

# Dorm-life upgrade: App-based washing machines in public university halls

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AZRA HUMAYRA

As a student residing in a university hall, the responsibilities and concerns of daily life are numerous – ranging from academics and maintaining grades to tutoring students as well as managing expenses. Amidst this long list of priorities, laundry and ensuring sustenance become additional burdens. In such circumstances, the prospect of spending a few extra bucks to use a washing machine or a vending machine seems quite appealing.

One IoT (Internet of Things) based service platform in Bangladesh that aims to solve this predicament is Your Campus – owned and run by Get-Aid Ltd. Your Campus currently operates within 95 residential halls across various public universities. They provide accessible vending machines for snacks and beverages as well as convenient washing machines for student use.

The whole process is done through a mobile app and students can download it and create an account using their affiliated hall and personal information. There is a credit system in which one credit equals one taka. Every wash costs BDT 50 or 50 credits. There are several packages such as 20 washes for 600 credits, 10 washes for 350 credits, and five washes for 200 credits. You must reserve the machine to use it at your desired time and date.



PHOTO: ASHRAFUL RAFID

The rest of the work is done after you go to the washing machine where you have to scan the QR code and put in the detergent that is already provided.

Students who do not want to invest their labour in washing clothes, view it as a relieving solution. Suriya Fatima of Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hall of the University of Dhaka says, “The addition

of washing machines is a positive for me. It was troublesome to wash heavy blankets and quilts but now I can wash them without fretting too much, so hall life has gotten much easier.”

The scene is similar for residents of Kabi Jasimuddin Hall. Musaddekun Nobil says, “It usually takes fifteen taka per piece of clothing to be

washed and ironed in our halls so it's quite affordable in contrast to other laundromats. The vending machines do not take cash so that's the only issue but you can use your credits to buy snacks.”

While a fee of BDT 50 for a single wash may appear reasonable, it's essential to acknowledge that within

our economy, there are students who not only have to support themselves but also their families. In the context where BDT 50 can provide a meal from the canteens, the decision to spend this amount on washing clothes becomes a significant trade-off for many. Not every student has the ability to buy a package that others may call a “good deal”. Hence, some students end up having to wash their clothes manually.

Vending machines offer a convenient option for quick snacks and beverages but they do not adequately address the important issue of providing students with proper nourishment. Ensuring students have access to high-quality food typically requires a significant financial investment or the ability to prepare their own meals. However, many students struggle to find the time for cooking and often rely on canteens and vending machines as their primary source of sustenance.

Many students who live in university halls of residence often face financial challenges, and they typically prioritise investing in essential items necessary for their daily lives. While initiatives like this aim to make students' lives easier, it's crucial to ensure that they cater to the needs of the majority of students. While these initiatives may seem ideal, larger issues persist.

Azra Humayra is a student of Dhaka University.

## TEACHERS' DAY, 2023

# Haileybury Bhaluka – a unique educational experience

ABIR HOSSAIN

Haileybury Bhaluka is a premier international boarding school, providing boys aged between 11 and 18 years with an exceptional English educational experience. The institution in Bangladesh is affiliated to Haileybury College UK and boasts an 850-acre campus situated in the beautiful rural setting of Bhaluka, 75 kilometres north of Dhaka, in Mymensingh.

On the upcoming occasion of World Teachers' Day, Simon O'Grady, Founding Headmaster of Haileybury Bhaluka, spoke to The Daily Star to paint a picture of their vision.

“For me, every day is World Teachers' Day. The best teachers have an enduring impact. Not just for one day of the year but for a lifetime of fulfilment. My message to my teachers is that, over the years, you've had an impact on thousands of students. Student by student, class by class, you've shaped a better world,” he said.

Haileybury has highly educated and experienced international teachers at their helm. The teachers at Haileybury use the latest teaching methods supported by research-led institutes to foster a culture of achievement. The Haileybury

curriculum includes the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) in Years 10-11, and the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) in Years 12-13.

Whilst Haileybury is committed to an outstanding education for its students, it is also determined to improve the education landscape in Bangladesh, more widely.

“We are a school that seeks to collaborate with other schools. We are supporting schools in a variety of ways to improve the quality of education,” Headmaster O'Grady said. By improving education across Bangladesh, they intend to help shape the vision for the country. That vision can be best realised through outstanding quality of teaching and learning. The students of Haileybury Bhaluka will, of course, be the first focus.

With its wide variety of facilities, promise to deliver high-quality education, and shape its students as global leaders, it isn't difficult to see why Haileybury Bhaluka is a top-tier institution.

“Parents are choosing Haileybury for fundamentally unique reasons. We are a safe, happy and successful school. We are a school that sees the well-being and happiness of our students as central to our

“The campus is exceptional. We have specialist facilities in every area of educational endeavour: science labs designed by international experts, sports facilities covering the whole range of sports, facilities for the creative and performing arts, as well as smart classrooms.”

successful mission,” Simon O'Grady said. “Haileybury Bhaluka is a wonderful school. It's a unique educational experience – not only in Bangladesh but also in the region,” he said. “Haileybury has a long and wonderful history. With over 160 years of outstanding achievement, its accomplishments are of global significance. It also has alumni in every quarter of leadership. Haileybury has offered to the world students who have had a great impact on it.”

Turning his attention to the campus, he was keen to arrange a visit for The Daily

Star to see its wonderful, rural residential setting at first hand, as its beautiful and calming environment offers students a canvas for learning and achieving in the widest sense.

“The campus is exceptional. We have specialist facilities in every area of educational endeavour: science labs designed by international experts, sports facilities covering the whole range of sports, facilities for the creative and performing arts, as well as smart classrooms. Smart classrooms resource education for the future. We are delighted to be able to offer these facilities for our students.”

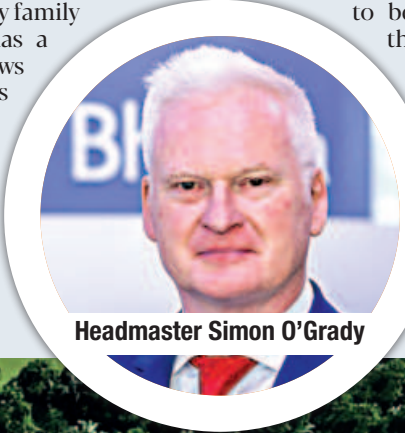
Despite how promising it may be, Simon O'Grady also understands that life in a boarding school must be balanced with quality family time. The school has a structure that allows busy working parents to be comforted by the expert care and education Sunday to Wednesday, with a shorter school day on Thursday that enables boarders

to be with their parents at the weekend for quality family time.

Simon O'Grady then spoke about the qualities of the students at Haileybury and what it is that they're looking for.

“We have the privilege of educating the most capable students in the country. Our mission is to make sure that these students have lives full of opportunity and fulfilment. We know that our students will become global leaders. We ensure that our education is future-focused, designed to teach key skills which make them adaptable, life-long learners, and creative thinkers. Critical thinking and collaboration set within our extensive education make for a life ahead that our students will need.”

Haileybury's education is designed to benefit students not only in the present but for the future that they will face. The institution's devotion to delivering the best education as well as opportunities for excelling across a number of co-curricular activities makes it truly one-of-a-kind centre for learning.



Headmaster Simon O'Grady

