

AGENTS OF CHANGE

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A new direction in education

How Bangladeshi students are connecting with foreign universities online

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With educational institutions shutting down and exams being cancelled or postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the lives of students across the world have been greatly affected. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, different courses were available online to millions of students worldwide. Most of those classes are designed to work into students' schedules, so that they can still manage to fulfill other obligations, like a career or familial responsibilities. They are accessible to just about everyone with an internet connection. However, inevitably, students find more distractions at home than they do in a classroom environment, involving household chores, noisy family members or phone calls. Those types of distractions go away with on-campus classes. Today, more people are starting their degrees online, prioritising their safety and health.

Many undergraduate students in Bangladesh who got admissions to foreign universities had to start their classes online, due to the travel restrictions, which comes with its pros and cons.

While some find the virtual learning environment hectic and exhausting, others are appreciative of the initiatives taken by their institutions to make things easier. Campus life is one of the key attractions for students. However, with universities moving to online classes, they are being deprived of that whole experience.

Tahsin Ahmed, a student of Drexel University, USA, was initially reluctant to start his first semester online. "The online learning experience is new to most of us, and I was unsure of how it would turn out. However, I'm glad that it went much better than I had expected," he said. He is attending classes from Dhaka and intends to join his campus soon. Commenting on the efficiency of online classes, he asserted that interactions are easier due to the availability of chat features. "Many shy students are able to ask questions without the fear of talking in front of so many people," he added.

"Since most of our classes are pre-recorded, it is difficult for us to learn the concepts on our own, using ideas from the lectures," shared Shafin Raowan Chowdhury, a student of The University of British Columbia, Canada, who is



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