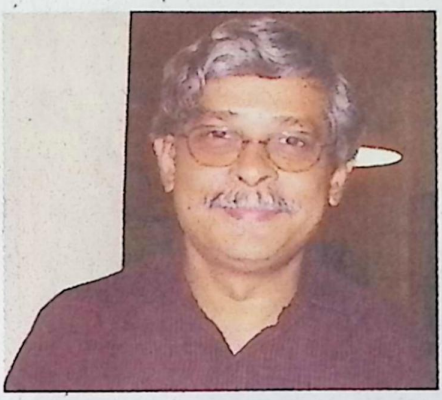


A teacher is more than just an educator. With right initiative, sincere intent and a desire to promote positive change in the country, a teacher can be a true nation builder. Teachers can use themselves as leverage points to organize events and/or activities that further hone the talent of the students. In recent times, a number of extra-curricular activities have been held in various educational institutions. Whether its an inter-university debate competition or a science fair, these activities have created a platform for talented young minds to convene together under one roof. Many of these activities have been possible because of the initiatives and the guidance of certain faculties who have not only fulfilled their assigned position with sincerity and diligence, but have gone beyond the assigned responsibility to take steps that truly made a difference for their students. The initiatives undertaken by these teachers have showed a new direction to their students and created mechanisms through which the student community and the nation have been benefited.

This week Star Campus will feature some in-campus activities that caught our attention in recent past and the story of the faculties behind them. A few factors were considered before making the selections: Initiatives taken by the faculty to develop the student community in his/her institution, their initiatives beyond their own campus which have benefited the student community at large, and activities that have made a positive contribution to the country. This article is of course not inclusive of all deserving events/activities and/or faculties. By telling the stories of the selected few in this issue, we would like to promote the causes that they have stood for and inspire others to follow their footsteps.

Promoting Science and Technology among Bangladeshi youth

Muhammad Zafar Iqbal is a legend, a pioneer and a role model. As a science-fiction writer and later as the Head of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), Muhammad Zafar Iqbal has single handedly promoted science and technology among Bangladeshi youth.

A student of the Department of Physics in Dhaka University, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal went to University of Washington in the USA to obtain his Ph. D in 1976. He later joined Bell Communications Research (Bellcore) as a Research Scientist where he worked till 1994. Upon returning to Bangladesh Muhammad Zafar Iqbal joined as a professor and the Head of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering at SUST.

As a novelist, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal has not only motivated the youngsters to be more curious about science, but his literally works, many of which includes adventure novels for the youth, have managed to invoke a sense of patriotism among children and grown ups alike.

Despite facing adversity both within and outside the university, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal has been successful at establishing the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Sylhet as one of the finest computer science institutes in the country. Together with Mohammad Kaykobad, Muhammad Zafar Iqbal has initiated the Mathematics Festival in Bangladesh, which eventually led to Bangladesh participating in the International Mathematics Olympiad for the first time in 2005.

Muhammad Zafar Iqbal is also the Chief Advisorof a cultural club named "SHIKORH" which is the first and most popular student organization in SUST. Under his guidance, "SHIKORH" operates four departments: Music, Drama Art and Literature. One of the most active clubs in SUST, the motto "SHIKORH" is to promote Bengali Culture in the university. Whether through his novels or through his work at SUST, the initiatives taken by Muhammad Zafar Iqbal since his return to Bangladesh have broadened the mind of the local youth and has created a platform for the upcoming scientists and engineers of the nation.

Showcasing the Mathematical Talents of Bangladesh in International Arena

Prominence is earned through a sincere dedication on a focused goal. Prof. Jamilur Reza Chowdhury's goal was to become an Engineer, and 50 years later he not only mastered that role but has also gained a stream of respect for his contribution for the academia, governance and the society in general - a deal far more credited than he had bargained for.

After graduating from college he got admitted in BUET and joined