

We need to provide quality education at affordable cost

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STARTING from 1980s, demand for university education in Bangladesh has been increasing fast. The limited number of seats in public universities could not meet the growing demand of the students and many of them had been going to India, Thailand, U.K. and other countries for higher studies. Government was not also prepared to open new universities in public sector. Observing the situation, a few educationists took an initiative to convince Government to allow universities in non-government sector and as result, The Private Universities Act was passed in 1992. Following this, 16 universities were set up. Of these universities, some charged high tuition fees of which was beyond the capability of most of the students and others could not provide quality education.

In the context of this situation, a group of accomplished academics, self-made successful industrialists, recognised professionals and well-known administrators with a high set of social and ethical values united their efforts to set up an 'inclusive' university that will provide quality education at a reasonable cost. Their dream was, and still is, a university that will be one of the best in its chosen fields of study in the region and in the world in course of time. So came into being Eastern University.

Following the founders' values, the university is committed to prepare patriotic, socially responsible and ethically conscious graduates and to equip them with knowledge and skills essential for leadership in private and public sector in the increasingly competitive and globalized environment. To pursue the values of social responsibility and inclusiveness, the university has set its fees and payment system within the reach of the middle class families from where the largest segment of college educated students comes for higher education. To include those who

cannot afford even this reasonable fee, liberal financial assistance are given to poor and meritorious students in the form fee waivers, scholarships, student loan and outright personal donations by the foundation members and top executives. The opportunity to seek admission is open to all candidates with the minimum GPA requirement set by UGC but an admission test is conducted to assess, screen and select candidates who qualify for higher education.

The governance of the university is a rare example of ideal democracy. The 30-member Eastern University Foundation and 21-member Board of Trustees (BOT) function like micro-parliaments where issues are resolved in a democratic manner after thread-bare discussion and debate and there is no one with veto power. The BOT and all other statutory committee meetings are regularly held. Adhering to the accepted ethical standard, no BOT or Foundation member and no member of other stakeholders interferes with the selection of students, faculty, staff or committee members. Neither is there any influence on examination or grading from any quarter. The university can certainly boast of the above mentioned practices as it is not easy to follow these in a culture where recommendation is the norm. The administration of the university is in the capable hands of the experienced Vice Chancellor, highly qualified Pro Vice Chancellor, competent Treasurer and seasoned Registrar.

To instill Bangladeshi patriotism among students and to make them socially and ethically conscious, the general education curriculum of the university includes a course on Bangladesh Studies and another course on Values and Ethics which are compulsory for all undergraduate students. A course on Bengali Language and Literature and another course on Liberation Movement and History of Bangladesh will be introduced soon. The university has a field of studies in Business Administration, Computer Science and Engineering, Electrical and Electronic Engineering, English Language and Literature, and Law.

Quality of education, being the corner stone and centre of attention of all efforts and being the focus of branding, is given the utmost importance. From the very beginning, the university has been attracting good students, hiring best faculty, providing appropriate technology and environment for learning, rigorously monitoring student and teacher performance and taking remedial actions – all with the single purpose of ensuring quality education. The Internal Quality Assurance Cell, the first established one among all private universities, is now working religiously in a World Bank-HEQEP funded three year project for educational quality enhancement. When the system of quality assurance will be completed and implemented in 2018, the university will be ready for accreditation. However, the application for the accreditation of undergraduate programme in Electrical and Electronic Engineering is under consideration of the Institute of Engineers of Bangladesh.

The university places strong emphasis on co-curricular and extra-curricular activities to develop the students' communication and interpersonal skills, social and leadership skills and to enhance their general awareness about national and international affairs and developments. The university encourages students to become a member of least one of the 18

clubs and forum. The Students Affairs Office plays a very commendable role in motivating and engaging students in organising the club or forum programmes and encouraging all students to participate or attend.

The Centre for Research and Development (CRD) allocates research funds, procures and monitors research projects and consultancy projects, and organises research seminars and training on research methodology. It publishes a bi-annual research journal, The Eastern University Journal.

The Centre for Innovation and Incubation encourages students and faculty to come out with innovative ideas of products, designs or process, experiment and test them in the centre and continue development of the potential ones to the final stage and commercialisation, if feasible.

The Centre for Faculty and Staff Development offers courses, workshops, seminars and conference for continuous skill development of faculty members in teaching-learning and of officers and executives in administrative tasks. The Centre also conducts research for innovation and improvement in teaching-learning and administrative process.

The Career Service and International Office regularly conduct a Career Success Programme (CSP) – a Workshop to prepare the graduates for job entry and career building. Most Eastern University graduates get employed within a short time after passing out or even before they have completed their final semester. While most of them seek jobs and receives assistance from the Career Service and International Office, many of them become entrepreneurs or self-employed professionals like lawyers, software engineers, website designers, etc.

Recently, the university has crafted and adopted a strategic plan after revising and articulating its vision, mission, goals and strategies. The plan is in the implementation process and it is expected that by 2020, Eastern University will be one of the top five private universities in

Bangladesh in terms of quality and a globally recognised university in due course of time.

Because of international standard curricula, courses, credits and degree, students of Eastern University are readily accepted by universities in the USA, Europe, Australia, China and other countries and many EU students are studying abroad in Bachelors, Masters and PhD Programs with credit transfer and degree acceptance. Eastern University has academic partnership with over 20 universities in UK, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Finland, Malaysia, China and few other countries. Under a collaboration

agreement, two students of the FBA are pursuing study in Master in Finance with scholarship in Yunnan University of Finance and Economics in Kunming, China. From now on, two students will attend the program every year. Hangzhou University in China has offered 20 scholarships for undergraduate Business and Computer Science students.

In pursuance of commitment of the founders of the University to provide "higher education at affordable cost," Eastern University is surging ahead with close cooperation of its top management, teachers, students and staff to be one of the top five private universities in Bangladesh.

Spring 2017 Admission is open

Admission Tests:
25 November 2016 (Grad)
26 November 2016 (Undergrad)

e-Admission forms are available at admissions.ulab.edu.bd

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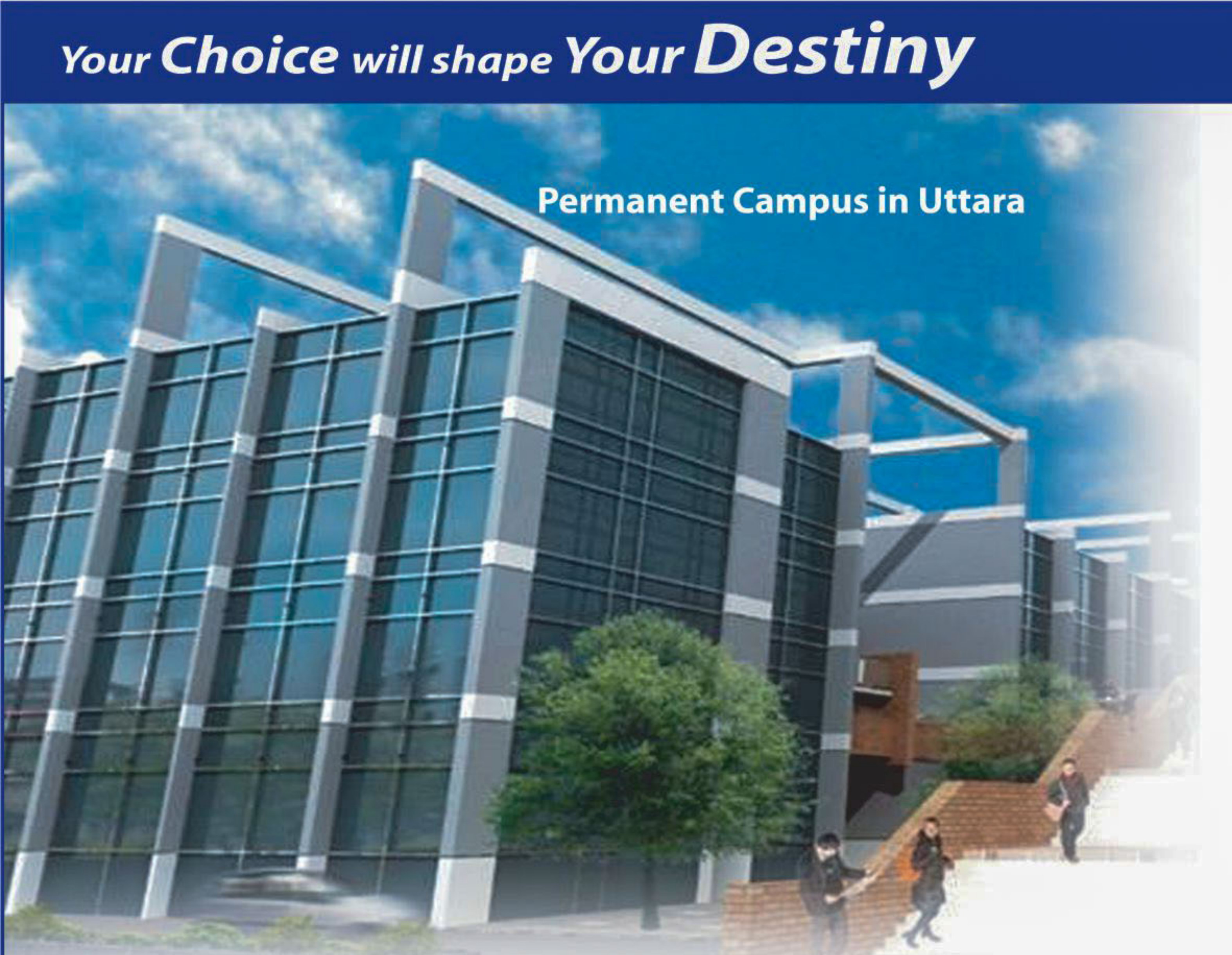
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ULAB celebrated its 12th Foundation day with great enthusiasm on October 6 at ULAB's permanent campus ground in Mohammadpur, Dhaka.

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