



## EMBRACE DIVERSITY

"Many of us tend to participate verbally rather than practically when it comes to matters of the country. But voicing an issue does not solve the problem itself. I think being engaged in community-based organisations will give our voices a platform and help us to actually know about the reality of crises facing our country. Introducing seminars and road shows at different universities would also raise awareness and increase the involvement of youth in current affairs.

I am proud of how Bangladesh has been developing and rebuilding itself, and was especially pleased with the enlistment of 'Mongol Shobhajatra' in the UNESCO cultural heritage list. However, I am concerned about how much matters of extremism and violence against minorities are being overlooked – they deserve even more attention.

As a youth from an ethnic background, I would say that having a

clear conscience of right or wrong is more important about such sensitive topics than being biased and taking sides. I sincerely hope that Bangladesh will learn to embrace people from all religious backgrounds and ethnic groups."

### MOULY DEWAN

1st Year, Computer Science and Engineering  
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## END THE POLITICAL BLAME GAME

"The visit by President Xi Jinping brought the spotlight of the world upon the country and more importantly it came with promises of funding for various infrastructure and development projects. This shows that Bangladesh's geopolitical importance is finally being realised by the major powers. The deals being done, however, have to be judged on the terms and conditions of the repayment.

Two issues in Bangladesh need to be addressed urgently. Firstly, extremists need to be punished and youth

awareness should be raised to ensure that future generations do not make the same mistakes. The second pressing issue is the lack of a proper political environment. Opposing parties not agreeing to issues is understandable and acceptable, but not even having the political climate for parties to "agree to disagree" is bad for the entire country. The major parties should attempt to rectify this through discussions and negotiations so that the country can move forward.

I would like to see political parties

and the civilian society move away from the political blame game, identify root causes of the most pressing issues facing the country, and work together to reverse them. Such an improved environment will be conducive for the economy to build upon the 6-7 percent GDP growth rate we have been experiencing and thus improve the standard of living."

### SAMEEN AHSAN

Economics and Finance, North South University



## UNDERSTAND THE MIND, CULTIVATE CREATIVITY

"In 2016, I was especially pleased when Rajshahi started combating air pollution, and when Bangladesh ranked high in South Asian gender equality. I believe there should be an emphasis on current issues in schools from a young age. We also need more charismatic leaders who wish to teach and lead, such as Dr. Yunus, whose wisdom and effective communication can encourage us to become involved in a more positive way. We may think of politics as a negative force, but it shouldn't discourage us from seeking

knowledge and understanding the system. No system is static; hence we have the power to change it. If the country can remind us of it, we would be motivated to participate effectively. I believe Bangladesh needs an ardent focus and acceptance of mental health issues. It is a taboo concept; when brought up, the patient is often directed towards religious reliefs. There needs to be different outlets and more practical acknowledgement of these realities. We also need playgrounds where children and teenagers are not limited to

basketball, football, or cricket. Society in general needs to stop glorifying the tuition culture that deprives students of their childhood. Human beings are creative minds; we aren't machines that need to have a constant measured output. Each and every person has a potential to do good, but that fire needs to be ignited at first and the rest will unfold."

### ADIBA HASAN

3rd Year, Religion & Political Science  
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## OUR COUNTRY, OUR RESPONSIBILITY

"We are stuck in a loop. Young people aren't interested in politics because it doesn't have a healthy environment, and the parochial system of politics is the result of the lack of youth involvement. We need to fix both ends. The young generation should try to get involved and fix things themselves; meanwhile, our leaders should make the political environment more welcoming towards younger participants.

The same applies to the business world. There's a negative view towards businessmen widely regarded as dishonest. This culture needs to change. We have had slow growth in investments despite a stable political environment and absence of economic depression. The central bank can't

change this situation even with decreasing interest rates. Young people should be encouraged, trained and even given loans to start their own businesses instead of remaining unemployed while looking for jobs under others.

On another note, I came out of the July terrorist attack with mixed feelings towards the media. While some showcased examples of quality journalism by reporting accurate news, others spread fear, confusion, and hatred through unchecked news, dividing the nation when it was in dire need to be united.

Corruption, I believe, is what needs immediate attention. It is decreasing our administrative efficiency, slowing down development, and increasing the

income inequality. Mere laws are no longer enough – quick trials and the establishment of severe punishments are necessary.

Despite all odds, Bangladesh has proven that she is able to achieve great things such as lower maternal mortality rate, improved sanitation conditions, and eradication of preventable diseases through vaccination. We need to stop blaming the government or anyone else, realise that the problems of this country are our own, and transform into a model of development and an example of what humanity can achieve through united effort."

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