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# THE PURSUIT OF DIGITAL DREAMS

## Digital Innovation Challenge for Women-2017

**PRIYANKA CHOWDHURY**

On September 15, 2017, at 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon, several teams flocked together to attend the first round of mentoring session of "Digital Innovation Challenge for Women 2017". Much before the organisers announced the opening of the mentoring session, the participants got hold of their required mentors for help. Earlier in the week, the mentors got a glimpse of the ideas presented by the participants and were prepared accordingly.

On asking why a digital innovation challenge exclusively for women is necessary for our country, Nilufar Yasmin, a solo contestant, dissects the question. "It gave me the right push that I needed," she says. "Women in our country are still considered inferior to men, especially in the digital world. First, we need to be on the same ground as that of men, and then, we

can compete together," Nilufar adds.

Amina Khatun, another participant, traveled to the city center from JKKNI University, Trishal, Mymensingh. This is her very first time in the capital. She shares her experience while waiting for her mentor to arrive. Amina expresses great joy in being a part of this competition and feels this could lead

her towards a successful venture in game development. "I am a game developer and a designer. I have found a mentor who works in a similar field. I am excited to share my ideas with him," expresses Amina. She always dreamed of becoming an engineer. Her parents have been very helpful and her younger brother is her best friend as

well as a critic who loves to trick her with challenges.

All the mentors invested more than five hours each to groom the participants and get them ready for the Presentation Round the next day.

A third year student of BUET, Mitrasree Deb shares her experience after the presentation, "The mentoring session

helped a lot. I think, now, I can pitch my idea better." She has always been passionate about competitions and finds them helpful to channel her ideas.

"I could not find any other female who was interested in participating, so, I decided to participate on my own," says Anamika Ahmed, a CSE major from BRAC University. According to her, females are much more serious regarding their academics, and on the other hand, the male counterparts are more focused on developing their skills and taking part in competitions. "More girls should participate and competitions like this need more exposure," Anamika explains.

Women in Digital gave these young females the platform required to nurture their ideas, projects, and products. Through "Digital Innovation Challenge for Women 2017", these gifted individuals are a step closer to their pursuit of the digital dream.



## 5 Things to learn from GAME OF THRONES

**AFSANA AZIZ NITOL**

After the season 7 finale of Game of Thrones, the internet is knitted with fan theories regarding season 8. For a change, instead of assuming what happens next, how about we ponder upon what we have learned so far? After all, Game of Thrones is more than just a show about blood, fire, ice, dragons and nudity. Here are five words of wisdom to take in from the show:

1. A mind needs books like a sword needs a whetstone, if it is to keep its edge. Says Tyrion Lannister after Jon snow asks him why he reads so much. His brother, Jaime Lannister, has his sword to survive. Being a high-born dwarf, he needs intelligence to survive and he has managed to do so, so far. This proves the power of books.
2. "If we die we will die, but first we will live." Living beyond The Wall, amidst all the danger, Ygritte has managed to have a fierce and fun-loving attitude towards life. Even after her death, let us remember for the free spirited soul she was. Let us not forget this beautiful quote by Ygritte, Jon Snow's first lover, when we are busy talking about Jon and Khaleesi.



3. The lone wolf dies, but the pack survives. Winter has often been used as synonymous with perils. Hence, when the winter comes we must stick together. Unity is strength here. The Stark kids have had a different consequence this time and managed to survive, because they trusted each other and worked together.
4. You may be a slow learner, but you will learn. Worry not, if you are a slow learner! Look at Sansa Stark; look at her character growth and be inspired.

5. Men like to talk about other men when they are happy. Yes, men gossip too! Lord Varys, the master of whisperers, Petyr Baelish, Xaro Xhoan Daxos are few examples of sneaky men in the show. If White Walkers could talk, we are sure we could have learned a lot from them too.



PHOTO: COURTESY

## Jackal Study

**ZOHEB MAHMUD KHAN**

The Jackal Study is a long term research programme undertaken by the Jackal Project. The initiative is conducted by the Department of Environmental Science of Independent University, Bangladesh.

The project was initiated back in 2016, when an anomaly in the behavioural patterns of jackals in Bakerganj of Barisal was noticed. Jackals in the area had recently turned very aggressive and

were attacking people for no apparent reason, and the locals were taking matters into their own hands by killing off the jackal populations.

The research started from June, 2016, when a group of students were taken to Bakerganj in order to get to the bottom of the matter. By then, jackal populations had drastically decreased, and were tottering on the brink of local extinction. Starting with Focus Group Discussions with local people and then with house hold surveys, a

baseline survey was soon completed regarding the depth of the matter. Within 8 months, the research was moved into a scientific phase where the local jackals were observed and studied up close. Awareness programmes were launched, mainly targeting local women and school children via workshops held at various schools in the locality. Within a year, the jackal populations had revived to sustainable proportions and killings were reduced greatly. This was a result

of the awareness that rose among the local people as they understood the importance of jackals in the ecosystem. As an extension of this project, Jackal Study is planning to do another research on jackal behaviour, in order to better understand how these fascinating creatures adapt to the ever growing human presence around them.

The writer is a lecturer in the Department of Environmental Science, Independent University Bangladesh.



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### Youth Opportunities

#### 1. UNHCR – U.S. Protection Legal Internship 2017 in USA



The UN Refugee Agency, UNHCR, was established in 1950 by the United Nations General Assembly to provide protection and assistance to refugees worldwide. The agency's Regional Representation in Washington, DC, seeks for a volunteer Legal Intern to assist staff in its U.S. Protection Unit. The intern will get a chance to attend and report on conferences, seminars and Congressional hearings addressing refugee and asylum issues.

Deadline: Ongoing | Internship

#### 2. 1st Inter-University Undergraduate Research Symposium 2017 in Dhaka

School of Business and Economics at United International University is going to organise the first-ever Inter-University Undergraduate



Research Symposium (URS) in Bangladesh. URS is expected to create an opportunity for discovering new ideas and knowledge through engaging undergraduate students in different areas of research.

Deadline: September 30, 2017 | Competition

#### 3. Obama Foundation Fellows 2018



The Obama Foundation Fellows will be a diverse set of community-minded rising stars comprising of organisers, inventors, artists, entrepreneurs, journalists, and more,

who are altering the civic engagement landscape. The two-year, non-residential fellowship will offer hands-on training, resources, and leadership development. The foundation is seeking for participants who are excited about helping them design, test, and refine the fellowship.

Deadline: October 6, 2017 | Fellowship

#### 4. Mexican Government Scholarships for International Students 2018

Mexican Government Scholarship Programme for International Students, who are interested in studying for a specialisation,



Master's degree or doctorate, conducting graduate or postdoctoral research, or taking part in an undergraduate or graduate-level academic mobility programme, are welcome to participate in the scholarship programme.

Deadline: September 28, 2017 | Scholarship

#### 5. Nieman Foundation International Fellowship 2018 in Harvard University



A Nieman Fellowship is an extraordinary, transformative learning opportunity open to journalists working in all media in every country around the world. Those

selected for the programme spend two full semesters at Harvard, auditing classes with some of the university's greatest thinkers, participating in Nieman events, and collaborating with peers.

Deadline: December 1, 2017 | Fellowship