



## BRIDGING ACADEMIA with industry and global practices



**PROF. DR. SHAMS RAHMAN**  
Vice Chancellor, East West University (EWU)



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**The Daily Star (TDS): What makes your university the ideal choice for prospective students?**

**Shams Rahman (SR):** Ideally, a university is a place where knowledge should be created and exchanged. And that's exactly what East West University is dedicated to. More specifically, we are committed to academic excellence, an innovative learning environment, and a holistic approach to student development. We have a beautiful campus in an excellent location, in the heart of Dhaka city which makes it easy to commute to the campus. We have an exceptional faculty, as we believe the intellectual property they share in the classroom is critical for developing students' skills and competencies. All our labs are equipped with modern tools and research equipment, enabling hands-on training for students. We emphasize extracurricular and co-curricular activities through various clubs.

Students should consider this holistic package—classroom education and research, extracurricular activities, and outside-the-classroom engagements—as our university's key approach.

**TDS: Please share details about the programs and courses tailored to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to excel in today's dynamic job market.**

**SR:** We are aware of the changing global needs driven by technology and environmental concerns. Our programs are designed to incorporate technologies associated with Industry 4.0, and we are transitioning swiftly into Industry 5.0. Let me highlight some of the critical findings of the recent report by the World Economic Forum.

According to this report, big data analytics, climate change, and cybersecurity are expected to be the biggest drivers of job growth. Analytical thinking and creative thinking will be the most important skills.

To address these issues, we carefully design our programs and courses to ensure our students are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to excel in today's fast-paced and ever-evolving job market. For instance, recently we have introduced a Data Science and Analytics program and are in the process of launching cutting-edge programs in Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Cybersecurity, Environment and Climate Change, and a technology-oriented MBA. Our Civil Engineering program integrates technology into its curriculum, a specialization attractive to engineers seeking international opportunities, especially in the Middle East.

Our Business Department recently earned accreditation from the ACBSP, a prestigious North American accreditation body. Furthermore, we've signed MOUs with institutions like the Asian Institute of Technology, Macquarie University in Australia, and a U.S. university.

**TDS: Could you tell us about the dynamics of your teaching staff?**

**SR:** We have a clear strategy when it comes to recruiting and developing faculty members. For junior faculty—lecturers, senior lecturers, and assistant professors—we focus on recruiting fresh graduates with some experience. Our approach involves recruiting, retraining, and retaining them.

For senior faculty—associate professors and professors—we ensure their dedication to



teaching, active involvement in research, and ability to take on leadership roles within the university. To retain them, we provide incentives such as research grants through our Center for Research and Training and additional financial benefits for publishing in top journals.

**TDS: Can you tell us about the university's research facilities?**

**SR:** Providing robust research facilities and nurturing research capabilities among academics are critical priorities for us. We encourage and motivate all our academics to apply for research grants, conduct research, and publish their findings. Last year alone, a commendable number of articles were published.

We are also working to build a research culture by introducing the concept of a "Research Day," which is new in Bangladesh. We fund student-led research, allowing master's and final-year students to publish in top journals.

**TDS:** How does the university nurture the inner

potential of its students through extracurricular activities such as clubs, job fairs, and competitions? **SR:** We have two entities dedicated to student development: the Department of Student Welfare and the Career Counseling Center, which helps with presentation skills, mock interviews, and CV writing. Our 21 active student clubs, including Photography and Debating, nurture leadership, teamwork, and negotiation, often leading to national-level victories and lifelong passions.

**TDS: Could you provide an overview of tuition fees, scholarships, and waivers offered by the university, as well as other initiatives aimed at supporting students in achieving their academic goals?**

**SR:** Our university is affordable for middle-class, upper-middle-class, and lower-middle-class families, offering various scholarships. These include merit-based scholarships, academic performance scholarships, Trustee Board Director and Medha Lalon scholarships, employee scholarships for children of university staff, and financial assistance for students facing hardship. We also offer a District Quota Scholarship for top students from each district. Recently, we awarded 10 full scholarships to female students from Gaza, covering both tuition and living expenses at the request of the Palestinian embassy.

In conclusion, I would like to highlight that when it comes to learning, teaching, research, and innovation, our approach is holistic, and our strategy is simple: 'inside out and outside in.' This means that what we teach and research on campus, we take to the industry, while also bringing knowledge from the industry into the classroom.

## How Are Private Universities Shaping the Future of Research?

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Prof. Dr. Md. Abdul Mannan Chowdhury, Vice Chancellor of Presidency University, emphasized, "Every year, faculties are getting the exposure they deserve in international journals for their outstanding contributions to societal growth. This inspires students to accept real-world challenges and enhances their creativity and confidence."

Uttara University aims to make a global impact through research, tackling both local and global problems. "To receive incentives and acknowledgment for their accomplishments, faculty members and students are encouraged to participate in international conferences and publish their



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research in esteemed, indexed journals. This not only raises the university's academic standing but also ensures that Uttara University will continue to play a significant role in advancing technology and knowledge worldwide," noted Prof. Eaysmin Ara Lekha, Vice-Chancellor of Uttara University. The university takes pride in its existing research and innovation facilities.

At IUBAT, the Miyan Research Institute drives impactful research focused on real-world issues, such as renewable energy and healthcare solutions. Prof. Abdur Rab, Vice-Chancellor of IUBAT, remarks, "IUBAT is committed to fostering a culture of inquiry and creativity. Its research facilities and innovation labs play a pivotal role in this mission. The Miyan Research Institute finances research funds for teachers and students and leads the university's research

efforts." IUBAT's commitment to high-quality research is evident in its achievement of 4th position in SCImago (2024) for SCOPUS-indexed publications. The Innovation and Entrepreneurship Centre at the university fosters student innovation, equips them with entrepreneurial skills, offers financial aid for product prototyping, supports patenting, and encourages business ventures.

Prof. Dr. Abdul Awal Khan, Vice-Chancellor of International Standard University (ISU), stated, "The university is focusing on a range of research topics, including socio-economic development, food security and sustainable development, artificial intelligence, innovative human management processes, and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19." The university's policy-oriented research covers a wide range of fields, from artificial intelligence to socio-economic development.

On societal progress, Prof. Dr. Nawzia Yasmin, Vice-Chancellor (in-charge) of the State University of Bangladesh (SUB), noted, "From conducting pioneering research in renewable energy to developing community-centric healthcare models, our university prioritizes impactful projects that benefit society." The university promotes advanced research in diverse fields, from technology and health sciences to business and renewable energy,

through its research centers to address real-world challenges with innovative solutions. Additionally, the university provides labs equipped with modern tools and technologies that support practical learning. Students are encouraged to participate in funded research projects, hackathons, and competitions, further enhancing their skills and confidence.

In conclusion, the integration of research within the educational framework of private universities in Bangladesh is not just enhancing the quality of education but is also driving social change, fostering innovation, and preparing students to face global challenges. Their efforts highlight the growing emphasis on research as a fundamental aspect of university life. By investing in state-of-the-art research facilities, providing substantial funding, and promoting collaborations, these universities are not only creating new knowledge but are also shaping future leaders equipped with the skills and insights needed to address real-world problems. As Bangladesh continues to develop, the commitment of its private universities to research will play a crucial role in fostering sustainable development, technological advancements, and societal progress, ensuring that the next generation is ready to lead with creativity, innovation, and a deep sense of responsibility.

**TEACH THE MAN THAT WHICH HE KNOWS NOT**  
IUB  
INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH

- BDT 233 million** in research and grants in 2023-25
- 1,450+ publications** by IUB faculty in the last 4 years
- 128** PhD-holders in the faculty
- BDT 270 million** in scholarships and waivers in 2023-24
- 47%** female students
- 19,000+** Alumni

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