadcast on September 6, 2020 at 11am (BDT) with Nahid Kamal, President, Aussie NSUers Association and Md. Wasimul Islam, Secretary, External Affairs, Aussie NSUers Association as guests. Both of the guests are former students from the CSC Department, undergraduate Batch '99 of NSU and are currently working in Australia. The episode was hosted by Mr. Fardin Yaman, the Alumni Affairs Officer of Office of External Affairs.

The session mainly focused on reminiscing about the NSU campus memories and discussing the current activities and goals of the guests. Ms. Kamal and Mr. Islam started the discussion by sharing their memories about how the Aussie NSUers Association was founded and how they joined the association. Ms. Kamal shared her experiences about the exciting journey with Aussie NSUers Association. They mentioned that the foundation of the bonding and aspiration that motivated them to start and continue with the association actually originated in their student life through NSU campus life and culture. In the beginning of the 21st Century, when Ms. Kamal and Mr. Islam were studying at NSU, the university campus was situated in Banani. The guests were requested to share some distinct memories from their NSU student life and they became nostalgic while sharing interesting campus life incidents. According to both of them, their campus was different from the current one, but the connection, care and culture that NSU holds has been constant from their time till now. They hoped to preserve and extend the connection and network that former graduates and current students of NSU have through Aussie NSUers Association and expected alliance and help from the Office of External Affairs in this matter. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/3403337299723551>



Office of External Affairs Organizes International Students' Orientation Program for Summer '20



Summer 2020 has been an exceptional and somewhat difficult semester for all the students, faculty members and administrators of North South University. The international students who enrolled in this semester had to start their journey with NSU in an unusual way, too. Like every other semester, NSU Office of External Affairs organized a greeting session for the new joiners to make them feel welcome and informed. But due to the pandemic situation, the program could not be held on campus, rather it happened as a web video conference where the organizers and international freshers joined via Google Meet from their own residences.

The online orientation program was held on September 7, 2020 at Bangladesh time 3:00pm and continued till BST 4:00pm. Six international new comers from different countries and regions like Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Sudan, etc. attended the program. All of them joined the event from their own home countries. From the organizers' side, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs, Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer, Office of External Affairs, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer, Office of External Affairs, Mr. Fardin Yaman, the Alumni Affairs Officer, Office of External Affairs were present in the program.

The program started with a brief introduction of the students as well as the members of Office of External Affairs. After that the International Affairs Officer, Ms. Samina explained the institutional rules, do's & don'ts and offered facilities to the students. She also discussed the visa-related issues and instructed them regarding the visa process. None of the students could arrive in Bangladesh due to the global pandemic and thus are continuing the Summer 2020 online semester from their home country. The students shared their feelings and observations about online classes, faculties, classmates and overall experiences of the very first semester here at NSU. The orientation event ended with a Q/A session where the students could freely ask questions about academic or other NSU-related topics.

Web Seminar on Higher Study Opportunities in Germany with DAAD Representatives

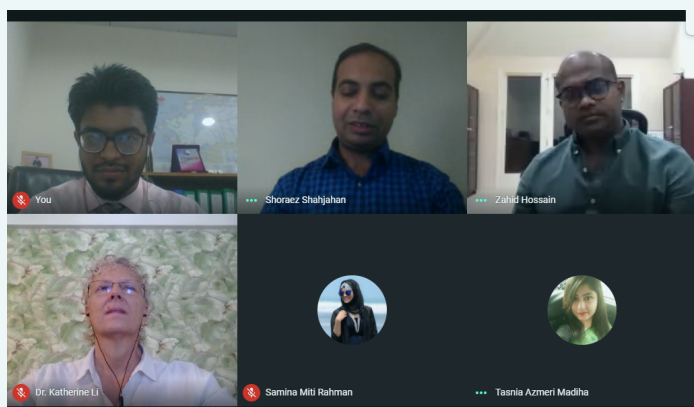
North South University Office of External Affairs organized an exciting web seminar with DAAD Bangladesh on September 13, 2020. The informative seminar was conducted through Google Meet with participation of the delegates of DAAD from national and international sectors and members of Office of External Affairs. Mrs. Anuroopa Dixit, the Program Officer, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi, Mrs. Pooja Midha, the Program Officer, DAAD Regional Office New Delhi and Ms. Rumana Kabir, the Information and Office Manager, DAAD Representative Bangladesh were present in the event as speakers and representatives of DAAD Scholarship Program. On other hand, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs and Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer, Office of External Affairs from NSU attended the event. The meeting streamed live from the official Facebook page of NSU Office of External Affairs through Facebook live so that it reached interested students easily.

The purpose of the event was to inform students about the application requirements and criteria for studying in Germany under DAAD scholarship programs. The first speaker of the seminar was Ms. Rumana Kabir who introduced DAAD as a self-governing organization of German universities for providing academic exchange service. DAAD mostly works to guide and help international students to locate the best opportunities to attain scholarships in German universities. Ms. Rumana mentioned the pros of choosing Germany for higher education and elaborated on their offered scholarship programs available in different subjects. In this context, one important detail that she shared was that many German universities are now offering courses of Masters' programs in several subjects in English, which broadens the possibility and convenience for international students to apply and attain scholarships in Germany. The German Education Ministry also permits job facilities for international students like part-time jobs while studying, one-and-half-year post study work permits, etc.

The latter part of the seminar was presented by Mrs. Pooja. She started off her presentation by providing information about the various cost covering structures and spans of the scholarship programs offered and arranged by DAAD. She especially emphasized the calculated and timely decision timeline required by preparing and applying for desired scholarship programs. The last portion of the event was open for questions from participants. Interested students are welcome to contact both DAAD and NSU Office of External Affairs through the contact details provided for further clearance and knowledge of the scholarship programs and opportunities. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video: <https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/3777128868982277>



Office of Alumni Affairs Conducts the Second Episode of 'NSU Alumni Talk Show'



The second episode of the 'NSU Alumni Talk Show' took place on September 15, 2020 at 9:30am (BST) with Mr. Zahid Hossain, Applied Research Scientist, Oculus Facebook and Mr. Shoraez Shahjahan, National Manager, Canadian Mental Health Association as guests. Mr. Zahid and Mr. Shoraez both were former students of NSU consecutively from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering and the Department of Business Administration and Economics. Both of them are also closely associated with the Bangladesh Alumni Foundation (BdAF), Mr. Zahid being the current President and Mr. Shoraez being the current Vice President of the organization.

The session started with Mr. Shoraez sharing the story and thoughts behind the formation of BdAF. The idea of establishing BdAF was inspired by the strong connection and bonding between alumni and current students and administration that Mr. Shoraez observed in most universities of the USA. Most of these universities have funding or scholarship programs running through donations and initiatives of their alumni base. BdAF was founded with the expectation of running similar alumni conducted programs in Bangladesh, connecting and strengthening the alumni network of universities of Bangladesh and proceeding further with newer and broader welfare plans. The guests were very glad to inform the audience that North South University Office of External Affairs is already affiliated with BdAF and is proceeding strategically regarding the alumni scholarship funding program. Mr. Zahid proudly mentioned NSU to be the pioneer university in Bangladesh to bring revolutionary changes for the improvement in the higher education system and practices as were introduced by the North American education system to Bangladesh.

Besides discussing the formation, progress and functions of BdAF, the guests also shared their cherished memories and experiences of both NSU and Stanford University's campus life. They also let us know their views and suggestions about the education system and curriculum of NSU. There was also a short discussion about admission and scholarship opportunities for NSU graduates in the USA. Both of guests emphasized the importance of internships, work experiences, proper reference letters – overall having an organized and timely plan to apply abroad for interested students. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video: <https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1709181479246253>

Office of External Affairs Conducts IELTS Web Information Session

North South University Office of External Affairs arranged an informative web seminar on IELTS in association with the British Council on September 20, 2020. The purpose of the seminar was to inform the students, faculties and all others associates of North South University about the facilities that the British Council is offering especially for NSUers and to help them with IELTS-related general information and suggestions. Ms. Umme Aisha Masjuda, the Business Pursuit Officer, Examination Service British Council and Mr. Ferdous Khan Samuel, Alumnus, North South University were present in the session as speakers. Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Mdiha, the Coordination Officer of Office of External Affairs hosted the event which streamed live from the NSU Office of External Affairs Facebook page.

The seminar started with Ms. Aisha giving a brief introduction about the IELTS program. She apprised that the IELTS program is conducted in Bangladesh through the partnership of the British Council, IDP and Cambridge English Assessment. Cambridge English Assessment works for the research, analysis production and development of the IELTS program; British Council and IDP work to deliver the program to the examinees. Ms. Aisha also elucidated the NSU-British Council affiliation program in detail. This affiliation has an ambassador program and a scholarship program. The British Council has appointed two student ambassadors selected among NSUers who help to promote the program, articulate and provide information about it and maintain the registration process. The ambassadors' contact details can be found on the official Facebook page of the OEA as well as that of the British Council. On other hand, the students who register for the British Council IELTS program through NSU and are able to achieve a certain score threshold will be eligible to apply for the yearly scholarship program. Two students among the applicants will be selected as recipients of the scholarship. The scholarship amount will be contributed toward the recipients' tuition fees in the following semesters.



Ms. Aisha and Mr. Samuel both encouraged every student to appear for IELTS whether they have plans to study or settle abroad or not, because attaining this standardized English proficiency assessment can provide preference and a head start in the case of job applications, visa processing, etc. Mr. Samiul then shared some suggestions for preparation of IELTS and his experience of sitting for IELTS. He emphasized the most on time management both while preparing for and attending the test and added that preparing gradually and going through several mock tests before sitting for the actual exam is the key to scoring better. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:
<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/328906571783759>

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Program Arranges a Web Seminar for NSUers



North South University Office of External Affairs has recently arranged a web seminar with the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Program Association through video conference, with the presence of the representatives from the Award Program Association and members of the OEA. The event was held on September 21, 2020 and was conducted via Google Meet. The event was also streamed live via the official Facebook page of NSU Office of External Affairs. Mr. Khaild Shahrir, Programme Manager and Mr. Tomiruzzaman, Programme Officer, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Program were present as guests and speakers in the seminar. Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs was present during the program. Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer of Office of External Affairs hosted the event.

The speaker of the event, Mr. Tomiruzzaman started his presentation with an introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award mentioning it to be a self-development program for young people, which was established in 1956 by His Royal Highness Prince Philip. The program is all about personal growth and overcoming personal challenges. People between the ages of 14 to 24 are eligible to participate in it. The award program is arranged by organizations working for the development of young people around the world and currently is recognized as one of the world's leading initiatives for welfare of young people. The program started its operations and functions in Bangladesh in 2008 with only 14 institutions. But now, a total of 94 institutions are associated with the award program including North South University. Since the beginning of its journey in our country, so far nearly 20,000 students have enrolled in the award program.

The activities of the program are established in three levels which are bronze (6 months), silver (6 months) and gold (12 months). The sections included under the levels are skill, service, physical recreation, adventurous journey and residential project. Currently, the activities of the award program have been redesigned and converted to home-based activities due to the lockdown situation during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Mr. Tomiruzzaman mentioned, the aim of this initiative is to encourage young people to develop their personal interests and practical skills. Other than personal development, attaining Duke of Edinburgh's International Award can help young people to get academic scholarships abroad, ensure preference in the job sector, create and broaden networks, improve communication skills, enrich CVs and more. Mr. Tomiruzzaman ended his presentation mentioning the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Program website where more detailed information and guidelines can be found about the process and advantages of the program.

The ending remarks of the event was presented by Dr. Li. She praised the innovative, empowering and very helpful initiative of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Program for development of young people. She also thanked Mr. Tomiruzzaman for his organized and informative presentation and hoped that this event would be of help NSUers. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:
<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/337048274041246>

The Third Episode of Alumni Talk Show Gets Aired

The third episode of 'NSU Alumni Talk Show' took place on September 23, 2020 at 12:00pm (BST) with Mr. Rahi Khondker, Alumnus, Department of Computer Science and Engineering Batch '94, North South University as the guest. By educational background, Mr. Rahi is an IT specialist and initially started his career in the same sector, however later in his life he came to a realization that he was truly passionate about working with people more than working with computers. So he decided to follow his passion and restart his career as a peak performance strategist and high productivity coach. Over the years, Mr. Rahi has been working with world famous international authors and motivational speaker like Tony Robbins, J. Abraham, Dr. John Demartini and many others as a strategic partner. During the talk show, he shared the story of his journey of discovering and pursuing his passion and the experience of working with renowned personalities. For the younger people who are struggling to choose a career path, he advised them to search for their passion and expertise, to keep putting effort and energy into it and motivated them to explore their opportunities.



Mr. Rahi Khondker is also a founder member and the current president of the Melbourne Alumni Association – Melbourne NSUers which is working to assemble the NSU alumni working or studying in Melbourne to keep them connected. While talking about the formation and progression of Melbourne NSUers, he became nostalgic and took the audience back to his student life and NSU campus days. He shared a few deeply cherished memories and incidents about the campus life and club activities of his student years. He also mentioned that the inspiration of establishing Melbourne NSUers came from a desire to serve their beloved institute, and from the same drive, the organization would be more than happy to collaborate with the Office of External Affairs to amplify the progression of the alumni network of North South University. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1222786604767553>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode - 4



The fourth episode of the 'NSU Alumni Talk Show' was broadcast on September 30, 2020 at 12:00 pm (BST) with three of the most successful alumni of North South University BBA Batch '95: Mr. Tariqul Sena, Mr. Muntasir Bhuiyan and Mr. Mahfuz Kamal as guests. From NSU, Dr. Katherine Li, Director of Office of External Affairs, Mr. Fardin Yaman, The Alumni Affairs Officer, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer were present during the event. The event started with Mr. Muntasir sharing the back story of his enormously versatile career portfolio. After graduation, he started his career as a faculty member at North South University. After several years of involvement with teaching, he decided to explore the other working areas related to his major, marketing and found himself to be more interested in market-oriented sectors than teaching. On the other hand, Mr. Tariqul started and continued his career as a consultant and Mr. Mahfuz got himself into the banking industry. All three of them became nostalgic going down memory lane while talking about their journey from student life to career buildup. According to them, involvement with all 9 clubs that NSU had back in their student years was one of the most valuable and precious experiences of their student life. Working with these clubs on one hand enriched them with experience, on the other hand their club-based achievements glorified the name of NSU. The guests also shared valuable suggestions about gathering experience and career establishment for the current students and fresh graduates of NSU.

Our guests expressed enthusiastic interest when they were informed about the central alumni database and networking system that has been initiated by the NSU Office of Alumni Affairs and will be established soon. As alumni of North South University, they thought it would be beneficial for them as well as for the thousands of alumni of NSU who are working both in national and international sectors. Mr. Tariqul mentioned that the central alumni network can work as an umbrella under which all the national-international autonomous alumni chapters of NSU can function connectedly. Each of them emphasized reaching out to the alumni for suggestions or help for the current NSUers and recent graduates. The central alumni association can be a great medium for such communication between the administration, alumni and current students of the institution. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the videos:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/344250673656811>

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/358235072034107>

Web Information Session on Higher Studies' Opportunities in France

North South University Office of External Affairs organized a webinar on Higher Studies' Opportunities in France' on September 30, 2020. The seminar was conducted through Google Meet and streamed live via the official Facebook page of NSU Office of External Affairs. The purpose of the event was to provide a broader view and clearer idea about higher education opportunities in France to the students who are interested to learn about the prospects of pursuing higher studies in France. Ms. Atiya Ayesha Khan, the Councilor of Campus France Bangladesh was the guest of the seminar. The event was hosted by Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer of NSU Office of External Affairs.

Ms. Atia started the session with a brief introduction and description of France, its culture and education system. She described France as the heart of Europe and to be comparatively convenient and more affordable than other countries in Europe for students. According to her, proper shortlisting of universities and timely application to preferred universities can offer students a good chance of getting enrolled in any good university in France. But for that, students must collect adequate and accurate information from reliable sources about offered programs, application procedures, offered scholarship schemes and other relevant admission processes of French universities. This is where Campus France provides support and assistance to the international students who intend to pursue higher studies in France. Campus France is a French public institution in charge of promoting higher studies in France and facilitation of the mobility of international students, researchers and experts. Campus France Bangladesh is the Bangladesh branch of the French Government organization that focuses on the local students here and assists them with information about study fields for bachelors, masters and PhD programs in France. Campus France Bangladesh started its journey in the year 2011 and since then has helped a lot of Bangladeshi students with information and suggestions regarding university admission in France.

Though the event, Ms. Atia provided some general suggestions about applying to French universities for the interested students. First she gave a briefing about the requirements, especially language requirements of applying to universities of France. She mentioned that there are a good number of international courses available in France in English, so proficiency in the French language is not a must to pursue education in France. Students just have to find and apply to their preferred subject and program according to their language proficiency and preference. She also provided details like duration, cost, etc. on offered programs of bachelors, masters and PhD programs in various educational fields in different universities of France. Ms. Atia also discussed about the work permit process and visa-related matters for international students according to the French education policy. At the end of the session, she provided the contact details of Campus France Bangladesh and encouraged interested students to communicate with them for further information about the discussed topics.

To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/644824366398516>



OEA Arranges Web Seminar on Higher Studies in Japan



by Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer of NSU Office of External Affairs.

North South University Office of External Affairs recently organized a web seminar in association with the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh to provide interested students a broader and clearer view about higher study opportunities in Japan. The informative and interactive seminar took place on October 6, 2020 through via Zoom with H.E. Naiko Ito, the Japanese Ambassador to the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh as the chief guest and Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of NSU Office of External Affairs as the session chair. Other panel speakers included Dr. Kaosar Afsana, the Education Advisor, Embassy of Japan, Dr. Abdul Khaleque (former student of Kumamoto University Medical School), Director, Office of Admissions and Professor of Biochemistry in the Dept. of Biochemistry & Microbiology, North South University and Dr. Murad Hossain (former student of Niigata University of Pharmacy and Applied Life Sciences), Associate Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, North South University. The program was hosted

The event started with warm greetings from the chief guest Ambassador Naoki Ito to all the present speakers, organizers and audience participants of the event. He congratulated Bangladesh for stepping into the 50th year of its diplomatic relationship with Japan in 2020 and mentioned that Japan is offering the largest number of educational scholarships to Bangladeshi students who are interested to study in Japan on this occasion of the 50th anniversary of Japan and Bangladesh. Ambassador Ito hoped this opportunity would improve the strength of the diplomatic relationship between Japan and Bangladesh and increase the interest of Bangladeshi students to pursue higher studies in Japan. The session chair of the event Dr. Li also conveyed warm welcome to the guests and participants of the event and thanked Japan for always being an excellent friend of Bangladesh from the very beginning of the diplomatic connection between the two countries. Over the last five decades of the Japan-Bangladesh diplomatic relationship, more than 4,200 Bangladeshi students have received higher education from different Japanese universities in various academic fields. The two faculties present in the event from North South University who completed their degrees in Japan, Dr. Abdul Khaleque and Dr. Murad Hossain shared their study experiences and daily life as foreign students in Japan and encouraged students to give a thought about pursuing post-graduation, PhD and research in Japanese universities.

The latter portion of the event was allocated to scholarship and application information for Japanese and Q&A session. This session was conducted by Dr. Kaosar Afsana, the Education Advisor, Embassy of Japan. She provided general information about scholarship opportunities, application procedures, PhD and research opportunities in Japan and invited questions from the interested students on these topics.

To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/667361454217210>

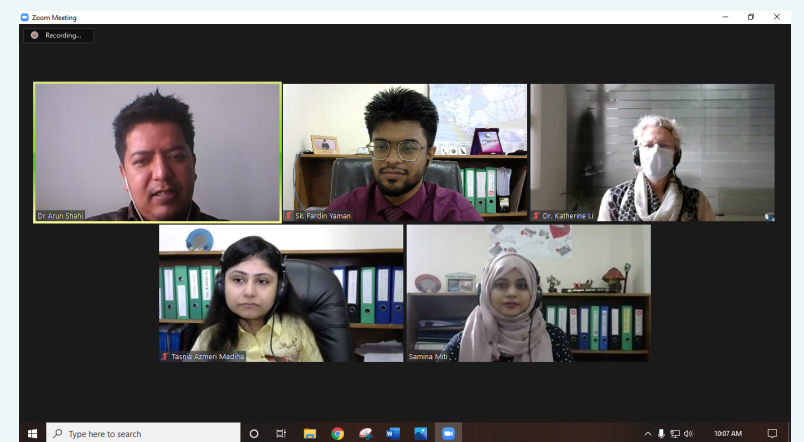
NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 5

The fifth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on October 7, 2020 at 9:30 am (BST) having an international alumnus of the MPH Department batch 2017 of North South University, Dr. Arun Shahi as its guest. Dr. Arun is originally from Nepal; he completed his Bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery from China and Masters' in Public Health (Epidemiology) from North South University. According to Dr. Arun, NSU is one of the best universities, especially for the MPH program, in the subcontinent. As his educational background is versatile and he has experience studying in several countries, he talked about some of the differences in the inter-continent education system that he noticed. According to Dr. Arun's observation, the Chinese higher studies' pattern is more research-focused whereas the Bangladeshi one is more practical knowledge oriented. Speaking of which, the guest shared some pictures of field visits, refugee camp visits from his years at NSU and became nostalgic while talking about his bond and memories with the faculty members and students of his department. Dr. Arun also appreciated the cooperation that he received from NSU's Office of External Affairs as an international student during his student years here.

Dr. Arun also has the experience of working as a doctor with prominent hospitals of Bangladesh like Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical College Hospital and Dhaka Medical College Hospital for several years. Later he moved to Nepal and currently is serving as a cancer specialist and lecturer in Patan Academy of Health Science in Nepal. He also mentioned that his research interest is cancer. Currently, due to the pandemic, Dr. Arun has to deal with the COVID-19 cases as well as cancer patients. From his experience of treating and handling COVID-19 positive patients, as a doctor, Dr. Arun wanted to pass the guidance of preventing COVID-19 to the viewers through our show. According to his words, washing hands, wearing masks and maintaining social distancing are the musts for avoiding COVID-19 infection.

Dr. Arun also informed us that they have a small NSU alumni community in Nepal. They have recently started to think seriously about expanding the association and he expressed his expectation to get support from NSU about it. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/771520933645377>



Study UK Virtual Fair 2020

The British Council arranged a Study UK Virtual Fair this year with participation of representatives from more than 20 universities from all around the United Kingdom. Universities like King's College London, Oxford Brookers University, the University of Manchester, the University of Kent, the University of Glasgow, etc. The virtual event took place on October 9, 2020. The universities' representatives who were present in the event shared information about the application requirements, admission procedures and scholarship opportunities of their universities.

North South University Office of External Affairs was also associated with the event. Ms. Tasina Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer represented NSU OEA in the virtual fair and collected information about application and admission procedures for universities of the UK for the interested students of North South University. Ms. Madiha also discussed about the collaboration opportunities and scopes with the representatives from different universities of the UK in the meeting and provided contact details of North South University Office of External Affairs to them for further discussion about this matter.

North South University Arranges French Lessons for Students



North South University's Office of External Affairs had plans for a long time to facilitate French language classes for the NSUers on their own campus. To act on this plan, Dr. Katherine Li, the Director and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer of Office of External Affairs initiated contact with Alliance Française de Dhaka (AFD) three years ago.

Moving forward to present, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the proposal of organizing French language classes at NSU sped up and was finalized by the Director of AFD, Mr. Olivier Dintinger following on earlier discussions with the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Chairman, Department of English and Modern Languages. As classes at NSU continue to take place online due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the French language classes easily fit into this model.

Once the details of this initiative were decided and announced among the students, they showed intense interest to join the program. Within a very short time, 21 students had registered for the program which was successfully launched on October 9, 2020.

NSU Toastmasters Club Conducts a Live Session

North South University Toastmasters' Club recently organized a web information session for NSUers to learn more about Toastmasters International and more specifically about the club at NSU, its activities and its purpose. The session took place on October 12, 2020 at 4pm. It was streamed live via the official Facebook page of NSU Office of External Affairs. The interactive session was moderated by the faculty advisor of the club, Dr. Katherine Li. The event was also attended by Mr. Ashek Muhammad Rumi, Vice President of Education, Ms. Kazi Farhana Aziz, Vice President of Membership, and Ms. Sakhyha Alam, Vice President of Public Relations from NSU Toastmasters' Club. Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer were also present from NSU Office of External Affairs.

The session started with the NSU Toastmasters briefly introducing themselves, the club and its activities. During the introduction, Toastmaster Sakhyha Alam mentioned that Toastmasters' International is a worldwide non-profit educational organization which was started in 1924 as a small club with an intention to help people with their public speaking and communication skills. Though the initiative has been functioning internationally for quite a long period of time, it was introduced to our country not long ago. Toastmasters' international started functioning in Bangladesh in 2011. The first Toastmasters' club of Bangladesh was the CMA Tigers' Toastmasters' Club. Currently, there are 21 Toastmasters' clubs functioning actively in Bangladesh. NSU Toastmasters' Club was founded in 2017 and was the first university-based Toastmasters' Club of our country. The prime purpose of the club is to improve public speaking, leadership skills of university students. The activities and competitions arranged by NSU Toastmasters' Club intend to improve the communication and networking skills of its members.

In the latter portion of the event, the present Toastmasters of NSU Toastmasters' Club explained the club activities, meeting procedures, membership procedures and other essential activities in details. They also gave the audience an idea about how they are conducting their club meetings online during this pandemic situation. To make the activities of their regular meetings clearer, the club members, along with the members of NSU OEA, virtually conducted a demo meeting with segments like Table Topics (impromptu speeches), feedback providing, etc. The live session with NSU Toastmasters' Club demonstrated its purpose and made the club's agenda clearer to the audience and newer members of the club.



OAA Broadcasts Episode 6 of NSU Alumni Talk Show

The NSU Alumni Talk Show had its 6th episode on October 15, 2020 with three successful alumni of North South University from three distinct batches - Iftekhar Uddin from BBA Batch '953, Ronnie Islam from BBA Batch '971 and Fatima Wara Farzana from BBA Batch '113.



Currently, Mr Iftekhar and Ms. Wara both are working at the National Australia Bank (CBA), as Team Leader and Loan Administrator and Mr. Ronnie is working in ANZ as the Head of Application Security and Engineering. From NSU OEA, Dr. Katherine Li, Director of Office of External Affairs, Mr. Fardin Yaman, The Alumni Affairs Officer, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, the Coordination Officer and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer were present during the session.

The program started with brief introductions of the guests and their current career situations which later led the discussion towards comparing different national and international job industries and work culture. As Mr. Iftekhar has experience working with the telecom and banking sectors in both the national and international contexts, he shared the patterns, similarities and differences he has noticed regarding operations and workplace culture in these versatile sectors and environments. In that context, he mentioned that the main difference between the banking sector of Bangladesh and Australia is in operations: flexibility, dynamism, constant product re-engineering, process re-engineering, etc. The other guests of the episode, Mr. Ronnie and Ms. Wara too shared about their journeys of professional life from the very beginning including how they decided what career path to pursue. According to all three of them, the guidance and direction they received from North South University impacted their career choices. Talking about the impact of NSU on their lives, the guests became nostalgic and shared the treasured memories of their student years at North South University. As Mr. Iftekhar and Mr. Ronnie were associated with NSU from the early years of its foundation. While going down memory lane, the guests admitted that the campus and student quantity might have changed, but the education quality, friendliness and helpfulness of faculties as well as liveliness of the campus has been the same for their beloved NSU from the very beginning.

All three of the guests of this episode are members of the NSU alumni base of Melbourne NSUers. They shared the story of starting this organization and talked about their further dreams for Melbourne NSUers. They also encouraged the current NSUers who are planning to study or settle in Australia to contact them for any support without hesitation and ensured that they would try their best to support their fellow alumni in any way possible. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/362338835190941>

Alumni Talk Show Episode 7

The third episode of the 'NSU Alumni Talk Show' took place on October 21, 2020 at 3:30pm having three of successful alumni from the very first batch of North South University; Mr. Nurun Nabi Chowdhury Sujon (BBA Batch '93), Md. Miraj Rahman (BBA Batch '93, MBA Batch '97) and Mr. Enamur Rahman (BBA Batch '93) as guests. All three of them are currently working successfully in different sectors inside or outside the country; Mr. Sujon is associated with Saif Power Group as the Head of Marketing, Md. Miraj is the current director of Rupsha Tyres and Chemicals and Mr. Enamur is working outside the country now, as Business consultant in power and energy sector in the UK.

The session started with the guests sharing their professional life experiences and suggestions with the audience. While talking about their current job situations and corporate life experiences, all three of our guests mentioned the strong and positive impact of North South University's education system and guidance to build their career. They especially mentioned that the applicable knowledge that NSU provides its students throughout their student life played an important and powerful role in their career development. In this context the guests shared some memorable incidents from their student years at NSU. As for being the first batch of the university, many of their memories are associated with the very first clubs, labs, intra-inter cultural programs and competitions of NSU. Sharing of such precious and treasured memories created a nostalgic ambience. The guests mentioned confidence and self-believe as the key factor of success and advised the newer NSUers to always remember and follow these key factors in life. The alumni believe that the supportive attitude and unity they had among themselves back in their student life was what turned into a legacy now and is carried forward by every NSUer from then till now. This unity is what keeps the alumni, current students and administration connected and helps the institution to grow as a whole. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/3463824313654874>



Information Session with Macquarie University, Australia



North South University Office of External Affairs arranged an information session with Macquarie University, Australia on October 28, 2020. The interactive session was conducted as a video conference through Zoom and was shared through Facebook Live from the official Facebook page of NSU OEA. The main speaker of the event was Mr. Tanveer Shaheed, Associate Director, Global Engagement and Business Development, Macquarie University. We also had Mr. Abdul Mumin Evan, Faculty, Marketing and International Business, NSU and Mr. Alkayet Hossain, Country Coordinator (South Asia), Macquarie University attending the event as guests.

The session was organized to enlighten the interested students about the application process, offered courses-programs and scholarship schemes of Macquarie University, Australia. The event started with Mr. Tanveer informing the audience briefly about education opportunities for international students in Australia and Macquarie University. He mentioned that Australian government's education policy is favorable for international students, thus Australia has become one of the most prominent hubs for international students over time. Among a number of high ranked and highly qualified universities of Australia, Macquarie University is one of the best and has been one of the top choices for the international students interested to pursue studies in Australia. The university is one of the top 200 ranked universities of the world according to QS World University ranking 2021.

Fortunately, North South University has an affiliation with Macquarie University, Australia; this affiliation allows NSUers to enjoy several advantages regarding applying and studying at Macquarie. Mr. Tanveer mentioned that, Macquarie University will offer 25% scholarships for NSU students who meet the academic requirements of applying for the whole program they will be enrolling in. Moreover, the one semester study program of the university is offered with 50% scholarship for NSUers. Mr. Tanveer also informed the participants that Macquarie University, Australia offers a double Masters' program for students and encouraged the students to go for the double Masters' program if convenient.

During the latter portion of the event, Mr. Evan and Mr. Alkayet, the alumni of both North South University and Macquarie University, shared their experiences of studying in both the universities. They encouraged current NSUers to consider Macquarie University as a choice while planning for pursuing higher studies in Australia. Both of them mentioned the Australia-based NSU alumni organization: Aussie NSUers as a great supporter and shelter for the new Bangladeshi students in Australia. They advised NSUers to contact the organization for any need while studying or staying in Australia. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/3392987730780326>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 8

The weekly program 'NSU Alumni Talk Show' launched its eighth episode on October 29, 2020 at 3.00 pm (Bangladesh time) having Mr. Mashroof Hossain, a distinguished NSU alumnus from Batch '042 of Department of Economics, as the guest. After graduating from North South University, Mr. Mashroof decided to join Bangladesh Civil Service and is currently working as the Additional Superintendent of Bangladesh Police. During the talk show, he discussed the factors that inspired and influenced him to join the Bangladesh Police and continue building his career in that field. Mr. Mashroof also shared some of the interesting and aspiring experiences from his tasks and operations in the police force. Mr. Mashroof initiated a self-defense training institute for women called 'Warrior Women Bangladesh' and this great initiative is currently leaving a remarkable effect on women's empowerment in our country. During the event, Mr. Mashroof shared his thoughts and struggles behind the establishment of 'Warrior Women Bangladesh'.



Besides being an excellent student of NSU and acing the BCS exam, Mr. Mashroof has the experience of studying in several renowned educational institutes of the world. This highly successful alumnus of NSU has acquired a Masters' degree from Harvard University, USA. One of many interesting facts about him is that he was a direct student of Sir Amartya Sen, the world famous Noble Prize winner Bengali Economist. During the episode, Mr. Mashroof shared precious memories of his studentship years both in Bangladesh and abroad. These discussions made him nostalgic and later, led the conversation towards the differences he has noticed between Bangladeshi and international education systems and curricula. The informative and interactive discussion session ended with academic and real life experiences based advice from Mr. Mashroof for the current and future students of North South University. To know more about the event visit, please click on the link to the video:

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/808521976597554>

NSU Signs MOUs from July – October 2020



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1) Coppin State University | 9) Assam Science & Technology University |
| 2) Sinhgad College of Pharmacy | 10) Power Grid Company of Bangladesh Limited – PGCB |
| 3) DCCI | 11) University of Essex |
| 4) NACOM | 12) WaterAid |
| 5) Apurba Technologies | 13) Assam Science and Technology University (ASTU) |
| 6) Alliance Française de Dhaka (AFD) | 14) Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) |
| 7) Robi Axiata | 15) University of Miyazaki |
| 8) Innovations for Poverty Action | |

To learn more about the newly signed MOUs, please view the MOU List on the NSU website:

<http://institutions.northsouth.edu/oea/international-affairs/partnership/list-of-mous/>

New to the OEA

Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon is currently working as an Officer in the Office of the External Affairs (OEA) at North South University. He joined on October 07, 2020. Before joining the OEA, he worked in the Office of the Board of Trustees (BOT), NSU with the same designation for 10 years. He has 15 years of working experience in different private sectors. In 2005, he did his Bachelor of Arts (Hon's) degree in Information Science and Library Management from the University of Dhaka. After that, in 2017, he did his MBA in Human Resource Management (HRM) from City University, Bangladesh and got CGPA 3.75 out of 4.00. In 2018, he also successfully completed PGD in HRM from Bangladesh Institute of Management Studies (BIMS), Innovate Awarding, UK. He obtained First division both his H.S.C and S.S.C exams. In 1992, he was awarded a Govt. Scholarship in the Junior Scholarship Exam and obtained talent pool 1st and got the highest marks in his thana level.

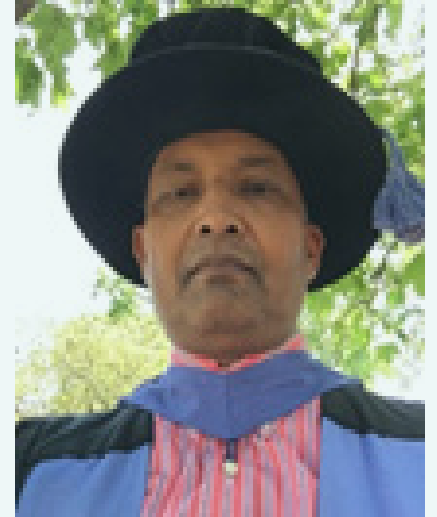


International Faculty Feature

Dr. Helal Ahammad joined NSU in September 2018 as a Professor of Economics and the Director of Economics Research Platform (ERP), School of Business and Economics, North South University, Bangladesh. Prior to venturing into the exciting teaching and research opportunities at NSU, Dr. Ahammad spent over 25 years in undertaking and leading applied research for the Australian Federal Government, and also while working at two leading Australian universities. His research has covered a range of issues and policies relating to the economic development of Bangladesh; climate change impacts, adaptation and response policies; energy and resources economics; agricultural economics; and international trade.

Dr. Ahammad was a Lead Author of the Fifth Assessment Report of Working Group III of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change; and also of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development Global Report Agriculture at a Crossroads. In May 2019, he organized a conference on "Emerging Challenges and the National Budget: Options for Actions" at NSU, which was graced by high-profile policymakers including the Honorable Minister for Planning of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

With the NSU ERP as an Academic Partner for the Bangabandhu-Cambridge Policy Simulation Lab project, Dr. Ahammad co-facilitated a four-day pilot policy simulation lab Policies for Improving Bangladesh Resilience for Industry 4.0 in September 2019. During 2015-17 as an International Consultant, Dr. Ahammad successfully led and delivered an economic study on the Bangladesh ship-recycling industry, jointly commissioned by the UN International Maritime Organization and the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. He has also undertaken economic modelling and studies for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, International Food Policy Research Institute, AgMIP—an agriculture-focused international climate change modelling forum, and the Stanford University's Energy Modelling Forum (EMF). He also co-Chaired Stanford University's EMF Land-Use Modelling subgroup's activities. Dr. Ahammad has published in reputable refereed journals including Agricultural Economics, Economic Modelling, Energy Economics, Global Change Biology, Proceedings of the National Academy of Science, and Resources Policy. He has also published a book: Foreign Exchange and Trade Policy Issues in a Developing Economy: The Case of Bangladesh. He has earned his PhD in Economics and Master in Economics of Development from the Australian National University.



Interviewer: After having spent 15 years of your career working for the Australian Federal Government, what inspired you to move back to Academia full time? And what led you to NSU?

Dr. Helal Ahammad: In my view, advising bureaucrats and policy-makers—who are highly intelligent but not subject-matter-experts—of one's research-based policy ideas is in many ways similar to teaching (albeit with exams and grading!) bright and young university students. As such, it all comes down to knowing one's audience, and raising and maintaining their interest in the subject matter while communicating by effectively using their 'language' and within a given timeslot.

The first one and a half decades of my career I did spend in academia—started at the Economics Department of the University of Rajshahi, and continued on at the Australian National University (ANU) and then at the University of Western Australia.

The following 15 years I had spent mostly at one of the leading research bureaus of the Australian Government, working at the pointy-end of providing research-based advice for underpinning evidence-based public policy making. Essentially, I was never too removed from academia. Indeed, while in the 'business' of advising the 'policy buffoons' I always wanted to retreat to academia full-time someday. Also, ANU groomed me to become a development economist with a particular focus on the economy of Bangladesh. With my perennial and 'organic' interests in university teaching, scholarship and development research, it is only natural that I have returned to a university in Bangladesh for the final leg of my professional journey.

In fact, when the 'teaching & research combo' was on offer at NSU, it seemed like the 'perfect match' for my mature-age career aspirations. NSU provides an excellent 'landing-pad' to the mid-career, returning Bangladeshi expats for wholesome tertiary-level teaching and, in my case, also institutional settings for persuing academic research.

Interviewer: The focus of your research has been on climate change, can you tell us more about why you have been particularly focused on climate change? How do you think Bangladesh is doing in regards to mitigation, adaptation and innovation in this area? Might it be an example from which others could learn?

Dr. Helal Ahammad: Interest in, and dealing with, climate and extreme weather events such as floods and cyclones are unavoidable aspects of growing up in Bangladesh. Historically, this part of the world has been battered by major natural disasters and the accompanying famines.

But my research and professional interest in climate change intensified in the beginning of this millennium when developed and developing countries were collectively negotiating the Kyoto Protocol within the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change—a major multilateral initiative to tackle the future devastating impacts of climate change. The Protocol included commitments by developed (the so-called Annex B) countries to mitigating their greenhouse gas emissions as well as to facilitating adaptation to climate change by vulnerable developing countries such as Bangladesh, Maldives and the Pacific Island counties.

This is when I made my career switch—leaving a full-time academic career to becoming a senior economist at the Australian Government Bureau, which at that time was leading the science-economics integrated modelling, research and policy advice on climate change within Australia. Climate change is one of the multi-disciplinary and complex albeit diabolical issues and arguably the greatest moral challenge that the global humanity is facing. Climate change also appears to have generated a 'gold rush' in research. However, robust research and sound policy advice on climate change warrant some long-term commitment and a dedicated team of experts with a diverse range of knowledge and expertise. The bureau was well placed to offer such an institutional setting and was well connected to the global research and modelling community involving organizations and institutes like Stanford University, MIT, IAASA, IFPRI, FAO and OECD. Needless to suggest that I was truly and completely hooked into climate change research!

Well, it is fair to say that Bangladesh is the poster-child of climate resilience and disaster management almost routinely portrayed and featured in major global discussions on adaptation to future climate change including in the UN-sponsored multilateral conferences and negotiations. The global community of researchers and development practitioners regards Bangladesh a successful 'case study' in disaster risk reduction and emergency response. The key elements of the 'Bangladesh story' include a National Plan for Disaster Management, a dedicated Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, and measures such as early warnings, engagement of local communities and other key stakeholders, and planned relocation of targeted and vulnerable groups to the relative safety of disaster shelters.

However, Bangladesh is a small emitter of greenhouse gases in the world and currently does not seem to be worried about mitigating its own emissions. This is evidenced by the government's plan to expand the net electricity generation capacity significantly to over 50 gigawatts (GW) and 80 GW by 2030 and 2041, respectively, relying heavily on imported coal. While ensuring energy security is a worthy policy goal, Bangladesh's increasing and substantial dependence on coal (and other fossil fuels) flies in the face of its advocacy for the global efforts in mitigating greenhouse gas emissions in order to reduce its own vulnerability to future climate change. Furthermore, as Bangladesh is seeking to graduate out of its LDC status by 2024 and aspires to become a developed country by mid-century, it must seriously consider the possibility that the global community will exert formidable pressures on a much prosperous Bangladesh to actually meet a stringent emissions reduction target in the future.

Interviewer: What is the Economics Research Platform (ERP)? Can you tell us more about the history of it and what it aims to do?

Dr. Helal Ahammad: Housed within the NSU School of Business and Economics (SBE), ERP aims to lead, undertake and facilitate research and policy analysis through (i) commissioned and independent research and policy studies within NSU; (ii) research collaboration across various disciplines within NSU and beyond; (iii) in-house training programs & short-courses for research capacity development; and (iv) effective dissemination of ERP-NSU research and policy analysis. ERP strives to build and sustain strategic and academic partnerships with leading research institutions; and inform the national and supra-national policy discussions and facilitate evidence-based decision making in Bangladesh.

Recently, as an Academic Partner, ERP collaborated with the Resilience and Sustainable Development Programme (RSDP) of the University of Cambridge on the research project Bangabandhu-Cambridge Policy Simulation Lab, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. ERP (i) undertook background research on the topic Re-skilling Policy Development to Help Promote Industry 4.0; (ii) coordinated a national Innovation Readiness Survey; and (iii) co-facilitated a four-day pilot policy simulation lab Policies for Improving Bangladesh Resilience for Industry 4.0. As for its history, ERP has been set up with a grant of BDT 1.26 crore from the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh under the Higher Education Quality Enhancement Project (HEQEP), with co-funding from NSU worth about 20 percent of the project cost plus other in-kind support including the IT support services. The HEQEP sub-project of setting up ERP was successfully completed in June 2017.

Interviewer: How is teaching at NSU different from teaching at Australian universities?

Dr. Helal Ahammad: I would like to point out two key areas of difference: (i) At NSU there is very limited practice of interactive classroom discussions. This could be partly due to the Bengali cultural of 'passive' learning and not asking questions, and also because of not having enabling institutional settings such as conducting tutorials. (ii) With 12 credit-hour teaching loads in each of the trimesters at NSU, faculty members generally do not have much discretionary time and energy to embark on academic research and scholarship—the two essential ingredients for sustaining 'quality' teaching and professional development in a university. By comparison, academics in most Australian universities have less teaching loads and more time for undertaking academic research and professional development.

Interviewer: From your bio, we came to know that you have an interest in Agricultural Economics. What is that? Can you tell us more about the economic modelling and studies that you did for the UN Food and Agriculture Organization? And, what do you think about the UN World Food Programme winning the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize?

Dr. Helal Ahammad: Food and agriculture is one of the highly regulated and subsidized sectors in Bangladesh and also globally. Food security concerns, domestic food policies and agrifood trade restrictions are alleged to have halted the progress of the Doha Round of multilateral trade -

liberalization negotiation being facilitated by the World Trade Organization. Also, agricultural activities are highly reliant on weather events and climatic conditions. The future climate change is projected to have adverse impacts on land productivity globally though not uniformly across geographical regions. This will alter the relative productivity of land in one region compared with another resulting in changes in the volumes and the commodity mix of agricultural production globally and by region. My interest in agricultural economics is linked to all of the above.

My early work in agricultural economics was a study on the implications for Bangladesh of food aid, food policy and the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade liberalization negotiation. At that time, Bangladesh was a net importer of food and the largest food aid recipient in the world. More recently, I was interested in exploring the implications of future climate change on agricultural production and agrifood trade as well as in the economics of options for agriculture to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. I was involved in an extensive international exercise undertaken for the Agricultural Model Inter-comparison and Improvement Project (AgMIP, www.agmip.org), involving 10 of the world's leading global economic models. Economic models are some stylized representations of the working of the real world. They incorporate key resource constraints, economic decision making and consumption and production responses, inter-linkages among the various parts of an economy, trade and other policies. They are numerically implemented and simulated to answer 'what if' questions!

My work commissioned by the UN Food and Agricultural Organization emanated from the AgMIP exercise. It provides a synthesis of modelling results for agrifood trade under the selected socioeconomic and climatic scenarios. In particular, it examines key trends and patterns in projected future agrifood trade under different socio-economic and climate scenarios and, drawing on the results, sheds some light on the relative importance of socio-economic and climate drivers, as well as the characteristics of the models involved, all of which determine the model-projected trade patterns.

Yes, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has awarded the 2020 Nobel Peace Prize to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) for "its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict." WFP is the world's largest humanitarian organization and, in 2019, provided food aid to close to 100 million people in over 80 countries who were victims of acute food insecurity and hunger. With the global havoc of the Covid-19 pandemic now added to violent political conflicts in parts of the world, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of starving people. WFP reportedly has intensified its efforts to tackle the challenge under the tagline "Until the day we have a medical vaccine, food is the best vaccine against chaos."

In the past, the Nobel Committee awarded the Peace Prize to many organizations and institutions including the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh and the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. WFP has well-earned the 2020 prize.

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

Dr. Helal Ahammad: I envisage NSU to remain the top-ranking private university within Bangladesh and at the same time elevate its ranking within Asia through (i) 'quality' undergraduate education and (ii) a much improved research profile of the university achieved through the offering of some research-based graduate degrees and reasonable teaching-offsets for faculty members undertaking academic research.

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

Dr. Helal Ahammad: With a pool of highly qualified educators well-tuned to job-markets and world-class facilities, NSU provides one of the most modern and best tertiary learning environments in the country in order to groom job-ready graduates. So, students, take full advantage of the resources and opportunities that NSU has on offer. The economist in me would suggest that while students are paying for their education they should devote to learning and ensure 'the best value' for their money. To be job-ready, along with formal classroom education, they should seek to develop 'soft' skills such as (oral and written) communication and networking, a sense of healthy living and work ethics and professional integrity, strategic thinking and problem solving, team play, work and leadership. Above all, students, do let your learning journey at NSU be a happy experience for you to treasure and cherish for the rest of your life!

NSU Alumni Feature



Iftexhar Uddin is an NSU alumnus from the batch 1995 of Bachelor of Business Administration. After graduating from NSU, he completed his MBA from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA). He received his second Master's degree from Monash University, Australia. Iftexhar worked in renowned companies of Bangladesh like Grameenphone Limited, Banglalink Standard Chartered Bank etc. After moving to Australia, he worked at the Commonwealth Bank of Australia. Later, he joined National Australia Bank and is currently working as Team Manager. Iftexhar is also a founding member of Melbourne-based NSU Alumni association called "Melbourne NSUers" and has served as President for one term.

Interviewer: As you have worked in banks both in Bangladesh and Australia, what differences of operation do you notice between these two countries?

Mr. Iftekhar Uddin: The flexibility, the dynamism and the adaptability are the main differences between the bank operations of the two countries, I believe. That is the main reason of a sustainable banking system in Australia. They always look for new and better ways to get things done. Also, in Bangladesh I used to work at desks with piles of papers stacked on them. Every desk had them. In Australia almost no work is done in hard copy. Everything is digitized and online.

Interviewer: What do you think are the major challenges the banking sector is facing currently? How do you think they can be solved?

Mr. Iftekhar Uddin: The economic impact is the major challenge at present. Because of the pandemic, the retail sector has not been operational for a while, and people are losing jobs. So, the money market is drying up, and there will be a lot of loan default in the near future. And the banks are struggling to maintain their balance sheets. From my perspective, as the banks here are very adaptive, and the employees are working from home for the last 7 months, they can capitalize on that. They can reduce the cost by reducing numbers of branches and commercial buildings. Also, trying to get more money from foreign countries and governments might be another solution.

Interviewer: As you have educational experience from both countries; in which aspects is the educational quality different between Bangladesh and Australia? How close to international standard would you consider NSU's curriculum to be?

Mr. Iftekhar Uddin: I studied for a Master's back in Australia in 2002 right after finishing my MBA from IBA. I actually thought NSU had a better academic curriculum than Monash University which had 70 percent weightage on its final alone! And it was comprehensive! One more thing I noticed was that Monash had a gallery of 300 students with 1 teacher in the class, so there were almost no interactions. I believe that the interactions I had with my teachers and friends in the classrooms at NSU with moderate number of students had better impact on my future career, education and my characteristics.

Interviewer: Tell us about Melbourne NSUers Association and the story behind its establishment.

Mr. Iftekhar Uddin: I was part of the initial stage when Melbourne NSUers was established. Between 2006 and 2012, a lot of NSUers moved to Melbourne. There was no common platform of an NSUer community. To mention a few names: Mirza Asif, Faisal Bashar, Tamim, Zafrin, Rushmi, Ronnie and I started talking about it and the idea was the brainchild of ours. We just thought, "Hey, let's arrange a picnic and see how many NSUers can we get together!" We got around 100 NSUers joining in that picnic. After that, we created an Executive Body and started our journey. I was lucky enough to be one of the EB members and very proud to see where it is standing now!

Interviewer: What are your suggestions for students and fresh graduates in Bangladesh seeking higher education or career in Australia?

Mr. Iftekhar Uddin: The choice of subject is important in order to receive the maximum points and application for PR. But then again, I personally believe that you should focus on choosing the subject you are really passionate about, because that will be the subject you can succeed in. If the subject does not get your PR, you can always choose another country or move back to Bangladesh for a successful career. But I advise not to settle for mediocre results while choosing a subject that you don't love. The willingness to change the mindset is also a concern. Both education and the professional environment are a little bit different in Australia than in Bangladesh. Here, we do not even mention the results of GPA in the resume. The skills and experiences are the deciding factor. So, in the interviews, it's not only about knowing. You have to know and also let others know that you know!

International Student Feature

Li Jiahuan comes from Jiangxi Province in southern China. She is a girl with a shy personality. When she first came to Bangladesh, she was afraid to speak because of her poor English. She thanks her enthusiastic Bangladeshi classmates, because her English level has improved greatly. She has many hobbies, such as listening to music, reading books, watching movies, etc. She came to Bangladesh in 2016, and that was her first time abroad. She came to Bangladesh to go to school because her relatives work here. During the four years in Bangladesh, she has grown a lot, has become more independent, and has acquired a broader vision. Her dream is to travel the world, and she believes she can realize this dream. During the four years in Bangladesh, she has changed a lot, her personality has become more cheerful, and she has become more confident. The way of education at North South University is very different from that in China. She used to be a person who was very scared to talk to teachers, but the teachers at North South University gave her a feeling of being a friend. Regarding the future, like all the students who are about to graduate, she is eager to have more room for development in the future. She believes that there will be gains if there is hard work, and she will have an infinitely beautiful future with such hard work.



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

Li Jiahan: The reason I chose North South University is firstly because it is the best private university in Bangladesh. The excellent campus environment makes me feel very comfortable. The second is that there are no Chinese students in other schools, while North South University has Chinese students. North South University has better educational facilities. North South University has cooperation with many international universities and also with Yunnan University in China, which makes me feel a sense of belonging.

Interviewer: In which subject are you pursuing your undergraduate studies?

Li Jiahan: My major is Accounting. First of all, accounting is an old and popular major, and every company and enterprise in modern society must have accounting. The job of accounting is relatively simple, and employment is relatively easy. Second, you can develop good financial management habits, and you will have your own habits and ideas in your consumption philosophy. Third, there is a large space for the development of the accounting profession and the platforms for accounting work are all related to finance. Unrestricted, wide application range. It is also very beneficial to my own future business.

Interviewer: What inspired you to choose your undergraduate study major?

Li Jiahan: Choosing an accounting major is my mother's suggestion to me. My mother is an accountant. After she gave me a detailed introduction to this major, I felt that I was more suitable for this major. Because I am not a person who is good at communication, marketing and international trade majors that require a lot of communication are not very suitable for me.

Interviewer: From your bio, we come to know that you have evolved a lot in your past four years' stay in Bangladesh? What or who do you think influenced your evolution and how?

Li Jiahan: The one who helped me the most in the past four years is my uncle, who is of Chinese descent in Bangladesh. Because he can't speak Chinese, only English and Mongolian, so I must speak English when communicating with him, which made my English greatly improve. At school, the English environment is also very good. When the teachers see me there, they will take care of me and teach in English. The classmates are also very friendly and enthusiastically help me solve problems I don't understand.

Interviewer: What are your future plans for your higher studies and career?

Li Jiahan: My future plan is to continue to study for my MBA in other countries. I feel that in today's society, a Master's degree is still very useful, especially when you are not clear about your professional positioning. First of all, during graduate school, most of the schools will have positions such as assistants and teaching assistants, plus students can do part-time jobs, which allows for a certain degree of financial independence; second, for future jobs, it has more advantages than only an undergraduate degree. Finally, the self-enhanced learning and scientific research experience during the Master's period will enrich me.

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

Li Jiahan: I have lived in Bangladesh for 4 years from 16 years of age to the present. Although I only live near the capital Dhaka, and have not been to other parts of Bangladesh, I have also come into contact with all kinds of Bangladeshis. Some are very friendly and some have bad intentions. Most people in Bangladesh are friendly to foreigners, many people are eager to communicate with foreigners, and they have a good impression of China. Bangladesh is densely populated with many people on a small land. There are hundreds of millions of rickshaws in crowded Dhaka. Large cars, small cars, motorcycles, rickshaws, and pedestrians are crowded and bustling regardless of lanes. So the traffic situation is quite bad with beggars everywhere regardless of age. The streets are full of children from 2 to 15 years old, mothers with babies and elderly people. Every time I see them, I feel sad inside.

Interviewer: What differences between Chinese and Bangladeshi people and culture catch your eyes the most?

Li Jiahan: There are too many cultural differences between Bangladesh and China. According to my life, the biggest difference between living in China and living in Bangladesh is that there are more entertainment activities in China, but I rarely go out in Bangladesh, first because of insecurity, and second because there are no interesting places to go.

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

Li Jiahan: I hope NSU can hold more interesting activities instead of boring lectures.