



PHOTO: ORCHID CHAKMA

SATIRE

Student drops three semesters to focus on club activities

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It is widely believed that peer pressure in university involves either someone offering you unsolicited career advice or everyone else's relationships making you feel horrible about being alone. However, the reality is that as a freshman, everyone around you is busy being recruited by university clubs.

Being left out from that is worse than third wheeling five couples at the same time. Not joining a club, which involves at least seven to eight rigorous rounds of screening, is considered a skill issue. Moreover, defending yourself by claiming that you're simply not interested in university clubs is assumed to be a pathetic attempt at coping.

"I thought of joining the cultural club to have a social life on campus, maybe make a few friends outside of my class. But then I heard Sakib Bhaiya's speech on club day, and I realised that if I didn't immediately join the Career Development Club I would be another unemployment statistic, a disappointment to my parents, and a failure in life," said Fariha Tasnim while frantically creating a LinkedIn profile. "If you'll excuse me, I need to perform a SWOT analysis on myself before the club interview."

Upon hearing such glorious remarks of his articulation abilities, we sought out Sakib Bin Chowdhury in hopes of gathering his wisdom. Despite his busy itinerary consisting mostly of intimidating unassuming freshmen, he was kind enough to spare us a moment of his time.

"I'm in my final year of university and I have learned a lot during my time at this Career Development Club. Do you think I became president of this club with my nose in

a book? I dropped three semesters to organise events and create networking opportunities for myself and my fellow members," he said.

Owing to the average person's ignorance about the ways of the world, we too displayed skepticism about putting academics on the backburner, but Sakib proceeded to kindly illuminate us: "Academics have no bearing on your workplace success. Always prioritise your club work and trust me, you'll have reputed companies lined up to offer you full-time unpaid internships. The midterm you skipped might cost you a couple of grade points, but that missed conversation with the CEO who would have hired you as a fresh graduate could cost you your whole career."

The interview with Sakib was cut short as the fifth and final round of screening new recruits was about to begin, which is when Farzana Khan, the vice president of the club took over.

When asked about the rigorous screening process, she said, "It's the low acceptance rate that sets us apart. People who want to focus on their grades or technical skills and have no formal suits or romantic prospects are best left for the robotics clubs and out of ours. They'll be working *for* us in the future, anyway."

When asked to verify whether only failed debaters have lined up to join the club, Farzana refused to comment and invited us to promote their newest case competition Victory Ventures instead.

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RED FLAGS TO BE AWARE OF AT A UNIVERSITY CLUB

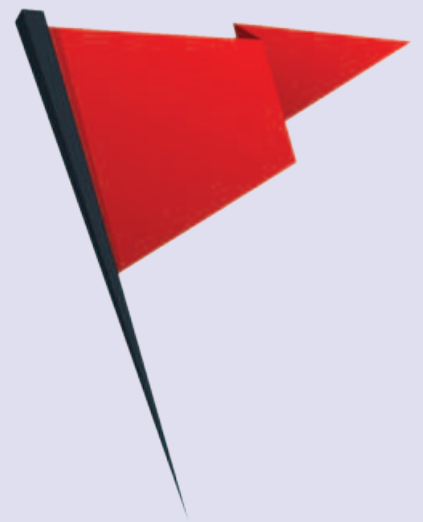
Lack of transparency is a major warning sign. If a club is vague about its goals, leadership structure, or finances, it may not be well-organised or trustworthy.

Excessive fees with no clear purpose should raise concerns. Firstly, clubs shouldn't be charging fees in most cases. But, if they do charge fees, maybe for tours or lunches, they should be justified.

A toxic or exclusive environment can ruin the experience. If members seem cliquish, unwelcoming, or overly competitive, you may struggle to feel included.

Poor leadership and disorganisation often lead to chaotic events and unmet promises. Reliable clubs should have a clear structure and active participation from leaders.

High-pressure recruitment tactics can indicate a problematic culture. Clubs should encourage, not pressure, you to join. Also, it's a university club, not a multinational corporation; the club shouldn't have an extremely difficult recruitment process either. If it does, it means the club thinks too highly of itself, which is never a good thing.



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