

NOTICE BOARD

BRAC University and Swisscontact collaborates to launch ESG-focused Academic Programme

BRAC University and Swisscontact have signed an agreement to develop a certificate programme on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG). This programme will be tailored for Bangladesh's export-oriented industries, particularly the ready-made garment (RMG) sector. The initiative is part of Swisscontact's Promoting Green Growth in the Ready-Made Garments Sector through Skills (PROGRESS) project, funded by the Embassy of Sweden and the Embassy of Switzerland.

This certificate programme on ESG will equip participants with knowledge on ESG frameworks, reporting, measurement, financing, and industry case studies. The programme aims to address the urgent need for organisations to embed ESG practices as a core business strategy to achieve sustainable growth and meet stakeholder expectations.

Starting with the certificate programme in 2026, progressing to a postgraduate diploma by 2027, and ultimately introducing undergraduate and graduate majors by 2029, this initiative intends to embed ESG principles in higher education and industry practice. The collaboration advances multiple United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Ikramul H Sohel, Senior Programme Officer – Inclusive Economic



Development at the Embassy of Sweden, remarked that the partnership advances Sweden's priorities on sustainability, gender equity, and green growth, and will strengthen ESG integration within higher education. BRAC University Vice-Chancellor Professor Syed Ferhat Anwar emphasised that the collaboration reflects the university's commitment to advancing sustainability alongside economic and social well-being, integrating global ESG standards with local industry realities. He added that BRAC University has been exploring ESG for quite some time and has engaged with international partners, including universities in the United Kingdom that offer similar courses. Helal Hussain, Country Director of Swisscontact Bangladesh, highlighted the initiative as a significant step towards addressing systemic challenges

in the sector, including curricular gaps and gendered barriers in the ESG talent pipeline. Farzana Amin, Team Leader of the PROGRESS project, added that Swisscontact is supporting RMG factories in Bangladesh in their green transition, where collaboration with academia can play a pivotal role in building a pool of qualified sustainability professionals.

Dr David Dowland, Registrar; Professor Wasiqur Rahman Khan, Chairperson of the ESS department; Professor Syed A Mamun and Professor Shahidur Rahman from the ESS department; and Kharul Basher, Director of the Office of Communications, attended the signing ceremony.

Ikramul H Sohel, Helal Hussain, and Farzana Amin, along with Coordinator Sayedul Arefin and Senior Officers Nowshin Anjum and Syeda Suhaymah Ahmed from the project, were also present.

British Council hosts Alumni UK Gala Night 2025

The British Council hosted a grand Alumni UK Gala Night on November 25, bringing together around 300 UK alumni from diverse sectors to celebrate their achievements, leadership, and contributions to Bangladesh's development.

Sarah Cooke, British High Commissioner to Bangladesh, said, "Bangladesh's UK alumni network is a powerhouse of talent and innovation. Its members, all educated at world-class UK universities, have made a remarkable contribution to education, research, entrepreneurship, climate action, governance, and the creative industries. These achievements play a vital role in Bangladesh's development and in shaping its future."

Delivering his welcome address, Stephen Forbes, Country Director of the British Council, highlighted the British Council's long-standing commitment to engaging and empowering UK alumni in Bangladesh.

Senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh, development partners, representatives from UK universities, and leaders from academia, business, civil society, and the creative industries also attended the event.



IUB celebrates 10 years of Saima Hall

Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) has marked the 10th anniversary of Saima Hall, a residential facility established a decade ago to provide free accommodation, meals, and quality higher education to underprivileged female students from remote regions of the country. Among private universities in Bangladesh, Saima Hall remains the first residential hostel offering such fully funded support exclusively for disadvantaged female students.

A special event was held on November 29 to celebrate the milestone. Students currently residing at Saima Hall – enrolled across various departments at IUB – performed at the celebration.

Saima Hall began its journey in 2015 with eight students, occupying the top five floors of a building owned by the family of A Matin Chowdhury, Member of the IUB Board of Trustees. Over the past 10 years, the number of residential students has increased to 50.

The hall is funded by the Shaheed Khalek and Major Salek Bir Uttam Trust, established by the family of A Matin Chowdhury. IUB Trustee Salma Karim oversees all hall operations, supported by a committee comprising IUB officials working under her guidance.

Speakers at the anniversary event included Trustee A Matin Chowdhury, Trustee Salma Karim, Chairman of the Board of Trustees Didar A Husain, Trustee Towhid Samad, Trustee Wazed Ali Khan



Panni, Trustee Rashed Chowdhury, Vice-Chancellor Prof. M Tamim, and Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof. Daniel W Lund. Trustee Mohammad Tanvir Madar and Trustee Dr Husne Ara Ali were also present.

Over the past decade, nearly 70 female students have completed their education at IUB while residing in Saima Hall. All of them come from disadvantaged families in remote and economically marginalised regions of Bangladesh. Many alumni are now employed at leading institutions in the banking, information technology, and other sectors, both in Bangladesh and abroad. Several have also pursued higher studies in countries including the United States, Canada, Italy, Germany, Japan, and Malaysia.

South Point School & College students shine at Commonwealth Chess Championship

Students from South Point School & College have brought pride to Bangladesh with their remarkable performances at the Commonwealth Chess Championship.

Tashrik Shaihan Shan secured a silver medal in the Open Under-20 category after a victory in the final round against India's Grandmaster Shyam Nikhil. In the Girls' Under-18 division, Woman Candidate Master (WCM) Omnia Binte Yusuf Lubaba won the bronze medal for Bangladesh. In the Blitz category, Ajan Mahmud of South Point School won the divisional award in the Under-10 section.

Among other notable Bangladeshi results, WCM Warisha Haidar secured 4th place in the Girls' Under-10, South Point's Raihan Rashid Mughdha claimed the 5th prize in the Open Under-10, Safayet Kibria Ajan scored 5 points from 9 rounds in the Open Under-12, and Sidratul Muntahana Nafi scored 4 points in 9 rounds in the Girls' Under-12.

