

LEARN TO COMMUNICATE AND EMPATHISE

"I believe in clarity. Better communication between the youth and policymakers or experts could clear up agendas and issues among the youth. Seminars could be arranged countrywide to disseminate knowledge and to gather views on a particular policy. Media can participate by acting as the third eye that keeps things in check.

I am excited about the way we have been navigating through the deep seas of foreign relations, especially with China. However, threat of militancy

and persistence of violence against women and ethnic minorities cast these achievements into shadows. Then there are development projects that overlook environmental and demographic costs. Among these, I believe that the Rohingya refugee crisis requires immediate attention because of its national and international impacts.

We, the younger generation, tend to put great weight on education, but neglect morality and end up becoming the people we hate. We talk

about issues but take no course of action. This has to change. In 2017, I want to see an enhancement of equity, and watch Bangladesh emerge as a nation that is cooperative, empathetic and respectful towards all."

MANSURA AMDAD

2nd Year, Department of International Relations
University of Dhaka



WORK FOR A SAFER BANGLADESH

"Despite all our problems, we have one of the most rapidly growing economies in the world. There is so much more we can achieve if we get engaged.

2016 has not been a good year to say the least, but the economy continued to grow strongly, with the energy and IT sectors making very impressive strides. Cheap solar panels have helped alleviate poverty in many rural areas of Bangladesh by providing clean, renewable energy.

Our beloved cricket team has continued to bring joy to millions of people.

I think the most pressing issue in Bangladesh right now is the protection of minority groups. This not only includes threats from extremist groups but also Hindus whose communities have been the subject of vandalism and arson, and the Rohingya who desperately need refuge in our country. We must collectively speak out about these

issues and make the government take action.

For 2017, I want more stability and security. I do not want us to become a police state but I appreciate efforts to crack down on extremist groups. I hope the government invests more on education, and that we get an election with a strong opposition."

SYED AYMAN KABIR

3rd Year, Economics
Wesleyan University, USA

GUIDE THE YOUTH CORRECTLY

"While it is difficult to engage youth directly at the policy-making level, we can always play the role of watchdogs. For that, we need to be well-informed about the crises of our times.

I think the Bangladesh-China relations are the highlight of the year, as well as being a significant boost in South Asian geopolitics. Meanwhile, the Gulshan attack revealed our vulnerability in dealing with terrorist threats. The attacks on religious and

ethnic minorities are shameful for us as a nation and I believe that they deserved more media attention.

Among the issues of the Rampal project, violence against women and children, and the Rohingya crisis, the youth's involvement in extremism demands most urgent attention. The government must have clearer and more immediate policies to tackle this threat.

Our policymakers over-use the

term 'role model for the world' while describing the developments of Bangladesh. I want to see the actual manifestation of the term not only in economics, but in all spheres of society and politics."

JANNATUL MAWA

2nd Year, Department of International Relations
University of Dhaka



DECENTRALISE, IMMEDIATELY

"The best thing to happen to Bangladesh in 2016 was definitely the Test match win over England.

I am extremely concerned about the threat of a major earthquake in Dhaka city. Although realistically it will take a lot of time, I cannot stress enough on this – our government must realise how important it is to decentralise as soon as possible. Otherwise, we may be in grave danger

in the near future. Government offices, business entities, etc. need to be dispersed throughout the country. Cities like Chittagong and Khulna can serve well in such moves.

Despite setbacks, Bangladesh always finds a way to make significant strides in terms of economic development. We have a population of around 165 million. With proper utilisation of our manpower, we can

definitely go a long way. I hope Bangladesh follows the path of Mahathir Mohammed's Malaysia and soon becomes an ideal country for other nations. 2017 can very well be the year that initiates it all."

ISNAAD SHARAHBEEL

Student of Finance
IBA, University of Dhaka