



# NSU NEWS

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Published for and by the NSU Community



**North South University**  
*Center of Excellence in Higher Education*



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The pandemic's hardship and challenges spilled into January and February 2021, extending the somber gloom well into the new year. The NSU family adapted to the new normal and proceeded with activities maintaining all safety guidelines.

While the pandemic may have diminished the celebrations, it never halted the community's achievements. These silver linings within the all-encompassing gloom reassured all that we can continue to rise together.

Leading this rise, our International Advisory Board (IAB) member, Professor Dr. M. Zahid Hasan, has been awarded the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award by the US Department of Energy in a ceremony held on January 19, 2021. Our student Dibya Joyti, of North South University's Bachelor of Science in Economics, was selected to portray the character of young Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the Bangla biopic titled Bangabandhu. The entire NSU family shared the excitement of both achievements.

In late February, the community gathered to commemorate the martyrs of the 1952 Language Movement, which was followed by a virtual discussion session on International Mother Language Day 2021. Earlier in the month, NSU welcomed its first-year students during the Spring Orientation. The virtual orientation program was broadcasted live on the official Facebook page of NSU, the official YouTube page, the NSU website, and DBC News TV Channel.

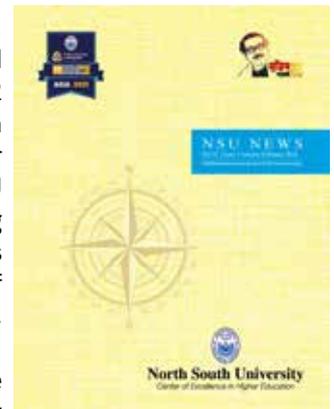
These events and many more took place in the safety of our homes and office rooms, bound only by the spirit of this community. In a similar manner, February ushered in Boshonto Utshob 1427, which was also celebrated virtually with the "zoomosphere" lighting up in colors and livening up with music, a much-needed repose from the onslaught of Covid-19.

Four technology-based startups, building scalable solutions to turn some of society's biggest problems into opportunities, have graduated from the inaugural cohort of NSU Startups Next (NSUSN), a startup incubator established to shape and support and create the next generation of founders. To celebrate the success of the graduate startups and the launch of the next cohort, NSUSN hosted a virtual graduation ceremony.

Research and collaborations continued as a number of MOUs were signed, expanding on old engagements and exploring new partnerships. Various departments organized webinars to keep the community vibrant and continue with academic enrichment.

Considering the country's overall economic condition, the NSU authority extended the tuition fee waiver for Spring 2021, once again for all students of NSU. This profound generosity affirms NSU's unwavering commitment to the community.

We hope you will enjoy perusing the issue and thank you for staying dauntless through this worldwide emergency.



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Be safe,  
-Editor

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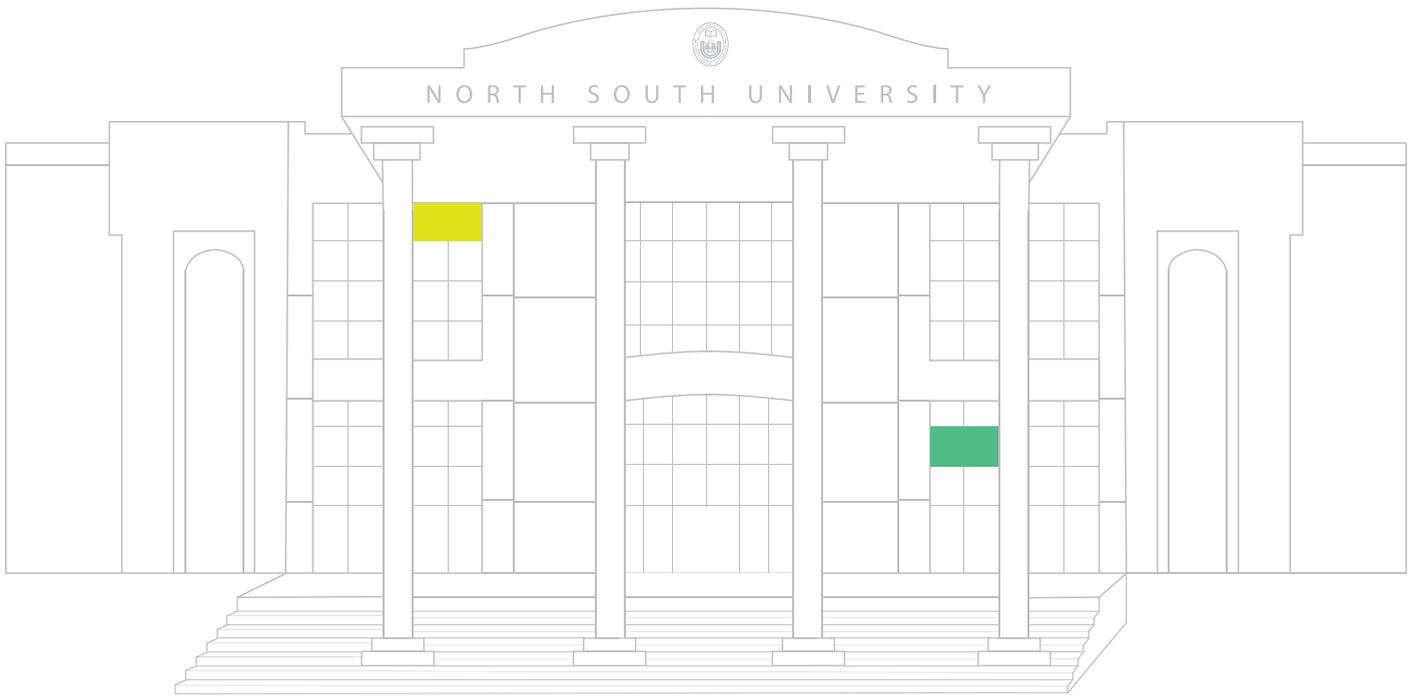


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NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY



# Father of the Nation



**North South University**  
*Center of Excellence in Higher Education*

## Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Congratulates NSU Student-Lead Cast of *Bangabandhu*



Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh and Ms. Sheikh Rehana with Dibya Joyti, an NSU student, and the cast of the movie *Bangabandhu*.

Dibya Joyti, a student of North South University's Bachelor of Science in Economics program, has been selected to portray the character of young Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in the Bengali biopic titled *Bangabandhu*. Mr. Joyti was informed about this opportunity in late December, 2020, and, on a Thursday afternoon in late January, 2021, he confirmed the good news to Prothom Alo - a renowned Bangladeshi newspaper that covered Mr. Joyti's news. Mr. Joyti, along with his mother, actress Shahanaz Khushi, and his father, actor Brindabon Dash, is ecstatic to have gotten this opportunity.

Mr. Joyti told Prothom Alo "Our family of four all have read *Bangabandhu* Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's autobiography. I have always heard stories about Bangabandhu from my parents. The fact that there is a cinema being made about the best Bengali to have existed in a thousand years, and that I have gotten the chance to play the role of this Bengali's teenage-self in the cinema is something, I think, nothing else can surpass in terms of luck. You could say that I am in a daze."

During this time, Dibya Joyti, to know more details about *Bangabandhu* Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, went to meet Sheikh Hasina, Bangabandhu's daughter and the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, and her sister Sheikh Rehana. Mr. Joyti informed Prothom Alo that, on January 9, 2021, in four hours, he learnt a lot about *Bangabandhu* from them which he never even learnt from books and various footages. However, he thinks it would be quite challenging to characterize this particular role since there is a lack of video clips of Bangabandhu in his teenage years on the internet in contrast to the availability of video clips and pictures of Bangabandhu in his mature years.

Nonetheless, Mr. Joyti said, "Despite the lack of documentaries and video footages of Bangabandhu in his teenage years, on meeting the Prime Minister and her sister, I have learnt a lot of things that will greatly help me with my acting. They informed me about various incidents involving their father, Bangabandhu, during his teenage years, his characteristics, their relationship with their parents, and Bangabandhu's demeanor and gait." Furthermore,

Mr. Joyti informed Prothom Alo that after he had been selected for the role, a special pass was organized for him from the Bangladesh Film Archive so that he can learn additional information about *Bangabandhu*. This also helped him get inside the mind of the character he is to play.

Mr. Joyti was set to go to Mumbai that month with a lot of other co-actors and co-actresses to shoot for the *Bangabandhu* biopic. The film, made by Bangladesh and India collaboratively, is directed by Bollywood's Shyam Benegal.

Upon inspiration aroused by his parents, Mr. Joyti, in 2014 when he was in grade 6, started acting in the TV-serial "Shontan." Later on, he, along with his twin brother Shoumo Joyti, acted in numerous TV-serials such as "Happy Family," "Joint Family," etc. However, through acting in the film directed by Akram Khan and funded by the government, Nokshikathar Jamin, the siblings first introduced themselves as film actors. The biopic *Bangabandhu* will be Mr. Joyti's second film. Not only Mr. Joyti and his family, but NSU is also ecstatic to hear of his honorable achievement.

## International Mother Language Day 2021



Chairman, BOT, Mr. M.A. Kashem, Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Mr. Azim Uddin Ahmed, Professor Atiqul Islam, Professor M. Ismail Hossain, Professor Abdur Rob Khan, Professor Hasan Mahmud Reza, Professor Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Professor Javed Bari, Professor Gour Gobinda Goswami, and others at a virtual discussion session on "International Mother Language Day 2021".

The first private university and the number one ranked private university of Bangladesh, North South University (NSU) organized a virtual discussion session on "International Mother Language Day 2021" at North South University (NSU) on Sunday, 21 February, 2021.

Dr. Gour Gobinda Goswami, Director, Office of Student Affairs, NSU delivered the introductory speech at the beginning of the session.

On the occasion of International Mother Language Day 2021, various activities were taken up. The program started at 12.01 am on 21st February with laying down flowers and lighting Candles at NSU Shahid Minar to pay tribute to the martyrs of the great language movement. The national flag was hoisted at 6 am and kept at half-mast. This virtual discussion session and cultural program were organized to highlight the significance of the great language movement and to perpetuate the memory of the language movement of 1952 to the new generation.

Founder Chairman & Director, Southeast Bank, Mr. M. A. Kashem, Former President, FBCCI and Chairman, Board of Trustees (BOT), North South University was present as the Chief Guest. Freedom Fighter Lion Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Former Chairman & Member, Mr. Azim Uddin

Ahmed, Member, Board of Trustees, North South University were present as Special Guests. Professor M. Ismail Hossain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, NSU was present as the Guest of Honor. Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Professor & Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, NSU was present as the Keynote Speaker. Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU chaired the event.

Speaking as the Chief Guest, Chairman, Board of Trustees, NSU, Mr. M. A. Kashem said, "There is no comparison of Bengali language in expressing our thoughts. The mother tongue must be loved and cherished." In the meantime, he told the students, "Today's students are the leaders of tomorrow. You have to be honest, disciplined and dutiful and you have to work for the development of the country." At the same time, he emphasized in the practice of Bangla language and the history of Bangla language and highlighted the various steps taken by North South University to make the students interested in learning Bangla language education.

Member, Board of Trustees, NSU, Mr. Benajir Ahmed said, "I think if you don't know Bengali well, it becomes difficult to know another language. We need to know the Bengali language and the history of Bengali language for improvement. At the same time,

he added, "Our consciousness of independence was awakened by the language movement of '52 and we were established as an independent country."

Member, Board of Trustees, NSU, Mr. Azim Uddin Ahmed said, "North South University has always organized all kinds of programs to patronize Bengali culture. I feel proud to attend any Bengali events." At the same time, he said, "It was the language movement that later encouraged all kinds of movements, in continuation of that, we got the gift of an independent country."

Vice-Chancellor, NSU, Professor Atiqul Islam said, "The movement of 1952 later served as the backbone of all movements and encouraged us to fight for getting an independent country. That is why we have to remember the contribution of language martyrs with everlasting gratitude."

Among others, Prof. Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Dean (Acting), School of Health & Life Sciences, NSU, Prof. Dr. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Dean, School of Business & Economics, NSU, Professor Dr. Javed Bari, Dean, School of Engineering & Physical Sciences, NSU, Mr. Jamil Ahmed, Director, Public Relations Office, NSU, Directors of various departments, Department Heads, senior officials, teachers and students were also present at the program.

## Boshonto Utshob 1427 Held



Mr. Mustafa Jabbar, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology with Mr. M. A. Kashem, Chair, BOT, NSU, Members of the BOT, and Professor Atiqul Islam and others dignitaries celebrating Boshonto Utshob 1427 virtually.

North South University celebrated Boshonto Utshob 1427 virtually on February 14, 2021. On this occasion, NSU students embraced spring in a splendid manner and preserved the message of the arrival of spring. The heritage of Bengali culture was also embraced during the virtual program. Every year, Boshonto Utshob takes place in NSU in a grandiose manner and the entire campus gets decorated in a very colorful manner. However, the coronavirus pandemic restricted the celebrations to a digital manner this time. Nevertheless, this factor did not stop NSU and North South University Shangskritik Shangathan (NSUSS) from successfully organizing one of the most lively and colorful events of the year.

Mr. Mustafa Jabbar, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Posts, Telecommunications and Information Technology, Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh was present as the honorable Chief Guest of the celebration program. Mr. M. A. Kashem, Chairman, Board of Trustees, North South University was present as an esteemed Special

Guest of the program. Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Mr. Azim Uddin Ahmed, Mr. Aziz Al Kaiser and Ms. Rehana Rahman, Members, Board of Trustees, NSU were also present as respected Special Guests. Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU chaired the event. Dr. M. Ismail Hossain, Pro Vice-Chancellor, NSU was present as the Guest of Honor.

Speaking as the honorable Chief Guest, Honorable Minister Mr. Mustafa Jabbar mentioned, “We are a nation which has fought for its mother tongue and a nation which gives extreme importance to culture and heritage. Hence, it is great to see so many students and NSU celebrate today’s wonderful occasion of Boshonto Utshob.” Mr. Mustafa Jabbar also encouraged everyone to follow safety protocols and be aware during these difficult times of Covid-19. During the closure of his speech, he thanked the authority of NSU for organizing such a major digital event. Speaking as the esteemed Special Guest, Mr. M. A. Kashem expressed, “Hosting such a colorful and impressive online Spring

Festival program in the middle of this pandemic is a great achievement! At North South University, we celebrate all kinds of festivals of Bengali culture in a grandiose manner.” Mr. M. A. Kashem also advised the audience to strictly follow safety measures because of the current Covid-19 situation. During his speech, Professor Atiqul Islam dedicated this year’s Boshonto Utshob to Late Mr. M. A. Hashem, Former Chairman and Member, Board of Trustees, North South University.

For the first time in the history of NSU, an entire festival was organized digitally via an online live stream. NSUSS organized Boshonto Utshob digitally and made sure that the entire program is telecasted via Facebook Live through the official Facebook page of NSU. The steadfast members of NSUSS participated in the spring festival while following all sorts of hygiene rules and regulations. One of their notable contributions is that they safely painted the premises of NSU through their own handmade festoons, flyers and invitations. The online Boshonto Utshob program

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## Virtual Orientation Program of Spring 2021



Virtual Orientation Program of Spring 2021 attended by Mr. M. A. Kashem, Chairman, Board of Trustees, NSU, and Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Member, Board of Trustees, NSU, Mr. Abed Khan, Senior Journalist, Chairman, Press Institute of Bangladesh, Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU and others at the online session.

North South University, had organized a virtual orientation program for the newly enrolled students of the Spring 2021 semester. On February 13, the virtual orientation program was broadcasted live on the official Facebook page of North South University, the official YouTube page of NSU, the official website of NSU and DBC News TV Channel. Mr. M. A. Kashem, Chairman, Board of Trustees, NSU, graced the virtual orientation program as the esteemed Chief Guest. Mr. Benajir Ahmed, Member, Board of Trustees, NSU, took part in this program as the honorable Guest of Honor. Mr. Abed Khan, Senior Journalist, Chairman, Press Institute of Bangladesh, was invited to the orientation program as a Guest Speaker, and Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU chaired the online session.

The virtual orientation ceremony commenced with a welcome address from Dr. M. Ismail Hossain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, North South University. Dr. M. Ismail Hossain warmly greeted the guests and audience members, and mentioned during his speech, "We are grateful to the parents and guardians of our newly admitted students, since they have supported their children's decision

to study in the number one ranked private university of Bangladesh." In the current Spring 2021 semester, more than two thousand students got admitted in the graduate programs of the 16 departments of NSU. The virtual orientation program was also attended by the Deans of the four Schools of NSU - Professor Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Dr. Javed Bari, Dean, School of Engineering and Physical Sciences, Professor Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences, and Professor Dr. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Dean, School of Business and Economics.

During his speech, honorable Chief Guest Mr. M. A. Kashem exclaimed, "For the first time in Bangladesh, North South University has organized a virtual orientation ceremony of such a magnitude. It is commendable to see thousands of students, parents and guardians join this auspicious program live online. I wish the newly admitted students the very best, and hope all of you give tremendous importance to your university education." Esteemed Guest of Honor, Mr. Benajir Ahmed, remarked during his speech, "Notable efforts have allowed NSU to be ranked as the number one private

university in Bangladesh, as per the QS World University Rankings. It is admirable to observe that even during the ongoing global pandemic, we have been able to successfully continue our quality educational activities online."

Guest Speaker Mr. Abed Khan also expressed his admiration towards the efforts of NSU authorities and faculties. "It is wonderful to see NSU conduct classes in a digital manner amidst this pandemic. I hope the newly admitted students will make full use of this opportunity and try to excel in this world-class educational institution." said Mr. Abed Khan. During his speech, Chair of the session Professor Atiqul Islam expressed, "Excellence in higher education and quality service to the students have made NSU one of the most respectable universities in Bangladesh. We have international quality faculty members who teach students with utmost care." Various members of NSU authority, senior officials, teachers, delegates and numerous students watched the virtual orientation ceremony. North South University recognizes the importance of a proper orientation ceremony and that's why the university took such big steps to host the entire orientation ceremony digitally.

## Four Promising Startups Graduate from NSU Startups Next



Honorable Minister Zunaid Ahmed Palak, M.P., Mr. M.A. Kashem, Chairman, BOT, Vice-Chancellor Professor Atiqul Islam, and other dignitaries, with startup graduates from NSU Startups Next at the virtual graduation ceremony.

Four technology-based startups, building scalable solutions to turn some of society's biggest problems into opportunities, have graduated from the inaugural cohort of North South University Startups Next (NSUSN), a startup incubator by NSU to shape and support to create the next generation of startup founders. To celebrate the success of the graduate startups and the launch of the next cohort, NSUSN has hosted the virtual graduation ceremony on 26 January 2021.

NSUSN launched its very first cohort in June 2020 to support the future founders with guided mentorship, networking, and early-stage funding opportunities for making their businesses scalable in the long run. Upon going through rigorous guidance, business-building support, and evaluation on the ideas, teams, real-life problem-solving capacity, and scalability of the businesses, four startups are graduating from the program.

The ceremony was graced by Mr.

Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP, Honorable State Minister, Ministry of Information & Communication Technology, Government of The People's Republic of Bangladesh, as the Chief Guest; Mr. M. A. Kashem, Chairman, Board of Trustees, North South University, as Special Guest; and Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, North South University as the Session Chair.

The four graduate startups named Thrive (A platform to provide education technology products for augmenting classroom experience), ReShop (A reseller platform for online businesses with 360 degree logistics and marketing solutions), Kalke (A human resource and people management Software as a Service platform to automate HR-related tasks), and Hypescout (An influencer fueled digital marketing platform), are developing solutions high-potential sectors in this growing market of Bangladesh.

NSUSN aims to provide high-potential entrepreneurs and teams with a support network and structured

growth process needed to build startups that can make a difference. Many of the country's top founders, experts, advisors, and investors mentor the aspiring entrepreneurs in the cohorts of NSUSN.

"I wholeheartedly thank the NSU Startups Next team for taking this timely initiative to nurture the young founders of our country. We are really happy to see their encouragement towards creating more job creators, not job seekers. I will encourage all the potential entrepreneurs and young leaders to apply to NSU Startups Next for getting all the necessary opportunities to build a better future. We always believe our students are capable enough to solve the biggest problems in our society. Let's work together to build a better Bangladesh", said Chief Guest Mr. Zunaid Ahmed Palak, MP.

"North South University has always advocated for excellence in all academic fields. NSU Startups Next is an excellent program organized by NSU. We all feel proud of this initiative.

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## MarXcellence Held Online



Mr. Mustafa Jabbar, the Honorable Minister of Post, Telecommunications and Information Technology with Mr. M.A. Kashem, Chairman of North South University Board of Trustees, Professor Atiqul Islam and Professor M. Ismail Hossain at the grand finale of MarXcellence.

The Grand Finale of Samsung presents MarXcellence, associate sponsored by Sundarban Courier Service was held on January 29, 2021 concluding the month-long digital marketing competition organized by Marketing and International Business Club of North South University (NSU MIBC).

The initiative was taken by NSU MIBC to debut a fully virtual case solving competition as campuses remain closed countrywide. Samsung presents MarXcellence featured almost 300 teams from over 40 universities from across the nation, making it the biggest digital marketing competition in Bangladesh. The competition consisted of 3 rounds. In each round, teams solved real-life based business cases, and were judged by various leading marketing figures of the country.

The Grand Finale of the event was contested by the top six teams who qualified from the first two rounds. The finalists delivered

their presentations to a panel of illustrious judges comprising of Mr. Md. Muyeeder Rahman, Head of Business, Mobile Division, Samsung Bangladesh, Mr. Mamun Ar Rashid, Head of Media & Digital Marketing, Banglalink, and Mr. Mohammad Oli Ahad, CEO & Founder, Intelligent Machines Limited.

Team GS and the Boys from North South University were declared the Champions of MarXcellence. The 1<sup>st</sup> Runners-Up were Quarterback, from Bangladesh University of Professionals, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Runners-Up were Team Fan Club, from Institute of Business Administration, University of Dhaka.

The Grand Finale was graced by a number of highly esteemed guests. The Chief Guest of the Grand Finale was H.E. Mr. Mustafa Jabbar, the Honorable Minister of Post, Telecommunications and Information Technology. The Special Guest of the evening was Mr. M. A. Kashem, Chairman

of North South University Board of Trustees. The Session Chair was Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice Chancellor of North South University. Present as Guests of Honor were Mr. Hwansung Woo, Managing Director, Samsung Electronics Bangladesh, and Dr. M. Ismail Hossain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of North South University. Also present was Dr. Gour Gobinda Goswami, Director of the Office of Student Affairs, North South University, who delivered the introductory speech.

Mr. Mustafa Jabbar, in his speech, commended and congratulated North South University, and expressed his pleasure to be a part of the event. He noted that the youth of Bangladesh are highly creative when it comes to the digital world, and mentioned that such digital competitions are beneficial to that end. Mr. Mustafa Jabbar also thanked Samsung for their investment in the country, calling them an inspiration to other

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## Career and Placement Center of North South University Opened New Doors for Engineers in Japan IT Market



Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor M. Ismail Hossain, Mohammad Khasro Miah, Director of CPC and the BCC project director, Mr. Md Golam Sarwar at the Memorandum of Understanding signing ceremony between Bangladesh Computer Council, The University of Miyazaki, Japan, and North South University.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony among Bangladesh Computer Council (BCC), North South University (NSU), and The University of Miyazaki (UoM), Japan for Post Bangladesh Japan ICT Engineers; Training (BJET) Implementation Agreement have been signed on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at the ICT Tower, Agargaon, Dhaka.

The Career and Placement Center (CPC) of NSU has been leading the project on behalf of NSU from the beginning under the leadership of Professor Mohammad Khasro Miah, Director of CPC. Being the department in charge of career, internship, and job placements, CPC of North South University is always working on creating a bridge between the students and the corporate world. The MoU signed among BCC, NSU and UoM have added another feather to their crown of success.

In this regard, "The project for skills Development of IT Engineers Targeting Japanese Market" will serve our students to a great extent. This MoU will create further opportunities for the students

to learn more about their career opportunities and prepare them for their future career track. At least 80 students will get chance to enroll in this program with a fee of 10,000 Taka

only. The first six months of the training module will be held at NSU, and the second three months module will be held in Japan. Completing the modules will open up enormous job opportunities for our engineering students. The program aims to support the capacity development of Bangladeshi ICT engineers and future ICT engineers who have the potential to create business networks between Japan and Bangladesh.

Esteemed personnel from different organizations were present at the ceremony. The BCC project director, Mr. Md Golam Sarwar, inaugurated the ceremony by delivering the inauguration speech. Mr. Parthapratim Deb, Executive Director, attended the meeting as the chief guest. Professor M. Ismail Hossain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor of North South University, was present as a Special Guest along with Professor Tsutomu Ikenoue,

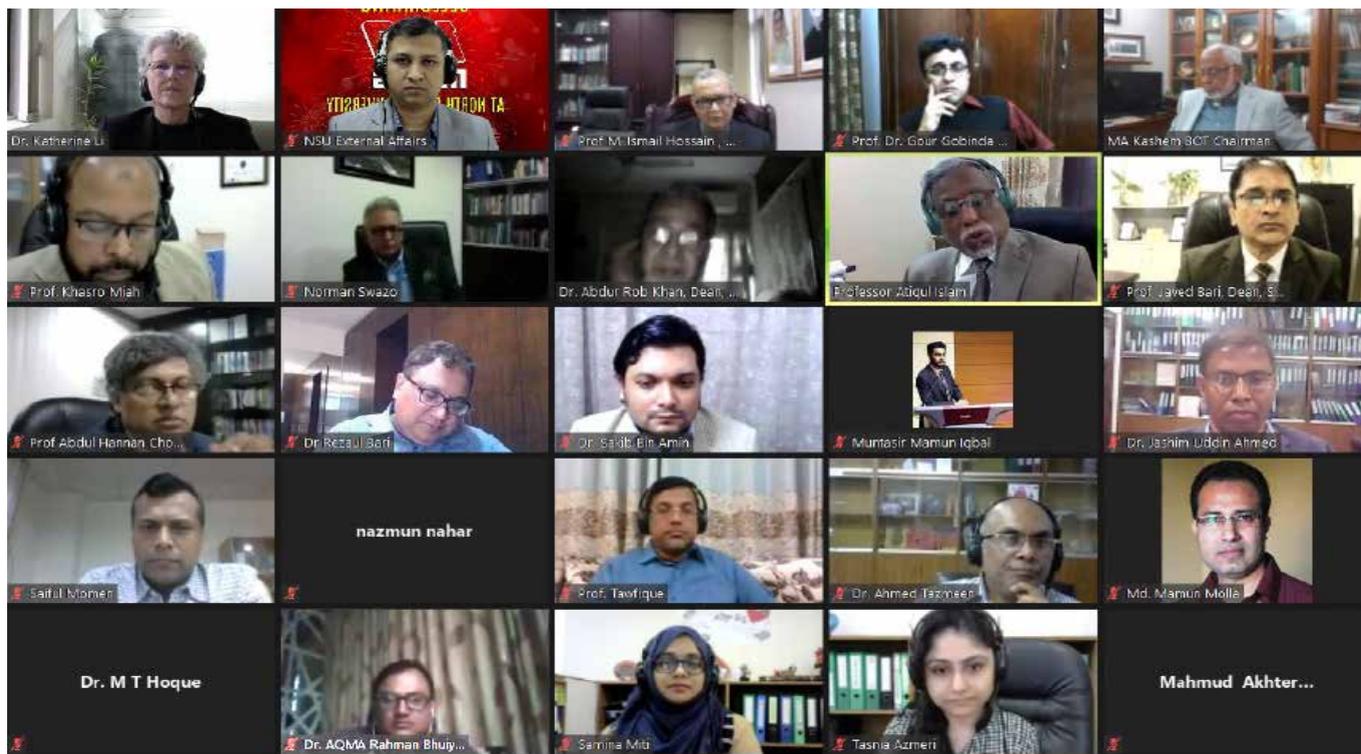
the President of The University of Miyazaki, who attended the ceremony through Zoom Meeting from Japan as a Special Guest.

JICA Experts Mr. Yuki Morishita, Mr. Takeo Uzawa delivered the BJET achievement report at the ceremony. Professor Mohammad Khasro Miah, Director of Career and Placement Center (CPC), and Professor Dr. Javed Bari, Dean of School of Engineering and Physical Sciences, attended the ceremony as the representatives of NSU.

Mr. Yuho Hayakawa, Chief Representative of JICA Bangladesh, and JICA Expert Akihiro SHOJI also graced the event on behalf of BJET.

Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor of North South University, Mr. Parthapratim Deb, Executive Director of BCC, and Professor Keisuke Murakami, Vice President (International Relations) of the University of Miyazaki, signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. Mr. Mohammad Enamul Kabir, Director of BCC, delivered the closing remarks and closed the ceremony after signing the MoU and photo session.

## Office of External Affairs Organizes MoU Workshop



MoU Workshop attended by Mr. M.A. Kashem Honorable Chairman, Board of Trustees, NSU, Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, Professor M. Ismail Hossain, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Deans and all Department Chairs.

Office of External Affairs (OEA) at North South University started its journey back in 2015 with a target of internalization and enriched outreach for NSU. In this regard, the office has extended the university's international partnership and collaboration to a remarkable extent. Very recently, the outreach of North South University reached a major milestone after getting its 150<sup>th</sup> MoU. This success has raised the bar much higher than before for outreach at NSU. For the next phase of outreach, NSU OEA approached the Office of Research (OR) of NSU to align the future outreach efforts with the strategic research priorities of each School of NSU.

To celebrate 150 MoU signings and gather input from the faculty leadership, NSU OEA and NSU OR came together in a virtual MoU workshop held on January 11 2021. The event was attended by approximately 50 participants including Professor Atiqul Islam, Vice-Chancellor, NSU, Dr. M. Ismail Hossain, Pro Vice-Chancellor, NSU, Mr. MA Kashem Honorable Chairman, Board of Trustees, Dr.

Katherine Li, Director, Office of External Affairs, Professor Norman K. Swazo, Director, Office of Research-NSU, Muntasir Mamun Iqbal, Director, Institutional Ranking Cell (IRC), Dr. Md. Nurul Kabir, Research Coordinator, School of Business and Economics (SBE), Dr. Mamun Molla, Research Coordinator, School of Engineering and Physical Sciences (SEPS), Professor Sk. Tafique M. Haque, Research Coordinator, School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS), Dr. Asim Kumar Bepari, Research Coordinator, School of Health and Life Sciences (SHLS) and faculties from different departments of NSU. Director, IRC stressed the importance of academic partnerships for ranking. Director, CPC emphasized the internship opportunities that also are an important strategic interest in partnership.

The prime objective of the workshop was to discuss working collectively toward the goal of making our efforts both more integrated and strategic. During the workshop, the Director of Office of Research mentioned that

they have been collecting and keeping record of the research interest areas of every department of the four respective schools of NSU for quite a while now. He made two specific recommendations:

1. Dean and research coordinator for each school can meet with department chairpersons to review both the general list MoU and the school-specific list MoU (that I provided earlier) to identify which institutions should have priority for prospective research contacts from school faculty. The idea would be for each department chair to review the department faculty list at the prospective collaborating institution to identify research areas that relate to department research goals (5-year research targets). Then the research coordinator can be provided the list of contacts identified by each department. The research coordinator can then initiate a contact (by email) to explore the possibility of discussing a research collaboration (this can be set up as a Zoom meeting, e.g.). This should be done soon, in advance of

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# Certificate Course on Humanism, Policy, and Diplomacy Inaugurated at NSU



The US Ambassador H.E. Mr. Earl R. Miller, Major General Abdul Qayyum Mollah, Vice-Chancellor Professor Atiqul Islam at the inauguration of the Certificate Course on Humanism, Policy, and Diplomacy.

"Everyone, including the US, and UN, needs to come forward in resolving the Rohingya issue," stated Vice-Chancellor Professor Atiqul Islam, chairing the inauguration of the 10-week Certificate course on "Humanism, Policy, and Diplomacy" by the Center for Peace Studies (CPS) of North South University held on February 6. The US Ambassador Mr. Earl R. Miller, and Major General Abdul Qayyum Mollah, Head of BIPSOT, NDC, PSC were present in the inauguration as special guests.

Vice-Chancellor Professor Islam also said it was the responsibility of the university to acquire knowledge, disseminate knowledge, and use it in humanitarian work. He added how NSU has always been playing an active role and how it is NSU's responsibility to implement the basic principles of humanitarianism - the fulfillment of fundamental rights, living in a peaceful situation etc.

Dr. Katherine Li, CPS Advisor and Course Coordinator moderated the inaugural session. Professor Sk Tawfique M Haque, the Director of SIPG and CPS, NSU highlighted the context of organizing the course in the event. CPS has been working on peace building research and advocacy

activities since 2019 under the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG) at North South University.

Organized in partnership with the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training (BIPSOT), the course is the first of its kind in Bangladesh to discuss humanitarianism, policy, and diplomacy. Ambassador M Shahidul Haque is the course advisor. The course has been organized on zoom.

In his inaugural address, Mr. Miller, Ambassador of the United States Embassy, said that the American Embassy has always been committed to humanitarianism. He emphasized the US standing by Bangladesh in various areas of humanitarian activities, including providing assistance to the Rohingya crisis. BIPSOT-Chief Major General Abdul Qayyum Mollah, ndc, psc, noted that the crises and challenges against humanity are gradually changing. He added, "Our goal is to ensure a safe and peaceful environment. I believe that those who are taking part in this course will help prevent future threats to humanity and play a role in maintaining peace."

42 Participants have joined from

Bangladesh, Canada, Japan, and Italy who are students and professionals in teaching, journalism, government and non-government and international organizations. The trainers of the course are from different universities of Bangladesh, Australia, USA, Thailand etc., from government and non-government organizations, UN and various international organizations.

The topics covered in this course include concepts, principles and history of humanitarian organizations, their origins, development, and scope of work, conflict resolution and humanitarian initiatives, humanitarian action in climate change and displacement, human rights and gender in the humanitarian crisis, Rwanda in the context of humanism., Darfur, and Somalia Case Study, Humanitarian Diplomacy, The Future of Humanism, etc. One of the notable aspects of the course - despite being an online course - is the physical inspection by the course participants at the Rohingya camp in Cox's Bazar, an example of humanitarianism for refugees. The 4-hour course will run every Saturday afternoon until April 10, 2021 Bangladesh time.

## Professor Dr. M. Zahid Hasan, NSU IAB Member, Earns the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award

Professor Dr. M. Zahid Hasan, a member of North South University's International Advisory Board (IAB), has been awarded the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award (E.O. Lawrence Award) by the US Department of Energy (DOE) in a ceremony held on January 19, 2021. The award honors mid-career US scientists and engineers for remarkable work in research and development that boost the national, economic and energy security of USA - in accordance with DOE's mission. Dr. M. Zahid Hasan is Princeton University's Eugene Higgins Professor of Physics and, due to his "groundbreaking discoveries" and astounding contributions in research in the area of condensed matter and material sciences, the US Government has bestowed upon him this highly prestigious and time-honored award.

The establishment of the E.O. Lawrence Award dates back to 1959. It was founded to honor Ernest Orlando Lawrence as he was a major physics researcher who invented the cyclotron (a type of subatomic particle accelerator) and attained the 1939 Nobel Prize in Physics. Therefore, it comes as

no surprise that Lawrence was one of Dr. Hasan's inspirations - all the more reason for everyone to acclaim his stunning achievement. He said, "I am quite honored and humbled to receive this award as E.O. Lawrence was one of my



Professor Dr. M. Zahid Hasan.

scientific heroes. Lawrence's invention of the cyclotron led to modern high-energy accelerator technology that I use in my research to explore topological states of quantum matter. I am also very grateful to Lawrence Berkeley

National Laboratory and SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory for supporting my research leading to this award."

Dr. Hasan is one of eight recipients to earn the award, each for a distinct area of research. The honorable recipients were revealed in an announcement by US Secretary of Energy Dan Brouillette on January 12, 2021. Furthermore, each of the award winners received a citation signed by the secretary of energy, a gold medal resembling Ernest Orlando Lawrence, and \$20,000 as an honorarium. Quoting the award citation, "Hasan's work has opened new areas in condensed matter physics and holds promise for future transformative applications in materials sciences. Guided by predictions from ab initio calculations, he has focused on the search for, and discovery of, new quantum states and topological quasiparticles

such as the helical Dirac fermion and the Weyl fermion." NSU is immensely proud of its fellow IAB member, Dr. M. Zahid Hasan, and wishes him many more of such outstanding achievements in his future endeavors.

## MarXcellence Held Online Cont'd...

companies.

Special Guest Mr. M. A. Kashem thanked the organizers for hosting the event, and congratulated the finalists for their performance. He thanked Mr. Mustafa Jabbar for his presence, and spoke appreciatively of his leading role in digitally transforming the country. Mr. M. A. Kashem also thanked title sponsors Samsung for affiliating with North South University, and

invited them to engage in further collaboration.

Earlier, Guest of Honor Mr. Hwansung Woo congratulated North South University and NSU MIBC for successfully hosting this event completely virtually, and spoke of his appreciation of the initiative to hold a digital marketing competition in this pandemic situation.

Closing the Grand Finale, Session

Chair Professor Atiqul Islam noted that North South University regards Mr. Mustafa Jabbar as one of its best well-wishers, thanking him for his presence and inviting the Ministry to work with North South University for the betterment of the country. Professor Atiqul Islam also congratulated NSU MIBC for its success in organizing MarXcellence.

## NSU Genome Research Institute finds Rare Mutation in Spike Proteins of SARS-CoV-2

North South University has been the first and only private university in the country to sequence SARS-CoV-2 genomes using their own facilities at our own Genome Research Institute (NSU-GRI). Researchers at NGRI, under the leadership of Professor Hasan Mahmud Reza, Dean of the School of Health and Life Sciences, NSU and Dr. Muhammad Maqsud Hossain, Director of NGRI, NSU have completed sequencing of fifty eight SARS-CoV-2 isolates using Illumina MiSeq platform. Prof. Firoz Ahmed and Prof. Aminul Islam of Noakhali Science and Technology University assisted in providing samples. Other members of the team included Prof. Abdul Khaleque, Prof. Kazi Nadim Hasan, Aura Rahman, Tahrima Huq, Naushin, Abdus Sadique, and Jahidul Alam from NGRI, NSU.

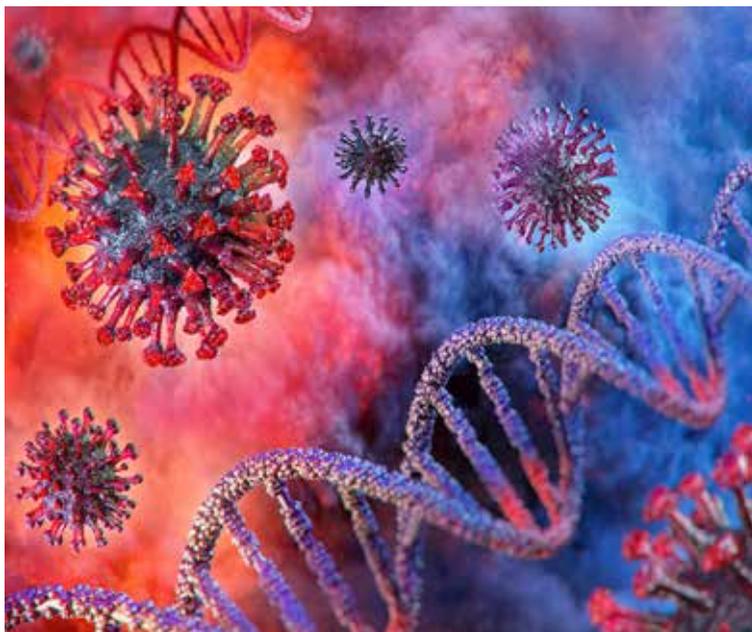
The SARS-CoV-2 virus consists of 29 proteins, of which the four structural proteins have been the subject of much investigation as potential therapeutic targets. Among these, the spike protein has by far been the most studied one. Spike proteins protrude out of the viral membrane and facilitate its entry

into host cells through interacting with surface receptor ACE2. Mutations in spike protein can therefore impact how efficiently the virus is able to penetrate and infect host cells.

NGRI, Bangladesh has reported some rare mutations in these four structural proteins that have not been

(F) in position 204 of the spike protein (Y204F). This is also to be noted that the genome harboring this mutation belongs to the lineage B.1.36.

Whether or not this mutation has any downstream effects on the structure and function of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein as well as the virus's infectivity is sure to be a topic of further investigation. The same mutation was found in 2 samples sequenced by NGRI as part of a mass sequencing project. The team identifies this lineage as one of the most virulent isolates and it is mutating for its better fitness in the community. The observation is based on the genome sequences available in GISAID for deceased patients from India and Saudi Arabia who were infected with this lineage. Among the



An artist's impression of SARS-CoV-2.

found commonly across the globe. Of these, one mutation in the crucial spike protein is hereby being reported for the first time in Bangladesh and thereby in the world. This is the substitution of the amino acid tyrosine (Y) by the amino acid phenylalanine

52 Indian genomes available for the deceased, 10 were infected by this lineage, whereas, in Saudi Arabia among the 121 available genomes, almost 50% were affected by this lineage. Other countries where this lineage has been found include the UK (45%), Denmark (9%), and Canada.

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## Office of External Affairs Organizes MoU Workshop Cont'd...

the next CFA for 2021-2022 CTRGC grants, so that this can be planned in advance and grant applications be directed at such collaborative research projects. Where such collaborations are identified, we can work towards having the CTRGC funding request increased above the usual 5 lakh limit (further, a joint funding opportunity should be explored).

2. For new MoUs I recommend each school look at the QS Asia rankings to see which in the top 50

or so may present opportunity for a general MoU that can then be pursued subsequently in subsidiary agreements specific to a school, institute, department, or center. Future MoUs should be strategic in line with the 5-year strategy document we produced.

The event ended with the ending remarks from the higher administrative body members - Honorable Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor and Chairman, Board

of Trustees. They appreciated the initiative and shared their thoughts and ideas about the collaborative activities happening between different departments of NSU as well as with other national-international institutions. Along with praising the workshop, they requested the regular arrangement of such effective workshops and meetings further for extending collaboration and development opportunities.

## NSU Global Health Institute Leads Bangladeshi Survey on Future Acceptance of COVID-19 Vaccine

Bangladesh has gone through all the procedures to bring the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine from India. When it comes to scaling up delivery, we now need to consider possible roadblocks, which also involve determining which communities can get it first and at what cost. This research was conducted by a team led by the North South University (NSU) Global Health Institute among adults who were over 18 years of age. Other team members included the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), the Rangpur- Hypertension and Research Center and the Bangladesh Centre for Injury Prevention and Research (CIPRB).

Between December 12, 2020 and January 7, 2021, a total of 3,647 people (the response rate was 81 percent) were included in the survey. Interviewers obtained the information from participants through face-to-face interviews from eight districts of the country, including metropolitan cities, Upazilas, villages and urban slums. The study found that if it is free, effective, secure and recommended by the government, 74.6

percent of individuals plan to take a vaccine. 17.6 percent of respondents, meanwhile, were unsure if they would take it. 7.8 percent, on the other hand, were reluctant to take. Intent to vaccinate was regarded as 'acceptance of vaccine' while uncertain and unwilling to vaccinate were consecutively considered as 'vaccine hesitancy' and 'unacceptance of vaccine.'

The study also found that the intention to vaccinate among day-laborers was significantly lower than respondents from other professions. Rickshaw pullers, road-side sellers, regular drivers, etc., were considered day-laborers. Just 46.8 percent of day-laborers reported willingness to vaccinate, while the numbers for

other occupational groups ranged from 62 percent to 83 percent. The highest intention to take the vaccine was stated by the office workers with a monthly wage, and it is 82 percent. The acceptance of vaccinations by medical doctors or nurses was 81 percent. The findings indicate that people with a higher income than those with a lower income were more likely to support a vaccine.

According to this study, relative to the city population, individuals residing in the rural region displayed both vaccine hesitancy and reluctance

group showed 68% interest.

The gender gap in vaccine acceptance was slight and the figure was 76% for males and 73% for females, respectively. The study also discussed the current chronic condition and the acceptance among the study respondents of the COVID-19 vaccine. It seems that people with underlying conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, asthma, kidney diseases, etc. demonstrated a lack of interest in the vaccine. For various diseases, the vaccine acceptance rate ranged from 53 percent to 61 percent.

Those who identified COVID-19 illness on their own were no more likely than other respondents to respond positively to the vaccine issue. The acceptance rate of this group is 56%. If costs are involved with vaccination, the overall vaccine acceptance rate fell to 46 percent in another vaccine acceptance issue. Thus, more than half of the individuals did not show interest in taking vaccines by spending money.

In conducting mass vaccination campaigns in the country, building people's confidence in the vaccine will be a major challenge. For people with low literacy to understand it, communication messages must be designed so that the level of faith in the vaccine and the acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccine in Bangladesh can be increased. In order to help create confidence in a possible COVID-19 vaccine, valued community-based

individuals and non-governmental organizations should be unbiased on the side effects or problems of taking the vaccine. We must keep in mind that the findings are a snapshot taken at a point in time, but with frequent changes in the perceived risk of disease and the development of COVID-19 vaccines themselves, individuals may change.



An AstraZeneca vial.

to vaccinate against COVID-19. The vaccine acceptance rate shown by rural people was 64 percent. Except for urban slums, city people showed the highest interest in vaccination and the figure is 81 percent while the amount is 53 percent from the slum.

Older adults over 60 years of age have shown a low prevalence of vaccine acceptance, 61 percent. Other age groups have shown a similar trend of vaccine acceptance in adults, especially between 18 and 50. Younger individuals under 30 years of age, for instance, reported 74 percent of vaccine approval, while individuals from the age groups 31-40 years and 41-50 years of age showed 73 percent and 78 percent, respectively. And individuals in the 51-60 age

## NSU Earns No. 1 Rank for Research Publications Among All Universities of Bangladesh

North South University has been revealed to have produced the highest number of research publications among all the top universities in Bangladesh, both public and private, according to a recent report by The Business Standard (TBS). The report, published on the TBS website on January 19, 2021, analyzes each of these universities' roles in research in 2019. According to their data, NSU has produced 1135 publications and it has ranked 5<sup>th</sup> among the top 10 private universities in terms of research expenditure, spending BDT 6,53,00,000 solely on research.

Research work conducted by universities is, undoubtedly, of crucial importance for any country's advancement and growth, be it economic or intellectual. Therefore, despite the rather underdeveloped situation in Bangladesh in terms of research, NSU is relentlessly striving to relieve the country of such a detrimental issue. This is evident as the university secured the top spot for research publications and, thus, it may well be said that NSU is fruitfully making the most out of research funding in the country.

Nonetheless, NSU strives beyond

contributing knowledge merely within the boundaries of this country - rather, the university strives to emanate knowledge like a ripple, through its research, to every other nation around the globe so that the world may



progress as one.

The Vice-Chancellor of NSU, Professor Atiqul Islam's words to TBS echoes this significant notion of the role of research. He said to TBS, "Our country's universities have mostly been disseminating knowledge from foreign books and research. Now we are trying to generate knowledge for our own nation as well as for other nations."

Impressively, Professor Atiqul Islam also mentioned, "Most of the research and articles of NSU's researchers are

being published in internationally recognized journals. We are doing well in research. We have connections with Cambridge University, The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and many other international organizations." Furthermore, his words, "Actually, we have no funding constraints. We are providing funds as per researchers' needs. But we want quality and world standard work," exhibits NSU's high standards regarding any work it conducts - the university is not willing to compromise quality at any cost.

He also added, "Our students can easily get scholarships and admission at the world's reputed universities showing research work that they conducted with their teachers at our university. A good amount of skilled manpower is also generated through the research," which depicts NSU's fruitful efforts to attain academic excellence - the benefits of which its students are free to reap.

NSU aspires to climb even higher and attain the number 1 ranking in research expenditure in addition to its top spot in publications produced so that the rest of the world, alongside Bangladesh, may flourish.

## NSU CTRG Funds Academic Collaboration between DEML, NSU and DEH, BRAC

The Department of English & Modern Languages (DEML) of NSU and the Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University co-presented the major finding of the NSU CTRG (2019-2020) funded project "Outcome based curriculum design and implementation: Problems, Strategies and Implications for English Language Teaching at two private universities in Dhaka, Bangladesh" at a data sharing session at a webinar on Saturday, 27 February 2021 on Zoom.

The Chair of DEML, Professor Dr. AQMA Rahman Bhuiyan introduced

▶▶ Continued on Page 17



Dr. Sabreena Ahmed



Ms. Tania Rahman

## International Webinar on “Post Corona Neurological Complications and Management” Held

An international scientific webinar was jointly organized by the Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences of North South University and Bangladesh Neuroscience Society, as part of addressing the current corona situation and subsequent challenges in Bangladesh. The main topic of this webinar was the importance of post-corona neurological complex and its management guidelines. Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences, North South University, and Dr. Mohammad Ashrafur Rahman, Assistant Professor, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, conducted a survey on mental health complications of Covid - 19 infected patients in Bangladesh. From July 25, 2020 to January 10, 2021, in total 2037 Covid-19 infected patients aged between 20 to 60 years participated in this survey. The survey was not made only via online survey; they also physically took face to face interviews and Q&A sessions of few patients. The study found that 75.2% of participants had severe mental distress and 16.3% had severe depression. On the other hand, the tendency of partial amnesia is noticeable in 52.7% of the patients. Other complications include loss of sense of smell (84.2%), headache (93.7%), insomnia (76.3%), fatigue and exhaustion (81.6%), muscle pain (66.0%), and many more.

In the above mentioned scientific webinar regarding post-corona neurological complications, Dr. Manzoor Rony from the University



Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza, Dean, School of Health and Life Sciences, North South University, Dr. Manzoor Rony from the University of Illinois, USA, Dr. Mohammed Uddin Dafl from The Hospital for Sick Children, Canada, with others at the International Webinar on Post-Corona Neurological Complications and Management.

of Illinois in the United States, Dr. Mohammed Uddin Dafl from The Hospital for Sick Children, Canada, and Dr. Il Su Moon from the Dongguan University College of Medicine in South Korea presented significant portion of their thoughts and research on the global Corona situation. The importance of meditation, its science-based techniques and methods in dealing with corona-related mental complications were discussed by Dr. Il Su Moon. Dr. Monzur presented the mental health information of the United States' corona patients. Dr. Dafl shed light on the genetic defects and neurological complications of corona patients. Dr. Forkan Uddin, Head of Clinical Research (Neurogen Children's

Healthcare) has provided guidance on coping with post-corona mental health problems in Bangladesh. Dr. GM Sayedur Rahman, Chairman, Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences, North South University, started the webinar with a welcome address at the webinar. The President of this webinar, Dr. Hasan Mahmud Reza said that it is very important to provide services to the patients by opening special corners in different hospitals and clinics to solve the post-Covid complications in Bangladesh. He discussed the importance of information and guidance received from this webinar in dealing with the deadly covid-19 pandemic in Bangladesh, and announced the end of the event with a vote of thanks.

## Four Promising Startups Graduate from NSU Startups Next Cont'd...

The fourth industrial revolution will be based on technology. So the merger of business and technology will be imperative for solving the problems of tomorrow. I wish the success of the second cohort by NSU Startups Next as they initiate

the change required to solve the problems of tomorrow.”, said Special Guest Mr. M. A. Kashem.

NSU is already home to the founders of successful startups like Pathao, Chaldal, iFarmer, Trucklagbe, and many more who are

thriving both locally and globally. NSUSN is committed to giving the country more entrepreneurs who can create jobs across a range of industries and contribute to the economy significantly.

## Will Myanmar's Recent Military Coup Affect Rohingya Issue?



Webinar to discuss the impacts of military coup in Myanmar on the Rohingya crisis attended by Brigadier General (Rtd.) M Sakhawat Hossain, Senior Fellow of SIPG, Ambassador Shahidul Haque, Professorial fellow of SIPG, Professor Lailufar Yasmin of Dhaka University, and faculty of Sultan Joynal Abedin University from Malaysia, Dr. Mahbulul Haque joined the webinar as panelists.

On February 8, the Center for Peace Studies (CPS) under the South Asian Institute of Policy and Governance (SIPG) of North South University has organized a webinar to discuss the impacts of the military coup in Myanmar on the Rohingya crisis. Brigadier General (Rtd.) M Sakhawat Hossain, Senior Fellow of SIPG, Ambassador Shahidul Haque, Professorial fellow of SIPG, Professor Lailufar Yasmin of Dhaka University, and faculty of Sultan Joynal Abedin University from Malaysia, Dr. Mahbulul Haque joined the webinar as panelists.

The issue of Rohingyas being stateless and seeking refuge in Bangladesh, for more than four decades, has drawn global attention in 2016-2017 when more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar fled to Bangladesh to escape genocide. The webinar provided feedback on the military rule of various ethnic groups living in Myanmar, including the Rohingya community living in Bangladesh and Malaysia. In addition, the geopolitical context, its impacts on Bangladesh-Myanmar bilateral relations, and the lack of a strong role in the Western world also came up.

Speaking on the state of democracy in Myanmar, Professor Lailufar Yasmin said that the fight for democracy is not actually for democracy because the military rule is constitutionally

sanctioned. SIPG senior fellow Dr. Sakhawat Hossain pointed out the impacts of Myanmar's military rule on the Rohingya crisis, mentioning that the country's State Counselor had never had good relations with Myanmar in the past. Disagreeing with the remarks, Ambassador Shahidul Haque noted that since the country's State Counselor was born and raised in a military family, she had always had good relations with the military. He added that there was little difference between her views on the Rohingya and the current military junta in Myanmar. Rather there is a planned plot behind the current military coup, which has not yet been revealed.

Dr. Mahbulul Haque from Malaysia focused on the regional political dynamics. He thinks that ASEAN is silent on the issue because of its non-interference policy, which is unfortunate. After the military coup in Myanmar, there has not been much official protest in other Southeast Asian countries. Common people of those countries, however, demonstrated some protests. He also highlighted our limited knowledge about Myanmar, which serves as an obstacle to resolving the Rohingya issue. NSU Professorial Fellow Ambassador Shahidul Haque emphasized the need to strengthen the process of justice for the Rohingya genocide in the ICJ. He also stressed

that Bangladesh's strategy should be adopted by understanding this situation.

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Dr. Ishrat Zakia Sultana, CPS Coordinator, moderated the session while NSU's Confucius Institute director Dr. Bulbul Siddiqui gave the welcome speech. Among others, Professor Sk. Tawfique Haque, Director of SIPG and CPS, faculties, researchers, and representatives of international organizations also joined the webinar. CPS has been working on peace research and advocacy activities since 2019.

## Webinar on “East West Street, the ICJ, Genocide and the Rohingya” Held on February 24, 2021

The Department of Law organized its second international webinar on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February, 2021. Professor Philippe Sands QC, Professor of the Public Understanding of Law, University College London, had spoken on 'East West Street, the ICJ, Genocide and the Rohingya'.

The talk had begun, following introductory remarks by Professor Md. Rizwanul Islam, Chair of the Department of Law at North South University.

Mr. Saquib Rahman, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Law had moderated the webinar. Mr. Nazmus Sakib, Graduate Teaching Assistant at the Department of Law, was the technical coordinator. The attendees included students and faculty members of NSU and other Bangladeshi as well as Australian and US Universities.

It is one of the many webinars organized by the various departments of NSU with an aim to build a better understanding of the past and the present, as well as building a more hospitable future.



Professor Md. Rizwanul Islam, Chair of the Department of Law, NSU with Professor Philippe Sands QC, Professor of the Public Understanding of Law, University College London at a Webinar on East West Street, the ICJ, Genocide and the Rohingya.

## Boshonto Utshob 1427 Held Cont'd...

commenced with some traditional Bengali dances and folk songs, including the famous song - Boshonto Eshe Geche (spring has come).

One of the main attractions of the show was that members of NSUSS showcased their acting skills during the "Delightful Debate" segment. The program was thoroughly enjoyed by NSU students, teachers and others,

as many of the audience members shared their appreciative comments and viewpoints online.

Among others, Professor Dr. Abdur Rob Khan, Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Professor Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Dean, School of Business & Economics, Dr. Gour Gobinda Goswami, Director, Office

of Student Affairs, directors of various departments, department heads, senior officials, teachers and students were also present at the program. North South University recognizes the importance of such national occasions, hence the university authorities took substantial measures to host the program digitally.

## NSU CTRG Funds Academic Collaboration between DEML, NSU and DEH, BRAC Cont'd...

the speakers Ms. Tania Rahman, and Dr. Sabreena Ahmed and moderated the session. He also welcomed the delegates of BRAC University, led by Professor Firdous Azim, Chair of the Department of English and Humanities. Ms. Tania Rahman, Senior Lecturer, NSU and the Principal Investigator and Dr. Sabreena Ahmed Assistant Professor at BRAC, as Co-Investigator of the project spoke about problems in implementing outcome based (OBE) curricula for

teaching English in a comparative study based on qualitative data conducted at two private universities in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

At the webinar, the speakers also spoke about potential strategies to tackle these problems. They presented the sampling which comprised teachers and administrative personnel from the Department of the English, North South University and the Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University. They

presented from the data collected in the study which yielded findings that helped to identify significant problem areas in implementing OBE curricula for teaching English at the two universities as well as ways to resolve such issues. After a lively Q&A session, Professor Bhuiyan thanked the speakers, the delegates of BRAC University and the audience. He welcomed further collaboration between the two institutions.

## Information Sessions with Saint Mary's University, University of Maryland, and Texas A&M International University



Dr. Mohammad Rahaman, Associate Dean, Sobey School of Business, Ms. Linda Te, Director and Regional Manager, CUAC Global Marketing, Dr. Katherine Li, Director OEA, NSU and others at the session.

North South University Office of External Affairs (NSU OEA) organized three important web information sessions in the January and February of 2021. These information sessions help students gather useful insights about foreign universities and what procedures need to be followed to get admission in these universities.

NSU OEA organized an online information session on January 21 with Saint Mary's University, Canada. The event was attended by a number of distinguished guests representing both Saint Mary's University delegation team and the Canadian University Application Center (CUAC). The guests included Dr. Mohammad Rahaman, Associate Dean, Strategic Partnership and Community Engagement, Sobey School of Business; Ms. Linda Te, Director and Regional Manager, CUAC Global Marketing; Mr. Samuel Turpin, Student Recruitment Officer, Saint Mary's University; Mr. Kazi Rahman, Senior Recruitment Officer, Saint Mary's University; Mr. Warren Mosley, Senior Recruitment Officer, Saint Mary's University; and Mr. Shafkat Chowdhury, Director, Global Logistics and Bangladesh Office, CUAC Bangladesh Office. The online event started with a commencement speech from Ms. Linda about the

strong relationship between Canadian University Application Center and NSU. She mentioned that the organization's first school connection was with NSU and the Director of Global Logistics of the Bangladesh Office. During the session, a detailed presentation was provided about the educational programs and facilities in Saint Mary's University. The speakers emphasized on the success of Saint Mary's University's business school and the fact that the university is the second largest research university in Canada. Adding to that, the speakers spoke about cultural diversity aspects via mentioning that 32% of the Saint Mary's University students are international students coming from over 115 countries. The students watching the live program also asked various questions about the admission procedures in the university.

On February 3, an informative webinar session was conducted by NSU OEA with the University of Maryland, USA. The objective of the information session was to provide students with useful guidance regarding the curriculum, academic structure, admission process and scholarship opportunities offered by the University of Maryland. Ms. Jody Heckman-Bose, Associate Director, International

Student Service, University of Maryland, and Ms. Megan Van Son, Manager of Graduate Admissions, Graduate School, University of Maryland were present in the online event as keynote speakers. Ms. Van Son commenced the presentation with comprehensive introduction of the University of Maryland and mentioned that the institution is one of the flagship universities in the USA. Being a high ranked public research university in the United States, she mentioned that the university students receive plenty of research funding and scholarships. It was also mentioned that the university offers diverse courses and programs for both local and international students of graduate, post-graduate and doctoral levels. Ms. Heckman-Bose also joined in the discussion as she carefully elaborated on the application procedures and requirements of the university. During their concluding statements, both the speakers encouraged NSU and Bangladeshi students to apply to the University of Maryland to pursue their higher studies.

Another online information session was conducted by NSU OEA on 23 February with Texas A&M International University (TAMU), the USA. A number

▶▶ Continued on Page 19

## Vetoes & Atrocity Crimes: The Use by a UN Security Council Permanent Member of Its Veto Power

The Department of Law organized its first international webinar on January 27, 2021. Jennifer Trahan, Clinical Professor at the Center for Global Affairs, New York University (NYU) had spoken on 'Vetoes & Atrocity Crimes: The Use by a UN Security Council Permanent Member of Its Veto Power'. The talk had begun, following introductory remarks on the part of Professor Abdur Rob Khan, Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at North South University, and Prof. Md. Rizwanul Islam, Chair of the Department of Law.

Mr. Saquib Rahman, Senior Lecturer of the Department of Law had moderated the webinar. Mr. Nazmus Sakib, Graduate Teaching Assistant at the Department of Law had coordinated the programme.



Professor Abdur Rob Khan, Dean, SHSS, NSU with Jennifer Trahan, Clinical Professor at the Center for Global Affairs, New York University and others at the Webinar.

## Information Sessions with Saint Mary's University Cont'd...

of guests were present during the informative session, including Ms. Diana Carolina Valdez, Director, Office of International Engagement, TAMU and Ms. Jessica Chandarlis, International Student Advisor, Office of International Engagement, TAMU. The event started with a brief introduction of Texas A&M International University and it was mentioned that the university offers programs and courses in several languages. During her speech, Ms.

Valdez expressed, "As students from different regions and countries of the world come to Texas A&M International University for higher studies, the university preserves a unique blend of cultures on the campus." Later during the session, Ms. Chandarlis spoke about a unique project of the university called 'The International Student Mentor Program.' She said that this program helps international students to adapt to the system and culture

of TAMU. During the closure of the session, both the guests encouraged students to apply to the university via available scholarships for international students.

All three of these online web information seminars were interactive as speakers took related questions from the student audience. The sessions took place in Zoom online video sharing platform and was broadcasted live on the official Facebook page of NSU OEA.

## North South University Announces Waiver for Spring 2021

North South University has been taking many initiatives during the global pandemic due to Covid-19. It is to be noted that, in the Summer & Fall 2020 semesters, a significant amount of fees were waived. Considering the overall situation, NSU authority has decided to continue with the waiver for Spring 2021 Semester like the last semester. All Student-activity fees (library fee, computer lab fee and other fees) have been waived. In addition, 10% of the tuition fees would be waived. The total waiver of the fees would amount

approximately to 20% for the Spring 2021.

In addition to the waiver, NSU has been taking other initiatives for student welfare. Around 1300 children of the brave freedom fighters of 1971 have been given the opportunity to study at NSU without any fees. Further, a special scholarship has been given to the students of NSU who lost their parents during the Corona pandemic.

Since the establishment of this university, it has provided financial assistance of 150 crore taka to the

students till date. Approximately 18 crore taka has been provided as scholarships to meritorious and needy students over the last 12 months. North South University staff members have donated 2 days of their salary amounting to 50 Lacs taka to the relief fund of the Honorable Prime Minister. NSU has also distributed 11000 bags of relief material through the Bangladesh Army and Police among the affected families during the pandemic. North South University wishes overall success of the students and seeks sincere cooperation of all in this regard.

## Tareq Kazi, an NSUer

Finnish-born Bangladeshi footballer Tariq Kazi wants to play for the Bangladesh National Team. The defender's dream may be fulfilled soon as he has been called up to the preliminary squad for the World Cup 2022 qualifiers. Kazi was delighted after he was selected to the preliminary team. The 19-year-old Bashundhara Kings defender expressed his jubilation through a video on his Facebook page. The second round of the 2022 World Cup and the 2023 Asian qualifiers will begin in October. Bangladesh is scheduled to play their first game against Afghanistan in Sylhet on October 8. The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) announced a 36-man squad for the second round. The squad will practice at a camp in Gazipur from August 7 under head coach Jamie Day.

Let's hear from Tarek. NSU News: How long have you been playing football and what got you interested in it?

I was five years old when my parents got me on the ice hockey team and I played ice hockey for five years.

I love the sport, but I love football more. So,

I chose football. My elder brother used to play football. So, when I was very small, I used to go to watch his football practice and I fell in love with football. So, I told my parents, this is what I want to do. Also, I used to play floorball and ice hockey, but, football was my passion and I have continued playing football.

NSU News: What is your dream team to play for and why?

Since childhood, my dream team is Arsenal because the club prides itself

on treating all their players like they treat their main team.

NSU News: What do you do when you aren't working? How do you unwind? When I'm not working, I like to unwind by working out, watching football, reading a good book, or playing PlayStation, and I fancy going to the sauna a lot.

NSU News: Who is your favorite

and to not be too critical of themselves because it's a difficult time for everyone. You have your own body and you can still train at the very least with bodyweight exercises. Some people have access to other equipment, and that's great as well. Take the time to work on other aspects of your game such as technical/tactical aspects and also the mental aspect, which is really important.

NSU News: We see from your profile you are also a student. How do you juggle being a player and student? To be honest, for me there is no problem. I love studying and it gives me a different aspect of life to be motivated by.

NSU News: How is NSU supporting you for your game?

Maybe the biggest help has been Hridoy Alam, the President of North South University Athletics Club. He always helps me with all the extra duties and paperwork, which is why it has become easy for me to concentrate on going to classes and training/games.

NSU News: What is your favorite quote?

"A chi fa male mai mancano scuse." in English this means "he who does evil is never short of an excuse."

NSU News: What makes you addicted to progress?

The euphoria of success.

NSU News: Where do you see yourself in the next 5 years?

In 5 years, I will still be working hard toward the goals I have set for myself but in a more advanced place.



Tareq Kazi, Bangladeshi footballer at NSU Student.

football player and why?

From the past, easily Thierry Henry, he was just the perfect all-around player with the correct mentality, and from the present, Hector Bellerin, he carries the right mentality for a big club who is not doing so well at the moment and that is inspiring.

NSU News: What advice would you give to other athletes to help them stay focused and in shape during COVID-19?

To try and stay focused on their goals





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