



**Office
of External
Affairs**

THE BRIDGE

The Official Newsletter of the Office Of External Affairs

ISSUE 20 | JUL-AUG '21

Editor's Message

Welcome back to The Bridge, the official newsletter of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) of North South University. In this issue you will find that we are continuing to build new bridges around the world through Information Sessions with our partner institutions, Alumni Talk Shows, conversations with Bangladeshi Educators Abroad and now NGOs working in Bangladesh to develop the country. In this new talk show, we are learning about the grass-roots initiatives that our faculty/staff at NSU and from our partner institutions can avail through research and internship opportunities. We hope you enjoy the programs and look forward to your feedback. We are here to serve you.

Editor

Dr. Katherine Li

Reporter

Nusrat Naila Nokshi

Illustrator

Hafiz Uzzaman

Information Session with American University in Cairo, Egypt

North South University's Office of External Affairs organized an online information session with the American University in Cairo, Egypt on July 6, 2021. Ms. Eman Fouda, Senior Manager, Graduate Recruitment Office of Graduate Studies at American University in Cairo was present as the speaker and represented the university during the webinar. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and was shared via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.



The event started with a warm welcome message and an informative presentation by Ms. Fouda introducing the university and elaborately explaining the academic structure of Postgraduate programs at the American University of Cairo. She mentioned that this widely reputed university was founded in 1919 and has been providing quality education to national and international students since then. The university has a student body of nearly 7,000 students among which, 25% are graduate and 75% are undergraduate-level students. The university has five schools that serve a wide range of academic programs including over 50 masters' programs, 2 PhD programs and 24 graduate diplomas. Ms. Fouda especially mentioned the School of Business as it is broadly appreciated among the applicants and has received several awards for diverse and quality education. She also explained that the university operates 14 cross-disciplinary research centers with advanced research facilities to offer radical research opportunities to its students. Moreover, the university runs several academic and non-academic services for the assistance and development of its students.



During the event, Ms. Fouda mostly emphasized the programs and opportunities available at the postgraduate level at the American University in Cairo. She elaborately discussed and explained the academic structure including program maps, semester maps, the credit counting strategy, CGPA system, tuition fees schemes, etc. for postgraduate courses and programs. Additionally, she described the application requirements for the listed programs and guided the audience through the application procedure and deadlines of the offered programs. Another significant aspect that was highlighted during the event was the available financial assistance for students at the American University of Cairo. Financial assistance programs like fellowships and financial aid were discussed in detail by Ms. Fouda. The session ended with an effective Q&A session during which interested students could directly communicate with Ms. Fouda. To know more about the event, visit <https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/958905021609957>

NSU Signs an MoU with Nagasaki University



国立大学法人
長崎大学
NAGASAKI UNIVERSITY

An MoU was signed between the School of Medicine and the Graduate School of Biomedical Science, Nagasaki University and the School of Health and Life Sciences, North South University on July 6, 2021. The academic cooperation includes exchange programs, collaborative research projects, exchange of academic information and materials, imple

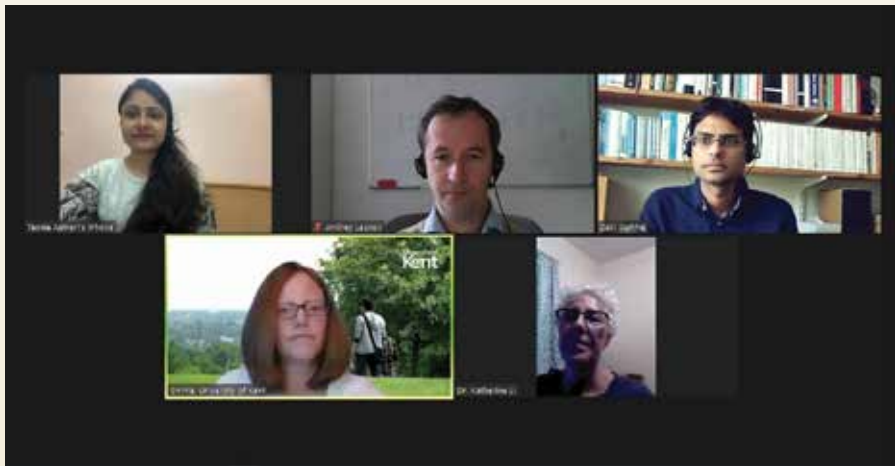
mentation of lectures and symposia and any other academic collaboration activity that the two universities may approve. The MoU was signed by Meamura Koji, Dean, School of Medicine and Kawakami Atsushi, Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical Science from Nagasaki University. Likewise, from NSU, Prof. Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences and Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor.

Information Session with the University of Kent, UK

North South University's Office of External Affairs arranged an online information session with the University of Kent, UK on July 12, 2021. Ms. Emma Spittles, International Officer for Bangladesh, Dr. Andrey Launov, Senior Lecturer, School of Economics and Dr. Zaki Wahhaj, Reader in Economics at the University of Kent was present as the guests and speaker during the webinar. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and was shared via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.



The event highlighted the features and facilities of the University of Kent as well as the existing and potential collaboration possibilities between Kent and NSU. The information session started with a brief introduction of the attendee representatives from the University of Kent followed by an informative presentation showcasing the heritage, location, campus, academic structure and prospects of the university by Ms. Spittles. The University of Kent is a highly reputed university of the United Kingdom which was established in 1965. Currently, the university has around 20,000 students among which a significant percentage is comprised of international students. The university holds a very strong reputation in research and teaching excellence for having a research-led teaching and internationalization-oriented administrative structure. In fact, the University of Kent has been ranked in the top 10% of the world's universities for international outlook by Times Higher Education (THE) 2020.



The University of Kent offers a wide variety of programs and courses for undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral-level studies. The university has over 500 courses available under 6 schools which are – Arts and Humanities, Natural Science, Computing, Engineering and Mathematical Science, Business, Human and Social Sciences as well as Law, Society and Social Justice. The education structure at Kent promotes inspirational student experiences such as learning and technical resources, academic and personal support, living and leisure, extracurricular, etc. Moreover, the university focuses on the students' employability and career progression through

placement opportunities and work experience in offered programs.

Besides introducing the programs and opportunities of the University of Kent, Ms. Spittles also enlightened the audience about the facilities offered by the university. She briefed about the wide range of scholarships available for international students and the procedure and requirements to apply for the scholarships. She also mentioned the convenient on-campus accommodation arrangements especially as this happens to be one of the main concerns of the international students who intend to study at Kent. She also explained the entry requirements, application procedure, tuition fees, etc. in detail during her presentation.

Afterwards, the floor was passed to Dr. Launov and Dr. Wahhaj, two remarkable professors from Kent School of Economics for highlighting the programs and opportunities offered by their department in brief. They enlightened the audience about the Master's program/MSc programs offered under the School of Economics, the program maps, credit structure assessment method and so on. Dr. Wahhaj emphasized the Economics conversion program and Development Economics program and discussed research and career opportunities in relevant areas.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/324158249181929>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 40

The fortieth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on July 14, 2021. The episode showcased Ms. Anika Shams, a distinguished alumna of North South University from the School of Business and Economics, Batch 2007, Department of Business Administration. Ms. Shams completed her undergraduate degree from NSU in 2010 and received her postgraduate degree from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Dhaka University.

Although Ms. Shams majored in Human Resource Management, she started her career journey in the supply chain management department at the MGH Group and after one and half years of service in this alternate sector, she started her career in HRM. Currently, she is associated with Marico Bangladesh Ltd. as the AGM (Human Resources) and Sales (Human Resources Business Partner). Apart from that, she also has the experience of working with prominent national-multinational companies like Banglalink, Berger Paints, etc.



The event started with a lively discussion about the guest's professional experience, interests and journey. Although Ms. Shams had an initial experience working in SCM, her academic interest and expertise has been HRM since her undergraduate studies. As an HRM expert, Ms. Shams shared her insights about the HR influence in the current corporate culture of Bangladesh. She mentioned that HR is no longer seen as a supporting system, rather is considered as one of the main departments of organizations. She also highlighted the common challenges of the HR practice that HR professionals have to deal with in current organizational structures. From the experience of being solely involved with recruitment procedures for nearly 10 years, Ms. Shams shared some vital suggestions regarding interview skills with the audience. She suggested to prepare a precise and informative resume, take proper preparation and carry an optimistic attitude during any interview to ace it.

As an alumna of North South University, Ms. Shams, shared her memories, experiences and takeaways from NSU during the event. She appreciated NSU for offering her the vast platform and opportunities to explore. She mentioned that the balanced blend of academics and extracurricular opportunities at NSU helped her the most in her professional life so far. According to her, the global outlook that NSUers are exposed to from the very beginning of their student life impacts their future life positively.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/235587568233677>

Memorandum of Understanding Between NSU and SuperMap Software Co. Ltd.



Co. Ltd. and Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, North South University.

NSU signed an MoU with SuperMap Software Co. Ltd. on July 15, 2021. The MoU agrees to conduct joint research projects, share resources (software, information, etc.) hold collaborative workshops and training programs, share internship opportunities, etc. This MoU was initiated by Professor Dr. Sirajul Islam, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Director of the Center for Infrastructure Research and Services (CIRS) at NSU. The MoU was signed by Mr. Nicole Chen, Regional Manager, SuperMap Software

Meeting on Research-related Outreach Updates by Office of External Affairs

A meeting was held to discuss the research-related outreach updates conducted by NSU Office of External Affairs on July 18, 2021. The agenda of the event was to highlight the progress regarding outreach activities to government-registered NGOs of Bangladesh. The meeting was attended by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs (OEA), Prof. Dr. Norman Kenneth Swazo, Director, Office of Research, Prof. Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Chair, Dept. of Political Science and Sociology, Director, South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG) and Research Coordinator, SHSS, Prof. Dr. Mamun Molla, Research Coordinator, SEPS, Dr. Md. Mainul Hossain, Associate Professor and Research Coordinator, SHLS, Dr. Md. Nurul Kabir, Assistant Professor and Chair and Research Coordinator, SBE, Dr. Hasanuzzaman, Assistant Director, OEA, Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer, OEA, Ms. Tasnia Azmeri Madiha, Coordination Officer, OEA and Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA.

The discussion started with the statement of the agenda and focus of the meeting by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs. The meeting basically focused on the research collaborations, joint publications, training and internship opportunities for students, faculty members and administrative staff of NSU with NGOs. Afterwards, the floor was passed to Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, OEA who informed the attendees about the outreach efforts and progress made by OEA so far. Mr. Masud mentioned that the OEA has reached out to 526 NGOs till date and has conducted 32 successful meetings that resulted in 3 signed MoUs so far. He presented a brief overview of the approached organizations along with their working areas and contact details.

The outreach initiatives and progress regarding collaboration with government-registered NGOs were highly appreciated and praised by all the attendees of the meeting. They thanked the OEA for arranging such a necessary and timely initiative and hoped that these efforts would benefit NSU in the long run. Meanwhile, Prof. Sk. Tawfique M. Haque, Director, SIPG and Research Coordinator, SHSS reminded everyone to differentiate action research from commission research and approach the outreach initiatives accordingly. The attendees agreed to contribute to the collaboration initiatives by locating relevant research opportunities and interests and sharing them with the OEA. They also proposed organizing such inclusive meetings more often for better communication and cooperation among the units. Lastly, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA thanked everyone for their cooperation and suggestions and assured everyone that she would keep them updated about the further actions and progress regarding the aforementioned topics.

International Student Orientation Ceremony – Summer 2021

The orientation program for international students of Summer '21 semester was held on July 18, 2021. Due to the ongoing pandemic situation, the program could not be held on campus, rather it was held on Zoom by the Office of External Affairs for the international freshers of Summer 2021. The students from different countries and regions like Morocco, Nepal, China, etc. attended the program. From the organizers' side, Dr. Katherine Li, the Director of Office of External Affairs, Dr. Hasanuzzaman, the Assistant Director, Ms. Samina Alam Miti, the International Affairs Officer, Mr. Fardin Yaman, the Alumni Affairs Officer, Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer were present in the program. Furthermore, the student employees of the 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 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 new comers 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.



Some memories and photos of the previous orientation programs of international students were displayed to represent the essence of the conventional event. The introductory session was concluded with a short speech from the Director.

The following segment of the event was the introduction session. The new students from different home countries present in the ceremony introduced themselves one by one. Afterwards, the members of the OEA present in the event introduced themselves as well and each of them conveyed short messages to the freshers. The event ended with a very interactive Q&A session where the students could ask questions about NSU and OEA.

Continuation of Outreach efforts to the National NGOs in Bangladesh for the purpose of research collaboration and branding of NSU

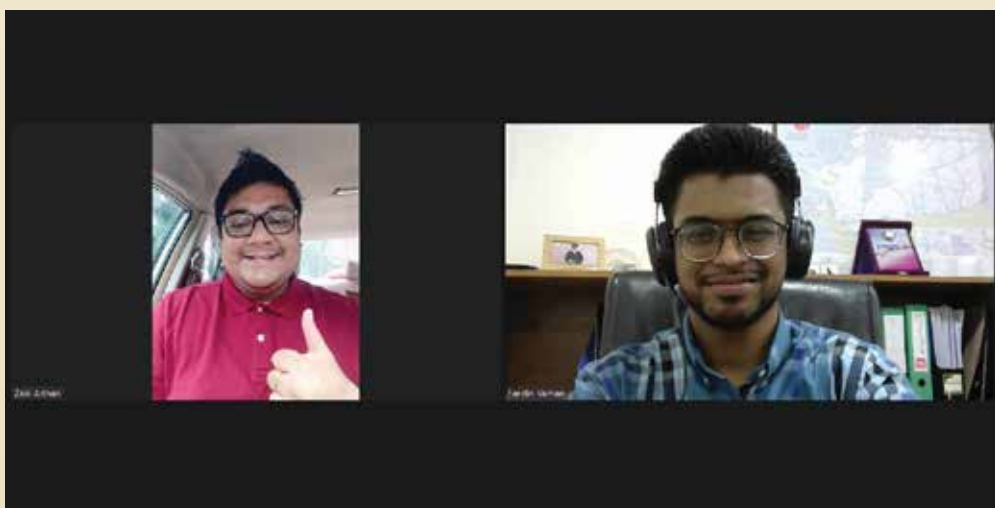
North South University's Office of External Affairs (OEA) started reaching out to government-registered local NGOs by sending the NSU Research Foci Booklet for potential research collaboration, joint publications, training programs, and internship opportunities through possible MoUs starting in October 2020. As part of that continuation of outreach efforts, the OEA organized several more virtual meetings with the government-registered local NGOs.

The following table shows the current progress of this effort from July 13, 2021:

| Sl. | Meeting Date | NGO Name | Contact Person | Website Link |
|-----|--------------|--|---|--|
| 01. | 01 July 2021 | Arannayk Foundation (AF) | Mr. Rakibul Hasan Mukul Executive Director | www.arannayk.org |
| 02. | 04 July 2021 | Centre for Development Innovation and Practices (CDIP) | Mr. Utpal Barua Executive Director | www.brightbangladeshforum.org |
| 03. | 13 July 2021 | SERAC-Bangladesh | Mr. S M Shaikat Executive Director | https://serac-bd.org/ |

For more information about this effort, please reach out to Mr. Mehedi Masud Sumon, Officer, Office of External Affairs at mehedi.sumon@northsouth.edu.

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 41



The forty-first episode of NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on July 19, 2021. As the guest of this episode, we had Zaki Md. Adnan, a distinguished alumnus of North South University from BBA batch 2009. Mr. Adnan completed his undergraduate degree from NSU in 2014 having a dual major in Finance and Economics. He also received a Master's degree in Economics from North South University in 2017. In his professional life, Mr. Adnan has the experience of working with assorted national-multinational organizations like Grameen-phone, Telenor Digital, Radio Foorti, MGH Group, etc.

Although Mr. Adnan's academic expertise was in mathematics-based areas, his career orientation is diverse and mostly content creation oriented. Mr. Adnan's professional journey started with Radio Foorti, he joined the station as an intern but eventually got involved with the creative department. He shared

his exciting memories and experiences of working with Radio Foorti with the audience during the event. Mr. Adnan has been associated with Grameen-phone for a significant share of his career as well. While sharing the experience of his journey with Grameenphone, he especially mentioned the excel

lent workplace culture of the company. Mr. Adnan has had the opportunity to explore five different roles while working with GP and had exposure to international experience.

While talking about his professional experience, Mr. Adnan emphasized the importance of practical and detailed market research to collect knowledge about target audiences over and over again. He suggested to practice and develop such a practical and informative approach towards real life cases from one's undergraduate level. In this context, he especially mentioned three key soft skills that are essential to succeed in one's career, which are – communication, attitude, mindfulness.

As a remarkable alumnus of North South University, Mr. Adnan expressed his observations and insights about the academic structure, campus culture and range of opportunities of the university. He mentioned that NSU has so much to offer both in sense of opportunity and development; the academic and campus culture of the university systematically regulates students towards fair hard work and brings out the best of them by pushing them to the limits. Mr. Adnan also highly appreciated the exposure and global outreach the university unleashes for its students. He suggested the current students of NSU to grab every opportunity, explore every prospect and make the most out of their university life while they still can.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/2101284620027751>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 42

The forty-second episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on July 25, 2021. For this episode, we had Mr. Abdul Kawnain, an eminent alumnus of North South University from the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering, Batch 2011. Mr. Kawnain graduated from NSU specializing in power system engineering in 2016. Afterwards, he completed his Masters in the same subject area from Western Sydney University, Australia in 2018. Right after his postgraduate degree, he had the opportunity to join a manufacturing company of Australia as a graduate engineer. Later on, Mr. Kawnain worked with a number of renowned companies in Australia. Currently, he is working as the Operations Engineer, Power System Operation and Maintenance at Worley.

The event started with a brief introduction of Mr. Kawnain and proceeded forward with a discussion about his academic experiences abroad as well as professional journey so far. As he pursued his undergraduate degree from NSU and higher education in Australia, he has a clear perspective about the similarities and dissimilarities between the education systems of Bangladesh and Australia. According to his opinion, the education quality of NSU is up to the mark in comparison to the international universities. He mentioned the grading system of NSU to be more competitive compared to the Australian universities. There is a difference between the credit counting method of the national and international universities as well. However, he observed disparities in the lab facilities of NSU compared to the international universities.

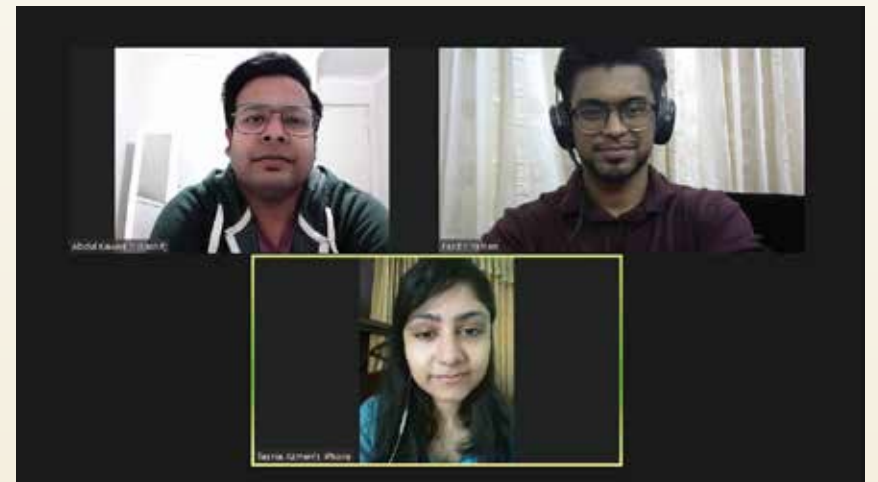
Moving further, Mr. Kawnain shared his career goal, experience and journey with the audience during the show. His current working area is the generation and transmission procedure of electricity. Mr. Kawnain's career goal is to specialize in his subject matter. To narrow down a bit more, his target is to work with renewable sources of energy. That being the goal, currently he is increasing his expertise in asset management and engineering. Furthermore, Mr. Kawnain aims to reach a supervisor position related to his interest and specializations.

In the latter part of the event, Mr. Kawnain shared memories and experiences from his NSU life. As for the reason to choose NSU for undergraduate degree, he mentioned the up-to-date curriculum and highly qualified faculty members of the university. He also participated in extracurricular activities while studying at NSU. Mr. Kawnain was involved with IEEE – an international engineering society chapter and actively participated in several international competitions and workshops through it. According to Mr. Kawnain, the most important takeaway from NSU for him was the learning of how to learn and absorb information.

As an alumnus of NSU, Mr. Kawnain suggested the current students of the university to ensure involvement in research work, publications, innovative projects as much as possible. Moreover, he suggested to attend selective online courses for essential skill development for a smooth career in the engineering field. Lastly, the guest appreciated the NSU Office of Alumni Affairs' initiatives and wished the best for the future initiatives.

To know more about the event, visit

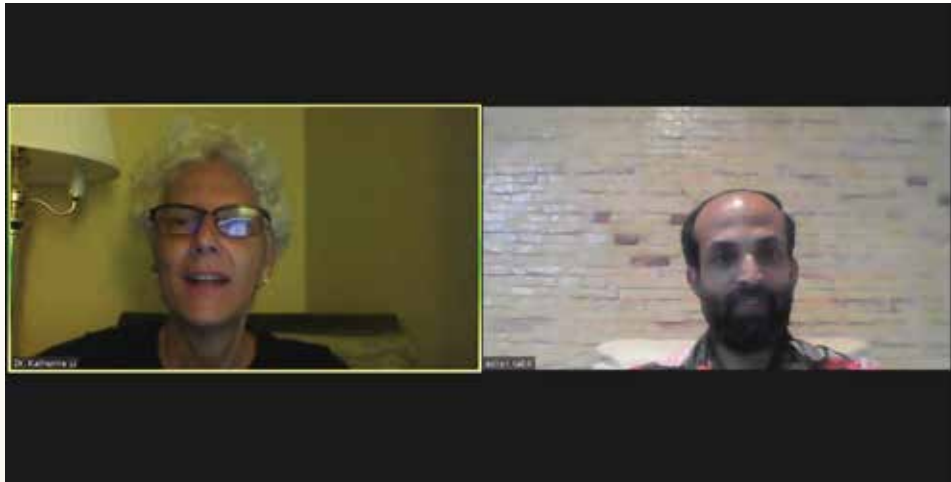
<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/153089710260929>



What's Your Story? Episode 2

The OEA continues to carry on with its new initiative as an extension of outreach to Bangladeshi Educators Abroad in the form of a talk show hosted by Dr. Katherine Li, Director, OEA. The name of it is, "What's Your Story?" The expected benefit to NSU students is to let them hear from successful Bangladeshis considered to be role models for young people as they consider their future possibilities. It is also an opportunity to create potential collaborative relationships with notable universities around the world where these honorable faculty members work. The second episode of the event was held on July 28, 2021 and for this episode we had Dr. Kabir Mamun.

Dr. Kabir Mamun is working as a Senior Lecturer at the University of the South Pacific (USP) and recently completed his role as the Deputy Head of School-Planning & Quality. Prior to this role, he has worked as Mechanical/Instrumentation Design Engineer at Sonex Metrology Ltd., Ireland a renowned metrology tools design company for the semiconductor industries. He has also worked as a Research Assistant at the School of Mechanical



and Manufacturing Engineering in the prestigious Dublin City University (DCU), Ireland. He completed his BSc in Mechanical Engineering from Islamic University of Technology (IUT), Bangladesh and achieved a scholarship (EU FP6 funded) from DCU to pursue his Research Masters in Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering and PhD in the field of Mechatronics and robotics application. His early professional career role was a Production Engineer at Sun Power Ceramic Industry in Bangladesh. He also worked as a Research Assistant at Dublin City University, Ireland. He is a member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and treasurer of IEEE (R10) Fiji subsection. Dr. Kabir has made a significant research contribution to the field of Energy, Mechatronics, Sensor & Instrumentation Design and so far has 60 plus peer reviewed publications including six (06) Patents, Book, Book chapters, Journal and conferences articles. He is also a member of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME).

Throughout the event, the guest shared his exciting journey and valuable insights with the audience. According to Dr. Kabir, determination and patience are the two key components of success. He emphasized exploring, being flexible and open to opportunities for improvement in life. He mentioned dedication, commitment and constancy as the primary qualities one must acquire in order to achieve any desired objective.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/207575334630636>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 43

The forty-third episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on July 29, 2021. The episode showcased Mr. Saqibur Rahman, a remarkable alumnus of North South University from the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE), Batch 2011. Mr. Rahman completed his undergraduate degree from NSU in 2016. Afterwards, he pursued his Master's from Macquarie University, Australia in Information Technology, Internetworking and Cyber Security. After finishing his higher studies, Mr. Rahman started his professional journey in Australia and has worked with renowned Australian organizations like Telstra, National Workforce, etc. Recently, he has joined Google and is working as an IT Resident with this Silicon Valley Company.

The event started with a lively discussion about Mr. Rahman's professional journey, subject area expertise and interests. Despite being an EEE student, he started to grow an interest for Information Technology and networking from his undergraduate days. Following this interest, he initially participated in some additional research and basic training in these fields and finally diverted his entire academic concentration towards IT through his postgraduate studies. While discussing his career, Mr. Rahman shared his working experience at Google. The inclusive working culture and environment is what he enjoys the most about Google. He mentioned the company to be very innovation and diversity-oriented, which makes its employees' job both extremely exciting and challenging.

During the event, Mr. Rahman briefly explained the specialties and future opportunities of his area of specialization. He referred to the Information Technology and Internetworking sector as one of the most innovative and ever-developing fields among tech-oriented areas. From his practical experience and observations, he assured that the IT sector has ample job opportunities for qualified candidates that will expand further in upcoming days. The qualifications that Mr. Rahman mentioned to be essential for any aspiring IT engineers are basic knowledge of coding languages, vital industrial certification, fundamental knowledge on key concepts, etc.

Rewinding time a bit, Mr. Rahman reminisced about his campus days at NSU and shared memories from his student life with our audience. He mentioned that he had chosen NSU for his undergraduate studies mostly relying on the positive reviews regarding education quality and opportunities of the university. Mr. Rahman enjoyed a very versatile campus time as he was a member of numerous extra-curricular clubs and had a diversified friend circle. He could build a fairly extensive network by actively participating in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. The guest also mentioned the motivating and inspiring attitude and teaching method of the respected faculties of the EEE Department. Moreover, he emphasized the role of NSU in his life by referring to it as the building block of knowledge, skills and networks that he has gained so far.

As a senior alumnus of NSU, Mr. Rahman shared some significant suggestions for the current students and recent graduates of the university. He emphasized a willingness toward constant learning in every aspiring engineer and suggested to always follow passion, absorb as much knowledge as possible and keep updated with the industry.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/242210427740425>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 44

The forty-fourth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on August 6, 2021. We had Ms. Marjia Yeasmin, a distinguished alumna of North South University from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Batch 1996 with us as our guest for this episode. Ms. Yeasmin completed her undergraduate degree in Computer Science from NSU in 2001 and had her Master's done at Monash University, Australia in the same subject. After



her postgraduate degree, she started her career in Australia and so far has worked with a number of Australian companies in her area of expertise. Recently, Ms. Yeasmin had a significant turn in her career as she has founded her own research and consultancy firm named ANRF Research and Consultancy Pty. Ltd. Alongside with working as the co-founder of her startup, she is also working part-time as consultant with different Australian organizations.

Ms. Yeasmin shared the journey and experience of her diversified career with the audience throughout the event. She mentioned that, although she started her professional journey in the technical line, she had been planning to start something of her own for quite a while. Her further plan with ANRF Research and Consultancy Pty Ltd. is to expand its operation in Bangladesh.

Throughout her professional life, Ms. Yeasmin performed in leadership roles for a significant period in the corporate sector, and later on, established herself as an entrepreneur. This journey has extended her insight and observation about female empowerment in different dimensions. While sharing her perception on this topic, she mentioned the existing imbalance regarding the male-female ratio in leadership roles. She referred to female empowerment as a continuous process and acknowledged that the opportunities for women have expanded and improved a lot but still have long way to go. She emphasized that sincere determination and willpower for continuing with the progress.

In the last portion of the event, Ms. Yeasmin shared memories and experiences from her NSU life. Her initial intention was to go abroad for her undergraduate studies but the international class education quality of NSU impacted her decision regarding choosing NSU over other international universities. She especially mentioned her sheer interest in computer science and thanked the cooperative and qualified faculties of the department for helping to bring out the best in her. Ms. Yeasmin also appreciated the grooming and cultural development that NSU ensures for its students through offering exposure to co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities.

As the most vital takeaway from NSU, the guest mentioned the advanced academic and practical knowledge, communication and presentation skills and confidence in herself to be the most impactful ones. For the current NSUers, she suggested to be optimistic and determined towards their target.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/583765429669119>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 45

The forty-fifth episode of NSU Alumni Talk Show was aired on August 10, 2021. The episode showcased Ms. Tanzina Giash Tanni, a distinguished alumna of North South University from the Department of Business Administration, batch 2009. Ms. Tanzina completed her undergraduate studies majoring in Human Resources Management (HRM) and Marketing in 2013. However, she chose HRM as her career path when she joined Airtel as Human Resources Management intern right after graduation. Later on, she worked with different multinational companies like Augmedix, Accenture, etc. in their HRM departments. Currently, Ms. Tanzina is associated with Banglalink as the Talent Acquisition Lead Specialist. She handles the important human resources activities like recruitment, Banglalink innovators program, MTO program, etc. in her current role.

Ms. Tanzina has seven years of experience working in the Human Resources Management Department in the corporate sector. According to her observation, HRM is a continuously developing industry. It has been massively digitalized throughout the past few years and is most likely to keep this trend going throughout future. She referred to the HRM department as one of the most supportive departments and actively associated it with the welfare of the employees of an organization.

As a fairly experienced HR professional, Ms. Tanzina mentioned that there are several significant qualities that the HR department prefers to check for any candidate while interviewing for recruitment, among which optimistic attitude, genuine interest, basic knowledge in subject areas are the most important ones. In this context, she pointed out some common mistakes that effect the candidates' impression negatively during an interview. The most often made mistakes in her opinion are – lack of preparation, overconfidence, poor self-representation, etc.

As the resume is a significant part of job applications and being an HR specialist, Ms. Tanzina's role is highly associated with resumes of job applicants, she shared some suggestions about resume preparation for the fresh graduates. She advised to keep the resume simple, formal and informative, neat and clean and to the point.

During the event, the guest also talked about her student life in NSU. Ms. Tanzina chose NSU for her undergraduate studies considering the education quality and high employment rate of the graduates of the university. Her campus life was diversified and eventful as she was engaged in several extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. She mentioned that choosing her major was a challenging and crucial decision of her undergraduate life. After exploring her interests and researching about the career opportunities, she decided to major in HRM. In her opinion, NSU had prepared her for the corporate life with practical knowledge, presentation, communication and interview skills which hugely impacted her career journey in a positive way. To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/540347857382270>



Collaboration Meeting with Flinders University, Australia



An online meeting was held between Flinders University, Australia and North South University, Bangladesh on August 10, 2021 at 09:00 AM Dhaka time as a part of the global outreach effort of the Office of External Affairs.

Dr. Courtney Ryder, Teaching Project Director, Indigenous Health College of Medicine and Public Health,

Dr. Hossein Afzali Associate Professor of Health Economics, Ms. Julie Inglis, Manager of International Recruitment and Engagement, Office of the Vice-President and Ms. Melissa Willoughby, Country Manager, International Recruitment, Flinders International were present from Flinders University. From North South University, Dr. Dipak Kumar Mitra, Professor and Chair, Department of Public Health, Dr. Ahmed Hossain, Professor and Director, NSU Global Health Institute, Dr. Katherine Li, Director External Affairs, and Dr. Hasanuzzaman, Assistant Director, External Affairs were present from North South University.



The meeting aimed to find mutual areas of collaboration for joint research, short exchange of students and faculty members in public health area.

NSU Signs a Research Collaboration Agreement with ideSHi



As a part of research activities extension procedure, North South University Genome Research Institute (NGRI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the institute for developing Science & Health initiatives (ideSHi) on August 16, 2021. The areas of the MoU will address ongoing public health concerns, promote collaborative research on genomic analysis of infectious diseases and facilitate collaborative research on cancer genomic and other non-communicable diseases. The agreement was signed by Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, North South University, Bangladesh and Dr. Firdausi Qadri, Chairman, institute for developing Science & Health initiatives (ideSHi), Bangladesh and

valid till July 31, 2024 which is extendable upon successful completion.

Collaboration Meeting with MacEwan University, Canada

An online collaboration meeting was held between the international office of MacEwan University, Canada and North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh on August 17, 2021.

MacEwan University, Canada is one of the partner universities of North South University. The existing MoU between NSU and MacEwan agrees upon several collaborative programs like student exchange, faculty exchange, research collaborations, etc. The meeting was held regarding the activation of a faculty exchange program as one of the faculty members of MacEwan University, Mr. Shahidul Islam proposed inviting a guest lecturer from NSU for some of his courses. He expects the guest faculty to speak on a topic from the Bangladeshi perspective for a limited period of time during selected classes.



After the relevant departments of NSU were notified about the prospect, the Department of Economics showed interest. Through discussion and meeting, it has been finalized that Dr. Sakib Bin Amin, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, NSU will be conducting lectures on Energy Economics as a guest lecturer at MacEwan University. The teaching method and consulting software used by MacEwan University has been also shared with the associates of the program from NSU.

Collaborative programs regarding faculty exchange have been conducted before with universities from Australia, Germany, India and some other countries, but this is the first time for NSU to execute such an initiative with MacEwan University, Canada. This program is expected to strengthen the connection

between the two universities and open up further opportunities of collaboration.

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 46

The forty-sixth episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on August 17, 2021. As our guest for this episode, we had Mr. Inzaman Akhtar Inzi, an alumnus of North South University, from Department of Business Administration (batch 2010). Inzi completed his undergraduate degree from NSU in

2013; afterwards, he pursued a Master's from the University of South Australia in Professional Accounting and Finance. He also has academic expertise in Chartered Accounting. He has the experience of working with several Australian and multinational companies like Commonwealth Bank, Deloitte etc. Currently, Inzi is associated with an Australian insurance company, Allianz as their Product Risk and Compliance Manager.

The discussion with Mr. Inzaman started with his career journey and future career plans. The guest mentioned that he started his career in non-financial or operational risk management and continued to proceed forward in the same sector. As the Risk and Compliance Manager of Allianz, Inzi works with the three key elements of the company which are— process, people and system. His role is to detect potential risks that can hamper the profitability of a company and suggest methods to control those. To succeed in the risk management sector, Mr. Inzaman suggested accumulating profound academic knowledge in the subject area. In this context, he also recommended a number of elementary as well as critical level courses on risk management available online.

In the latter part of the event, our guest shared some of the treasured memories from his NSU life. He was passionate about studying and building a career in the accounting and finance sector and prioritized universities based on the quality of Accounting and Finance Department while selecting an institution for undergraduate studies. Thus, his prime reason behind choosing NSU was education quality and qualified faculty members in his desired department. Moreover, the appreciation and acceptance of NSU graduates in the job market influenced his decision to enroll at NSU.

Mr. Inzaman mentioned his journey with NSU to be very lively and inspiring. According to him, the significant takeaways from NSU for him are confidence, public speaking skills, curriculum and most importantly, practical case-based knowledge. These lessons and experiences from NSU life influenced his career greatly. As an alumnus of NSU, he passed some suggestions to the current students and recent graduates of NSU. He advised them to participate in as many extra-curricular activities, competitions, etc. as possible throughout their undergraduate life. He also emphasized acquiring some part-time job or internship experiences during one's student life.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/370593344582671>



Information Session with Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey



North South University's Office of External Affairs organized an online information session with Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey (OMU). Professor Mustafa Said, the Head of International Relations Office, Mr. Birol Kurt, International Coordination Coordinator, International Relations Office, Dr. Ismail Yaman, the Erasmus Institutional Coordinator and Mr. Tolga Arslan, Lecturer, OMU School of Foreign Languages were present as speakers and represented Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey during the event. From North South University, Ambassador Shahidul Haque, Professorial Fellow, SPPG, and Dr. Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs were present in the session. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and was shared via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.

The session started with a brief introduction of the guests followed by an earnest greeting and warm welcome speech by Professor Mustafa Said. Afterward, the floor was passed to Mr. Ismail Yaman who briefed about several collaboration programs, especially the exchange programs that OMU avails for its partner institutions. He mentioned that the university hosts exchange opportunities for undergrad, postgrad, teaching, and administrative staff and they have been offering these programs for quite a long period of time.

After Mr. Yaman, Mr. Tolga Arslan took over the stage and presented a brief overview of Ondokuz Mayıs University, Turkey. The university was established in 1975 and since its inception, it has been one of the leading universities of Turkey in terms of staff quality and number, academic and social facilities, and infrastructure. OMU has 19 academic faculties under which, nearly 128 graduate programs are offered to the students. The university also emphasizes research programs and runs 24 advanced research centers to facilitate the research activities. It is highly ranked nationally and internationally for excellence in education quality and student welfare-oriented administrative arrangements. Thus, the university has been one of the top choices for international students throughout the years and around 5,833 international students from nearly 114 countries are currently pursuing their higher education at OMU. The university ensures a secure environment and accommodation for the international students and facilitates them with necessary support and care.



As the event focused on the international collaboration opportunities and programs, the guests focused on discussing the various exchange programs that OMU facilitates. One of the university's most exclusive exchange programs is the Erasmus exchange program. The university has been running this program since 2004. During the event, the speakers elaborately explained the program and the partnerships, offers, and courses that fall under it. They also mentioned the cost structure and time schedules for participating in this program to the audience. Lastly, the guests expressed their interest to establish a partnership with NSU and proposed further discussion and consideration about possible collaboration opportunities.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/364585835155795>

What's Your Story? Episode 3



The third episode of 'What's Your Story' was aired on August 21, 2021 and for this episode we had Dr. Sohel Azad as our guest.

Dr. Sohel Azad is currently working as a Senior Lecturer in Finance at Deakin Business School (AACSB and EQUIS accredited), where he joined as Lecturer in Finance in 2011. He obtained his PhD in Finance from Monash University (AACSB accredited) in 2012. Previously, Dr Azad held teaching and research positions at various universities in Australia, Bangladesh, Japan and UAE. He was a Visiting Research Fellow at Kobe Gakuin University in Japan and the American University of Sharjah in the UAE. He earned an MSc in Development Economics from Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (Japan) with the highest CGPA among the graduating class and a Bachelor's and a Master's of Business Administration (Finance) with first classes from the University of

Chittagong, Bangladesh. Dr Azad has presented his research papers in various well-regarded economics and finance seminars and conferences in many countries including Australia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Saudi Arab, UK, USA, UAE and Vietnam, among others. He published more than 30 scholarly articles in highly rated economics and finance journals and book chapters. His research interests include Islamic finance and banking, corporate finance, innovation, asset pricing and financial contagion, etc. He received many international research grants, travel grants, fellowships, scholarships, and awards. Dr Sohel Azad has received the Australian Award for University Teaching Award in 2018 and Deakin University Vice-Chancellor Award for teaching in 2017. He is a regular presenter of Deakin's showcase Trading Room to new students, domestic and foreign visitors.

Throughout the event, Dr. Azad shared enlightening insights with the audience. According to him, hard work, self-motivation, goal orientation, satisfaction and honest intention are the key components of success and peace in life. He emphasized discipline in every aspect of one's life as well. Dr. Azad also encouraged the audience members to pursue the sustainable development goals as they are likely to be most effective in long run to impact the future positively. As for himself, his further goal in life is to contribute for the society's cause as much as he can.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/235427525128856>

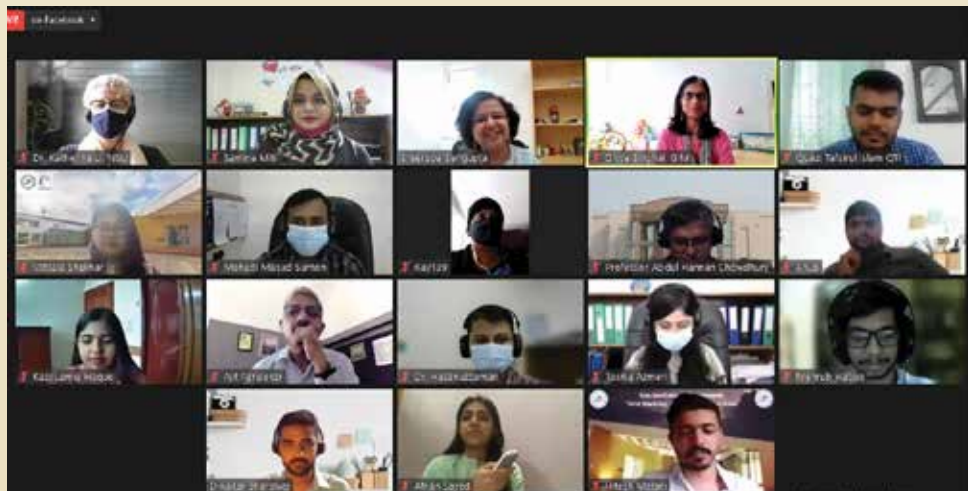
NSU-GIM Joint Student Project Closing Ceremony

A joint research project was initiated between the Centre of Social Sensitivity and Action (CSSA), Goa Institute of Management, India (GIM) and the Center for Peace Studies (CPS), South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG), North South University, Bangladesh (NSU) in April, 2021. The conducted research was on Responsible workplace: inclusion and diversity in organizations according to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A number of students and faculty members from both the institutes were involved with the program and the research project has just successfully concluded. In this regard, a virtual closing ceremony was held on August 24, 2021 in the presence of all the participants and facilitators of the project from both universities.



The closing ceremony was hosted by Dr. Sreerupa Sengupta, Assistant Professor, Goa Institute of Management, India. Professor Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Dean, School of Business and Economics, Dr. Katherine Li, Director, External Affairs and Advisor of CPS, Mr. Quazi Tafsirul Islam, Lecturer, Department of Management and Ms. Samina Alam Miti, International Affairs Officer were present in the ceremony from North South University. Dr. Divya Singhal, Professor and Chairperson, Centre for Social Sensitivity and Action and Dr. Sreerupa Sengupta, Assistant Professor, GIM and Dr. Ajit Parulekar, Director, GIM were present from the Goa Institute of Management. Alongside the administrative body members and faculty members, the students involved in the research project also attended the event.

Dr. Sengupta started the ceremony by introducing the attendees of the events and extended a warm welcome to all the associates of the joint project present in the event. After a brief and precise introduction of the agenda, expectations and deliverables of the project, she moved on to presenting the certificates of completion for the participating students and acknowledged their contributions successfully completing the project.



Afterwards, the students were invited one by one to have the floor to share their thoughts and experiences regarding their participation in the research program. They talked about the observations, learnings, practical and industry-based experiences that they acquired through this opportunity. All of them mentioned the intercultural communication and teamwork opportunity that this project exposed them to. Besides the accomplishments, the students also casted light upon some boundaries and difficulties they had to face during conduction of the research, most of which was because of the ongoing world-wide pandemic.

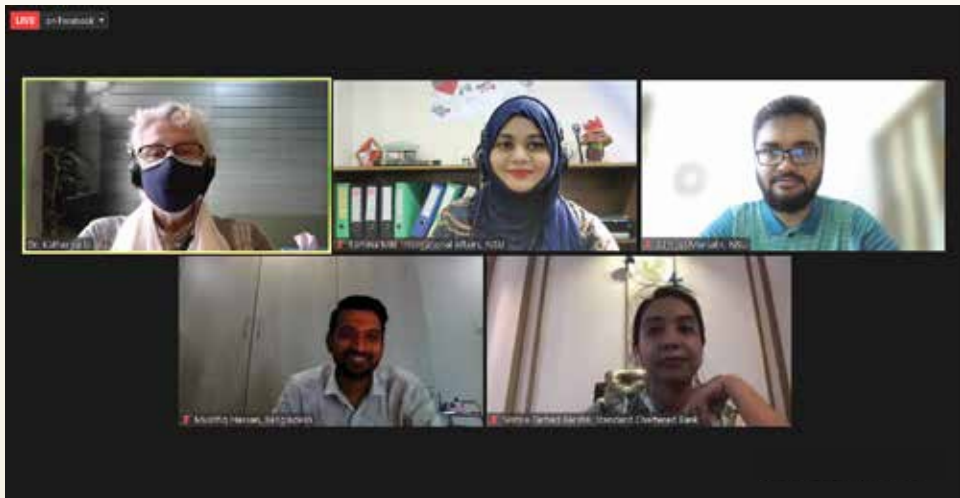
The event proceeded forward with short speeches from the administrative

body members and faculty members associated with the program. All of them conveyed their heartiest appreciation and gratitude for such a collaborative initiative and congratulated the students on the success of the project. They deeply praised the dedication of the participants and inspired more of such collaborative initiative between the two institutes. Professor Hannan especially appreciated the student engagement opportunities and alignment of academics with industry-based research that such collaborative programs inspire. He also suggested some proper documentation of the experience and achievements of this research program, in form of publication if possible.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/1344812685914211>

Study Abroad: Roadmap to Your Dream



North South University's Office of External Affairs organized an online session in collaboration with EducationUSA and Standard Chartered Bank on August 25, 2021. As the speaker, we had Mr. Mushfiq Hassan, EducationUSA Advisor and the Outreach Coordinator for the USA Embassy Dhaka Bangladesh and Ms. Sinthia Farhad Barsha, Market Products Specialist, Standard Chartered Bank, Dhaka, Bangladesh. We also had Mr. Samuel Mursalin, Lecturer, Department of Management and the Coordinator of NSU Startup Next at North South University as a guest for the event. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and was shared via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.

The event started with a warm welcome from the Office of External Affairs, NSU and a brief introduction of the attendees of the meeting. Afterwards, the floor was passed to Mr. Samuel Mursalin, an alumnus of North South University, Bangladesh and Johns Hopkins University, USA. Mr. Mursalin shared his journey of pursuing a postgraduate degree abroad starting from the preparation process to successful completion in his preferred program. He repeatedly emphasized selecting suitable programs and starting planning early to apply for higher studies abroad. He also suggested prioritizing the quality of the statement of purpose (SoP) while processing applications as the international universities critically scrutinize SoPs during the admission process.

The second speaker of the event, Mr. Mushfiq Hassan gave an overview of the activities and facilities provided by EducationUSA through a precise and informative slide presentation. Like the previous speaker, Mr. Mursalin, he also stressed choosing an appropriate program, starting to plan with sufficient time in hand, and preparing an outstanding SoP. In this context, he mentioned that EducationUSA consults with students to find the right fit for them in accordance with their preferences and background. He also presented an overview of offered programs, application deadlines, requirements, and procedures of renowned universities of the USA. Moreover, Mr. Hassan suggested some standard structures of formatting one's SoP. He especially mentioned their upcoming initiative – Graduate Virtual Fair 2021 and encouraged the viewers to attend the education fair.

Finally, the floor was passed to Ms. Barsha, who elaborately explained the financial support programs and plans availed to students by Standard Chartered Bank. She mentioned their student file program which is designed as a legal channel of payment to take care of the financial matters, transaction, etc. of the students who intend to study abroad. In this context, Ms. Barsha informed about the required documents and standard procedure for opening a student file at Standard Chartered Bank in detail.

The informative and lively event ended with an interactive Q&A session where the aspirant students asked several questions to our speakers. Lastly, the attendees of the event shared their thoughts about the overall session and experience. Dr. Katherine Li delivered an ending remark thanking all the guests for their cooperation and participation.

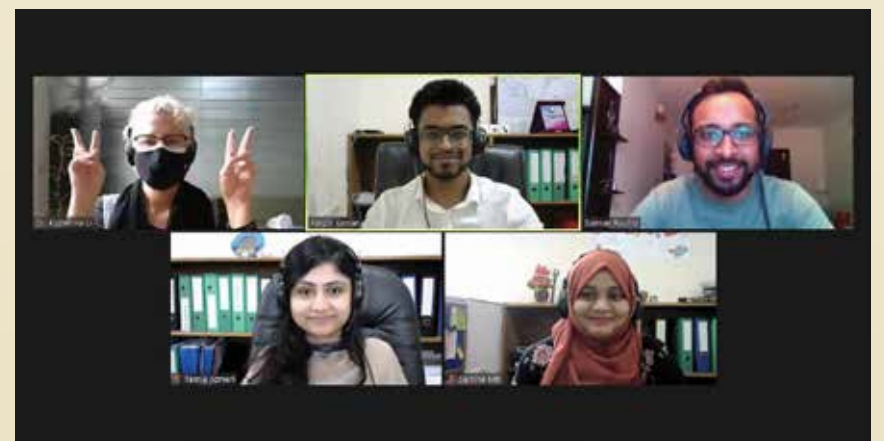
To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/278771480268969>

NSU Alumni Talk Show Episode 47

The forty-seventh episode of the NSU Alumni Talk Show aired on August 26, 2021. As our guest, we had Md. Salman Rashid, a distinguished alumnus of North South University from Department of Business Administration, batch 2007. Mr. Rashid graduated from NSU in 2011 and pursued MBA at Hult International Business School, Cambridge. His professional journey so far is mostly corporate; so far, he has worked with renowned national and multinational companies like bKash, Reckitt, Uber, etc. Currently, Mr. Rashid is working as the Head of Operations of Pandamart, the online delivery platform of Foodpanda.

The conversation started with a discussion about Mr. Rashid's current workplace and job role as Head of Operations. He mentioned that the primary promise of Pandamart is quick delivery of everyday essentials to their customers. As the operations of this platform are highly customer demand oriented, Pandamart faces several challenges in term of logistics and supply chain management. The operations of inventory management and timely delivery can be quite challenging at times too, especially during the lockdown situation.



Mr. Rashid has been associated with the corporate sector of Bangladesh for quite a while now and so he has a wide experience and some valu

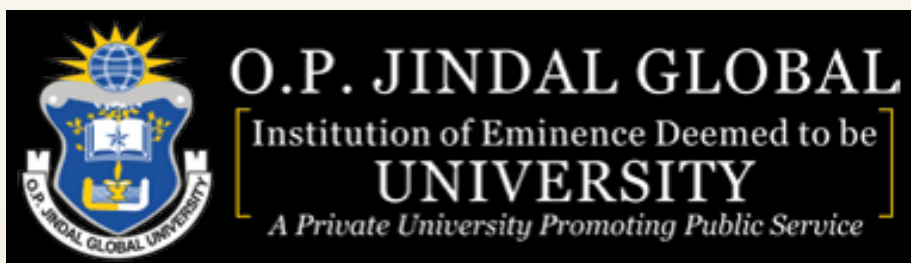
able insights about this sector. Based on his observation, the key skills that he mentioned for career buildup are logical and rational thinking, fast, effective and data driven decision making and decisiveness. These qualities can boost ones' career, whether they are in the corporate sector or as an entrepreneur. In this context, he mentioned that the common challenges that most startups face are regarding external challenges like regularity alignment, understanding with partners, fulfilling key promises of the venture, and living up to customer expectations, etc.

Moving back a little from Mr. Rashid's professional life to his student life, the discussion proceeded towards the memories and experiences of his NSU days. Mr. Rashid said that his reason behind choosing NSU for undergraduate degree was the education quality and the appreciation of NSU graduates in job market. As he joined NSU, gradually he realized that not only the education quality of NSU is internationally standardized, but also it offers the students an extended exposure to the industry and practical work field. He believes that the most excellent characteristics of NSU are experiential teaching and vigilant learning. The practical knowledge and networking opportunities acquired from this university are the most important take-aways for him from his undergraduate life. As an experienced alumnus of NSU, he suggested to the current students and recent graduates of the university to always hold a positive attitude, be flexible to changes and move forward with confidence.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/534485390990729>

Information Session with O.P. Jindal Global University, India



North South University's Office of External Affairs organized an online information session with the O.P. Jindal Global University, India on August 31, 2021. Mr. Akhil Bhardwaj, Joint Director, Office of International Affairs and Global Initiatives at O.P. Jindal Global University was present as the speaker and represented the university during the webinar. The interactive session was conducted through Zoom and was shared via Facebook Live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.

The event began with a heartfelt greeting to the attendees and audience of the event followed by an informative introduction presentation from the guest. During his brief presentation, Mr. Bhardwaj informed us about the inception, evolution, activities, and goals of O.P. Jindal Global University, India. He started off by mentioning the campus of the university and explained its locations and specialty in short. The comparatively young university has achieved a positive reputation in the sense of teaching quality, research opportunities, and advanced faculties among both Indian and international universities. It is already setting benchmarks regarding multidisciplinary progress and achievements in national and international platforms.

O.P. Jindal Global University is a completely residential university. Around 8,000 students are currently studying at the university in different programs under 12 distinct Schools. Each of these distinctive Schools offers unique, popular, and timely courses and programs for undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral-level students and research aspirants. The university emphasizes interdisciplinary research projects and publications, thus it runs 60 highly equipped and advanced research centers.

O.P. Jindal Global University is one of the best in India in the sense of qualified faculty members, academic excellence, and overall administrative integrity. The university highly prioritizes internationalization and is very enthusiastic about any opportunity for international collaboration. As a result, more than 500 international students enroll in different programs annually from almost 300 partner universities around the world. The university also hosts a significant number of international faculties from more than 37 countries of the world. Mr. Bhardwaj informed the audience about their global education system – international portfolio and programs, global networks, cross-border mobility programs in detail during the event.

The last segment of Mr. Bhardwaj's presentation consisted of glimpses of the campus, classrooms, labs, research centers, etc. of O.P. Jindal Global University. He especially mentioned the intensity of their on-campus security and assured everyone that the campus is completely safe for the students, regardless of their background and nationality. Lastly, he explained the digital infrastructure of the university in brief.

The event ended with an interactive Q&A session where the guest took questions from the audience.

To know more about the event, visit

<https://www.facebook.com/OEANSU/videos/252708093246453>



Faculty Feature

Born and raised in Hong Kong, Raymond Kwun-Sun Lau holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Queensland, Australia. He worked as a lecturer in History at Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) before joining the Department of Political Science and Sociology at North South University as Assistant Professor in September 2021. His teaching and research interests include international relations, international history, especially after World War II, genocide and mass atrocities, R2P, Africa-China relations, Chinese foreign policy and Hong Kong politics. He is the author of Responding to Mass Atrocities in Africa: Protection First and Justice Later (London & New York: Routledge, 2022).

Interviewer: Dr. Lau, why did you choose Political Science as your field of study?

Dr. Lau: I have always thought that the study of Politics/ Political Science is exciting because people disagree (or it can be said we agree to disagree). This is exactly the disagreement about the wide variety of theoretical approaches and schools of thought that I found the study of this academic discipline fascinating. Also, the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from Britain to China has triggered my interest (as a Hong Konger) in politics. This has prompted me to think deeply about the discussion and debate surrounding good governance, policymaking and implementation within the Hong Kong government, as well as Hong Kong's relationship with London and Beijing.

Interviewer: Tell us about your experience doing your PhD at the University of Queensland.

Dr. Lau: My experience of doing my PhD at the University of Queensland was never meant to be smooth sailing. It took me nearly one and half years before I could get my PhD candidature confirmed, because of some major changes I made to my PhD thesis topic (as suggested by my PhD supervisor). Also, the fact that UQ just wouldn't let me do conflict zones field trips in Africa for my case studies chapters had complicated my data collection process. Still, under the guidance of my PhD supervisor, I could complete my PhD dissertation eventually by relying on conducting archival research and accessing to secondary sources.

Interviewer: What made you decide to join North South University?

Dr. Lau: I was once invited to give a paper presentation at an International Webinar organized by the Center for Peace Studies (CPS) on the 75th anniversary of the UN in September 2020. This was my very first webinar experience with the tertiary institutions in Bangladesh. I found my intellectual exchange/ encounters with Bangladeshi scholars to be a very valuable experience. Since then, I have gotten a strong feeling that it is time for me to progress my academic career to the next level. Being inspired by Helen Keller's 'life is a daring adventure or nothing at all' philosophy, I've made up my mind to resign from my faculty position in Hong Kong and joined North South University.

Interviewer: What did you know about Bangladesh before you arrived?

Dr. Lau: The three things that come across my mind about Bangladesh is: 1) This country is one of the five fastest growing economies in the world; 2) Dhaka University (DU), the most prestigious university in Bangladesh, gained a reputation as the 'Oxford of the East' during its early years and has made a significant contribution to the modern history of Bangladesh; 3) The people of this country had fought very hard for the right to speak in Bangla as their mother tongue before gaining independence.

Interviewer: Tell us more about your research interests.

Dr. Lau: My research interests lie primarily in the area of international politics/international relations since 1945, Africa-China relations, genocide and mass atrocities, R2P, International Criminal Justice, Chinese foreign policy and Hong Kong Politics. My first single-authored book, entitled 'Responding to Mass Atrocities in Africa: Protection First and Justice Later', will be published by Routledge (in the series of Routledge Studies in African Development) by December this year.

Interviewer: What kind of research do you hope to do while you are at North South University?

Dr. Lau: I am planning to extend my research interests into Bangladesh's foreign policy and diplomacy in particular and the changing geopolitical landscape of South Asia in general. I will also make use of my stay at North South University to conduct in-depth research into the geopolitics, the responses of the Bangladesh government and international society to the Rohingya crisis.

Interviewer: Describe your teaching philosophy.

Dr. Lau: As an historically oriented political scientist, my philosophy of teaching revolves around Nelson Mandela's conviction that "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". The task of education in general and teachers in particular, as I believe, is to encourage students to escape his or her self-incurred tutelage and, therefore, to be able to nurture healthy skepticism about what one knows and a greater awareness of what one doesn't know. My main teaching goal, therefore, is to encourage students to develop their confidence, to speak up, to conduct research skillfully, and to advance their knowledge by taking into account different and opposing views.



Alumni Feature



Dr. M S Raunak *Raunak is the valedictorian of the very first graduating class of North South University. He currently works for the U.S. Government as a computer scientist at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the Department of Commerce (DoC). NIST is one of the top national research institutes in the U.S., which boasts having five Nobel laureates. Before joining NIST in 2020, he was a tenured Associate Professor and the department chair of computer science at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore, MD, USA.*

Academic Background and Research: *Dr. Raunak received his M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from University of Massachusetts Amherst under the supervision of Prof. Leon J. Osterweil. His primary research interest involves verification and validation of 'difficult-to-test' systems. His recent work has focused on developing metrics, tools, and methodology for finding bugs and providing assurance for cryptographic algorithms, complex simulation models, autonomous vehicles, and other artificial intelligence and machine learning systems. He is also investigating ways to make AI algorithms more explainable. Dr. Raunak has authored more than 40 peer reviewed papers, articles, and book chapters. His work has been published in top conference and journals including IEEE Transactions on Software Engineering (IEEE TSE), IEEE Transactions on Reliability (IEEE TR), and ACM SIGMETRICS. He is the guest editor of the*

upcoming special issue of IEEE Software on Explainable AI and Machine Learning.

After finishing his Ph.D. from UMass Amherst, he immediately joined Loyola University Maryland and taught there for 12 years. He has also taught at Mount Holyoke College. Dr. Raunak took a break between his M.S. and Ph.D. studies, and went back to Bangladesh and taught at North South University for a few years. During that time, Dr. Raunak also dabbled in entrepreneurship and founded a start-up in Bangladesh named Bangla2000.com. Shortly after the turn of this millennium, before services like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, or twitter came into existence, Bangla2000 served as the largest information and communication portal of the nation.

Dr. Raunak considers teaching at NSU as one of the best periods of his career. He found his passion for teaching during that time and was immensely popular amongst his students. While teaching at NSU, Dr. Raunak also provided consulting and advisory services to the Government of Bangladesh, Bangladesh Army, BRRJ, and other institutions. He was also the primary contributor in designing the computer science curriculum of BRAC University when it went for UGC approval.

Life at NSU: *Dr. Raunak is from the very first batch (931) of North South University. He attended NSU after graduating with distinction from Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School (CRLS) in Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA. At CRLS, he was awarded the National Honor Society membership for demonstrating excellence in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. As a student at NSU, he was highly involved in many cultural and extracurricular activities. Dr. Raunak brought out the very first Bangla Student magazine, Kothon, on the eve of 'Pohela Boishakh' in 1993. He was instrumental in organizing many activities including picnics, yearly cultural programs, debate-competition, and other student-life related activities. During the early days of the university, Dr. Raunak also worked as a student-worker at the registrar's office and played an important role in assisting the operations of the registrar's office. On the academic front, Dr. Raunak was one of the recipients of the very first Presidents' Award in 1994 for his academic achievement. On December 18, 1996 Dr. Raunak attended the commencement ceremony as the valedictorian of the first set of graduates of North South University. His commencement speech is still remembered by many students, teachers, parents, and administrators present that day as an awe-inspiring elocution.*

Life after NSU: *Graduating from North South University, Dr. Raunak worked as an IT officer at Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC), Dhaka. As the first batch graduates of the very first private university of the country, Dr. Raunak and others were able to create a very positive impression about the quality of Private University graduates, which went a long way in establishing and sustaining the private university sector in the country. Before leaving for USA with a scholarship to pursue graduate studies at University of Massachusetts Amherst, Dr. Raunak briefly studied MBA at Institute of Business Administration (IBA) at Dhaka University. There too, he was able to maintain academic excellence as a testament of the quality of private university education.*

Dr. Raunak lives in Maryland, USA with his wife and two children. His wife, Dr. Anjuman Islam, is an environmental engineer with a Ph.D. in Civil and Environmental Engineering from UMass Amherst and an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering from BUET. She works for DC Water, where her responsibilities include ensuring the water quality standards of the capital of USA.

Interviewer: Please describe the feeling that you had being the valedictorian of the very first graduating class of North South University.

Dr. M S Raunak: Giving the valedictory speech at the very first convocation of the very first private university of Bangladesh is definitely one of the fondest memories of my life. I still cherish it. I said in my speech, "... for better or for worse, my friends, WE ARE part of history!" I truly felt that way. It was an

immensely proud and joyful moment. I also understood that it was my responsibility to not only articulate our gratitude towards our parents, our teachers, and our beloved institution, NSU, but also to remind everyone of the responsibilities that would continue to lie both on us and on our Alma Mater. We had to succeed in our careers for NSU and NSU had to continue to be a top class university for the sake of its graduates.

Interviewer: You worked at NSU as both a student-worker and then faculty member. Tell us about your experience being in the position of serving students as opposed to being a student at NSU.

Dr. M S Raunak: I had the unique opportunity to help run the operations at the Registrar's Office at the very beginning of NSU's journey. Nothing was quite in place yet at that time. Even as student workers, we had to do a lot of different things and we had to improvise on many occasions. There was a brief period when we did everything starting from scheduling to student counseling to course registration. One of my jobs was to talk to parents interested in admitting their children at NSU. I used to describe the NSU concept, its strengths, and the whole idea of an American-style education. Some of my NSU friends and juniors still believe that the only reason they got admitted to NSU is because I convinced their parents about this new private university without any campus or established track record.

I also taught as a young faculty member at NSU between 2000 and 2002. It is one of the more memorable times of my career. I really enjoyed teaching at NSU, especially the interaction with the students. I am still in touch with many of my NSU students from that period all around the globe. It was my teaching time at NSU that convinced me to go back and do my Ph.D. and to start an academic career. In addition to teaching courses, I advised a number of students on their Senior projects. Some of these projects resulted in research publications. I always had an open door policy in my office and interacted with my students both in class and outside the classroom. Advising students about their potential careers paths and higher education was a part of my job that I enjoyed a lot.

Interviewer: Tell us more about your primary research interest which involves verification and validation of 'difficult-to-test' systems.

Dr. M S Raunak: Software systems have become ubiquitous. They encompass every aspect of our lives. These software systems are also becoming more and more complex every day. Verification and validation refer to a large umbrella of activities that include both ensuring that we have built the software correctly without errors (verification) as well as assuring that we have built the right system, i.e. what the customer or end-user really needed (validation). One important aspect of constructing correct and reliable software is to systematically test them to discover any errors or vulnerabilities that may be present in the software. When you test a software, you need to specify what the correct output or behavior for a given input or configuration is. For example, if you program a calculator and you ask it to compute 2 raised to the power 3 (2^3), you expect the program to produce 8 as its output. Knowing the correct expected output for a program is called having a "test oracle". You can easily set up testing for programs for which test oracles exist. But there are many complex programs for which no test oracle exists or building a test oracle may be infeasible. Many artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) algorithms, scientific computations, cryptographic implementations, and simulation models are examples of such systems. Often these types of software are termed as 'non-testable'. In my research, I work on developing systematic approaches to test such complex, 'non-testable' systems. I also work on measuring the strength of test suites such that we can provide some level of assurance for a software to be reliable or trustworthy.

Interviewer: In what ways are you working to make AI algorithms more explainable?

Dr. M S Raunak: From facial recognition to self-driving cars, we are increasingly relying more on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning algorithms. However, these algorithms and systems are usually complex and opaque in nature. The opacity in AI's decision making process makes it harder to make them trustworthy or reliable. Underscoring the importance of these systems, on December 03, 2020, the White House issued an executive order to promote "the use of trustworthy AI in the Federal Government". Amongst other directives, the executive order articulated that federal "agencies shall ensure that the operations and outcomes of their AI applications are sufficiently understandable by subject matter experts, users, and others, as appropriate." Being a Scientist at one of the top federal research institutes, this has now become a focus area of our research. The research area of Explainable AI (XAI) is relatively new and rapidly growing. In our approach, we look into the different attributes and their interactions present in the data that goes into training as well as testing an AI algorithm, and use those interactions to explain the likely contributors behind a particular classification decision.

Interviewer: Please tell us more about your National Honor Society membership. How did that experience influence your outlook?

Dr. M S Raunak: National Honor Society (NHS) is a nationwide honors society established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in 1921. 2021 marks the centennial year of its establishment. NHS members are nominated by their high school teachers based on four criteria: scholarship (academic achievement), leadership, service, and character. In my case, my AP (advanced placement) Physics teacher nominated me and with other teachers' recommendation, I was awarded the membership. I didn't even know about my nomination or recommendation until it was awarded.

It was highly prestigious to wear the special NHS insignia at my high school convocation. In addition to academic excellence, NHS encourages and prepares its members to grow and spend their lives focused on service, leadership, and character. Numerous NHS members have gone on to become successful politicians (US Senators, Congressmen, President), CEOs, as well as prominent athletes, journalists, and media personalities.

Interviewer: Can you tell us more about your experience working as an IT officer at Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC)?

Dr. M S Raunak: HSBC started its operation with a single branch in Dhaka some time in 1996. As a global bank, they had a sophisticated technological setup, which required a strong IT department. All their operations were run on IBM mainframes physically located in Hong Kong. We had direct satellite communication and ran banking applications by remotely logging onto the AS400 mainframes in the overseas head office.

Interestingly, three of the first batch computer science graduates of NSU joined HSBC during its early years in Bangladesh. The first to join HSBC amongst us was Sharmin Reehman, who is currently working in Singapore as the Head of Business Development and Technology of New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. Additionally, K M Nafiur Rahman and I joined soon thereafter to develop some in-house banking software as well as to run their daily IT operations. It was an excellent experience for us all. I should mention that getting hired at HSBC was a highly competitive process with multiple levels of written and oral interviews. We managed to compete and came atop many other top public university applicants to land the positions. From the very beginning, we created a highly positive impression in the market about our competence and professionalism as NSU graduates.

International Student Feature

I am Eid Omar Ahmed from Somaliland. Currently, I live in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and I am a student at North South University, in the Department of Law. I did my primary and secondary education in Hargeisa, the capital city of Somaliland, and I finished my SSC in 2013-2014. Then I joined the business sector and I was a shop owner until 2017. Besides business and studies, I used to watch football games, read the news about soccer and I was a good listener of the Holy Qur'an, Sometimes music as well. Moreover, I was familiar with the participation in educational and political debates. Currently, I like to read books and newspapers about politics and leadership. Additionally, I discuss the political scenarios which are happening in my country and around the world. Lastly, I enjoy reading articles and books related to my field.



Interviewer: After completing your higher secondary studies from your home country, what factors influenced you to move out of Somaliland and choose Bangladesh for higher studies?

Eid Omar Ahmed: During my secondary studies, I planned to pursue my undergraduate and postgraduate studies abroad, as I convinced myself that my country's education is less developed than others and also to gain experience. Additionally, the reason that I chose Bangladesh was getting a visa was easy and also there were some of my friends who were in Bangladesh, especially at North South University. I contacted them and they gave me some information about Bangladesh and they advised me to come to Bangladesh.

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

Eid Omar Ahmed: I had friends at North South University and they gave me detailed information about the university. I personally visited the university's website and I found anything related to the university. Then I decided to come and study here.

Interviewer: What motivated you to pursue an undergraduate degree in the Department of Law?

Eid Omar Ahmed: Law was my passion since my school tenure, and I had an interest in working and advocating for human rights as my country's justice system was not running well. Moreover, I have seen many cases in which people were complaining about a lack of justice. That was also another primary reason which led me to be a student of law and solve these issues.

Interviewer: What are your future plans for your higher studies as well as career once you complete undergraduate degree?

Eid Omar Ahmed: When I finish my undergraduate studies, I will immediately start my postgraduate studies in LLM and I will do in my career either in the political sphere in my country or practice law in order to work and serve my people.

Interviewer: Like you mentioned, you have an interest in politics. Do you have any plan to serve political causes in any way in the future?

Eid Omar Ahmed: Politics and law are two of my passions. So, definitely I will be part of political cases happening in my country specifically and political analysis in general.

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

Eid Omar Ahmed: Absolutely outstanding, as the university is one of the leading private universities in Bangladesh, the quality, culture and its academic structure are well furnished. Moreover, as a foreign student, I liked how the NSU team, whether the staff, faculties or students, have been hospitable to me.

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 classes with us.


Eid Omar Ahmed: Covid-19 became a worldwide catastrophe and the way North South University handled its academic activities was well mannered. And it's a good way for coping and preventing the educational gap which we could have faced as students. Thus, now I have become fully adapted to this online system. The only thing that I miss now is the physical classes, interactions with the students and faculty, as well as the NSU environment as a whole.


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

Eid Omar Ahmed: Dear NSU Applicants, Welcome to one of the top private universities in Bangladesh. Being a member of the North South University family is a glory and opportunity which everybody may not have. Moreover, as a foreign applicant, it's a convenient place because the English language is the academic language of the university. So, basically, you need to build your English base in order to adapt to the new environment, which is good for you!



**Office
of External
Affairs**

 880(2)-55668200

 880(2)-55668202

 oea@northsouth.edu

 <http://institutions.northsouth.edu/oea>

 Office of External Affairs, Level #5,
Administrative Building, North South University,
Dhaka, Bangladesh