



THE DAILY STAR CAMPUS STARS

UAP aims to build future leaders

ASHLEY SHOPTORSHI SAMADDAR

"The Daily Star Campus Stars" is a show that highlights promising individuals who have excelled in their academics and extracurricular activities, alongside securing success in their professional paths. The fourth episode of the show took place on June 15, 2021, featuring panelists from University of Asia Pacific (UAP).

The online event was hosted by Shuvashish Roy, Head of Business, *The Daily Star*. The speakers included Prof Dr Mohammed Tareque Aziz, Professor of Relationship Marketing, Department of Business Administration (BDA) and convener, UAP Branding Committee (UBC), Md Tarek Khan, Assistant Director, Admission and Directorate of Students' Welfare (DSW), UAP, Engr Khan Mohammad Kaiser, Vice Chairman, Computer Engineering Division, IEB Co-Founder, e-CAB President, UAP CSE Alumni Association, and Shahriar Islam Shovon, student of Law and Human Rights at UAP.

Students of UAP have managed to reach promising levels at different sectors, be it in science, commerce, or humanities. Under the guidance of prominent leaders, they have been allowed to nurture their skills, and overcome their difficulties.

"Philanthropist Sultan Mahmud, our vice chancellor, asked if I wanted to become

an engineer when I first visited UAP for an admission. That time we had renowned physicist Sadruddin Ahmed Chowdhury, and Prof Dr Mir Shamsur Rahman among many others as our professors in the engineering department. Their love and down-to-earth nature alongside genuine appreciation always instigated me to keep learning and growing in my profession," shared Khan Mohammad Kaiser.

He also discussed the importance of the undergraduate project in forecasting a student's future skills. "National consultant Kazi Anwar Hossain was my supervisor during my undergraduate project. The things we had learned still come in handy in my profession," he added.

Shahriar Islam Shovon spoke about UAP's helpful student facilities. "Our teaching method is divided into three parts: curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular. It helps enhance students' hard and soft skills," he said. "The university's tuition waiver facilities encourage students to keep their CGPA up. The research platforms at UAP aid the process of transforming theoretic knowledge into practical implementation for positive change."

UAP is determined to keep up with global standards of teaching methodologies.

Dr Mohammed Tareque Aziz shared that the faculty of UAP is supporting students in



this digital era and implementing updated pedagogy in the coronavirus pandemic. "To ensure all students had access to online education was our prime goal when the pandemic broke out. Our secondary goals were to

protect our curriculum, and guarantee proper grading and evaluation," she mentioned. "With efforts from the staff, we ensured delivery, accountability, and processing, through intense research. We have even come out

with a manual on online education, which has been of help to many."

UAP has collaborated with numerous foreign institutions to enhance capacity-building among students who wish to gather interdisciplinary knowledge and also be drawn to cultural activities while enhancing their communicative skills, especially in English. "Our DSW platform offers seminars, workshops, collaborations and participation opportunities at national and international competitions," shared Md Tarek Khan. "While these involvements help students to boost their confidence, it also directs them towards enhancing their creativity, alongside academic intelligence."

"Knowledge about different topics is aided by the research facilities, and grooming sessions and guidelines on public speaking, debating, or other such skills helps us boost our confidence," shared Shahriar Islam Shovon.

Furthermore, UAP offers a very convenient location, with a modern teaching-learning environment, and research and extra-curricular activities for students. "We believe in building not just leaders of tomorrow, but also ambassadors," concluded Dr Mohammed Tareque Aziz.

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YOUNG ACHIEVER

Reigning over the chessboard

MORMEE MAHTAB

18 year-old Mohammad Fahad Rahman is the youngest chess player in Bangladesh to earn the lifelong titles of International Master (2019) and FIDE Master (2013). The self-taught genius relies mainly on books to practice and perfect his moves across the chessboard. He is an SSC candidate from Little Jewels International School.

Fahad was only five years old when he first got to know about chess, and instantly fell in love with the game. "I was fascinated by everything in chess, and began learning the rules. After two months of practicing, I won a competition organised by my school," he shares.

What began as a fun hobby soon cultivated into a serious pursuit for Fahad, who went on to participate in a tournament organised by Bangladesh Shishu Academy in 2008, qualifying among participants across 8 divisions. Just after two years, he became an age group champion for the National School Chess Tournament, organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation. Soon after, he joined the national team.

"By 2011, we moved to Dhaka from Faridpur, as the federation was nearby. I began preparing for more competitive tournaments," says Fahad, who participated and won the National Sub-Junior and National Junior titles from 2014 to 2017, and 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018 respectively. His streak of brilliant performances in the nationals opened the doors to many international championships for him.

He played in the Asia Championship held in India, clinching a gold medal under both Standard and Blitz categories, and one bronze medal in the Rapid Chess category. He also participated in 14th Dubai Juniors Chess Tournament and ASEAN Age-Group (U-10) Chess Championship of Thailand.



PHOTO: COLLECTED FROM MOHAMMAD FAHAD RAHMAN'S OFFICIAL FACEBOOK PAGE

"I also participated in the 43rd World Chess Olympiad held in Georgia in 2018, which helped me earn an international rating to become an International Master," adds Fahad. The same year, he won the Asian Zonal Championship which led him to FIDE World Cup 2019, held in Russia.

"I got the chance to play alongside my idols, some of the best chess players in the world. I enjoyed their performances, witnessing their moves and learning about their strategies," Fahad says about his experience in the world cup.

The pandemic made it quite challenging for him to participate in many important international tournaments that would have assisted him in becoming a Grandmaster, the highest title a chess player can attain, apart from World Champion. Yet, Fahad has not remained idle. "I have played opposite the leading Grandmasters in our country. No matter what, I have always put up a strong fight. I aspire to keep working hard to become the youngest Grandmaster in Bangladesh," he concludes.

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YOUTH IN ACTION

'Jibon' saving lives

LABIBA KABIR

Jibon is a non-profit organisation based in Rangamati, which provides blood to the needy, free of cost. It was established in November 2011 as a Blood Donor Association, and gained the trust of the Chitragong Hill Tract (CHT) localities swiftly.

Sazid Bin Zahid, with six of his friends from Rangamati Govt High School, started the organisation when they experienced the lack of proper blood donation and blood management in Rangamati. The Co-founders are Meher Niger, Gayatri Chakraborty, Tasnima Hoque Zarin, Yeah Hakim Pias, Ashfaq Hossain, Sabyasachi Chakma.

Inspired by Anwarul Kabir, the current President of Jibon, the team follows a simple rule: the right blood supply at the right time can save a life. However, finding the right resources in a short time can be

a challenge. Recipient of the Joy Bangla Youth Award 2018, Jibon aims to create a safe space for willing blood donors, as well as governmental hospitals, blood banks, and volunteers.

The organisation does not take direct blood donations from people. Rather, it works as a medium. Jibon's team has a list with the blood groups, locations, and phone numbers of willing donors.

Those who need blood urgently, can post on the Facebook Group of Jibon. All posts must mention the health issues, exact blood groups, number of blood bags required, names, addresses, hospital cabin or ward numbers of patients, and relevant contact numbers. Currently, Jibon is operating with over 7,500 willing blood donors.

The organisation also launched workshops and mask distribution programmes in Rangamati to raise awareness about the

severity of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jibon operates widely in the CHT areas. The organisation's team has also expanded their work at Khagrachari, Bandarban, Cumilla, and Dhaka.

Currently, Jibon is working on multiple projects, along with blood donation.

"We are focusing on 'Hello Campus', a campaign that aims to help students through leadership and motivational training, debate sessions, sports, cultural programmes, and general knowledge competitions. So far, this campaign has covered over 10 educational institutions in Rangamati," says Sazid.

Moreover, 'Skill Drops' is an initiative of Jibon for skill development programmes such as basic computer training, graphic design courses, and handicraft training.

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Sazid Bin Zahid (L), with six of his friends, started Jibon when they experienced the lack of proper blood donation and blood management in Rangamati. Photo: Courtesy of Jibon