

OPTIMITY 2017: Where students become “investment gladiators”

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Investment, stocks, mutual funds - these concepts may sound familiar to many, using them in everyday scenario but when it actually comes to dealing with them, a lot of them will take a step back. This was exactly what the participants of IPDC presents “OPTIMITY 2017”, an investment and portfolio management competition by NSU Finance Club had to compete on.

With a vision to create more portfolio managers and to enlighten students on investment tactics, OPTIMITY was organised to give the students a platform to experience real-world scenario of the whole investment sector. From 13 universities, a total of 138 teams registered for the first round which only shows a small scenario of competitiveness of the event.

The purpose of the competition was to instruct the knowledge of investment and portfolio management into the growing minds of the students in order to make them more competent regardless of what their focus of study is.

OPTIMITY started with a workshop which took place on the July 28, 2017 at the NSU campus. In the workshop, a huge number of participants turned in where the stage was occupied by professionals from IPDC Finance. Nawed Wahed Chowdhury, Head of Treasury, IPDC

Finance and Benozee Ahmed, Chief Financial Officer, IPDC Finance shared their views about the event and encouraged the participants. Faculty advisor the Club, Muhammad Nasiruddin, Lecturer, Department of Accounting and Finance, NSU, inspired the participants to engage more in co-curricular activities alongside studies. The workshop was conducted by

Hossain, Chief Operating Officer, IPDC Finance, shared his views on the importance of finance based competitions in the country. The second one was a physical round, where participants had to give presentations on the industries they were given. Four groups were formed consisting of six teams and each group was given a particular industry to work on: tannery,



experienced finance professionals who had laid down the guidelines of the competition.

After solving a rigorous case, only 24 teams got through to the second round from the registered teams. A different set of tasks were given to the second round participants through another second insightful workshop. Shah Wareef

life insurance oil and power, and cement industry. The second round took place on August 11, 2017.

Finally, a total of 8 teams qualified for the finale of OPTIMITY from this round, followed by the last interactive workshop to handover the tasks for the final round to the students.

The grand finale took place on August

20, 2017. During the event, chief guest Mominul Islam, CEO and MD of IPDC Finance, and Dr. Gour Gobinda Goswami, Treasurer of North South University, praised the participants and presented crests to the valued partners of the event and most importantly to the top three winners. The top 8 teams had to go through another round of presentations and this time the panel of judges hailed from IPDC Finance and other renowned financial institutions.

In an attempt to become the investment gladiator, Beta Bots of Institute of Business Administration, Dhaka University (IBA, DU) won the title of champions and prize money of BDT 1 lac. Counter Logic, also from IBA, DU, received the title of 1st runners-up and pocketed BDT 60,000 and team ICONS from North South University were 2nd runners-up with BDT 40,000 as prize money.

An entire month of hard work and persistence of the members of NSU Finance Club was the fuel behind the successful completion of the grand event. The Club ended the grand finale by showing gratitude towards the title sponsor of the event, IPDC Finance, and other partners of the event who had played a very important role for the execution of the event.

LET REPTO BE YOUR TEACHER

FARAH MASUD

How incredible would it be if you could acquire essential skills for graphic designing, social media marketing, programming, and even learn academic subjects like English without having to make arduous journeys to and from coaching centres or seminars? Wouldn't it be even more amazing if you could gain all these skills at your own pace and in your native language?

That is exactly what Repto has to offer on their website edu.repto.co. It is an online skill development platform where all is taught in Bangla by Bangladeshi industry experts and teachers. It has over 80 active courses that are designed to provide students with special skills and qualities required in the job market – one that is becoming progressively competitive with the passage of time.

Repto is the brainchild of its 21 year old founder, Istiyak Sheyam, whose dream is to revolutionise the education system in Bangladesh. He mentioned, “When I was in college, I realised that our academic curriculum teaches us obsolete and impractical knowledge most of the

time, none of which is skill-oriented and have no practical use in the real world.”

Such a predicament is what motivated him to create this platform. There is a dearth of specialised skill-based institutions both in and out of Dhaka; Repto aims to provide such skills to people all over the country. The best part about Repto is its user friendliness. The layout of the site is neat and organised as it displays all the course categories in plain view, which makes it easy to navigate. The courses are shown as thumbnails, with clearly stated details such as lecture hours, length and cost.

After making an account, you can select any course of your interest. The lecturers use updated software for their courses and seem to have ample knowledge about the subject material. There are quite a few free courses, too. These courses are usually series of short lectures. The paid courses are much more in-depth. Every paid

course offers a free trial period during which you can access over 15 lecture videos, directly ask questions to the lecturers by using the student dashboard, or get instantaneous support from the real time chat and call options. They hold live classes and solutions seminars as well.

If you choose to buy the full courses, you will have access to all the lectures, necessary files and slides. The payment procedure is fairly simple. You can use mobile payment system like bKash, credit card or internet banking. The price range is commonly between BDT 200 and 2500. Most courses fall within a budget of BDT 1000.

Currently, there is no evaluation method or certification for completing the courses. However, according to Sheyam, they are working with organisations and international certification providers in order to develop credible and acceptable evaluation and certification processes in the future.

Overall, the Repto team is doing a pretty good job in satiating the appetite for knowledge of the Bangladeshi youth. Semester break and winter holidays are coming - why not spend a few hours each day to learn a new skill that might give you an edge on others?

Farah Masud is a humanbean and that is all you need to know about her. Please don't try to contact her anywhere, especially not in person.