DHAKA THURSDAY DECEMBER 19, 2024, *POUSH 4, 1431 BS* | A PUBLICATION OF The Daily Star

CAMPUS

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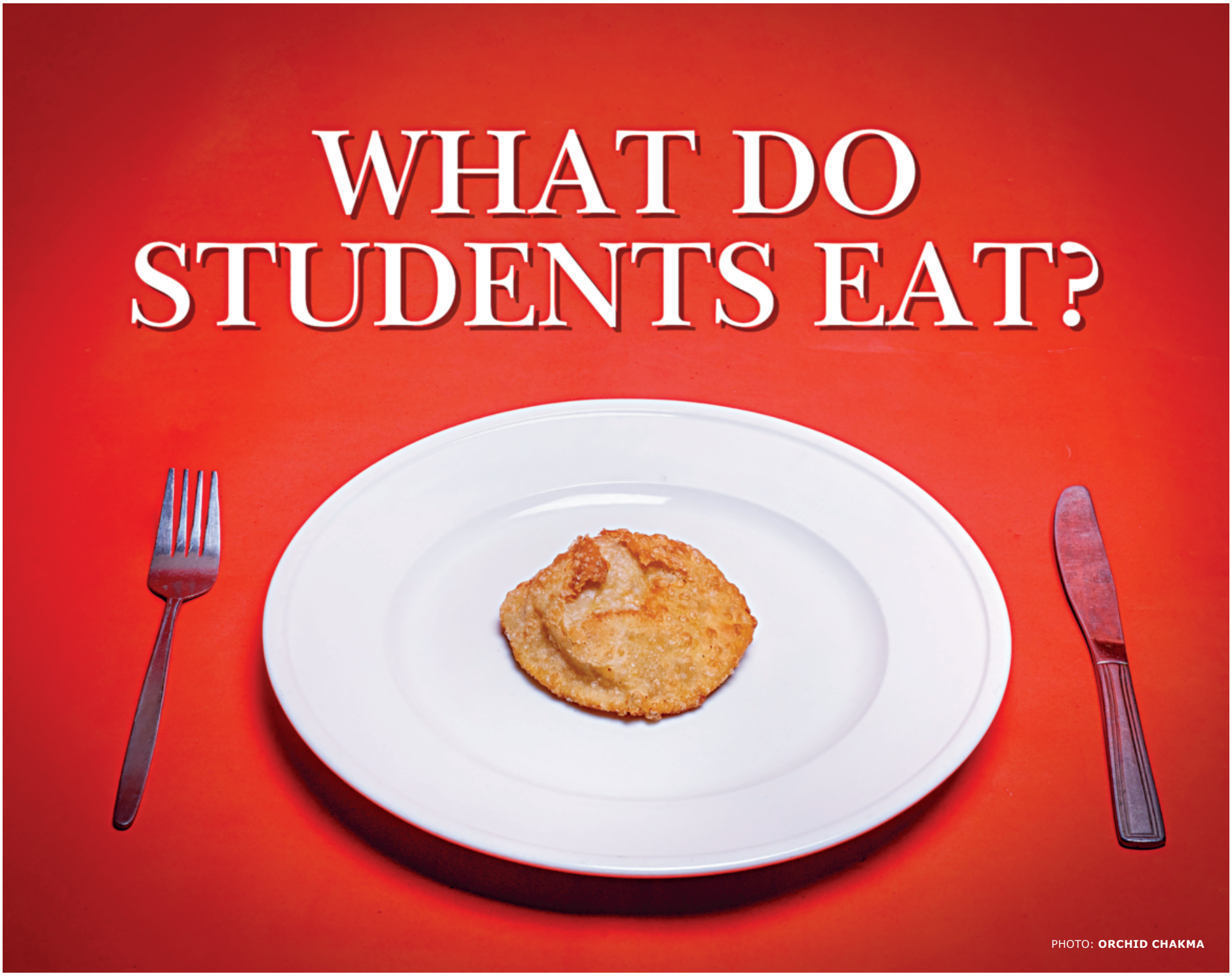


PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

MUSIC

GNX: Kendrick Lamar's surprise album is overflowing with a West Coast sound

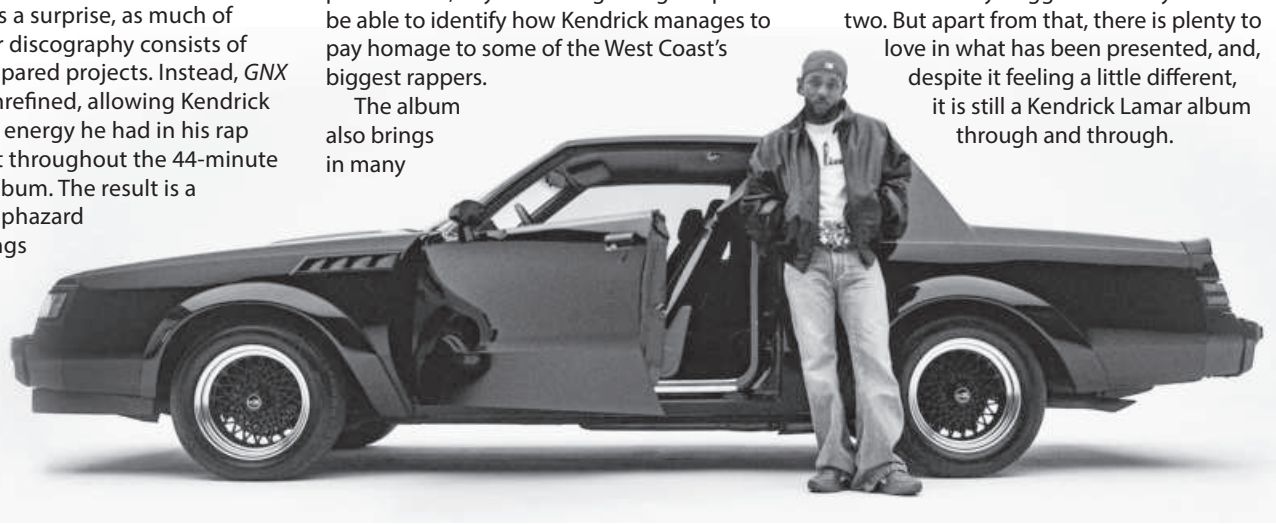
RAIAN ABEDIN

From the aftermath of what was perhaps one of hip-hop's biggest rap feuds, Kendrick Lamar has released his newest project. It's nearly become a meme to expect Kendrick Lamar to release music out of the blue, but this time, with *GNX*, we have an entire album.

From the very first track, "wacced out murals", it's evident most of what is present here has not been in the works for long. This strikes me as a surprise, as much of Kendrick's earlier discography consists of meticulously prepared projects. Instead, *GNX* chooses to be unrefined, allowing Kendrick to carry over the energy he had in his rap feud and apply it throughout the 44-minute runtime of the album. The result is a gorgeous, yet haphazard mishmash of songs with incredible west-coast-style production, creative sample usage, and some incredibly surprising features.

The album, overall, is a breath of fresh air in terms of songwriting. There is an ostensible air of levity around many of the tracks here. This is unlike Kendrick's previous projects, many of which are built around specific themes or narratives. *GNX* offers a sort of variety that his other projects rarely ever do. Some loose themes and motifs tie many of these tracks together. While not as pronounced, anyone willing to dig deep will be able to identify how Kendrick manages to pay homage to some of the West Coast's biggest rappers.

The album also brings in many fresh voices as surprise features, all of whom deliver. One highlight, for me, comes from the final verse on "hey now", delivered by one Dody6— a name most people seem to be unfamiliar with. Similar obscure names from the West Coast make themselves known throughout the album, resulting in *GNX* being a West Coast tribute album that also manages to pass the torch to those who are currently trying to make their names known. The album is only bogged down by a track or two. But apart from that, there is plenty to love in what has been presented, and, despite it feeling a little different, it is still a Kendrick Lamar album through and through.



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EDUCATION

How to write the "Why us?" supplement essay for US colleges

Colleges generally seek to understand two things through this essay: what makes you a good fit for that particular college, and whether or not you're interested in them and have done your research.

AYAAN SHAMS SIDDIQUEE

When applying to US colleges, be prepared to write essays — a lot of them. Thankfully, there's a wide range of resources available concerning the 650-word-long Common App personal essay, which is often considered the heart of your application. However, for college-specific supplements, the number of resources leaves much to be desired.

That being said, the following is a guide on writing the infamous "Why us?" supplement.

The "Why us?" essay is perhaps the most common supplement you'll come across on your application journey. While different schools word it differently, they generally seek to understand two things through this essay: what makes you a good fit for that particular college, and whether or not you're interested in them and have done your research.

A common pitfall applicants step into while writing this essay is being vague and nonspecific. For example, they might end up saying that they want to learn psychology and economics, but fail to mention specific courses or clubs they found interesting surrounding those subjects. Furthermore, there might be joint programmes that offer a combination of their desired majors, such as PPE (philosophy, politics, and economics), which the applicant might gloss over completely. This could indicate that they did not do enough research on the school to uncover anything in particular that they might levitate towards.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, by listing the different courses they want to take, professors they want to conduct research under, and clubs they want to be a part of, applicants may go overboard with showing schools how much research they've done.

Mark Dunn, admission officer at Yale University, thoroughly discourages this approach in episode 6 of the "Inside the Yale Admissions Office" podcast. He says, "This [essay] is not designed as an exercise to simply profess your love for Yale or for whatever institution you are applying to. People go and they research obscure faculty members or find something that appeared in the student newspaper four years ago, and they're just telling us they've done their homework here. We are not looking for facts about Yale here. We already know those. You don't need to tell us."

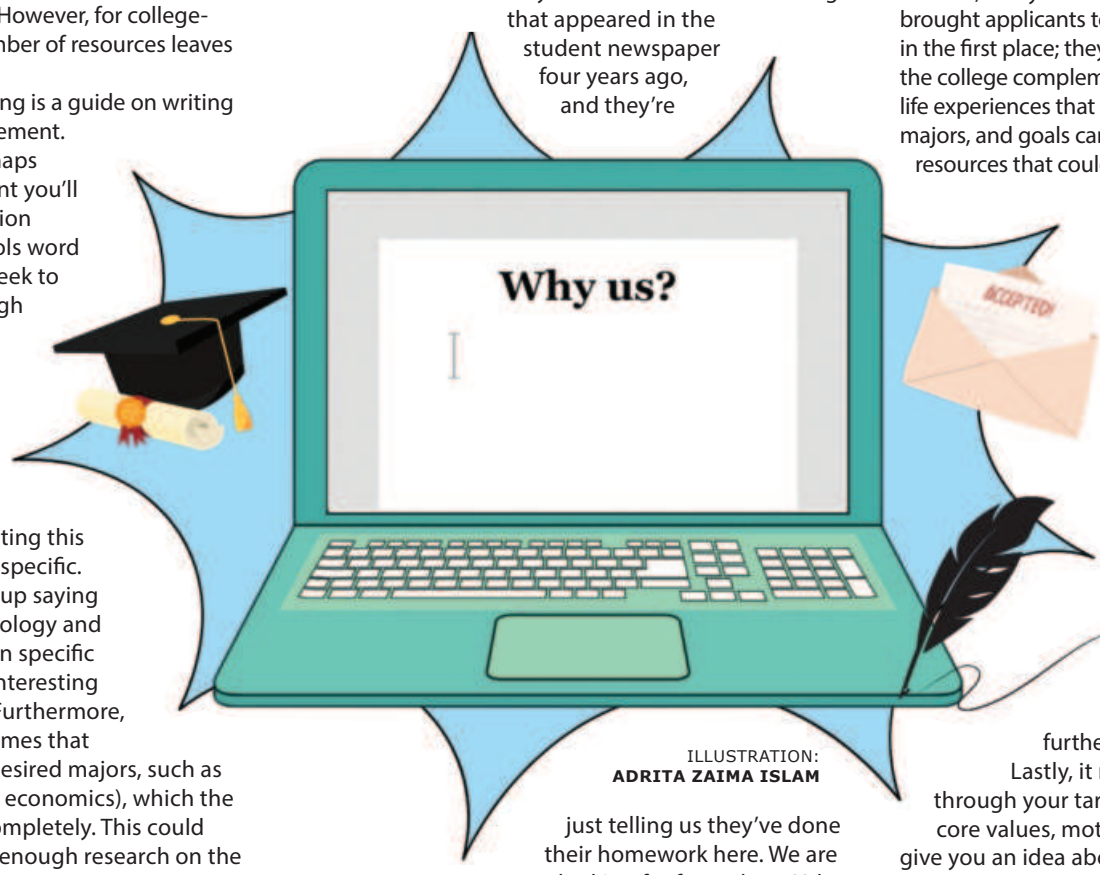


ILLUSTRATION: **ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM**

Colleges don't only want to know what about them attracts you; they also want to gauge what about you should attract them and why they should invest in you as a student. The "Why us?" supplement can be a perfect platform for you to showcase that you recognise your interests and know how to take the necessary steps to nurture those interests at the school of your choosing. This supplement is, therefore, important for establishing yourself as an ambitious, focused applicant who can add value to the school's community during your time there and beyond.

Thus, many successful "Why us?" essays focus on what brought applicants to that college and those courses in the first place; they talk about how the applicant and the college complement each other. Reflections on life experiences that shaped your interests, intended majors, and goals can act as a segue into school-specific resources that could help you pursue those objectives.

For example, if you are interested in environmental science and that stemmed from time spent in your school's Eco Earth Club, you could explain how the college's course on sustainable design speaks to you and would enable you to deepen your commitment to environmental preservation.

However, this is not to say that supplemental essays should become a rehashing of your activities list. With a typical word limit of 150-300 words, it might be more impactful to focus on a specific interest and use it as a gateway to show how the college's offerings can help you further develop that passion.

Lastly, it might also be helpful to dig through your target school's mission statement, core values, motto, or anything similar that could give you an idea about the kind of student body they aim to build. If you find values that align with your own, highlighting those in your essay can help demonstrate that you're an ideal fit for their campus culture.

Ayaan immerses himself in dinosaur comics and poorly-written manga. Recommend your least favourite reads at ayaan.shams@gmail.com

CAMPUS LIFE

The terrible eating habits of UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

PRASUN BIPRA *and* **RAIAN ABEDIN**

Students, especially once they're in university, can often lead very messy lives. This leads to near-complete disregard for their health and nutritional intake, leading to numerous health problems later in life.

Nutrition, despite its constant importance in our lives, is always cast aside whenever the topic of sustenance is brought up. For students, the very idea of sustenance is synonymous with 'eating whatever you can', and this practice is only reinforced by restaurants and university cafeterias offering mainly deep-fried items rich in unsaturated fats and unhealthy carbohydrates.

The biggest issues students face when it comes to meals can usually be boiled down into a few particular categories.

Firstly, there's the lack of nutritious food items. Nutritious, of course, refers to meals that have a balance in the amounts of proteins, carbohydrates, and healthy fats. Then, comes the issue of price. Finally, issues with variety as well as hygiene are ever-present in university cafeterias and even many restaurants.

With multiple facets such as these constantly at play, attempting to eat healthy may seem like a far-fetched idea for students. But health isn't something to be compromised, regardless of the trouble it might feel like at times.

Samiha Binte Kibria, who studies at the Institute of Business Administration, Dhaka University, shares her experience.

"The biggest problem for me is the unavailability of affordable and healthy meals," says Samiha. "Everything I can find in the cafeteria is either fried or not to my taste. Typically, I skip morning breakfast, so having something fresh like certain fruits would be a big help as they are rich in nutrients while also being easy on the stomach, but the cafeteria focuses on food that is either affordable and unhealthy, or is too expensive to be an everyday item."

Nutrition is often overlooked when it comes to student meals. Students tend to have packed schedules with limited time between classes, leading cafeterias to focus on quick, filling meals that can be prepared in bulk. Additionally, there's a preference for popular, familiar fast foods, which are seen as both satisfying and convenient, even if they lack nutritional value. Healthier options may not sell as well, discouraging cafeterias from diversifying their menus.

"For me, lunch is usually the most overlooked and unpredictable meal on busy days," says Moni*, a student at American International University-Bangladesh. "I often skip lunch altogether or grab whatever is affordable and nearby, mostly snacks like fries or *shingaras* to curb my hunger. I usually have a packed schedule, and most times, I have to opt for a stomach-filling meal instead of a nutritious one."

Another major challenge for students is the high cost of food. There is no doubt about the fact that a healthy, fulfilling meal will cost you a fair bit. With rising costs of produce, this is an issue that only seems to get worse as prices in both restaurants and university cafeterias keep shooting up. The effect of this can be directly seen among students, as many opt to skip meals to save money, while others rely on quick and ready-to-eat items that do more harm than good.

Hamid*, a first-year student at BRAC University, talks about his university's cafeteria experience.

"The prices at the cafeteria are really high, especially for students who are on a tight budget," says Hamid. "It's frustrating because, ideally, the campus should provide affordable options, but instead, a simple meal ends up costing more than it should."

As students habituate themselves to the intake of unhealthy, junk food, another problem arises. University cafeterias across the country have started showing signs of extremely poor hygiene maintenance, delivering substandard food to unassuming students ready to eat anything at a moment's notice, not caring for the quality as long as it fills their stomach and tastes halfway digestible.

Rahim*, a final-year student at North South University (NSU), shares his experience with one such incident.

"When our previous catering service, Kasundi, was still operating, things were unmanageable for the students," says Rahim. "I rarely ate what they had to offer because I simply never liked the taste and saw many people complaining about finding insects and hair in their food. I don't know how they were still allowed to operate after that."

Kasundi eventually got shut down after NSU students repeatedly raised concerns about its food. Protests were also held on a few occasions with the students demanding that the catering service leave NSU. Right now, Kasundi has been replaced by multiple other vendors. While this has increased the variety of food available at the university's cafeteria, price and hygiene still remain a glaring issue.

"Apart from a select few items, the prices aren't student-friendly, and multiple students have reported finding impurities in the food. However, this alternative multi-vendor system feels like a step in the right direction, although a lot still needs to be done," said Shahidul, a second-year student at NSU.

Adding to the issue is the lack of variety in food options available on campus. Cafeterias tend to offer a limited menu, heavily dominated by fast food and carb-heavy dishes that are easy to prepare in bulk but leave little room for diverse, balanced meals. For students craving fresh ingredients, whole grains, or plant-based proteins, the choices are slim, often forcing them to settle for the same repetitive options every day.

Aricia Chakma, a student at the Department of Environmental Science and Management at NSU, shares her view on the lack of vegetarian options in university cafeterias.

"Everything I can find in the cafeteria is either fried or not to my taste. Typically, I skip morning breakfast, so having something fresh like certain fruits would be a big help as they are rich in nutrients while also being easy on the stomach, but the cafeteria focuses on food that is either affordable and unhealthy, or is too expensive to be an everyday item."

"I really wish there were more vegetable options available," says Aricia. "It's hard to find healthy food options on campus, and sometimes, it feels like I am stuck with the same few options every day. We spend so much time at university that constantly having to rely on junk food due to the lack of healthier alternatives is harmful to both our health and our overall diet. Having better food options would greatly support a healthier lifestyle for students."

Ultimately, the situation in university cafeterias across Bangladesh underscores a broader issue affecting students' health and well-being. With limited affordable, nutritious, and hygienic options available, students are often forced to make do with repetitive, unhealthy meals that don't meet their dietary needs. A holistic approach that prioritises affordable, balanced meals and higher hygiene standards would not only support students' physical health but also help enhance their academic performance and overall campus experience.

PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

*Names have been changed upon request.

OFF CAMPUS

Sustenance, soaring prices, and STRUGGLING STUDENTS

How rising grocery prices are affecting the lives of students

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

AZRA HUMAYRA

Each day seems to arrive bearing updates on inflation and food insecurity. The air is thick with the strain, particularly among those for whom meals have become an unpredictable luxury. In Bangladesh, the World Food Program (WFP) reported in August that a staggering 38 percent of low-income households grappled with food insecurity, even as prices briefly dipped when the interim government took office.

As a public university student, I am no stranger to the diverse backgrounds of my fellow students. Some, who live with their families, have to put up with the economic turmoil. Others, however, who live away from home face the brunt of rising commodities all by themselves and are forced to make tough calls when shopping for groceries. Figuring out one's daily needs requires asking uncompromising questions: How many packets of noodles are required for a dozen eggs? How many cups of tea does one forgo for tomorrow's meal?

Khingmokay Marma, a fourth-year student at Dhaka University (DU) living in an off-campus hostel, describes narrowing down her shopping list, cutting one item after another to stay within budget. She says, "With market costs climbing, those of us in hostels or shared lodgings have to stretch our budgets just to manage," she explains. "At the market, you see that everything's price has gone up, and I can't just swap one item for another. We always have to sacrifice something to meet our fixed budgets. If I want fish or meat, I must do without vegetables; if I want vegetables, then the other two are off the table."

She, along with numerous other students, must balance the cost of living with their limited resources.

In conversation with students, a recurring theme surfaced: the steady, reluctant cutting down of food essentials. Syed Musaddekun Nobi, a DU student, prepares his meals in the cramped quarters of his Kabi Jasim Uddin Hall dorm room, yet even this simple ritual is slowly becoming a luxury. Vegetables, once a staple, are now a costly burden.

"The price of vegetables fluctuates so much that even buying them has become a challenge," he says. "Preparing vegetables isn't like preparing fish or poultry – you need a mix of other ingredients to make a proper dish. But going to the market and picking up cauliflower, potatoes, beans, and tomatoes – all of it quickly adds up. Sometimes, it's nearly as expensive as buying chicken."

For students on a tight budget, nutrition has become a delicate balancing act; a predicament where even basic produce feels like an indulgence.

Ummul Wara Zinatunnesa, a student at Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (RUET), recounts how a mere 500 BDT no longer stretches to cover the weekly market run. "The prices have been high since before August. We thought the price increase might ease when the government changed; instead, they've climbed," she says, with a weary resignation. "When you take Tk 500 to the market, the food you get barely lasts for two or three days, whereas it used to last for a week. The cost of staples like beans and cauliflower has soared, even as winter, typically a season for abundance, approaches," she adds. "While fruits alone can't meet your nutrition needs, they are still important. However, apples, tangerines, and oranges are all out of reach. So, I'm left with only rice and eggs. Nutrition has become a luxury, and there's nothing to be done about it."

Tahmina Nowreen*, a Khulna University (KU) student who has lived off-campus for two years, describes the strain of keeping up with rising expenses. "My only source of money is my tuition," she says, adding that she avoids turning to her parents for financial support. "With so little to rely on, keeping up with grocery prices feels impossible. Sometimes, I eat just to feel full – I don't even think about nutritional value."

For many students on a tight budget, meals become purely practical, devoid of any consideration for nutrition or quality, as their focus shifts from what they're eating to ensuring they at least have something on their plates.

According to another report by the WFP, "Food Security and Livelihood Monitoring," nearly one-third of households reported that they simply didn't have enough food. The situation worsens for low-income households, with six out of 10 reporting insufficient food – a staggering statistic.

The desire for nutritious meals should not be a luxury. It is a necessity, even as students across Bangladesh grapple with a merciless economy that has left them struggling from one meagre shopping run to the next. Subsistence meals cannot sustain the resilience required by young minds balancing ambition and academia. If these minds are the foundation of the nation's future, they must have bodies that are strong enough to support them. It is time for institutions, government agencies, and lawmakers to look beyond the numbers and see the faces of these young people who require more than just an education; they require the means to thrive.

"With market costs climbing, those of us in hostels or shared lodgings have to stretch our budgets just to manage," she explains. "At the market, you see that everything's price has gone up, and I can't just swap one item for another. We always have to sacrifice something to meet our fixed budgets. If I want fish or meat, I must do without vegetables; if I want vegetables, then the other two are off the table."

**Name has been changed upon request.*

Azra Humayra is majoring in Mass Communication and Journalism at the University of Dhaka.

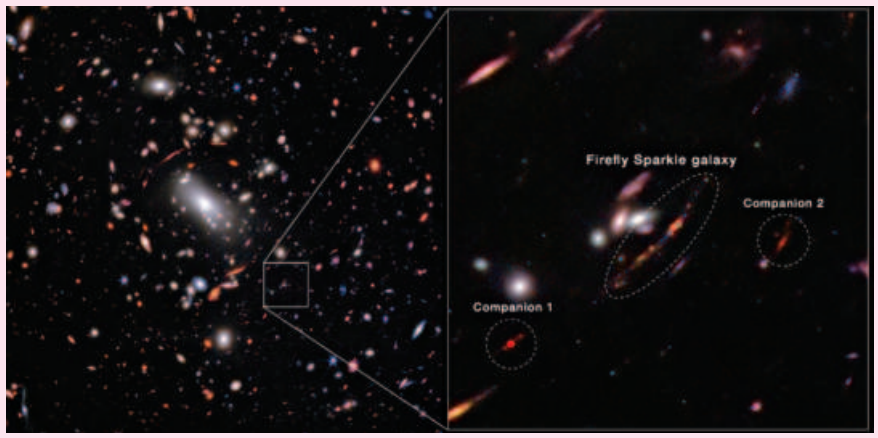
NOTICE BOARD

IUB scientist publishes major research in Nature on an actively forming galaxy

Astronomer Dr Lamia Mowla, an Assistant Professor at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA, and an Associate Member at the Center for Astronomy, Space Science and Astrophysics (CASSA) of Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), has published a groundbreaking research paper in the renowned science journal *Nature* on the discovery of Firefly Sparkle – a young galaxy dating back approximately 600 million years after the Big Bang when the universe was less than five percent of its current age.

This discovery – made as part of research that analysed data from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) by Dr Mowla and a team of 21 other scientists based mainly in North America, Europe, and Japan – offers invaluable insights into the formation and evolution of galaxies, reminiscent of the early Milky Way.

Located in a distant region of space, Firefly Sparkle consists of 10 compact star clusters embedded within a sparsely packed arc of stars. The galaxy is accompanied by two smaller neighbouring galaxies, referred to as "Firefly-Best Friend" and "Firefly-New Best Friend", forming a fascinating triad that offers a unique glimpse into early cosmic evolution.



The discovery leveraged the power of gravitational lensing – where light passes through warped space around a massive galaxy cluster in the foreground that acts as a magnifying glass – to amplify the light of Firefly Sparkle by up to 26 times. This natural cosmic phenomenon allowed astronomers to study the intricate structure of the galaxy despite its immense distance from Earth.

"Light from Firefly Sparkle took 13.2 billion years to reach us, but due to the universe's expansion, the galaxy is now much farther away," said Dr Mowla. "If we could observe it as it is today, it would likely resemble our own Milky Way. This gives us an incredible glimpse into how our galaxy might have looked in its infancy during the Epoch of Reionization."

Dr Khan Muhammad Bin Asad, Director of CASSA and Assistant Professor in the Department of Physical Sciences at IUB, said, "We aspire for IUB's CASSA to be recognised as the pioneer in this field in the future. Congratulations to Dr Mowla on publishing this groundbreaking research and gratitude for her association with us, sharing her research, resources, and knowledge, which have significantly contributed to building the foundation for astronomy education and research at IUB."

IUB has the only research centre for astronomy and astrophysics in Bangladesh where professional astronomers work and it is the only university in the country to offer minor courses in Astronomy and Astrophysics. IUB also houses two outreach telescopes for deep-space imaging which were received from the Dunlap Institute for Astronomy & Astrophysics of the University of Toronto, Canada, in 2022 through an outreach grant of Dr Mowla.

CASSA is dedicated to promoting education in these fields, conducting research, and contributing to global astronomical studies. The centre works to position Bangladesh as a proactive participant in the global scientific community.

Research & Innovation Week held at UIU with an exclusive seminar

United International University (UIU) is a front-runner in innovation and leadership among the private universities in Bangladesh. The Research & Innovation (R&I) Week started with an exclusive seminar held at the UIU Campus in United City, Madani Avenue.

Prof. Dr Md Abul Kashem Mia, Vice Chancellor of UIU, presided over the ceremony. Prof. M Zahid Hasan – Eugene Higgins Prof. of Physics at Princeton University and Fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences – was present as the Special Guest at the programme. Prof. Emeritus Dr M Rezwan Khan, Executive Director of IAR, UIU and Chairman of Power Grid, Bangladesh; Prof. Dr Hamidul Haq, Dean, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, UIU; Prof. Dr Hasan Sarwar, Dean, School of Science & Engineering, UIU; and Dr Md Zulfiqur Rahman, Registrar, UIU, were also present at the programme. The welcome address was delivered by Prof. Dr Khandaker Abdullah Al Mamun, Director of the Institute of Research, Innovation, Incubation and Commercialization (IRIIC), UIU.

In the programme, Prof. M Zahid Hasan conducted an exclusive seminar titled "Fourth Industrial Revolution and Future Society: The Transformative Impact of Changing Technologies". He discussed the implications of AI, quantum science, and other scientific advancements in the seminar.

Prof. M Zahid has written over 280 peer-reviewed journal articles. He worked at Stanford's SLAC National Accelerator as well as the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and is the recipient of the 2020 Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award. He has received the American Competitiveness & Innovation Fellowship for leadership in the field of physics from the US National Science Foundation and is listed in the "World's Most Influential Scientific Minds" list.

SEU CPDS launches soft skills programme with UNDP

Department of Career & Professional Development Services (CPDS) of Southeast University (SEU) in collaboration with UNDP's Futurenation organised a soft skills development programme's inauguration session titled "Employability Master Class & Scholarship Awarding Ceremony". The programme was held on December 11 at the SEU Multipurpose Hall.

Prof. Yusuf Mahbubul Islam, Vice Chancellor of SEU, graced the programme as the Chief Guest while Prof. M Mofazzal Hossain, PhD, Pro Vice Chancellor of SEU, was the Special Guest. Mohammad Namuddoza, Director, CPDS, delivered the welcome speech. Debashish Roy,Private Sector Specialist and National Project Manager, Futurenation, UNDP, also spoke at the event.

Rifaqat Rasheed, Head of Talent Management and Governance (P&O), Grameenphone, conducted the career session. Later, Futurenation awarded 915 scholarships on a British Council course and 200 scholarships on tech courses to SEU students. Among others, the Registrar, Additional Registrar, Chairman of the Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) and Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EEE) department, Board of Trustees Secretary, CML Director, and other officials were also present during the programme.

ILLUSTRATION: **ADRITA ZAIMA ISLAM**

CAREER

A 30-day guide for INTERNSHIP SUCCESS

ALLIN MOHANA BISWAS

The first month of your internship can feel like a whirlwind. New faces, unfamiliar processes, and an eagerness to prove yourself can create a mix of excitement and nervousness. But fear not. With a well-structured plan, you can navigate this initial period and set yourself up for success.

This 10-20-30 day plan will guide you through these crucial first weeks, helping you adjust seamlessly, display your potential, and make your mark.

Days 1-10: Laying the foundation

The first ten days are all about laying a strong foundation for your internship. Immerse yourself in the company culture by observing how people dress, interact, and approach work. Is the atmosphere casual or formal? Does the office prioritise a strong work-life balance? Understanding the culture allows you to fit in and adapt effectively.

Next, build a rapport with your supervisor. Schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss your internship goals and expectations. Actively listen, ask clarifying questions, and show a genuine interest in learning. Remember to build friendships with your colleagues. Strike up conversations during breaks. Lunchtime is a great opportunity to build connections. These friendships will provide support, offer insights, and make your internship more enjoyable.

Also, take the time to demystify your work. Ask your supervisor or colleagues for an overview of your role and the projects you will be involved in. Familiarise yourself with relevant tools and software, and actively seek training opportunities and take thorough notes.

Days 11-20: Taking Initiative

Now that you have settled in, express interest in specific projects or areas that align with your skills and goals. Talk to your supervisor and colleagues to see where your contributions can be most valuable.

Do not be shy to approach managers or team leads outside your immediate circle. Ask insightful questions about their roles and the company's direction. This shows initiative and demonstrates your interest in the bigger picture. Aim to network with everyone in your team. Have a brief, five-minute conversation with each person. Introduce yourself, express your interest in learning more about their roles, and discover potential areas of collaboration.

Days 21-30: Stepping up

This is the stage in your internship where you start actively contributing to assigned projects. Take ownership, ask clarifying questions, propose solutions, and meet deadlines reliably. Demonstrate your ability to learn quickly and apply your knowledge.

Do not be afraid to voice your opinions in meetings, even if you are unsure. Ask questions, offer constructive suggestions, and participate in discussions. Your fresh perspective can be valuable.

Show your colleagues you are trustworthy. Be proactive in identifying tasks, taking initiative, and completing them efficiently. Maintain open communication and regularly ask your supervisor for feedback. Most importantly, maintain a positive attitude. Be enthusiastic, helpful, and willing to learn. A positive attitude is contagious and makes you a more enjoyable teammate.

Do not be afraid to voice your opinions in meetings, even if you are unsure. Ask questions, offer constructive suggestions, and participate in discussions. Your fresh perspective can be valuable.

Remember, your internship is a two-way street. While you are gaining valuable experience, you can also have the chance to make a positive impact on the company. By highlighting your skills, initiative, and eagerness to learn, you will solidify a strong foundation for the rest of your internship and potentially create the way for future opportunities.

Allin Mohana Biswas is a student at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB).

EDUCATION

Transferring credits abroad? Here's what you should know

TINATH ZAEBA

In its simplest form, credit transfer lets students take the credits they've worked hard to earn in one institution and apply them toward a degree at another institution, including those abroad. For students studying in Bangladesh who wish to study abroad, the idea of transferring academic credits to institutions overseas sounds like a dream – one that could open a world of opportunities. But the process is not exactly a walk in the park.

The most obvious advantage of credit transfer is the chance to study in a more advanced or even specialised academic environment abroad. A scenario where you start your undergraduate journey in Bangladesh and later transfer to a university abroad might be a win-win situation. Not only is it less expensive than doing your entire bachelor's degree abroad but you also attain a global perspective.

In addition, transferring credits provides some flexibility. If you're not quite ready – whether financially or emotionally – to take the leap and study abroad right after your HSC or A level, you can start your undergrad journey at home and transfer elsewhere later. This gradual approach could ease the culture shock students are prone to experience when they move abroad, especially when they are younger. With a little more experience in and exposure to the real world, students tend to be better equipped and well-adjusted in their own identities, giving them the tools to navigate culture shock better.

There is, of course, a flipside to it. Credit transfer sounds ideal until you bump into the bureaucratic nightmare that the application process entails. Whether the credits that you've attained so far will transfer depends on several factors: to what extent the curricula match up, how the institution in Bangladesh is viewed abroad, and, of course, the policies of the country you're looking to transfer to.

Hence, transferring your credits to a foreign institution shouldn't be a casual decision. Students need to plan meticulously and understand that what flies in Bangladesh might not work elsewhere.

Credit systems in Bangladesh often differ from those in the West. For example, a three-credit course at home may not be equal in terms of credit value abroad, which could force students to retake courses or extend their study period, despite already transferring.

Moreover, the global credit transfer system isn't exactly standardised. Every university has its own rules about what they will accept. Sometimes, they'll accept credits for elective courses but not for core courses. In other cases, only part of a course will transfer. You may still have to take extra classes to fulfil graduation requirements, leaving you wondering why you bothered transferring in the first place.

Then there's the issue of reputation because, let's face it, not all universities abroad will view Bangladeshi institutions on equal footing with their own. That's a bitter pill to swallow, especially if you're told that you need to repeat courses to meet the standards of the school you're applying to.

If you're still in the game and thinking about credit transfer, know that even though it's difficult, it is not impossible. The process takes a lot of research and planning. Start by checking if the institution you're currently in has any established credit transfer agreements with foreign universities. Some private universities have partnerships with institutions abroad that make the process smoother.

Next, dive into the details of the university you're eyeing. Go through course catalogues, chat with academic advisers, and gather official transcripts and syllabi for your courses in Bangladesh. This paperwork helps foreign institutions assess what you've learned. Sometimes, you might need to dig deeper and provide proof of the number of hours you've spent in class or additional assessments.

Most importantly, brace yourself. The credits you worked so hard for may only be partially accepted. So, flexibility is key – you might have to adjust your academic plans on the fly. Also, don't forget to budget for the hidden costs: application fees, transcript evaluations, and any extra course fees you weren't counting on.

While credit transfer is promising, it remains a system in flux, particularly for students in Bangladesh, where the educational framework differs from that of developed nations. Credit transfer isn't an easy way out, but rather a different way forward. In the end, credit transfer could be your route to international success or paperwork purgatory. Either way, make sure you've got a roadmap.

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