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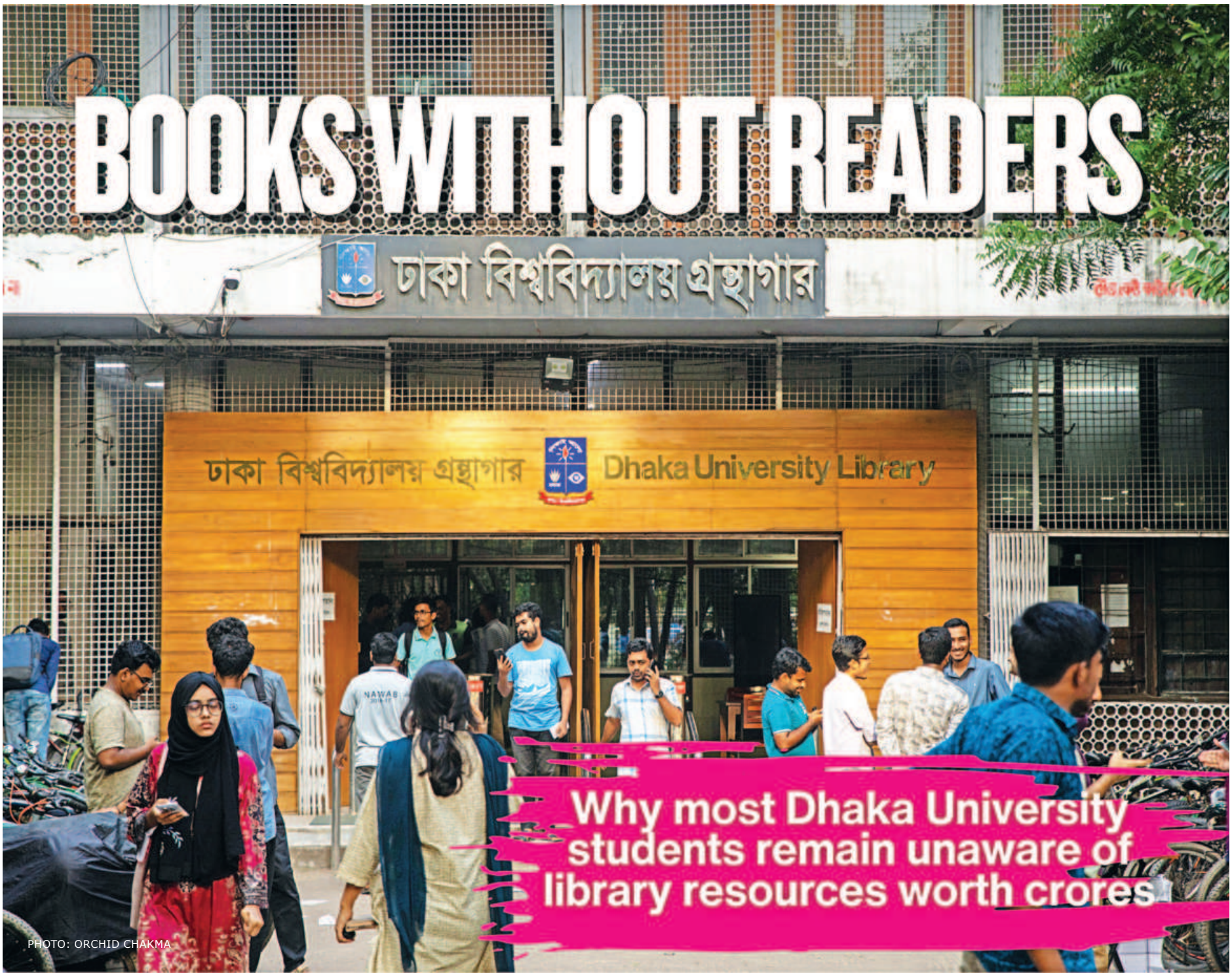

ANIME

Takopi's Original Sin dissects the complexity of love, cruelty, and guilt

MD. NAYEEM HAIDER

Trigger warning: Mention of abuse and violence
**This review contains spoilers for the anime*

A small, octopus-like alien, on a mission to spread happiness throughout the universe with their gadgets, crash-lands on Earth. They are found by Shizuka, a young girl who shares bread with them and gives them the name 'Takopi.' Over the following days, Takopi offers her various gadgets, only for her to reject each one. She insists that they can't do a thing to change her situation.

Within minutes of its beginning, *Takopi's Original Sin* presents an almost infectious innocence, juxtaposed with a quiet, sinister atmosphere. This tension is not only sustained but delved into further as the story progresses.

Takopi's Original Sin can be an uncomfortable anime to watch. Not least because of the relentless abuse of children that is carried out by other children. Rather, it is because of the quiet helplessness of the victim that is depicted in contrast to the unceasing malice of their abuser.

As the anime progresses, a girl's life is taken, and the characters are meant to convince themselves that they shouldn't feel too bad about what has just transpired. Eventually, however, they are confronted by the girl's mother, who sobs and begs that she be returned to her, promising to be a good mother. As they're each crushed under the guilt of their sins, the show forces us to acknowledge the convoluted complexity of trauma and the cyclic distortions it begets.

The show is masterful in its depiction of the way parents set the tone for the lives of their children. It also portrays how that very same thing can easily devolve into a burden that drags them down into the abyss.

Takopi's Original Sin is a bleak journey throughout. There are hopeful moments, but in painful contrast to their transience, the suffocating gloom of inevitable doom is always present. There is only a faint light at the end of the long, dark tunnel. A light that can be reached through empathy.

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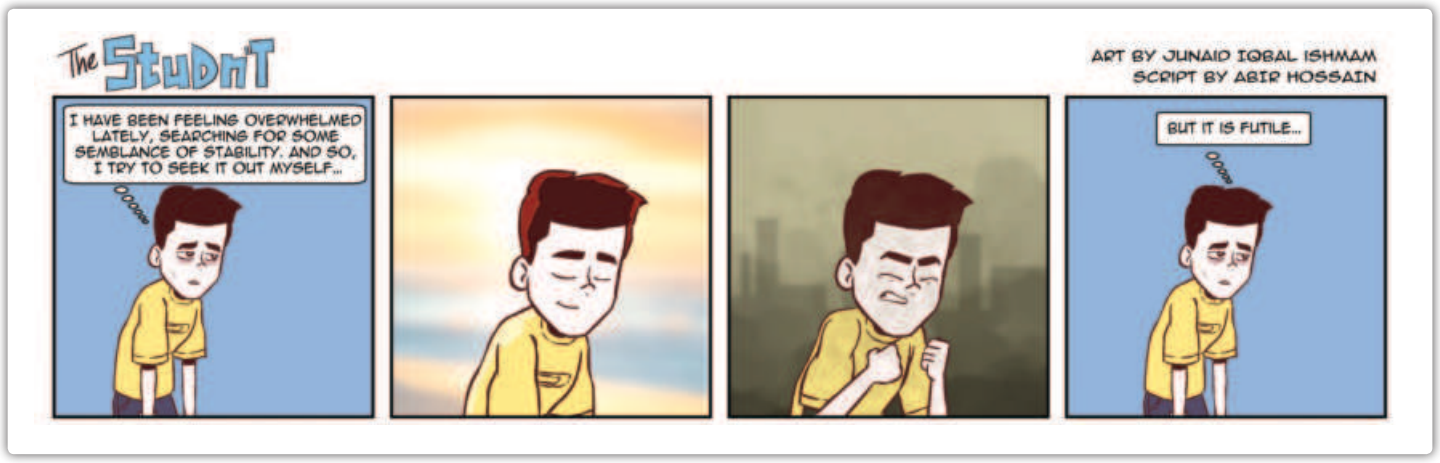

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Graduating ISD class secures USD 2.9 million in college scholarships

The graduating class of International School Dhaka (ISD) has secured almost three million US dollars in scholarships to international universities.

Continuing its annual trend of attracting financial offers from the world's leading colleges, the latest statistics show that graduates from ISD's International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum remain in high demand.

The Class of 2025 have secured places at prestigious universities around the world, including the USA, Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, and the UK, reinforcing the school's strong global footprint.

The breadth of their chosen fields reflects the scope of their education at ISD, from Aerospace and Software Engineering to Data Science, Business Management, English Literature, Psychology, and International Relations.

It signifies a focused commitment. The scholarships serve as awards that recognise the students' dedication of time, along with their leadership activities throughout the years, gained through extra-curricular activities that push them out of their comfort zone.

The school offers a wealth of opportunities for students to learn from experts in their field and gain new skills, from robotics classes with the leading US university Carnegie Mellon University, to receiving coaching with the world-renowned soccer club, Barca FC.

The grants also recognise the contribution made by the ISD faculty and the quality of ISD education delivered through its world-class curriculum.

In addition to an excellent pass rate, 50 percent of students gained a bilingual diploma, demonstrating their proficiency in a second language. An impressive 93 percent achieved the pass rate in the bilingual programme.

Such outstanding academic success reflects the diverse and vibrant community ISD celebrates and serves, embracing students from a variety of nationalities, cultures and backgrounds, within a supportive and nurturing environment. As students interact with peers from different backgrounds, they are exposed to a variety of languages, traditions and perspectives. This helps promote a natural sense of curiosity and empathy, tenets of the IB programme, which enables them to flourish academically and in the world beyond school.

The world needs leaders who can meet complexity with wisdom, empathy and innovation. ISD students are equipped to do so, navigating cultural differences to lead empathetically and value differences.

Whether they are shaping industries with innovation, serving the public, or contributing to the arts and sciences, ISD graduates are ready to take on leadership roles and make their mark.

For more information please visit: www.isdbd.org.

BOOKS WITHOUT READERS

Why most Dhaka University students remain unaware of library resources worth crores

AZRA HUMAYRA

Progga D'Rozario, a master's student in International Business at Dhaka University, was hunting for a copy of *Research Methods in Business Studies*, published by Cambridge University Press. She scoured the internet in vain. The price tag, USD 63, or roughly BDT 7500, placed it out of reach.

"It is a month of my tuition pay; I cannot squander it all for one book," says Progga D'Rozario when asked about her predicament.

Every year, more than 6000 students enrol at Dhaka University (DU), but how many of them know about the orientation programme offered by the DU Central Library, designed to give them access to hundreds of thousands of articles, books and journals from some of the world's leading publishers?

To understand the scale of the issue *Campus* asked 94 students on the DU campus from different departments and different academic years. The students answered 15 questions, a mix of open and close-ended, aimed at gauging their awareness of the facilities the university provides.

Upon being asked whether they are aware of the orientation programme arranged by the Central Library, 10 percent of students responded positively, 20 percent of students responded that they are unsure and the overwhelming majority, 70 percent of the students, responded negatively.

Aura Shahzad, a postgraduate student at the Department of Clinical Psychology, claims a student who just passed the Higher Secondary Examination (HSC) does not know what a journal is; neither did she. She says, "I did not know that there's an orientation programme to teach students about the repository. I would've attended it had I known about it. For Psychology students, journals are our bread and butter because we write everything based on the works of other scholars in the field. It would've helped me to get study materials as well as the fourth-year monograph."

According to our survey, 62.5 percent never tried to access the library's resources, 35 percent tried but failed, and the rest (2.5 percent) responded that they tried and were successful. Those who were successful attended the orientation programmes hosted by the library.

According to several students from the 2024–25 session, none of them had heard of the orientation programme. When asked if their departments had sent any notices about it, they said no. Furthermore, the majority (92.5 percent) believes the authority did not take proper measures to ensure that the students know about the university's access to major publications.

Ansuwa Karmokar, a student of Statistics, Biostatistics & Informatics, says, "We attended the orientation programme, but at the time we did not know what these meant or what their implications were. As a result, I have forgotten about it and use Sci-Hub to download the papers I want to read."

Rahee Nayab, a fourth-year Journalism student, shared the same thoughts as Ansuwa. He said that despite learning about the orientation programme, he did not retain much from it. He says, "If the library authorities focused more on how to get the library cards or showed us around the library instead of putting us in a room and giving us a lecture on things we do not know anything about as first-year students. Students usually put off creating the library card because the process is lengthy and daunting."

(Consult Table 1 for full data shared by Deputy Librarian Mohammad Azharul Haque, on the attendance of students at the library orientation programme over the years.)

According to official data provided by DU Library officials, in 2016-17 only 19.27 percent of students, in 2021-2022 only 43.47 percent, and in 2022-23 only 47.87 percent of students attended the orientation programmes. Meaning that over half of the students continually fail to attend the library orientation programme.

"I did not attend the orientation programme because I didn't think it was necessary. As a first-year student, I didn't feel I needed to understand something that seemed so complex," says Ragib Shahriar, a graduate student of Economics. He believes both the library and the department should place more emphasis on the importance of attending the orientation.

One perspective gleaned from the interviews is that students found the process to be not student-friendly.

The process of getting remote access is shaped by a number of factors, including a student's department and hall. This ordeal includes creating a hall ID card, filling out the library card form, getting the form signed by the hall provost. After getting the signature the student has to pay a fee at the Janata Bank TSC branch and keep the receipt. The student then takes the documents to the first floor of the library. Now you can get the remote access.

(Observe maps 1 and 2 for visual representation of the distance calculated and provided)

The annotated diagrams were created using the My Map feature of Google Maps to give an estimation of the distance and to illustrate the mandatory footsteps a student of Journalism attached with Shamsunnahar Hall needs to walk to get remote access. It will take the student approximately 2266 footsteps and a week to obtain remote access.

To compare this process of obtaining remote access with a private university, students of various private universities were reached.

Raian Abedin, a fourth-year student in the Department of Biochemistry and Biotechnology at North South University (NSU), says, "We have to email our librarian for an OpenAthens account, which is how we get a personal username and password. Logging in enables us to access most papers that we need. It gives me access to everything I personally need."

At NSU, students do not need a library card to get remote access. This stands in sharp contrast to the process at DU. Thus, to put things into perspective, a student from NSU takes zero footsteps, and a journalism student attached to Shamsunnahar Hall has to take almost 2266 steps.

In conversation with Senior Technical Officer Md Symon Islam, one thing became clear: crores of taka are being spent to provide access to high-cost journals from publishers. "Students usually go for pirated copies and do not realise we offer a better collection. Last year, almost two crore taka was spent to ensure access," he says.

(Head over to Table 2 for DU Annual Reports of 2011-12, 2016-17, 2023-24, and 2024-25 illustrating the budget invested to get access to journals.)

In the 2011-12 academic year, the journal budget was just over one crore taka. By 2023, it had climbed to more than two and a half crores. But while the funding has grown, its impact appears to have stalled.

After 2020, budget details vanished from official reports, and university officials seem unable to explain why. Students, meanwhile, continue to rely on pirated materials simply because they do not know better options exist. Without awareness and access, even the most generous academic investment fails to become a worthwhile expenditure, seen by no one and benefiting few.

When presented with the interview findings showing that 70 percent of students are unaware of the orientation programme and the university's access to international journals, and asked about the library's lack of initiative in ensuring student participation, Mohammad Azharul Haque, Deputy Librarian at DU Central Library responded, "We always send notice to each department. What are we going to do when they are not relaying the information?"

Dr Kazi Mostak Gausul Hoq, Librarian of DU Central Library, was confused when confronted with the data we collected of the students. He was distressed to accept the fact that 70 percent of students did not know that DU Central Library has access to international journals and 92.5 percent of students believe that the university did not take proper measures to ensure that the students know about the university's access to major publications.

This should not come as a surprise when the official data offered by the library illustrates that more than 50 percent of students fail to attend the library orientation programme. When asked about the data provided by his office, he says, "We keep an attendance sheet but at the end do nothing about the low participation, which is true." He also added that recommendations are not made because of the lack of demands from the students' end.

However, when presented with the information that students want to know about these facilities, Dr Kazi Mostak could not give a clear answer and spoke about the recommendations that are going to be made to the Pro-Vice Chancellor at the upcoming meetings.

Testimonies from students of the 2024–25 session were presented to the authorities, questioning why an entire batch of over 6000 students had not received the orientation programme. Mohammad Azharul Haque explained that there were administrative hurdles after August 5, 2024, which prevented them from holding the sessions. Later, he spoke about a plan to combine first-year and second-year students from each department to make up for the library's shortcomings.

Students like Progga D'Rozario, Rahee Nayab, and Aura Shahzad are victims of empty promises of digitisation. What they were told and what they have experienced tell two entirely different stories. While the authorities claim the system is being improved and digital access is expanding, the data tells a harsher truth. 70 percent of students do not even know that Dhaka University provides access to international journals.

More than half never attended the orientation programme that is supposed to guide them through these facilities. Among those who did, many left confused, unsupported, unaware of what was available and why it was necessary. The gap between the administration's words and the students' reality reveals inefficiency and neglect. In the end, students are left to fend for themselves in a system that claims to support them but rarely shows up when it matters most.

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Map 1

Map 2

TABLE 1

Session	Attendee Students	Total Departments (of 83)
2016-17	1310 (of 6800)	13
2021-22	3101 (of 7133)	66
2022-23	2889 (of 6035)	64

TABLE 2

Year	Budget for Journals (in BDT)
2011-2012	124.00 Lacs
2016-2017	155.00 Lacs
2023-2024	257.10 Lacs
2024-2025	226.70 Lacs

NOTICE BOARD

BRAC and BRAC University empower youth through 'The Way'

BRAC and BRAC University (BRACU) organised a youth engagement programme titled "The Way" ("Agamir Poth" – The Path to the Future) at the university's Merul Badda campus on August 24. The daylong event featured interactive talks, panel discussions, debates, showcasing of youth-led initiatives alongside BRAC's programmes, film screenings, music therapy, and various other engaging activities. The core objective of the initiative was to inspire the youth to embrace leadership, innovation, and advocacy while creating new opportunities for personal and societal development.

Around 250 students from different universities and educational institutions attended, alongside members of the BRAC Youth Programme, young professionals, development partners, media representatives, and officials from BRAC and BRAC University.

In the interactive session titled "The Science of Finding a Way", Asif Saleh, Executive Director of BRAC, stated, "Don't get boxed into what society tells you. Find your own way. You can make things happen as a change-maker, regardless of the profession you are in."

Highlighting the journey of BRAC's founder, the late Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, as well as lessons from BRAC's constantly evolving solutions ecosystem of development programmes and social enterprises, he stressed the importance of aiming for ambitious goals and committing to long-term change.

Professor Syed Ferhat Anwar, Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University, answered questions from the audience and reflected that true fulfilment lies in giving, which becomes possible when individuals identify gaps and innovate to address them.

In a "SparkTalk" segment, visually impaired student Wity Roy from Chila Union in Mongla, Bagerhat, shared her story of resilience and determination.

A parliamentary-style debate was organised by BRAC University Debate Club, followed by a panel discussion titled "Beyond One Way", featuring Tajdin Hassan, Chief Business Officer at The Daily Star; Nishat Anjum Palka, Chief Executive Officer of Mommy Kidz; and Bashira Harun, Chairman of It's Humanity Foundation.

Another highlight was "The Way of Harmony", featuring music by Armeen Musa and her team. Additionally, "Design Quest: Solve for Society" was conducted by MekaTeam, a social startup that works on design and facilitates game-based pedagogy.

The event also hosted exhibitions of youth-led innovations alongside BRAC's initiatives. It also featured various projects and initiatives by different BRACU clubs.

Participants of BRAC's Water Hackathon and Amra Notun Network (ANN) presented three projects – Jotner Dokan, "Eco Care", and "Ujjibon" – all designed to address social challenges.

Initiatives from the Climate Change Programme (CCP), Urban Development Programme (UDP), BRAC Institute of Educational Development (BIED), Integrated Development Programme (IDP), Ultra-Poor Graduation Programme (UPGP), Social Empowerment and Legal Protection (SELP), and BRAC Limb and Brace Centre (BLBC) were also exhibited.

Mental health support services "Moner Jotno" and BRAC International (BI) showcased their operations.

In a session "Always a Way – The Human Library", BRAC University alumni, BRAC Young Professionals (BYP) programme members, and the ANN shared their life experiences and personal stories.

NSU VC calls for redefining global leadership in social business at a conference in Bangkok

Prof. Abdul Hannan Chowdhury, Vice-Chancellor of North South University (NSU) and Chairman of the Board of Directors of Grameen Bank, addressed the International Conference on Global Leadership in Social Business Innovation: Sustainability, Science and Technology, and Entrepreneurship as a Keynote Speaker between August 28 and 29 in Bangkok, Thailand. This conference marks the inaugural gathering of Chulalongkorn University's Yunus Centre at the Social Research Institute.

In his keynote address, Prof. Chowdhury highlighted several crucial themes, including defining global leadership in social business, sustainability as a core imperative, entrepreneurship as the engine of change, the finance and fintech imperative, building resilient social business ecosystems, measuring impact beyond traditional metrics, and concluded with a call to action for shared value creation.

He stated, "Social business is the bridge between profit and purpose. It is not charity, nor conventional capitalism, but a revolutionary approach that solves human problems while sustaining itself financially. It envisions enterprises designed to address human needs rather than generate wealth for shareholders."

During his visit to Thailand, Prof. Chowdhury, on behalf of NSU, attended a collaboration meeting with Assumption University and signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on August 27. On the same day, he also signed an MoU with Sasin Business School, followed by another MoU with the CUSRI of Chulalongkorn University on August 28, all representing NSU.

IUB FACULTY MEMBER DEVELOPS NOVEL METHOD TO PREVENT FUNGAL INFECTION IN MUSHROOM CULTIVATION

Mushroom cultivation has been expanding rapidly across both rural and urban Bangladesh. Yet, farmers often face one persistent challenge: fungal contamination.

To address this problem, Dr Jebunnahar Khandakar, an associate professor in the Department of Life Sciences at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB), has developed an innovative method to prevent fungal infections. After nearly three years of research and experimentation, she has designed a process that halts the spread of harmful fungi without compromising yield, while also ensuring safety for both the environment and human health.

"My aim was to create something that farmers can easily use. The yield remains intact while the risk of infection decreases significantly," said Dr Khandakar.

Spawn bags — plastic packets filled with substrate and mushroom seeds — are the foundation of mushroom cultivation. Substrate is a bed of organic matter, such as sawdust, rice straw, or other plant residues, that provides nutrients on which mushrooms grow. But once a bag becomes infected, the fungus can quickly spread to other bags, jeopardising the entire harvest.

Bangladesh's hot and humid climate makes substrates particularly vulnerable to fungal growth. Traditionally, substrates are sterilised through autoclaving or pasteurisation. However, if contamination appears

afterwards, it is nearly impossible to control. Fungicides may offer temporary relief, but they also carry environmental and health risks.

Dr Khandakar's solution lies in using partially composted sawdust instead of untreated sawdust. In her method, 50 kilograms of dry sawdust is moistened to maintain 50 to 60 percent humidity, piled into stacks, and covered with jute sacks to keep internal temperatures within 50 to 60°C. The stacks are turned every three days, with water added if necessary. Within 9–12 days, the sawdust is converted into partially composted substrate.

This process reduces the amounts of free sugars in sawdust—nutrients that harmful fungi thrive on—while improving porosity, air circulation, and water retention. The result is a substrate environment favourable for mushroom growth but hostile to invasive fungi.

"In essence, I tried to mimic nature," Dr Khandakar explained. "Mushrooms naturally grow on partially decomposed organic matter. We recreated that environment in a controlled, scientific way."

Dr Khandakar earned her BSc and MS from Bangladesh Agricultural University. She completed her PhD at Nagasaki University, Japan, in 2014 and has been teaching at IUB since 2016. With nearly two decades of experience researching mushrooms, she conducted this latest work with support from the Mushroom Development Institute.

Commenting on the achievement, Dr K Ayaz Rabbani, Dean of the School of Environment and Life Sciences at IUB, said, "For sustainable agriculture in Bangladesh, such innovations are crucial. If farmers adopt this method, it will boost their income, increase production, and contribute positively to food security. We are proud that university research is reaching the field."

Experts note that this method could reduce financial risks for farmers, ensure year-round sustainable cultivation, and stabilise prices in the market. As supply expands, consumers will benefit from easier access to this highly nutritious food, while cultivators will enjoy more secure livelihoods.

DUCSU ELECTIONS

DUCSU ELECTIONS

How are students feeling about it?

MEHRAB JAMEE

PHOTO: **ORCHID CHAKMA**

The Dhaka University Central Students' Union, more commonly known as the DUCSU, is holding elections after six long years. But arguably, a fair election has not been held since the 1990s. The last DUCSU election, held in 2019 under the Awami League government, was marred by controversies and election irregularities.

Critics slammed the election on counts of voter intimidation, ballot stuffing, and an extremely uneven playing field, providing an unfair advantage to the ruling party's student wing, Bangladesh Chhatro League (BCL). Out of the 25 posts up for election, BCL was declared victorious in 23. The only major upset was Nurul Haque Nur, a leading figure in the quota reform protests of 2018, winning the top post of Vice President (VP).

However, the panel quickly became dysfunctional after the election, with clashes taking place between the VP's supporters and BCL activists on campus. Nur was assaulted a number of times himself, and with that, the glimmer of hope that appeared for a restoration of campus democracy at Dhaka University (DU) was nipped.

After their tenure ended in 2020, subsequent elections were not held. BCL continued to illegally dominate all aspects of student politics at the DU campus.

After the July uprising and the fall of the Awami League regime, BCL was banned nationwide. Students' political organisations started to regroup and rearrange themselves after years of being suppressed and persecuted. Voices in favour of healthy political practice raised the demand for fresh Students' Union elections in various public universities, DU being the first to hold them.

> DUCSU, constitutionally a non-political platform for student leadership and a nurturing ground for democratic practice, is to hold fresh elections. A total of 471 candidates have been confirmed to contest in the upcoming election on September 9, 2025.

DUCSU, constitutionally a non-political platform for student leadership and a nurturing ground for democratic practice, is to hold fresh elections. A total of 471 candidates have been confirmed to contest in the upcoming election on September 9, 2025. Almost all major student parties have announced their endorsed panels, along with a notable number of candidates running as independents. The number of candidates has nearly doubled compared to the previous elections, as the university authorities are promising a free and fair election.

So, are students more hopeful this time round?

Ahmed Abdul Mukit, a student at the Department of Political Science, remarked, "It feels good to see that DUCSU elections are finally happening after so many years. For now, I see a lot of rhetoric, and I hope at least 50 percent of it will actually be delivered. If each candidate can fulfil even half of their declared manifesto, the campus environment will move significantly towards progress. We are just hoping for a fair election where competent candidates are elected."

Another student, Junayet Rasel, a master's student at the Department of Mass Communication and Journalism, said, "My expectation from this DUCSU is that, once elected, the promises made in words are reflected in action, moving away from the culture of blind partisan loyalty."

A sizable chunk of the student body, however, remains disillusioned with the concept of campus politics in general. Samiha Binte Kibria, a student at the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), DU, said, "During my time at university, I haven't really seen anything impactful done by previous DUCSU representatives or any other student representatives for that matter. Even during the darkest days of DU in July last year, it was the general students who fought for real change, be it from self-determination or their commitment to their fellows and this nation."

Regarding the need for an official body for the representation of general students' demands, she said, "During the most trying times, the general students came together and were able to realise their demands by communicating with the authority. I am not sure how DUCSU representatives will do a better job at this. The whole thing feels unnecessary."

Depoliticising university campuses was one of the original nine-point demands of the July protests. But this has been nearly impossible to execute in reality on most campuses. Even Students Against Discrimination (SAD), the leading banner for the uprising, and their political successor party, the National Citizen Party (NCP), are quietly stepping away from campus depoliticisation.

So, if not depoliticisation, can healthy politics replace the patronage politics of the past? What role can DUCSU play here?

"DUCSU is not only a breeding ground for leadership, but it also plays an important role in safeguarding students' rights, in policymaking, and even in national politics. In representing the voices of DU students, DUCSU could be the strongest platform if elections are held at regular intervals," said Farhan Ahmed, a student at the Department of Law.

Speaking about what a dynamic DUCSU can do to restore faith in the disillusioned voter, Mukit said, "DUCSU should function as a non-political student forum. We will vote for our representatives to work in our interest and not in the interest of any other party. After fulfilling their promise to the general students, candidates can maintain a role in any political party they choose."

From its inception in 1922, there have been 37 DUCSU elections. The platform has produced many influential politicians, lawmakers, and leaders in the past. But infrequent elections after the 1990s, political instability, and partisan violence have eroded trust in this democratic institution.

With the entire country going through a period of reconstruction and reform of age-old institutions, many students of DU are daring to aspire for a democratic DUCSU once more. Junayet ended on a hopeful note, "In my view, DUCSU is essential because it brings student politics under accountability. If student politics is here to stay, leaders must be kept accountable."

Although students believe previous DUCSU elections have failed in many regards, because of the change in campus culture post August 5, they hope this election will bring positive change for the campus and the general students.

Reference:

Dhaka Tribune (March 12, 2019). *Irregularities rule Ducsu polls.*

Mehrab Jamee is a 5th year medical student at Mugda Medical College and writes to keep himself sane.

INTERVIEWS

PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS

In conversation with Tram Nguyen on the Monash-UCBD Partnership, the rising number of Bangladeshi students in Australia, and how Monash is shaping future-ready graduates.

CAMPUS DESK

Tram Nguyen, the Director of Marketing at Monash College, leads the development and execution of impact-driven marketing strategies to advance global education across the Asia Pacific region. With a career spanning across Southeast Asia and also in Australia, Tram brings deep expertise in international marketing, student recruitment, and global engagement.

In this interview with Campus, Tram reflects on the growing number of Bangladeshi students choosing Australia for their higher studies and how the Monash-UCBD partnership is supporting their journey.

Campus (C): Could you walk us through the current trend of Bangladeshi students going to Australia for their education?

Tram Nguyen (T): I think over the last four years, the number of Bangladeshi students in Australia has increased exponentially year on year. What's interesting is that the growth is spread across different sectors, with roughly an equal split between postgraduate and undergraduate students.

Then there are the students who are coming to Australia to learn at the vocational level, as well as students who are undertaking the pathway programmes. In terms of the actual numbers, our government data shows that in 2024, we had 13,000 Bangladeshi students commence their studies in Australia.

We've also seen an increase in Bangladeshi students coming to study with us at Monash. One of our growth ambitions is to make Monash degrees accessible to different markets, so partners like Universal College Bangladesh (UCBD) are important in our role in global education because we provide students with multiple options to get to the same destination. Students can come directly to Australia, or they can come through UCBD. The flexibility we offer is really important in driving the growth of students coming to Australia from a particular market.

C: Have you seen any changes in the perspective of students opting for global education?

T: There's definitely been a shift in how students prepare to go overseas for certain markets. They've really matured, and it's across a breadth of sectors. I think that access to high school education, as well, is a lot more diverse. There are a lot more opportunities for students to opt for global high school qualifications, like Cambridge or the International Baccalaureate (IB). And with that comes diversity in the types of applications that we get.

C: Tell us about the initiatives of Monash College's global study opportunities for Bangladeshi students.

T: With the diversity in students coming through, you have students who have prepared very well and early on in their high school years. These students have also graduated high school with really strong results, and are ready to directly attend university. There are other students who don't take the traditional way of going to university. I think that's where the role of the college is quite distinct.

We're here to help students find a pathway to university, and it doesn't necessarily mean that they're behind their peers. It just means that they are taking a different pathway that's unique to their own needs.

What we've seen in the last couple of years is students opting for a university pathway, like the Foundation Programme, after they complete grade 11. This is really interesting to me because I think students are basically saying that they want to start the journey early. And I think that's really empowering.

C: What kind of differences do you notice in the national curricula while assessing admission seekers from around Asia, and where do Bangladeshi students stand in your assessment?

T: Students in Bangladesh — as well as those from Southeast Asia and the Asia Pacific region — are very skilled in maths and STEM subjects compared to students in Australia and other countries. At Monash, we look at this as an advantage. And so, we have a programme that basically tests students when they come in through which we get to understand their level of expertise in mathematics.

C: What are some of the advantages that the Monash-UCBD collaboration offers to students to secure enrollment with renowned universities like Monash?

T: Depending on their goals, preferences, and readiness for university, students have multiple options to get to the same destination. So, having a partnership in the market here in Bangladesh means that students can start their university journey in a cost-efficient way while being close to their families.

The value of opting for a Monash pathway programme is the flexibility it offers. Once they finish their pathway programmes, students have the opportunity to choose across different campus locations in Australia and Malaysia. This too is a unique opportunity for students, as pursuing a Monash degree in Malaysia is very different compared to pursuing a Monash degree in Australia. In fact, some students choose to attend both campuses; they start in Malaysia and then come to Australia, which I think is quite a unique proposition.

C: To secure a better future, why should Bangladeshi students choose Monash as a Higher education option?

T: Bangladeshi students should choose Monash as a higher education option for three reasons: the quality of the degrees, the overall student experience, and the innovative learning environment.

Firstly, Monash is part of the Group of Eight (Go8) universities in Australia. The Go8 is a coalition of Australia's leading research-intensive universities. The university is also very highly ranked in graduate employability globally. We have courses that are accredited by many global accrediting bodies. Our business school, in particular, is Triple Crown accredited, which is an accreditation awarded by respected bodies in the US, the UK, and Europe. Completing such programmes keeps your options open for job opportunities globally.

Monash also offers a dynamic student experience, both inside and outside of the classroom. We take pride in developing students academically, professionally, and personally. Our programmes are not just delivering academic content; they are giving students the opportunity, from day one, to experience much more, including unique internships, projects, global experience programmes, etc.

Students also engage with mentors and career coaches, all of whom come together to help them become well-rounded graduates and work-ready.

Our campuses are also innovative learning environments; they are built to be ecosystems bringing students together. The facilities available at our campuses enable students to learn in different environments. We have maker spaces, design studios, specialised research centres, and various labs and hubs. Besides, our largest campus — Clayton — is nestled in the Monash Technology Precinct, which is home to 13,000 companies. So basically, students are living and studying in an environment where they're interacting with industry leaders, researchers, and startups.

All these traits really help our students as they are not just learning within classrooms but also engaging with the material they're learning.