



'NSU will be among 100 top universities in the world'

North South University (NSU) has made significant strides in global university rankings, securing positions across various prestigious lists. In the QS Subject Ranking 2024, NSU claimed a spot in the range of 351-400, while in the QS World University Ranking 2024, it landed in the 851-900 bracket. Additionally, NSU attained positions in the 501-600 range for Business, Economics, and Social Sciences in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2024. For Computer Science and Engineering, as well as Clinical Health subjects, NSU secured positions in the 601-800 category.

Moreover, in the recently released Times Higher Education (THE) Asia University Rankings 2024, NSU has emerged as the leading private university in Bangladesh, securing its position within the 351-400 band.

Under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor Professor Dr Atiqul Islam, NSU is prioritising quality education and expanding research and innovation endeavours to compete with renowned global universities. The university aims to produce skilled graduates who can make valuable contributions to both the nation and the international community. In a recent conversation with **The Business Post's Mir Mohammad Jasim, Professor Dr Atiqul Islam** shed light on NSU's future plans and its commitment to nation-building through education and innovation.

What impact have NSU's nation-building activities had?

Our focus has been on meeting the nation's needs. NSU has been dedicated to nurturing graduates of international calibre. We're pleased to note that nearly all our graduates are gainfully employed across various national and multinational corporations. A significant portion holds prestigious white-collar positions. We take pride in maintaining a high employability rate among our graduates, who have truly become assets to the nation.

What is the vision of NSU?

From the very beginning, our vision at NSU has been crystal clear: to emerge as the leading private university in Bangladesh. We're proud to say that we've accomplished this objective.

However, our aspirations extend beyond national borders; we aim to establish NSU as a globally recognised institution, and our efforts are aligned with this ambition. Through various initiatives, we are actively showcasing NSU on the global stage.

Is the NSU syllabus tailored to the job market?

Absolutely, our curriculum is designed



North South University VC Professor Dr Atiqul Islam

with the job market in mind. That said, we also recognise the significance of foundational subjects. Our faculty is deeply committed to ensuring our graduates are well-prepared for career opportunities. We regularly review and adjust our curriculum to align with the evolving demands of the job market.

How is NSU contributing to curbing student migration?

With a student body of 30,000, NSU plays a significant role in retaining talent within Bangladesh. At least 5,000 students opt to pursue their education here rather than abroad, a testament to NSU's appeal and quality of education. By providing a compelling alternative, we actively combat brain drain and help retain valuable resources within the country, thereby stemming the outflow of wealth.

What extracurricular opportunities does NSU provide?

In addition to academic pursuits, NSU encourages student engagement in a variety of extracurricular activities such as cultural events, debates, and leadership roles. Our campus hosts numerous programs, and we've even established a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Calcutta to facilitate cultural exchanges. Through these initiatives, our graduates emerge as culturally enriched and well-rounded individuals.

What challenges lie ahead for NSU?

Our primary challenge is the shortage of qualified and skilled faculty members. While we receive numerous applications for other positions, the number significantly dwindles when it comes to recruiting teachers. Fluency in English and communication skills pose significant hurdles, even for individuals hold-

ing foreign PhDs. Currently, our teacher-student ratio exceeds the optimal 1:10 ratio, standing at over 1:20. Despite our efforts to recruit more faculty, finding qualified candidates within tight deadlines remains a challenge. Many Bangladeshi PhD holders who pursued further studies abroad are reluctant to return due to the comfortable lifestyles and lucrative salaries overseas.

What are the plans to elevate NSU to a world-class institution?

While NSU has shown commendable performance in rankings such as the Times Higher Education Young University Ranking 2023, where we secured a position in the range of 201-300, we are driven to achieve even greater heights. Our ultimate objective is to break into the top 100 universities globally, although we understand that this journey requires time and concerted effort. However, there are challenges hindering our progress, particularly the inability to offer PhD programs.

Unfortunately, the absence of PhD programs impacts our rankings, depriving the country of significant international standard research opportunities. The reasons behind the Ministry of Education's reluctance to allow NSU to offer PhD programs remain unclear.

To address this gap, we plan to focus on recruiting foreign faculty and attracting international students. Additionally, infrastructure development is essential to accommodate these initiatives, including separate accommodations for male and female students.

Ultimately, our overarching aim is to contribute to the nation by producing skilled and knowledgeable graduates who can compete on a global scale.