

# Characters You Meet at MUNs

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Let's face it, other than for "developing skills" or "challenging yourself," MUN conferences are often more about that participation certificate, flaunting yourself in formals, and meeting new people. Speaking of the latter, here are a few categories of MUN-ers that you're likely to come across at every conference.

### The Know-it-all Fact-book

Getting your hands on the Best Delegate Award is probably one of your main goals for a conference, but this guy has made it his life goal. Does his shelf of awards, gathering dust, mean he should just try to relax for one committee session? No. Not only does he seem to know every past UN resolution and every fact about his country by heart, but he also knows everything about yours. Make one slip in your speech and he'll be waiting to pounce like a hungry bulldog, point out your mistake, tear you down, and make you look bad in front of the chair. *Know it all - 1. You - 0.*

### The Fashionistas

MUNs give you the opportunity to wear three/four different formal outfits, a traditional outfit for one day, and something sparkly for the gala night and dinner. The fashionistas know this better than anyone else - dapper suits, expensive tie pins, designer blouses and lots of makeup mean they're more geared up for



selfies than giving opening speeches. Lucky for them, something called "The Best Dressed Delegate Award" actually exists. I was struggling to fit my laptop and folders into my bag the night before an MUN whereas one of my fellow delegates was trying to figure out how she'd carry a red gown to change into

later for the gala night. Mmm-hmm.

### The Flirt

No, it is not alright to pass a note to the delegate of Japan asking for her phone number during a moderated caucus. It is also not okay to raise a Point of Personal Privilege and ask the Chair, "Can we please have the AC turned on? 'Cause it's

hot," with a wink. Flirting won't help you strengthen ties with allies or get you closer to any of the awards, honourable delegate.

### The Social Butterfly

The heart of the committee - the social butterfly - will interact with everyone, send friend requests, invite you for selfies and be the first to open a group chat for the whole committee. Thanks to this person, you'll find yourself attending reunions with your committee members 6 months (or years) later.

### The Lost Soul

Look closely past the eager, chatty delegates and you'll find a quiet kid sitting in the corner and minding his/her own business. These delegates barely know the full name of their assigned country, nor do they care about it. They're just here because they paid 2000 Taka for a participation certificate or their friends dragged them here for the weekend.

At the end of day, these are the individuals that will help make your MUN experience a memorable one. To be honest, you're more likely to cherish memories about that friend you made, or that flawless photo of you in a suit more than some certificate anyway.

*Salma Mohammad Ali fears she is becoming a crazy cat lady and uses writing as a means to grasp on to sanity. Send her your views/hate/love at fb.com/salma.ali209*

# CALCULATED PROCRASTINATION

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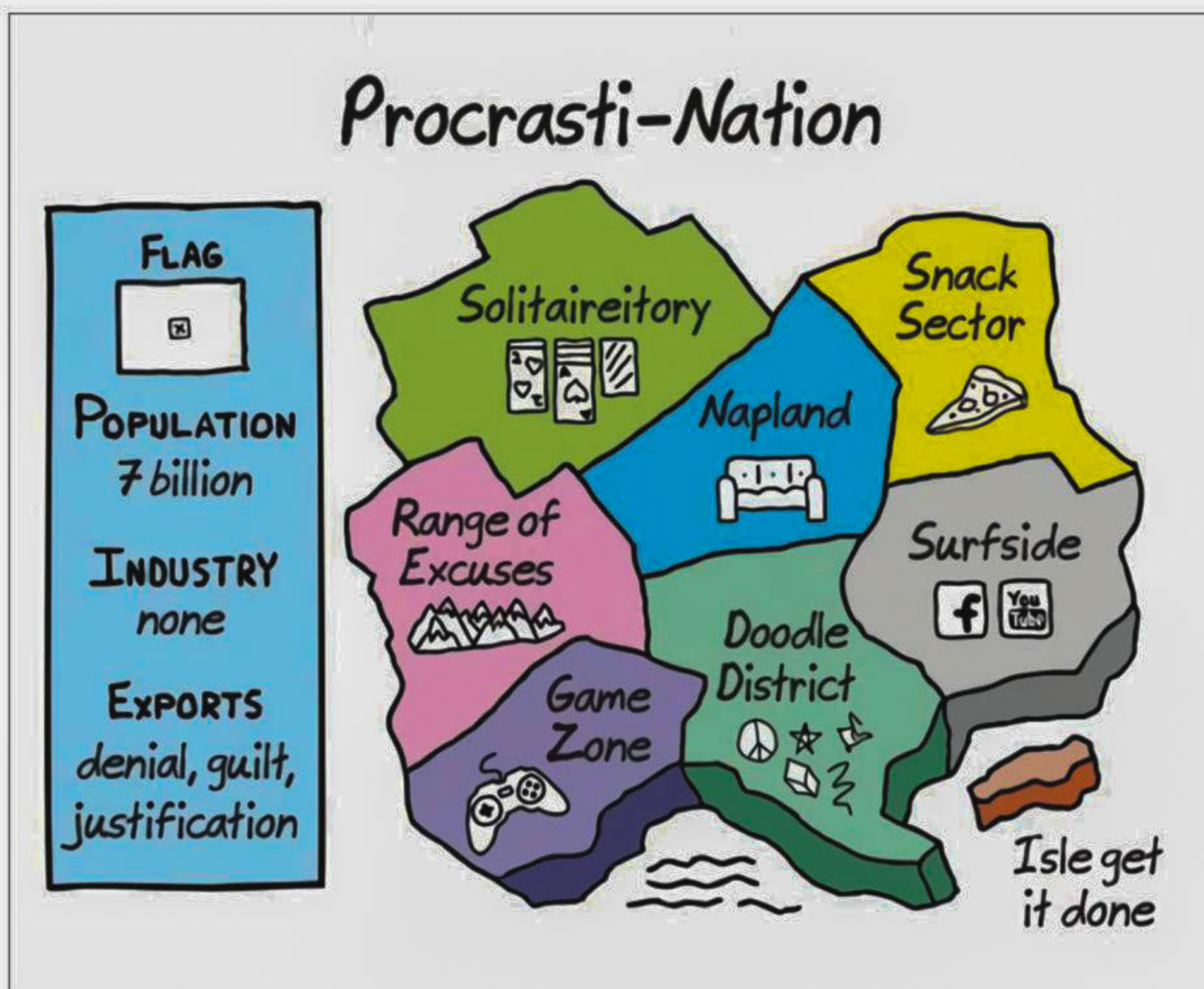
Is it not the basic dream that you can effectively maximise the period of procrastination without having to feel like your life is going to fall apart more than a few times? That is where decision mathematics comes in.

You might wonder, why learn math when you could just continue to mindlessly avoid the work you have to do? As valid as that might seem, the aspiration isn't to just be an average Joe in the world of procrastination but to reach the stature of one master procrastinator. So, pull out a few sheets of graph paper, keep a calculator at hand (although you could do without one), all you need now is a Cascade Chart.

In any scheduled project, there are things that must be done without delay - learning the skills you need, eating, watching new episodes of your favourite TV show, sleep (maybe?). These are your critical activities: to be done immediately. The main parts of your project cannot wait. Neither can *The Walking Dead*.

Life, as if not difficult enough, throws in other "non-critical" activities in the mix that too must be done. Non-critical doesn't mean unimportant. It signifies that it allows for some time before it needs to get done. The amount of time you get is the "float". The more float you have, the better it is for us procrastinators.

To put it into perspective, here's an



example. You need to complete a group project in a week. On the heading of your cascade diagram, chart out the number of days. Determine how many tasks you have and approximately how long each will take, like honestly estimating how many memes before actually discussing the workload.

Break them down into a web of steps which will lead to the completion of your task objective. If you draw a line between the critical steps, it will show you the quickest way to your end goal. That is your critical path. Such as: start WhatsApp group, arrange meeting, throw things together, complain about authori-

tarian system of schools, put the workload on the smart kid, present due project. However, not all the tasks will follow this path, like debating on what food to order.

Place those non-critical activities below the critical path between suitable intervals. Usually, or rather hopefully, the intervals are going to be longer than the duration of your non-critical tasks. Thus, you can float your duty at the back of your mind for that extra bit of time you have without affecting the deadline. In line with the above example: before the project, you could buy supplies right before the start of the project or keep it stored in your room early to get a constant reminder of your remaining tasks - either way, it works.

The Cascade Chart is a great tool for visualising your priorities (or lack thereof). It allows for a task to be completed in the least amount of time while finding loops for delays in some tasks. It's a beacon for those who must multitask and is crucial in their world, while being a planned schedule for squeezing in one more episode of the latest TV hit for the rest.

*With a keen eye and a broken brain to mouth filter, Mahejabeen Hossain Nidhi has a habit of throwing obscure insults from classic novels at random people who may or may not have done anything to warrant them. Drop a line at mahejabeen.nidhi@gmail.com*