

WE BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN what we have and what we need



PROF. SARWAR JAHAN

Professor of General Education, Initiator & Founder of Southern University

Southern University Bangladesh has been operating as an educational institution in the country since its establishment in 1998. As one of the first-generation private universities in Bangladesh, it commenced its journey on November 26, 2002. This Chattogram-based university has achieved several academic milestones over the years, establishing itself as one of the premier learning institutes in the southeastern part of Bangladesh.

In 2006, the Initiator & Founder of the University broadened membership for the university's advancement, establishing a

platform for underprivileged individuals unable to access Public Universities or afford Private Universities in the country. Southern University has built a beautiful campus in the prime location of Chattogram metro area at Arefin Nagar, Baizid Bostami. This location guarantees a tranquil panoramic view and environment, rendering the university an ideal setting for academic learning with international standards.

While recent graduates actively pursue employment opportunities, millions of positions remain vacant. Despite universities



in this conversation and immerse them in the real world to provide them with accurate information about available education and the actual needs of the job market. We provide them with education and assist them in gaining real-world experience. Our students engage in role-playing exercises to simulate employee and entrepreneurial scenarios, apply for jobs, and discuss taxation systems—all aimed at acquiring financial and work-related skills.

Our initiative connects young people with business leaders and professionals who serve as teachers and mentors. By immersing learners in real-world scenarios, these projects help them take risks, manage outcomes, and gain a better understanding of their future career options.

Southern University was the first to introduce an MBA program in Chattogram. One of the unique features of its Business Administration department is the involvement of most eminent professors in Chattogram in teaching at Southern. Additionally, the Hotel & Tourism Management subject has been introduced for the first time in Chattogram, reflecting the new demands of the present age. Recently, Southern University has signed an MoU with the Radisson Blu Hotel, Chattogram Bay View, allowing students from the Department of Hotel and Tourism Management to undertake a six-month internship at the five-star hotel for practical learning.

continually producing qualified graduates, employers report a severe shortage of skilled workers. A university degree is no longer the sole determinant for employment. In today's technology-driven economies, there is a rising demand for skilled labor in science and technology. Moreover, there is an increasing emphasis on "soft skills". Employers prioritize hiring individuals with strong communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking abilities. Considering that machines will handle routine tasks, Bangladesh must cultivate a workforce of "creative entrepreneurs" who possess innovation, empathy, and the ability to address complex challenges. As a higher education institution, are we adequately preparing our youth for the demands of the job market?

We collaborate with professionals to bridge the gap between the education we have and the education we need. We involve learners



Private universities and the evolving job market

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This allows them to learn about the capabilities of our students, and our students can learn from them how to tackle interview boards and understand other job qualifications. Additionally, we regularly hold job fairs on our campus," mentions Mohammad Omar Faraque, Director, Public Relations Department, State University of Bangladesh.

A vibrant alumni network plays a crucial role in creating a potential bridge for career development for students. Having dedicated centers for career enhancement and arranging job fairs are equally imperative as they provide students with the proper information and skills necessary for their professional growth.

"Improvement of career services is a key aspect. The Office of External Affairs provides a wealth of assistance through the Centre for Career Development (CCD), including employment fairs that link students with possible companies, mock interviews, and resume seminars.

over 400 partnerships with national and international tech entities. These collaborations allow us to align our curriculum with industry needs and provide our students with direct pathways to employment," shares Abu Yousuf Md. Abdullah, Chairman of Northern University of Bangladesh.

Private universities in Chattogram, like Southern University, strategically direct their attention towards the local potential, particularly in the tourism sector. They establish partnerships with reputable hotels, offering internship opportunities to their students. This approach not only enables students to gain valuable hands-on experience but also paves the way for potential career opportunities in the hospitality industry.

"Now, the Hotel & Tourism Management subject is introduced for the first time in Chattogram, which reflects the new demands of the present age. Recently, Southern University has signed an MoU with the Radisson Blu Hotel, Chattogram Bay View so that students from the Department of Hotel and Tourism Management can do an internship in the five-star hotel for six months to learn practically," says Prof. Sarwar Jahan, Professor of General Education, Initiator & Founder of Southern University.

Despite the considerable efforts made by private universities to enhance the skills of their students and elevate their institutions into centers of excellence and hubs for supplying a high-quality workforce to the job market, there are still issues that require sincere attention. Education experts now often advocate prioritizing quality over quantity.

Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, a renowned educationist, sheds light on the strategic approaches of private and public universities in curriculum development. Private institutions prioritize market-driven subjects to meet students' expectations of a return on investment, aligning their courses with employment prospects. On the other hand, public universities, with broader societal objectives, often emphasize disciplines such as history, philosophy, or Islamic Culture.

However, Dr. Ahmed highlights a common challenge: both public and private universities struggle to maintain consistent quality across their operations. While a handful of private universities meet qualitative standards, the majority faces difficulties in upholding quality benchmarks. He emphasizes the crucial role of prioritizing educational quality, effective student assessment methods, and efficient university management to enhance graduates' competitiveness in the job market.

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A strong alumni network together with individualized career counseling offer priceless mentoring and job placement support," shares Professor Dr. Eaysmin Ara Lekha, Vice-Chancellor, Uttara University.

"ISU has made successful and active collaborations with a range of corporate houses. This helps our students enhance their capacity in the right direction and apply their acquired knowledge and skills for career development. Additionally, the university has founded the Center for Higher Studies and Career Development (CHSCD), which aims to provide job opportunities for its financially disadvantaged students," mentions Prof. Dr. Abdul Awal Khan, Vice Chancellor, International Standard University (ISU).

"We actively collaborate with industry experts across various departments. For instance, the Computer Science and Engineering department has established



IUB
Independent University,
Bangladesh

The Four Pillars of IUB



Strong Liberal Arts Foundation

We help our students develop a taste for and the ability to appreciate the finer things in life such as art, literature, and music. They develop qualities such as humanitarianism and volunteerism so they can respond to the call of the hour.

Technologically Competent

In this era of fast-paced transformation and connectivity, it is essential to have the ability to leverage the power of digital technologies. As part of IUB's 'Coding for All' program, every student is required to have basic computer and coding skills irrespective of their concentrations.



Globally Conscious

Our students become globally conscious by learning to understand and interpret contemporary trends in global business, development and politics. As a result, when they graduate and explore opportunities, they can adapt to multicultural settings easily.

Environmentally Responsible

Every student must be aware of their roles in protecting the environment because climate change and pollution are the biggest challenges facing the world today and every human being has a part to play in protecting the planet.

