



DHAKA THURSDAY MAY 23, 2024, JAISHTHA 9, 1431 BS

A PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

# CAMPUS

SCAN THE QR CODE TO ACCESS CAMPUS ONLINE



## The realities of working at an MNC



ILLUSTRATION: SALMAN SAKIB SHAHRYAR



সেরা পণ্যে সেরা অফার

Digital Campaign 2024 Season-20

### গনস্টপ মিলিয়নিয়ার

৩০ জনের পর এবার কারা হবেন মিলিয়নিয়ার!!

রয়েছে কোটি কোটি টাকার নিশ্চিত উপহার

শর্ত প্রযোজ্য

**WALTON**  
Smart Fridge



প্রাপ্তি ইলেকট্রনিক্স, পেমেন্ট, কুমিল্লা থেকে

ফ্রিজ কিনে  
**১০ লক্ষ টাকা**

মেয়ে ৩২তম বিনোদন  
সেং হুমায়ুন সরকার, পিতা: আঃ হুসেইন  
হাসানউল, পেশিয়ার, কুমিল্লা



মেয়ে হেলিনা ইলেকট্রনিক্স, জামনা, কামারাই থেকে

ফ্রিজ কিনে  
**১০ লক্ষ টাকা**

মেয়ে ৩৩তম বিনোদন  
সেং আমিনুল ইসলাম, পিতা: সেং বাহার আলী  
হাশিম, জামনা, কামারাই



ওয়েবস্টোর গ্রামা, চকোপান, কোল থেকে

ফ্রিজ কিনে  
**১০ লক্ষ টাকা**

মেয়ে ৩৫তম বিনোদন  
সেং শামীম, পিতা: আব্দুর রহিম  
শং লালচন্দ্রন, ফুলবাড়ী, কোল



কে-৩৩৩-এন এলেকট্রনিক্স, হাফেজ, চকোপান থেকে

ফ্রিজ কিনে  
**১০ লক্ষ টাকা**

মেয়ে ৩৬তম বিনোদন  
সেং আবু আলম, পিতা: আলহাজ্ব তুলতান আহমেদ  
লাভ সেরি, কোচডালী, চকোপান

08000016267 (Toll Free) waltonbd.com

ক্রোতাদের ব্যাপক সাড়ায় মেয়াদ বাড়লো ৩০ জুন ২০২৪ পর্যন্ত। শর্তাবলি জানতে ভিজিট করুন: waltonbd.com/digital-campaign-20

**MUSIC**

# COWBOY CARTER

## Country music like you've never experienced before

TAASEEN MOHAMMED ISLAM

*Cowboy Carter* is one of Beyoncé's longest albums, clocking in at an hour and eighteen minutes with over 27 tracks. The album is heavily influenced by country and folk music. The album incorporates numerous genres such as R&B, Brazilian funk, Italian opera, pop, blues, rock, and hip-hop to create an unconventional country sound. However, the production of *Cowboy Carter* is drastically different from *Renaissance*. It is intimate and stripped back rather than ethereal and polished with the seamless integration of the tracks being the only common denominator between the bodies of work.

In terms of collaborations, the album has a range of high-profile artists on it – from Dolly Parton to Miley Cyrus and Post Malone – all complementing Beyoncé's storytelling throughout the record. A new wave of emerging black country artists were also featured on this record, such as Tanner Adell, Shaboozey, and Willie Jones. In terms of writing and production credits, the likes of Paul McCartney, Pharrell Williams, and RAYE were involved.

This album has numerous standout tracks, including "DAUGHTER", "AMERICAN REQUIEM", "YA YA", "TYRANT", and Beyoncé's rendition of the classic "JOLENE". *Cowboy Carter* also flips the domination of white voices on American country and folk culture. Beyoncé provides a historically absent lens into the black roots of country music, which has prompted a lot of controversy and debate about Black artist's place in the landscape of country music. However, the album has garnered global acclaim.

Ultimately, Beyoncé completely reinvents country music on *Cowboy Carter*, once again proving she's an artist who can make incredible music regardless of genre and is still an undisputed superstar almost 25 years into her career.



### OPPORTUNITIES

## 10 MINUTE SCHOOL

10 Minute School - Junior Associate

**ELIGIBILITY**

Bachelor's degree in any STEM discipline

Excellent written and verbal communication abilities

Strong analytical skills and attention to detail

Passionate about women's empowerment in STEM fields

Visit [jobs.smartrecruiters.com](https://jobs.smartrecruiters.com) to learn more

**DEADLINE: NOT MENTIONED**



HSBC Bangladesh - Student Work Placement

**ELIGIBILITY**

Be available to work full-time between July 2024 and December 2024

Students from any degree discipline graduating by July 2024 or completed graduation in January 2024 or later

Well-developed communication skills

Visit [hsbc.com/careers](https://hsbc.com/careers) to learn more

**DEADLINE: NOT MENTIONED**



Optimizely - Intern (Software Engineering)

**ELIGIBILITY**

Participate in the development of services and projects in first-class products

Complete well-scoped tasks in contribution to a variety of projects

Progress toward a degree, certification, or equivalent software engineering education

Visit [careers.optimizely.com](https://careers.optimizely.com) to learn more

**DEADLINE: NOT MENTIONED**

Editor & Publisher  
**Mahfuz Anam**

Deputy Editor of Features and Head of Content Marketing  
**Ehsanur Raza Ronny**

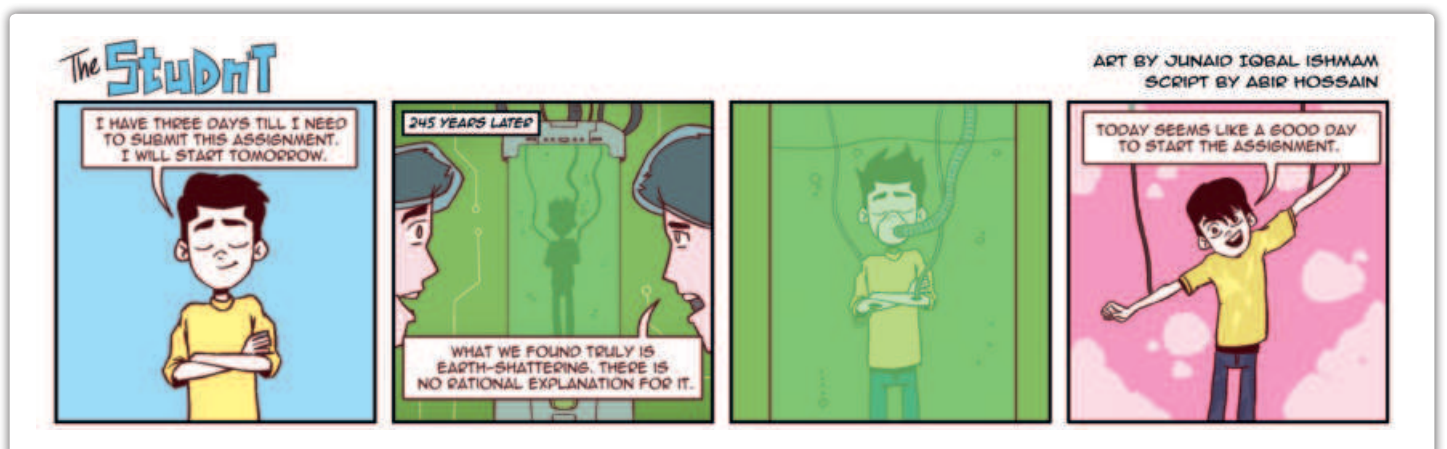
Campus Team  
**Faisal Bin Iqbal**  
**Syeda Afrin Tarannum**  
**Fatima Jahan Ena**  
**Abir Hossain**  
**Amrin Tasnim Rafa**

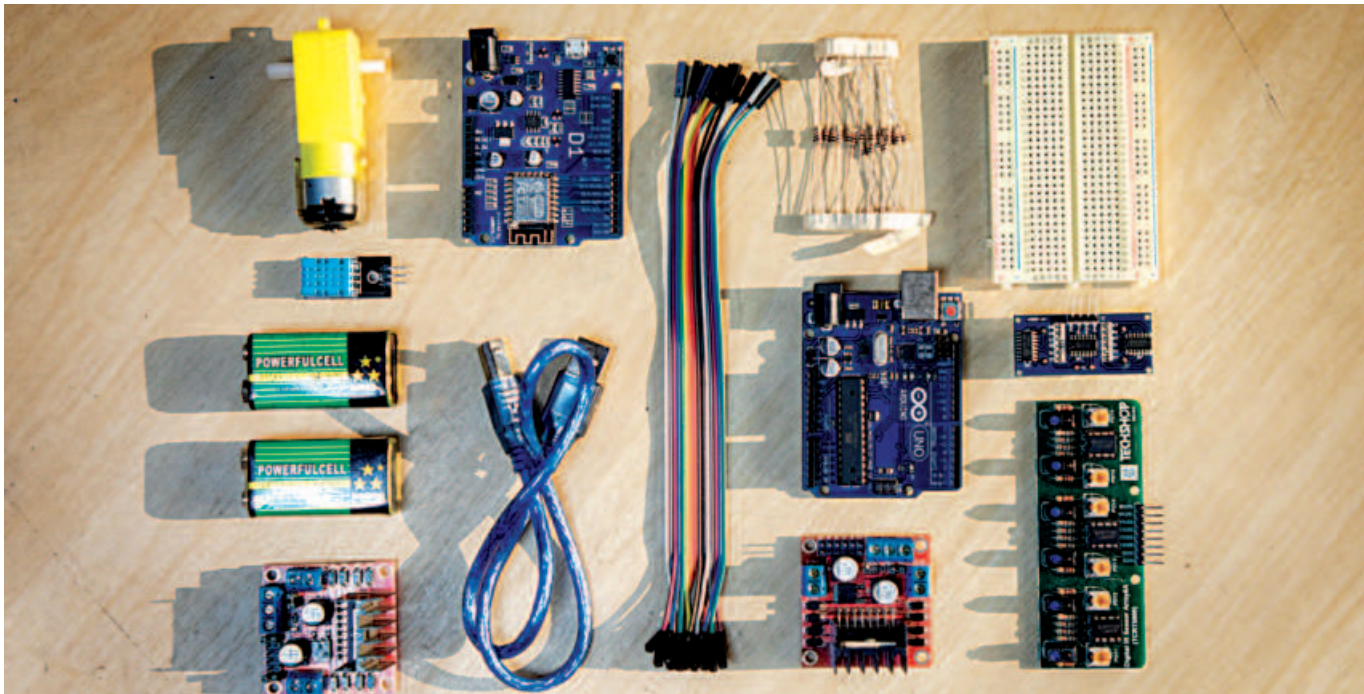
Photographer  
**Orchid Chakma**

Graphics & Layout  
**TDS Creative Graphics**

Production  
**Shamim Chowdhury**

Send your articles, feedback, and opinion to [campus@thedailystar.net](mailto:campus@thedailystar.net)  
Find our content online at [thedailystar.net/campus](https://thedailystar.net/campus)





PHOTOS: ORCHID CHAKMA

**SKILLS**

# Getting started with your first electronics project

SABIL SADAT ZAHIR

Starting your first electronics project can be a very daunting prospect. Whether it is a part of your course work or something you want to do for fun, you need to follow a clear plan to execute your vision. Here are some guidelines you can follow to create your first electronics project.

The first and obvious step is to figure out what you want to create. It is good to undertake relatively easier projects as a beginner. Projects like building a traffic automation system, water level indicator, home security automation, and so on are best for starters. These projects require relatively simpler and basic parts and components like a breadboard, LEDs, multimeters, and such.

If you want to go for more complex projects, you can utilise microcontrollers like Arduino or single board computers like Raspberry Pi to create robotics projects or advanced structural automations. These kinds of projects require some programming knowledge, so make sure to acquaint yourself with the required coding language. Using Arduino Uno is the best option for beginner projects due to its versatility. Do sufficient research when selecting your projects, consider the feasibility, costs of tools, and available learning resources such as video tutorials, blueprints, and schematics.

Secondly, once you have decided on a project and assessed the costs, you need to gather components and parts for your project. You can try ordering components from online stores like TechShopBD, Leetechbd, RoboDoc,

Robotics Bangladesh (RoboticsBD), and Udvabony. To account for any damaged tools or output errors, you might want to consider getting a few extra units of the same components.

You must take proper safety measures before starting your work. If you are doing the project for academic purposes, you might be able to use your university's labs which are already optimised environments. Additionally, you may also be supervised by your respective faculties in an academic setting so you will be receiving continuous guidance and feedback for your project.

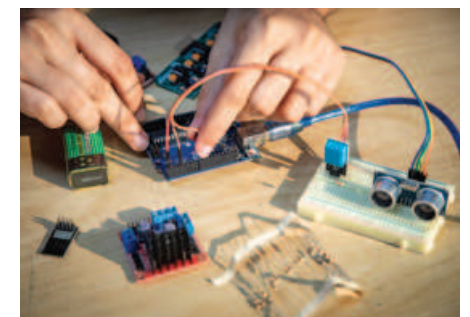
But if you are doing the project by yourself at home or somewhere else, make sure to do your research to avoid complications. In projects where you might need to use a soldering iron, be extra careful. Likewise, there won't be anyone to give you insight on your progress and so, it will be up to you to keep track of everything that's happening. Focus on building the prototype first and do your required testing and debugging. Know the basics like using the right amount of source current and utilising the right batteries (as high-power batteries tend to damage equipment).

These are just some tips you can follow during your first electronics project. Of course, depending on the type and scale of your project you might need to take extra measures. But you can use this article as a general guideline. First projects are always a bit confusing, but as long as you keep practicing, making errors, and learning to find solutions, you will eventually get the hang of it.

## Three YouTube channels that'll spark inspiration for your next Arduino project

**GreatScott!**

Whether you're just getting started with your first Arduino project or have a ton of experience in the field, *GreatScott!*'s library of content has something for everyone. From fun DIY projects and scouring AliExpress for hidden gems to undertaking full-fledged electronic projects, he strikes a subtle balance between entertainment and education.



**Rui Santos**

*Rui Santos's* catalogue consists of all kinds of Arduino tutorials. Alongside his YouTube channel, he also runs the website "Random Nerd Tutorials" that curates content revolving around Arduino modules, displays, sensors as well as entire projects. Santos's tutorials are meticulously put together, making sure that not a single step gets cut out, making it a great source for beginners.

**How to Mechatronics**

A one-stop channel for all the essentials. *How to Mechatronics's* videos cover a variety of content. Alongside projects and tutorials, the channel also gets down to the nitty-gritty of how things work on a foundational level. Through the channel's content, you might just be able to attain an intuitive understanding of Arduino hardware and software.

FCR01TOP1/2/4

To know more scan the QR code

**WITH BSRM FASTBUILD  
YOUR HOME WILL BE BUILT ON TIME  
WITH THE BEST QUALITY RODS**

■ OFF CAMPUS ■

# Navigating higher education ALONGSIDE MOTHERHOOD

**FATIMA JAHAN ENA**

When we think of pursuing a degree in higher education, the promise of an arduous journey is almost always guaranteed. However, when we add the concept of “motherhood” into this mix, the difficulties transcend into a whole new league.

Such was the experience of Tasfiah Tasnim Raya, an Economics student from Dhaka University (DU), who gave birth to her daughter during her second year. She shares, “Having a child during my second year of studies was full of significant challenges, especially during pregnancy when I experienced physical discomfort and fatigue. Balancing coursework with prenatal appointments and preparing for childbirth was hectic.”

Similar sentiments are echoed by Adiba Sultana\*, who was pursuing her diploma from Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) during her pregnancy. Adiba shares, “During pregnancy, I had gestational diabetes. I had to take insulin in the morning, afternoon, and nighttime. My morning classes were at 9 AM. Sometimes, I couldn’t take the insulin properly, or eat properly. Pregnancy is a stressful condition in itself. On top of that, I had exams, classes, and hospital duties. Everything combined led to a highly stressful journey.”

While pregnancy might be an incredibly strenuous journey, the hardships oftentimes begin after a child is born. Being responsible for another human being in the midst of academic pursuits has the capacity to overwhelm just about anyone.

Tahera Nargis Hamid, 59, who is currently pursuing a bachelor’s degree in Media Studies and Journalism at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), shares, “My child was born in 1988. I was a single parent then and studying for the Bachelor of Commerce Pass Course. As my child was growing up, I had to totally give up on my studies. A major reason was that my employers never lived up to their words. Although some of them promised that I would be able to continue my studies, they never allowed me to take leave to prepare for my exams or attend private tutors’ classes.”

She further adds, “However, having my child was the greatest reward in life. As such, she was not a problem or burden. I had no problem supporting her upbringing. After several attempts, I stopped asking the employers to support my parallel academic career and continued full throttle with my professional career instead. In spite of the fact that I had to make arrangements to ensure that my child got to school and returned home safely, and lived in a healthy, conducive

environment, I loved the extra responsibilities.”

When dealing with motherhood, re-entering the education system after taking a gap can prove to be quite daunting as well, with new sets of challenges.

Tahera, who re-enrolled at university at the age of 54, shares, “I had made attempts at continuing my education at different times. I wasted quite a lot of money for that – admission, continuation of classes, then dropping out. I did not get any support from the institutions where I had enrolled in. However, when I finally decided to enroll at University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), my daughter was doing her PhD. I was no longer involved in paying for her and was able to focus on my studies. Despite my age, everyone at the university (the teachers, the staff, the students) was extremely encouraging and supportive. I survived one semester at a time until I finally reached the end, with only one course and portfolio submission or defense left.”

In such instances, the importance of familial support cannot be understated. This can allow the mothers to not only focus on their education but also give them the chance to take care of themselves as well. Tasfiah shares, “In my current situation, managing my third year of studies alongside

raising my daughter requires careful time management and support from my family. I’m continuing my education despite the challenges and also prioritising self-care by going to the gym, hanging out with my friends, painting, and so on. In this whole journey, my family and my husband have been great sources of support.”

Raising children truly does take a village. However, having an entire support system composed solely of family members in this day and age may not be sufficient. In that case, the concept of a “village” shouldn’t just end with familial ties.

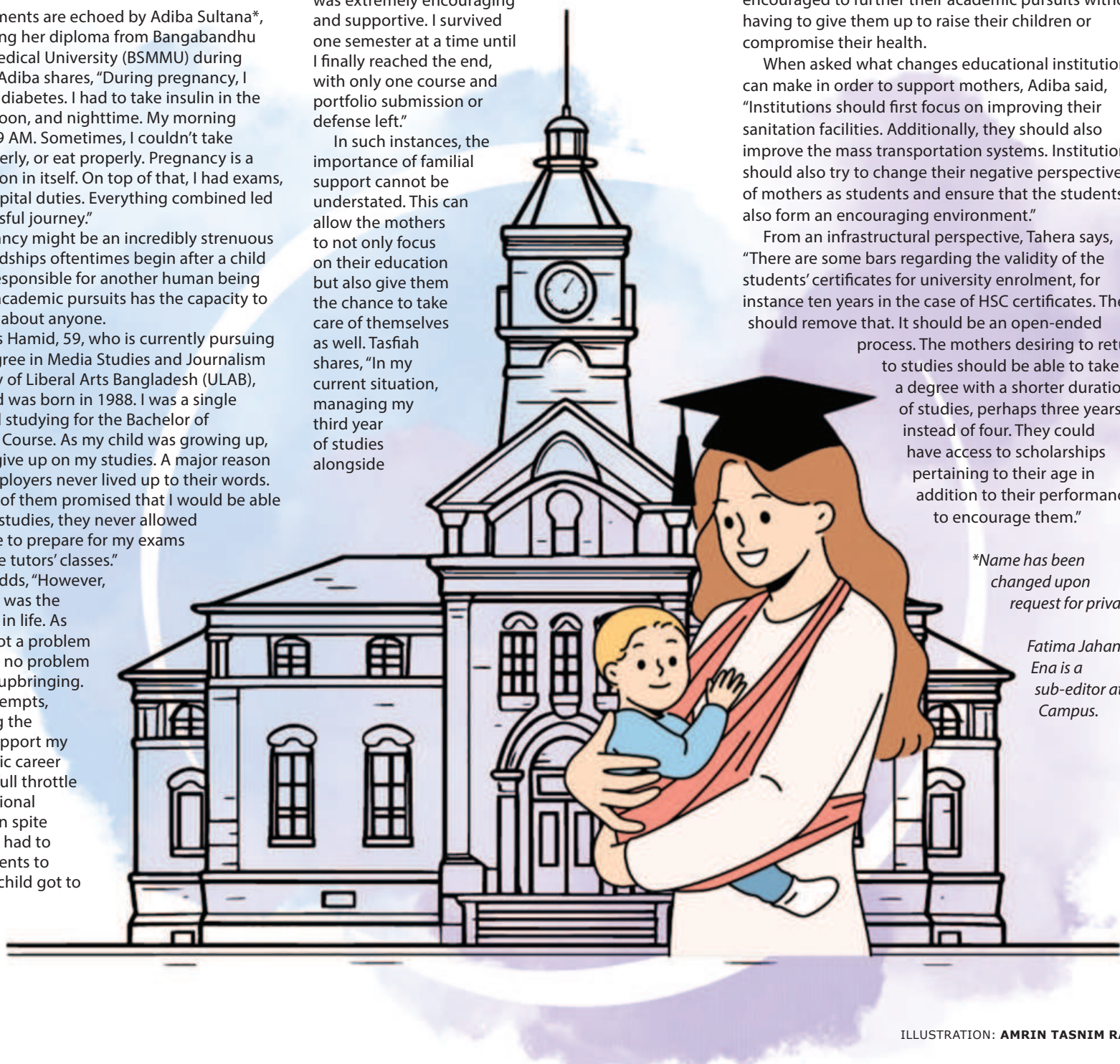
Educational institutions can be considered to be a part of the community, where mothers are encouraged to further their academic pursuits without having to give them up to raise their children or compromise their health.

When asked what changes educational institutions can make in order to support mothers, Adiba said, “Institutions should first focus on improving their sanitation facilities. Additionally, they should also improve the mass transportation systems. Institutions should also try to change their negative perspectives of mothers as students and ensure that the students also form an encouraging environment.”

From an infrastructural perspective, Tahera says, “There are some bars regarding the validity of the students’ certificates for university enrolment, for instance ten years in the case of HSC certificates. They should remove that. It should be an open-ended process. The mothers desiring to return to studies should be able to take a degree with a shorter duration of studies, perhaps three years instead of four. They could have access to scholarships pertaining to their age in addition to their performance to encourage them.”

*\*Name has been changed upon request for privacy.*

*Fatima Jahan Ena is a sub-editor at Campus.*



■ CAREER ■

# The realities of working at an MNC



**My company does not hire a lot of people. Moreover, there is a huge supply of candidates, due to which over a hundred resumes get sent in for a specific role. Ultimately, only one or two people make the cut, bringing the acceptance rate to somewhere around one percent.**

**NUZHAT HASSAN CHOWDHURY**

Jobs at multinational corporations (MNCs) have always been highly coveted due to the prestige, lucrative compensation packages, and career progression opportunities associated with them. The allure of these companies lies in the belief that they attract some of the brightest minds in their respective industries. However, it's difficult to ignore the fact that these perks often come at the cost of living up to high expectations, intense competition, and job insecurity.

It is easy to view the prospect of working at an MNC with rose tinted glasses when we only focus on the positives. So, what is the reality of working for these industry giants?

Securing a job at an MNC is no easy feat. Competing with hundreds of applicants, clearing several stages of assessment, and coming out on top is an uphill battle. These companies often require candidates to participate in written assessments, panel interviews, focus group discussions, and more before they are hired. The process can be incredibly mentally taxing.

"The recruitment process at my company is very thorough. I had to clear six stages of assessments before getting hired," says Saif Rahman\* a renewals desk specialist at a software development and consultancy MNC.

Despite being talented candidates, majority still come in short due to the exclusive nature of these companies. However, a few things can help candidates gain a competitive edge over the others.

"My company does not hire a lot of people. Moreover, there is a huge supply of candidates, due to which over a hundred resumes get sent in for a specific role. Ultimately, only one or two people make the cut, bringing the acceptance rate to somewhere around one percent," says Asif Syed\*, a senior executive at an e-commerce MNC.

"It is important to participate in extra-curricular activities alongside having good grades as it shows that the candidate is good at multi-tasking," he adds.

After overcoming a challenging recruitment process, new employees look forward to enjoying the perks of the job which come in the form of international standards, respectable company culture, impressive salary structures, and more. The offerings of companies vary as some focus on fostering a healthy work environment and prioritising work-

life balance, which may come at the cost of a tier two salary structure. Whereas others often push employees to their limits, but make sure they are well compensated for their efforts. However, it is true that a select number of MNCs offer their employees the best of both worlds.

When asked what he likes about working for his company, Asif stated, "I like the company culture my employer offers. Many of my colleagues are of a similar age as me and the work environment is healthy. Yes, there is office politics, but that is the case with any organisation. The office politics is not very toxic so it's not too big of a deal."

On the other hand, Samrin Amin\*, a planning strategist at a media agency MNC, has some mixed feelings about working at her company. "My company fosters a vibrant and collaborative culture, and it's inspiring to be a part of a team where everyone is passionate about delivering exceptional results. I feel supported in my career aspirations and empowered to take on new challenges. However, I don't feel adequately compensated for the level of commitment I bring to the table, especially considering current inflationary pressures. It's crucial for the company to reassess compensation packages to ensure they fairly reflect the employees' efforts," she says.

Employees may feel satisfied knowing their expectations are largely being met. Realistically, this happens on the condition that the employees meet the company's expectations in return. Working for an organisation that has large-scale operations and countless stakeholders can entail demanding clients, tight deadlines, and long hours. When employees fall short, they often feel the heat from management as there is no room for excuses when the stakes are this high.

"Advertisement media is a fast-paced industry. This can be exhilarating, but also exhausting. It's competitive and constantly evolving, which is why staying ahead of the competition requires constant learning and dedication. There are times when work demands require working on the weekends, which can impact work-life balance," says Samrin.

Although some roles are exceptionally demanding like those in sales and product management, others can be relatively laid-back.

"My job is fairly demanding, but it hasn't impacted my work-life balance negatively because my manager is lenient and prioritises his own and the team members' well-being. We don't have to work overtime unless we are running huge campaigns," says Asif\*.

Job insecurity is another factor affecting people's work experience. Like other private companies, MNCs also implement cost-cutting tactics through lay-offs and retracting employee privileges whenever they feel necessary. If the company is not thriving, it is an ominous sign for the workers.

"A huge number of employees recently got laid off due to cost-cutting and many of my colleagues were let go. This has definitely lowered morale," he adds.

Ultimately, working for an MNC comes with a mix of advantages and disadvantages. It is important to acknowledge both sides of the coin to make an informed decision about which direction to steer your career in.

*\*Names have been changed for privacy upon request*

*Nuzhat Hassan Chowdhury is an English instructor and a writer.*



ILLUSTRATION: FATIMA JAHAN ENA

## NOTICE BOARD

## AIUB holds seminar on “Next Generation Environmental Purification System”

A seminar titled “Next Generation Environmental Purification System” was held at the American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB) on May 18. The seminar was organised by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and J-TOP Corporation Limited.

The chief representative of JICA to Bangladesh, Ichiguchi Tomohide, inaugurated the seminar. He remarked that since 1973, just after two years of the independence of Bangladesh, JICA started its operation in Bangladesh and after 1980, it became the largest development partner of the nation with an investment of 300 billion yen.

JICA has contributed to the development of Dhaka MRT Project, Terminal 3 of Shahjalal International Airport Dhaka, Matarbari power plant, special economic zone, etc. He concluded that JICA has been continuously funding for the agricultural sector, cultural exchange, technology advancement, and employment creation.



At the seminar, environmental purification system was presented as the new project for the garment industry to recycle the wastewater with proper treatment and aim to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals accordingly. It was also highlighted that public health, environment, and food security are the major areas of finance. As a keynote speaker, the J-TOP president, Jiichi Nakaki, illustrated the whole process of wastewater recycling

with theoretical data and experimental demonstration. J-TOP is famous for automatic carbon-cutting technology and environmental improvement, and they already implemented their technology successfully in many countries in the last decades. Innovative technology to protect the future is the goal of the organisation with a win-win method between the local government and Japanese companies. It aims to provide all technological support in the

recycling industry using activated carbon technology.

In the seminar, Ziaul Haque, Director, Department of Environment, GoB, attended the seminar as a special guest. Dr Hasanul A. Hasan, Founder Member of the Board of Trustees, AIUB, handed over the tokens of appreciation to the guests. Dr Carman Z Lamagna, Member of the AIUB Board of Trustees, concluded the session with a vote of thanks to the guests and participants. She highlighted the importance of the topics discussed in the seminar and their acute relevance to achieve sustainability. Owners of renowned garments companies, officials from corporates, members of associations, scientists, researchers, and faculty members of numerous universities actively participated in the seminar. The seminar was coordinated by Prof. Dr Md Taufiqul Islam, Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASS), and moderated by Shiho Tanaka, Adjunct Faculty, FASS.

## Research and Publication Award 2023 held at Uttara University

The Research and Publication Award 2023 was held at Uttara University (UU) on May 18 at the university’s permanent campus. From a list of over 300 publications, the ceremony awarded the top 50 researchers with the highest impact factor from its academic community. Organised by the Centre for Research and Training (CRT), UU’s contribution to research and indexed publication saw a 300 percent increment in research output in international journals and considerable improvement in its Web of Science and SCOPUS citation index, compared to last year’s award ceremony. The researchers received recognition by certification and awards.

The event was graced by the Chief Guest Prof. Dr Biswajit Chanda, Member of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Bangladesh and Special Guest Md Omar Faruque, Director of the Private University Division, UGC.

The ceremony was presided over by the Vice-Chancellor of UU, Prof. Dr Eaysmin Ara Lekha. The welcome address was delivered by Prof. Dr Md Mizanur Rahman, Director of CRT, UU.

Distinguished guests included Abid Aziz, Director of Fintech Research Group and member of the Board of Trustees and Prof. Dr Gour Gobinda Goswami, Pro Vice-Chancellor of UU, the Registrar, Deans, Chairpersons, and all faculty members.

The annual research ceremony of UU awards all faculty members who participate in high impact peer-reviewed indexed publications.



## IUB excels in 1st Inter-University Squash Tournament 2024

Squash players from Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) excelled in the “1st Inter University Squash Tournament 2024” held at the Station Officers Mess Alpha in Dhaka from May 10 to 11. The tournament, organised by the Bangladesh Squash Rackets Federation and the University Squash Community, Bangladesh, featured 28 participants from various universities.

Marjan Akter Monika, player and assistant coach of the IUB Squash team, emerged as the champion in the female category, with her teammate Joti Rani Roy from the Department of Accounting, who joined IUB last year with a full sports scholarship, securing the runner-up spot.

In the male category, Md Raihan, a first-semester student of Management Information Systems (MIS) who joined IUB this year also on full sports scholarship, became the runner-up. Anika Tabassum Kotha, from IUB’s Department of Pharmacy, finished in fifth place in the female category after a strong performance in the quarter-finals.

Brig Gen G M Quamrul Islam (Retd.), Secretary General of the Bangladesh Squash Racket Federation, Brig Gen Dr Nasimul Gani (Retd.), and Major Mahmud (Retd.), Joint General Secretary of the Bangladesh Professional Golf Association, attended the prize-giving ceremony.

Participants received crests and certificates in recognition of their achievements. The tournament highlighted the talent present in Bangladeshi universities, promoting sportsmanship and healthy competition.

In January 2024, IUB inaugurated an



international standard squash court, arguably the only squash court at the university level in Bangladesh, and enrolled three professional players on full scholarships. These players are expected to represent Bangladesh and IUB in the 2028 Olympic Games, where squash will be included for the first time.

In 2024, IUB players have brought multiple accolades in national level squash competitions. In February, IUB hosted the 1st ever national female squash tournament at the newly built squash court with the participation of 60 girls from across Bangladesh, where IUB’s Riyajul Zannat Urdho, another student on full scholarship from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), became runner-up in the open category. In April, Raihan and Monika clinched the champion and runner-up positions in the Men’s Open (University) and Female Open categories respectively at the 4th Bangladesh National Squash Championship 2024.



■ URC 2024 ■

# UIU chasing big dreams at this year's URC with **YGGDRASIL**

**CAMPUS DESK**

The Mars rover team from United International University (UIU) is a collaborative effort among several students from various disciplines united by their shared passion for space exploration under UIU's Center for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR) lab. Heading the CAIR is Dr Salekul Islam, a professor at the Department of Computer Science and Engineering (CSE), UIU, and leading the team is Abid Hossain, a lecturer at the same department, who serves as the team mentor. Md Yasin, a student from UIU's CSE department is the team leader.

The team is structured into seven specialised sub-teams. These include the mechanical sub-team led by Bayzid Baytur Redwan; electrical sub-team led by Shah Mehrab Hossain; science sub-team led by Suraia Afroz Maria; software and autonomous sub-team led by Sheikh Sakib; communications sub-team led by Shorower Hossain; logistics team led by Md Yasin, and media and branding team led by Sakib Mahmood Saad.

Formed in 2021, the team has grown to encompass 40 dedicated members recruited annually. Their achievements speak volumes, with consecutive triumphs in the University Rover Challenge (URC) 2022 and 2023, as well as the Anatolian Rover Challenge 2022.

With that being said, the team is always looking to improve and aim bigger, and this year will be no different as they prepare for the URC finals with their Yggdrasil rover.

"We are using our past experiences at the URC to improve our rover," says Abid. "Learning from the previous challenges we faced at the competition, we have brought changes to many aspects of our team and the rover itself, so I am hopeful that we'll be putting on a better performance this year."

Dr Salekul adds to this saying, "This year's rover is a more improved version of the last one. We have made improvements in different areas such as the communication and operation systems. We have also had to improvise a lot. For instance, we have used carbon fibre in our rover this year, but unfortunately, we couldn't find any advanced technology in use in Bangladesh to cut the carbon fibre sheets. So, the team had to work with local furniture-making stores to get that done."

"Right now, we're using different manufacturing techniques, hardware, and software packages to make sure that our rover is of the same standard as other top teams from different international universities participating in the URC," Abid adds.

Of course, when working on a project like this, roadblocks can pop up in many forms.

"Compared to teams from the US and Europe, we face far more challenges, especially in terms of logistics and staying fit after the long journey to the US," says Dr Salekul. "Besides, there's a lot of on-field decisions we have to take at the competition which can impact our score. We even see some of the best-performing teams struggle with problems that tend to hamper their performance. Despite that, we have left no stone unturned in our preparations for this year's competition."

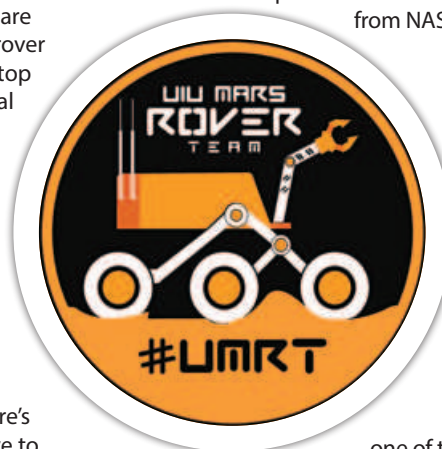
Abid goes on to emphasise on the need for certain skills for working on a project of this scale saying, "Building such a rover requires a team to have mechanical expertise, but UIU doesn't have a dedicated Mechanical department. Hence, our team members had

to learn a lot of things from scratch by themselves."

"Team-wide collaboration is vital here," adds Dr Salekul. "Just having students from Mechanical, Electrical, or Computer Science backgrounds won't suffice. They need to be able to work together to succeed."

Despite the roadblocks and challenges, UIU isn't afraid to chase bigger dreams at this year's URC, and the team's past accomplishments are inspiring them to do their best.

"In 2022, our rover's science system received a lot of praise at the competition," says Abid. "There, scientists from NASA told us that they were currently using



**This year's rover is a more improved version of the last one. We have made improvements in different areas such as the communication and operation systems.**

one of the technologies in their missions which we had used in our rover. This is indeed a matter of pride for us that we were able to implement something that NASA too is using."

As for what we can expect from Yggdrasil and UIU's Mars rover team, Abid says "We have done our best so far and will continue doing so at the competition as well as represent our institution and our country."

"Are we nervous? I'd say no," adds Abid. "We're trying out many new things this year, so we're more excited than nervous."

## OFF CAMPUS

# Getting into the Cambridge Rising Women Leaders Programme

**ZARRIN TASNIM**

From a young age, I have always sought out opportunities to challenge myself. Even as I transitioned into full-time employment, this hunger persisted. It was during this time that I stumbled upon the Cambridge Rising Women Leaders Programme – an opportunity tailor-made for competitive corporate women with leadership aspirations. It is catered to corporate women managers, with a minimum requirement of three years of professional experience. To participate, it is important to align one's goals with the programme's purpose.

The programme runs in four cohorts each year, – March, June, September, and November. The application form asks for one's current role and responsibilities at their workplace and focuses greatly on the applicant's purpose to attend the programme. It is important to be detailed and specific in the application form as those selected for the interview can be asked to elaborate on those details.

is an esteemed accolade reserved for only one participant per cohort. To be considered, one needed a professional nomination outlining why they deserved the scholarship. Fortunately, I had the unwavering support of my line manager, who graciously nominated me. Much to my surprise and gratitude, I was awarded with the scholarship.

The three-day programme took place at the prestigious Cambridge Judge Business School, where I found myself among 28 esteemed participants from all around the world. As the youngest and sole representative from Bangladesh, I felt an immense sense of pride in sharing my culture with such a diverse group of women leaders. Among us were professionals from renowned organisations such as Apple, Google, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Led by Cambridge professors and alumni, the programme offered insightful leadership courses and facilitated heartfelt conversations. These sessions taught us to build on strength-based leadership and create a positive workforce for the new generations. The leadership courses were open discussions where



PHOTO: COURTESY

For the interview, each shortlisted applicant receives an online meeting invite. The interview helps the organisers to know the candidate well. Here, I was asked about my plan regarding my professional life after attending the programme. I shared my vision of breaking stereotypes in a developing country like Bangladesh. I also shared how I aim to preach the knowledge I gain from the programme to my peers and help them be more confident in the workplace.

It was a pleasure when they shared that they would love to have someone from Bangladesh in the cohort after hearing about my purpose and plans.

After the interview, I received the welcome news of my selection for the programme. Following the selection, we had to submit a bio which was later shared with all the cohort participants so that we could stay connected with each other even after the event. The bio was based on our professional experience and personality.

To my delight, I also learned of a scholarship opportunity covering the programme's expenses, sponsored by the 30% Club United Kingdom. It

we learnt that currently, most organisations have Gen Zs in their workforce who are more purpose-based. We discussed and shared different ideas, and it felt quite relevant because, in our daily lives, we barely talk about the cultural change that comes with the generation gap.

We had sessions that not only focused on our verbal negotiation skills but also pinpointed on strengthening our physical presence as female leaders. It was a poignant realisation that women from all corners of the globe – both from developed and developing nations – faced similar challenges in their careers. This shared experience fostered a sense of camaraderie and solidarity, highlighting the power of unity and positivity in effecting change.

Through the programme, I underwent a profound transformation, shedding the cloak of self-doubt that had previously shrouded my ambitions. Now, armed with newfound confidence and insights, my goal is to pay it forward by imparting these learnings to others. I plan to coach and mentor aspiring leaders through formal sessions, spreading the message of empowerment and resilience that I have embraced.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Zarrin Tasnim completed her BSc in Electrical and Electronic Engineering from Islamic University of Technology (IUT) in 2021. After graduation, she joined British American Tobacco Bangladesh as a Global Graduate in Operations.

Currently Zarrin is working as a Commercial Sustainability Manager at the same company. She believes in teamwork and winning together, and practices empowerment regardless of gender.

Zarrin also aspires to give back to the society, and dreams to be a leader and an active voice for the nation.

