



Prospects and Challenges of Studying in Canada

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CANADA is among the preferred destinations for Bangladeshi students to pursue higher studies. Every year a good number of boys and girls get admission in various universities across Canada. There are some highly professional agencies in Bangladesh that are offering the required services to students in their search.

for the right kind of institute, in providing required information concerning various courses being offered, faculty strength, tuition fees, other charges, library facilities, dorm charges, availability of part time job etc. They also help students in filling up the admission forms and processing their visa so that they do not lose even a day. In our quest to find one reliable agency we hit upon CUAC and collected some vital information from the authorities. We share some of the information with our valued readers.

"Even today where one can find virtually anything by a simple keystroke, mouse click and or touch pad - the lack of knowledge about studying in Canada among Bangladeshis is staggering. Of course it's not that Bangladeshi students, parents and teachers have any more real insight into institutions in the US, UK and Australia - but Canada really stands apart as misunderstood among study abroad options.

It may be said that few know that virtually all Canadian universities are public. Unlike the US, private education (and medicine) is mostly a foreign concept in Canada. So all those Canadian universities one may have heard of, including the most popular names in Bangladesh - Toronto,

McGill, Alberta, Saint Mary's - are all public institutions. Unlike the USA which has almost 5,000 universities and colleges, Canada only has about 75 universities - a very small number for a country of 35 million people. Then again, many Canadian universities are among the larger campuses in the world and are home to tens of thousands of students.

With Canadian universities being public, few in number and supported by a very rich country, they are almost all of extremely high academic quality and world-class standard. This is probably the biggest misconception about Canada among Bangladeshi students. For a bachelor degree, it does not matter which public university one studies at in Canada. Canadians do not write entrance exams to attend their own undergraduate/bachelor degree programs. Most Canadians simply attend the university (or college) where they live. Unlike in Bangladesh where the difference of which campus one goes to, can broadcast one's own socio-economic status, Canadian universities have similar tuition fees for all Canadians, and are attended by Canadians of all economic classes. Again, this is dramatically different from the United States, which has some of the most expensive private (and public) universities in the world, and generally for those going to a prominent US university they are bright students, and in most cases they are also rich.

Thus for the cost, the reward of doing one's bachelor degree in Canada are excellent. It means a terrific education, and commonly not as expensive as similar quality options in the USA, UK and Australia. Anyone finishing a bachelor degree in Canada leads directly to an offi-



cial three-year work permit, then status as a Canadian permanent resident, and eventually a citizen.

The challenge however, is that for admission to most Canadian universities (not all), one should be a very good student. For example - for engineering hopefuls to Canada - Canadian universities only offer absolute world-class degrees. It's not like Bangladesh, where the few very best go to BUET and the rest must settle for much less. Thus for the vast majority of Bangladeshis who are dreaming of a Canadian university degree, the fact is, one needs to be a very good student, whether in a Bangladeshi or foreign curriculum.

However, another key aspect of Canadian education is that for those who are not suited for a university, Canada has a very large college sector, which is fundamentally different from universities. In Canada, colleges offer diplomas (with some exceptions where certificates and degrees are awarded) which focus on applied and practical education to prepare students more directly for working careers. For example in hospitality, many technical areas, basic business skills, etc - it's Canadian "community colleges" which service this area. Again, what's misunderstood in Bangladesh, is that it's a Canadian college diploma which best suits the majority of Bangladeshi students. The challenge however, is that obtaining a student visa for a college diploma is more difficult because this pathway to Canada is often abused by those who see it as an easy route to enter Canada without any real intention to study.

What about the myriad of Bangladeshis who already hold a degree from their own country? Is Canada an option for further

study? Š for a Masters?

Again - it's yet another misunderstanding about Canadian universities. Given that Canada's public university sector is of top quality, it serves to reason that its post-graduate/masters degrees would be of a very high standard. This is indeed the truth and it's fabulous news for the top Bangladeshi bachelor degree holders. Canada offers tremendous avenues for advanced study, research and careers in Canada. The best and brightest grads in Bangladesh may avail themselves of Masters degree opportunities which will even fund most of their costs in exchange for research and teaching assistantships. But for the average and good student (and the reality if most students are not exceptional), then a Masters degree in Canada is not a realistic option with the one exception of the few course-based Masters which will entertain students who are merely 'good' but not great.

So when it comes to the biggest global market for study abroad - pursuing post-graduate education - Canada is actually not a major destination. Not because Canada is not interested and welcoming, but because in the main, it's a destination for only the top students who are fewer in number.

For those seeking quality at a relatively affordable cost, and all in a country where peace, prospects and potential are all in abundance - Canada is an exceptional option. For serious and sincere students, at a minimum, it should be a consideration.

Written with information provided by Mr. Mel Braitman, the Managing Director of the Canadian University Application Centre. He can be reached by writing to dhaka@canada123.org)

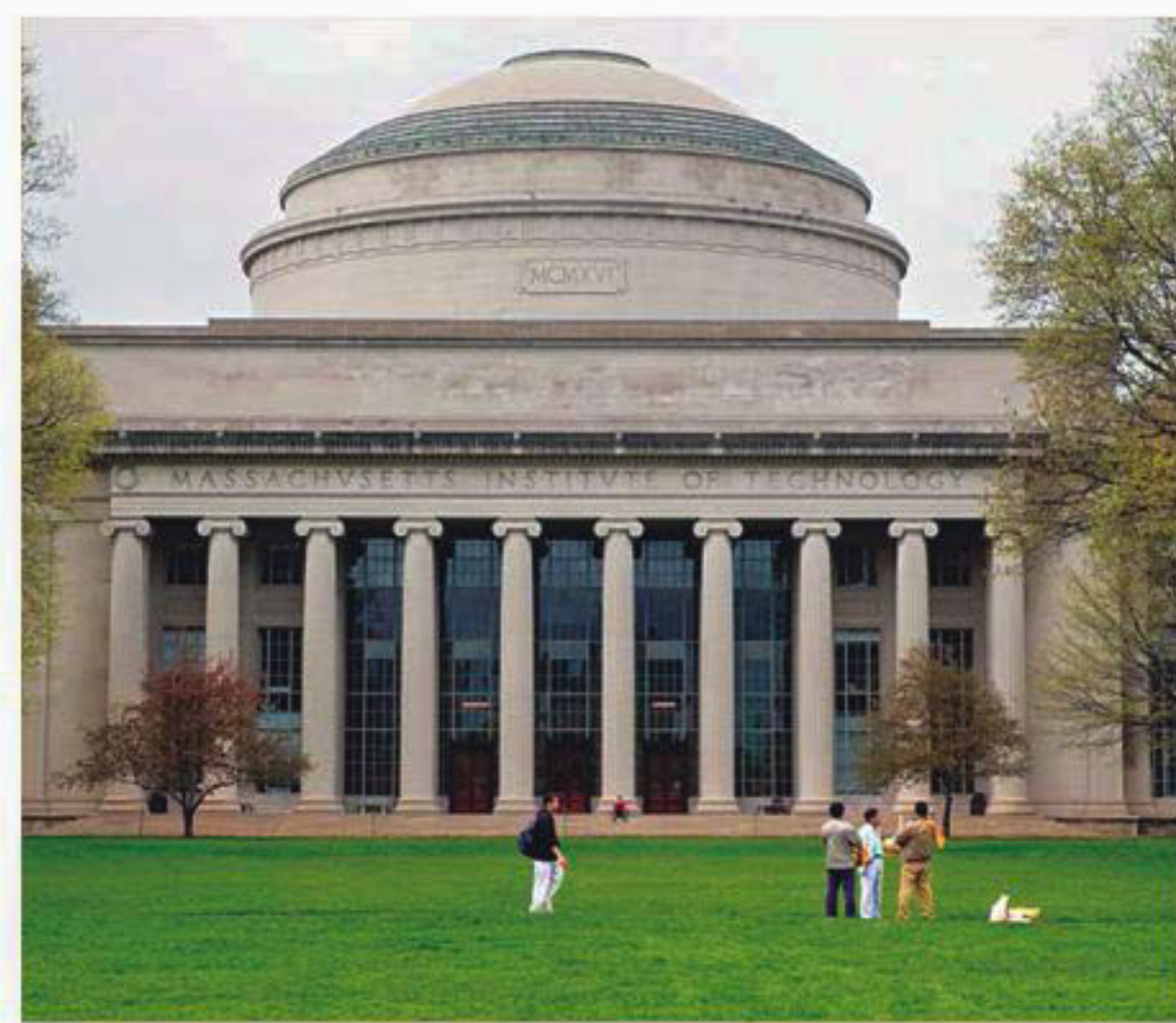
Behind every problem lies an opportunity

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FISCHBACH RL's sadly underrated quote seems to summarize one of humanity's greatest dilemmas: how to deal with problems. Fischbach takes the popular 'don't run away from your troubles' approach to the next level - he terms them as opportunities.

The Bangladeshi youth have a major problem: inaccessibility to foreign education. Mentors likes to think of the problem as Fischbach does, and to that end they created an opportunity out of the problem. The solution: the Mentors' Study Abroad program.

Needless to say, the number of college-bound students in this country outnumbers the available quality under-grad and graduation courses. Thus, a large chunk of students opt to try their luck in foreign universities every year. Despite their enthusiasm some practical problems withhold them in this regard: lack of information about potential universities, visa processing complications, financial aid complexities, etc. In 2006, Mentors' decided to assist prospective



students in their ventures by offering free counseling and eventually organized the process into its Study Abroad program.

Their Study Abroad department essentially brings the entire foreign application process into one accommodation in students' countries of choice, and Mentors' offers a wide range of countries and courses. They have partnerships with universities/colleges from USA, Canada, UK, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Japan, Sweden, Turkey, Netherlands, Russia, Spain and a number of other destinations. Client students are offered education advice, and upon selection of their preferred universities their paperwork is filed for them for admission, scholarship, transfer and visa.

While foreign application is a learning opportunity in itself, most students are put off by its more daunting aspects. As Fischbach states, Mentors' sees these more as opportunities than hurdles; to that end, its Study Abroad program's one step approach is tailor-made to make foreign education both more viable and accessible.

To learn more: info@mentors.com.bd
www.mentors.com.bd www.facebook.com/mentorsbd

Towards a wider horizon...

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THE journey is a long but interesting one, 21 years in fact, beginning from 1993 to 2014. This global network has evolved in this long period of time as a leading Education Consultancy firm. BSB today takes pride in seeing itself as a quality service provider achieving ISO 9001: 2008 Quality Certification, ASIC Certification and many other national and international institutional awards and recognitions.

BSB is a popular organization for admission of students in the world's renowned educational institutions offering advices concerning admission and career and making students ready for interview through its one stop service. Over the years, through various activities, it has been able to gain the confidence of the people of all classes and some renowned educational institutions abroad. So, as a dependable and trusted institution it has earned widespread acclamation from various universities and colleges of USA, UK, Canada, Australia, Germany, Malaysia, China, Ireland, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and Spain. It has sent many students to these countries. Many of them have graduated and taken up prestigious professions in various sectors.

BSB also manages scholarships and support for getting visit and spouse visa for talented students. It also conducts spot admission in the presence of the foreign delegates. BSB regularly organizes seminars and TV programmes in different parts of the country to provide students with the latest information related to education.

BSB is now a Foundation. It is widely accepted within the pre-primary to higher education; school, college, university (in progress) even madrasa. Particularly, the first and only educational TV channel 'Cambrian Television' will start to broadcast soon. The organization's founder-director, Lion MK Bashar PMJF as business entrepreneur and education entrepreneur has achieved different national and international recognition. Among them, World Education Congress-2012 for special contribution to education and in the same year highly recognized and prestigious The Bizz-2012 Award in Europe are mentionable.

To learn more about BSB the global network visit, www.bsbbd.com

MK Bashar talks on the services provided by education consultants
In response to our query, BSB Chairman MK

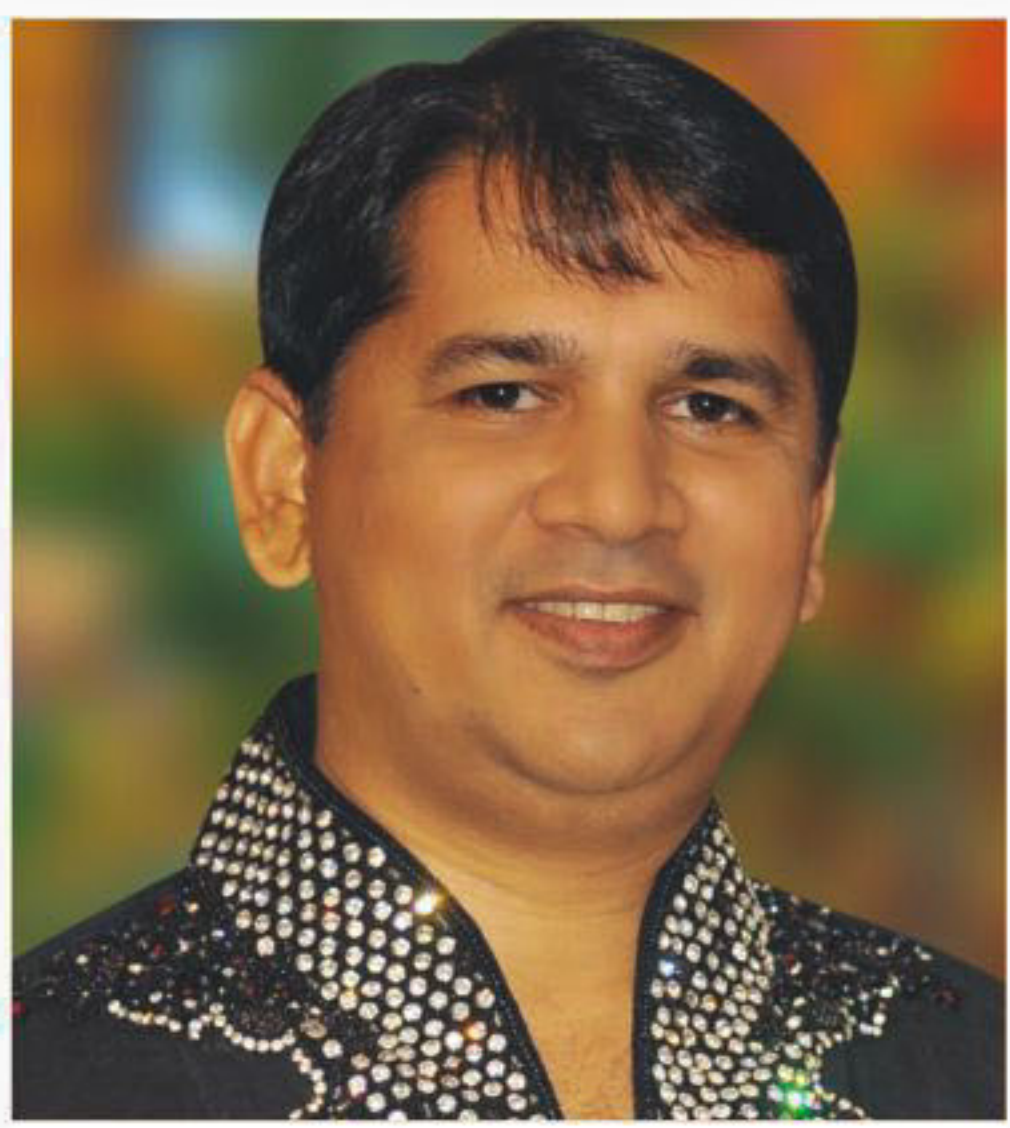


Bashar talked in length about the services provided by BSB as an education consultant to students who come for advice and necessary services. He said that a student who has just passed his or her HSC or completed undergrad studies and is interested to go abroad to study there, will not know where to get the needed information regarding admission in a foreign university and other relevant queries. He or she may end up going to the wrong people and get totally frustrated at the end. It is in such situation an experienced consultant/agency may help them with

proper guidance and ultimately send them to the university they prefer. Going to the genuine and reputable consultant and getting the right information are the basics that have to be ensured.

In reference to the Cross Border Higher Education Program, which has been recently gazette by the government, he said that this would allow well known foreign universities to offer high quality education. He emphasized that the standard of education in many of the private and public universities is not up to the mark. The foreign universities would therefore throw a challenge to them to improve their quality.

While talking about the contribution of students going abroad to the economy of the country, he pointed out that every year 20 to 25 thousand students are going abroad to pursue higher studies. At one stage most of them work and earn money. If we consider the total revenue remitted by nearly 500,000 students working in various countries for the last decade or more the amount would surpass the total revenue remitted by our expat workers. He emphasized that with due recognition of the sector as an industry by the government bringing home the commission earned by the local consultants/agencies would be hassle free. If local consultants/agencies are given government licence like the manpower export licence, the sector would become more organized and get a big boost and strive further to do even better.



Views of some students

SOHEL RANA

Fahrina Sabrin
Graduated in B.B.A. (Major in Marketing) from BRAC University



"I am currently studying in University of Dhaka (EMBA, Final semester). I want to go to Canada. University Choice: Winter University, Confederation College. My motto is to settle there." "Why?" "Because most of my relatives are there and they are encouraging me to get higher degree there." "Any challenges you are facing?" "Well, at first my family opposed me because they thought I was not mature enough to live alone abroad, a sense of insecurity. But true to say, I feel insecure here. I've made them understand logically and they're convinced now. I scored 7 in IELTS under British Council." "What kind of help you received from agency?" "Oh yes, they are very much professional in their work. They are helping me from filling up Application Form to facing embassy. I am satisfied with their services"

Rashida Khatun (Kajol)
Graduated in B.B.A. (HRM) from Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB)



"I am now studying MBA (Evening Program), University of Dhaka." I want to go to Australia, The University of Sydney Business School. Initially I faced many problems as I am a girl. My family and my relatives did not agree with me. But now I have overcome all the barriers. My father is an MBBS doctor who encourages me now a lot to do higher degree and settle down

abroad. I am taking preparation through an agency. They are very cooperative."

Showkot Ali Jewel
H.S.C. (Commerce Background)

"Studying abroad is my long desired dream. I have chosen a university named University of Toronto in Canada for under graduation degree in Business Studies. My elder brother



is studying abroad. He is encouraging me in this regard. I am willing to settle there. But there are several challenges I am facing now, especially regarding Bank balances. I think our Govt. should help the students to overcome this problem. Going abroad should be made easy. I have taken help of an agency. I am satisfied at the cooperation of my agency. Their student counseling is excellent. I have got a clear idea of the whole process"

Jibon Sarker
M. A.
Department of Sociology
University of Jagannath

"It's my long cherished dream to go abroad for higher studies and after completion of my post graduation I have an intention to come back. I have chosen a university named Linnaeus University of Sweden for Sociology related subjects. One of my senior brothers is helping me and keeps me informed. But there are several challenges I am facing now like keeping huge amount of money in an account and high tuition fees. I have a high appreciation for the agency which is helping me from filling application to facing embassy."

