

Excellence Redefined: The 16th Convocation of Brac University

Saima Sayeeda
Journalist



The 16th Convocation of Brac University. Photo: Maheer Helal

BRAC University held its 16th convocation on February 25th at the Bangladesh-China Friendship Exhibition Centre, celebrating 4,829 graduates from 37 programs. The event was inaugurated by Chief Guest, Honourable Education Advisor, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud. Convocation Speaker, Academy Award-winning filmmaker and journalist Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, shared invaluable advice: “No matter how intimidating the world looks, the courage to stand up will be your strongest ally.”

Shihab Muhtasim (Graduate, CSE) and Tahani Tabassum (Postgraduate, MNS) received the Chancellor’s Gold Medal. Shihab delivered a heartfelt valedictorian speech: “To succeed in something truly, you must learn how to enjoy it.” Tamara Hasan Abed (Chairperson, Board of Trustees BracU) recognised BracU’s role during the July Revolution and praised students for embodying Sir Fazle Hasan Abed’s vision of socially conscious leadership. Professor Wahiduddin encouraged graduates to prioritize their innate talents over financial gain.

Vice-Chancellor Dr. Syed Ferhat Anwar emphasized embracing change in this knowledge-driven journey. Twenty-eight students, equally divided between postgraduate and undergraduate programs, received the Vice-Chancellor’s Medal. Chairperson of the CSE department Dr. Sadia Hamid Kazi praised volunteers, hosts, and staff for their efforts. The convocation concluded with the distribution of graduation scrolls, marking the end of a transformative ceremony.

Saraswati Puja on Campus: Celebrating Harmony and Sustainability

Rishov Aditya
Journalist



Saraswati Puja celebrations at the BracU rooftop. Photo: Ratul Saha

On February 3rd, Brac University came together beyond communal identities to celebrate Saraswati Puja. The day-long event full of celebration was further amplified by performances and stalls set up by students and vendors from outside. The event’s highlight was the focus on being eco-friendly, such as making all decor from scratch using reusable materials. Debosmita Dey (Junior, MNS) states, “It was done to connect sustainability and art.” Both students and faculty members joined in the process, whether hand drawing or setting up the stage, to make the festival come to life. Mridula Das (Senior, ESS) adds, “Small steps like this can positively impact our nature.”

Despite the recent tumultuous period our country experienced, the BracU rooftop became a symbol of unity. It highlighted the broader emphasis on sharing love and culture among our students. Progga Paromita (Junior, MNS) shares, “I hope that our collective experience can set an example for all of us.”

As the event ended, everyone left in a festive mood filled with joyous memories. Faham Murtaza (Sophomore, BBS) shares, “This celebration helped better understand the mutual respect that coexists in our community.”

When NASA’s chief astronaut landed in BracU

Hasin Esrak
Journalist

One of the highlights of 2024 was Brac University hosting NASA’s chief astronaut, Joseph M. Acaba, on December 25th. Over 500 students and faculty, including the Vice-Chancellor Professor Syed Ferhat Anwar, attended the event, *From Earth to Orbit: An Astronaut’s Tale*, in the auditorium.

Joseph Acaba shared his stellar experience of spending 306 days in space. His unconventional path toward becoming an astronaut inspired everyone, from not attending university to joining the United States Marine Corps, volunteering with the Peace Corps, and teaching at a school. His advice for the BracU? students was: “Never be afraid of putting yourself in uncomfortable situations, as this is how you will grow.”

Calling himself a “spider-man in space”, he reminisced on experiences of walking in microgravity. Acaba showed how Earth looks from space, including the northern lights from orbit. Commenting on the potential of BracU students, he said, “I believe that soon, one of these students will join NASA’s Artemis Squad.”

In response to a question, Acaba reflected on how living on Earth feels after spending such a long time in microgravity. He reiterated, “Space is not the most beautiful place. This world is more captivating than space.”



Joseph M. Acaba with BracU students at the Auditorium

CAMPUS NEWS

BracU transforms into 'BRACwarts' for a spellbinding fest

Abiaz Mustafiz
Journalist

Brac University transformed into 'BRACwarts' for a magical three-day Harry Potter Fest. The event started with a Sorting Hat ceremony, where Dr. David Dowland (Registrar, BracU) was placed in Gryffindor. Quidditch matches thrilled spectators, while themed stalls and a grand ballroom dance added to the enchantment. The second day featured a Triwizard-inspired treasure hunt, won by the red team, and a mesmerising magic show. The excitement continued with a poster presentation competition. On the final day, Potterheads enjoyed back-to-back screenings of three Harry Potter films. As 'BRACwarts' bid farewell, Joynab (Sophomore, CSE) shared, "My inner child has seen her dreams come true." BracU proudly became the first university in Bangladesh to host such a fest.



The four Hogwarts house flags at BracU. Photo: Maliha Rahman

Love that's more than a valentine

Humans are Meant to be Warm

Progga Paromita

I think humans are meant to be warm,
Through settling fog dreads
And crisp stalks lone in dewdrop rain.
Cradled in frail, shivering arms,
Bare, bare, bare and loved;
I truly think humans are meant to be warm
To bask in the most divine flames; warm.
To ignite a hearth of loving embrace
In the darkest evenings of the year.
There are promises to keep
Through silent whisper trails of blur anear.
In sounding silence of creeping dark
All that lovers ever want is to be warm.
I think humans never wanted anything more than
to be warm.
Even with withered hands clasped at fraying rags,
Spots dark and feeble, calloused, drawn
Engulfed in drying slit, perished and budding,
Wait, wait, wait and stopped.
I think humans were always meant to be warm
Held, loved, buried; warm.

(This poem was selected as one of the best submissions of BracU Express's Valentine's Day 2025 prompt. To read more of them, check out our Facebook page)

School of Data Sciences brings global experts in theoretical physics to Bangladesh

Walid Hasan
Journalist

The School of Data and Sciences (SDS) recently hosted the Jamal Nazrul Islam Memorial Winter School in Theoretical Physics in collaboration with ICTP Physics Without Frontiers. Eighty selected participants attended this seven-day residential program at BracU's Savar campus from January 28th to February 3rd.

Professor Dr. Mahbub Majumdar (Dean, SDS) stated, "This has been in the making for years; our goal is to pave a research pathway for our students." Renowned physicists Ashoke Sen, Suvrat Raju, and Michele Cicoli delivered lectures on advanced theoretical physics.

Before the school, MNS faculty and Mir Mehedi Faruk (McGill University) led preparatory lectures for over a hundred students. Sayeda Tashnuba Jahan (Lecturer, MNS) noted, "We never had such opportunities as students—this will help them pursue higher education abroad."



The faculty and participants of Jamal Nazrul Islam Memorial Winter School

TEDxBRACU: Inspiring Innovation Through Impact

Navid Faruque
Journalist

On January 16th, the International Association for Business Communicators Club (IABC) hosted TEDx at BracU, featuring professionals from diverse fields. The event began with acknowledgements from David Dowland (Registrar, BracU) and Tahsina Rahman (Joint Director, Student Life). Talks included Shayaan Sheraj's Silent Crisis and Subimal Chakma's insights on crisis response in the Chittagong Hill Tracts. Singer Miftah Zaman shared lessons on frugality and motivation, while Azwa Naeem (Founder, Alokito Foundation) highlighted the need to reshape teaching models.

Former cricketer Shahriar Nafees ended with a speech on balance and determination, stating, "With consistency, the greatest peak of your dream can be achieved." As the event ended, sophomore Aiman Zerin Chowdhury (Sophomore, ESS) reflected, "TEDx, as an innovative platform for growth, has always intrigued young minds like me."

OPINIONS & ACADEMICS

Clubs besides studies: Unlocking potential or facing hurdles?

Saima Sayeeda
Journalist

Campus clubs are seen as an opportunity to broaden horizons. However, for many, managing them alongside academics becomes overwhelming. The question arises: Do clubs contribute to student growth or add hidden obstacles to the academic journey?

Clubs offer students essential skills and networking possibilities that boost their overall attributes. Although some clubs operate meetups without proper workflow, impulsively joining clubs may also result in academic struggles and time restrictions. Here, the crucial factor is achieving balance and relevance by choosing wisely between personal interests and academic responsibilities while ensuring these activities aid personal growth.

“Challenges are inevitable, how we manage them matters. Club activities have encouraged me to step beyond academics and think outside the box, I find it fulfilling,” shares Miftahul Zannat (Junior, CS). Furthermore, Sifat Islam Ishty (Senior Lecturer, ESS) acknowledged clubs as an avenue for connections and development. He emphasised, “Clubs can be most beneficial when they offer hands-on experiences through workshops, industry collaborations, and networking”.

To keep things in perspective, clubs can be more than just a way to pass the time. If you maintain the proper balance, they may become a meaningful part of your academic journey.

Clubs and Campus Life: Unlocking Potential or Facing Hurdles?

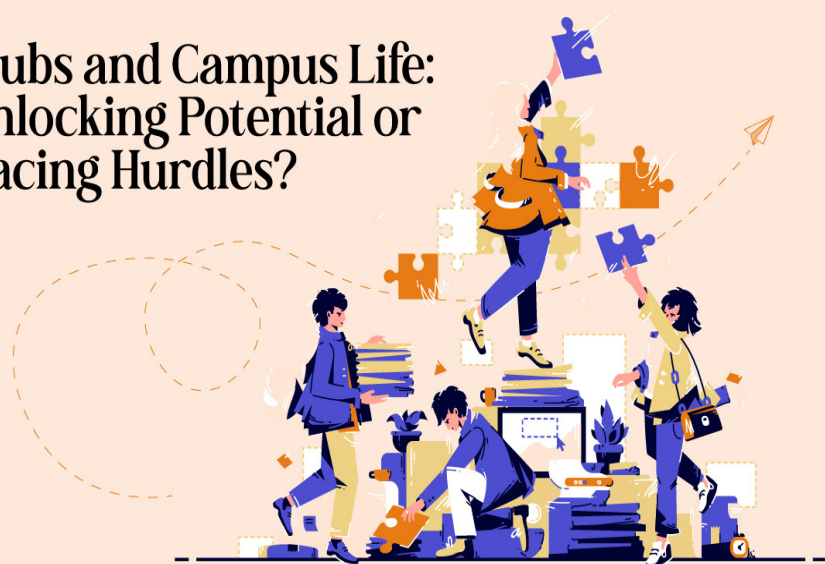


Illustration by: Nushin Tarannum Ibshar

Anonymous posts stirring the cauldron of chaos

Antara Raida Huq
Journalist

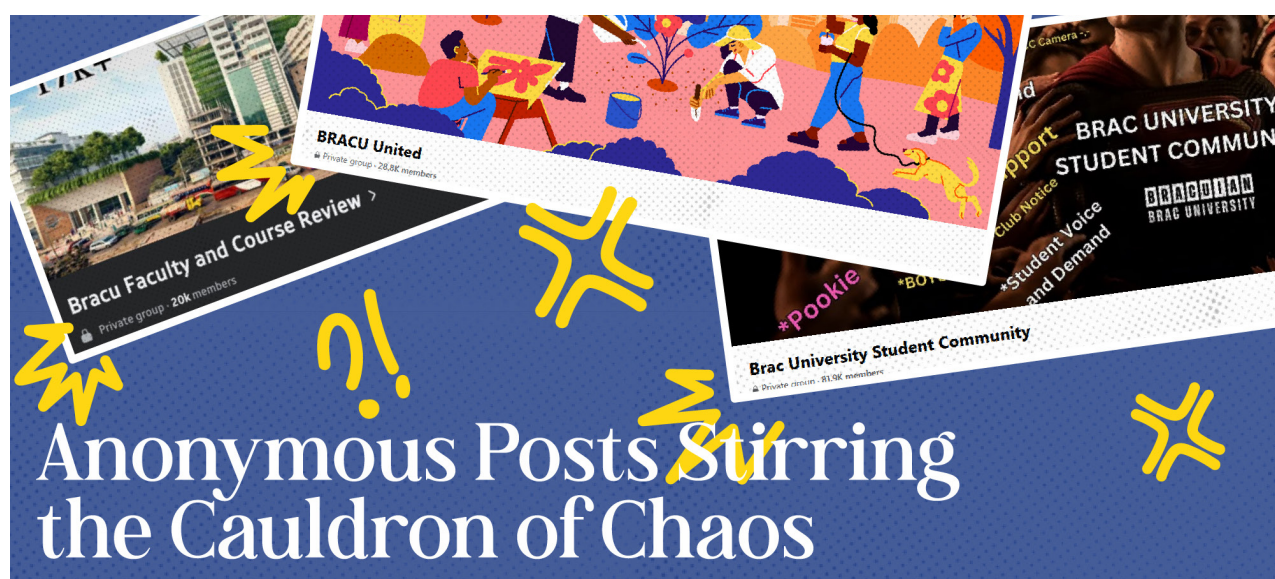


Illustration by: Nushin Tarannum Ibshar

Facebook groups have been a significant aspect of student life at Brac University, facilitating connections, information sharing, and laughter. Groups like ‘Brac University Student Community’, ‘BRACU United’, and ‘BRACU Faculty and Course Review’ were once functional spaces for discussions and academic support. Unfortunately, the recent rise of anonymous posts has significantly changed the situation.

The groups were created for helpful exchanges but are now flooded with baseless accusations, gossip, and off-topic rants. Faculties are unfairly targeted, while students have to scroll past endless drama, random memes, misinformation, and even extremist opinions. “It is wasting my time and increasing my anxiety,” says Khadizatul Kubra (Junior, CSE). However, these posts draw public attention based on the reactions and comments.

But what if the anonymous option becomes unavailable? Will the same people make the same audacious move? Is anonymity used to express genuine concerns or only to spread rumors and personal ideologies? The line between free speech and misuse keeps getting blurred, and we must think twice before posting or believing everything we see.

Connect, a seamless system riddled with errors

Ramisha Islam Rodela
Journalist

This semester began with another change for the students: Brac University introduced Connect, a new student portal with a better user interface and more efficient system for advising, tracking grades, payment information, and other features than the previously used USIS.

The transition was made for the betterment of students. However, technical glitches and internal inaccuracies caused difficulties and frustrations during the advising phase. Students struggled and sought seats even after the regular class started. Yet, some share their positive insight like Mountashiour Rahman (Junior, EEE), “Along with better UI, the new system prioritizes students over faculty to add, drop, or withdraw, which is an advantage for the students”.

Almost everyone agrees that the new system has better features. They are also on the same page regarding keeping USIS active and using Connect for trials. The sudden migration to a new system without multiple trials and errors was not the best approach. The administration conveyed that the website is new, and bugs are expected. Hence, patience is the only solution for students until next semester. However, will Connect correctly connect with students in the next semester?

SPECIAL FEATURE

Student Editorial Board 2024-25 Edition

After a year in tenure of Bracu Express, the 8th Student Editorial Board reflects on their journey.



"I did not know who I was when I joined BRACU Express three years ago. Being the Editor-in-Chief among everyone else was the best thing that happened to me in my miserable undergraduate life. Being the head of the paper and keeping everyone up and running was the most tiring but interesting part of my daily life. I have learned to lead, say "no" fearlessly, restructure, reshape, and craft captivating articles. I do not miss the restless days when, despite my best efforts to manage everything perfectly, someone would always flake, causing things to go wrong unexpectedly. Nevertheless, everything faded when I saw those articles getting the reaction they deserved and people all over the campus swooning over their papers, smiling endlessly. That is when I knew I could not have done this without my team. I will always hold this crazy, creative organization close to my heart like my baby. I hope the following Editorial Board keeps Express in the care and love I have filled it with completely. Work together and make yourselves proud."

Tagabun Taharim Titun
(Editor-in-Chief)



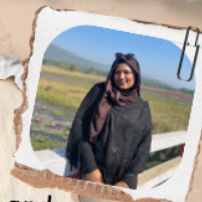
"Here's to the ones who dream
Foolish as they may seem
Here's to the hearts that ache
Here's to the mess we make"
_ La La Land (2016)

Mysha Momtaz
(Head of Administration)



"I still cannot believe I got the magical and incredible privilege to tell people's story. From starting dedicated segments for bookworms to arranging an event about the first love of my life aka poetry, my preteen nerdy self would be so proud :) And this would take twice as long if I want to mention the amazingly talented and hardworking people I worked with, so just want to say, that baby nerd Prodipta COULD NOT HAVE ASKED for better comrades in this wonderful journey!"

Prodipta Hasin
(Managing Editor)



"Leading Bracu Express' online platforms and watching the team thrive has been an absolute honour. Grateful for this journey, I trust SEB9 will take the torch forward with the same passion!"

Samin Mehzabeen
(Head of Web Media)



"As I step down from my position in BRACU Express, I just want to say—thank you. Leading the creative team, designing the layouts, and bringing the vision to life has been an unforgettable journey. To the team—the passion, dedication, and trust made this experience truly special. I couldn't have done it without you. BRACU Express will always have a piece of my heart. Wishing it nothing but success ahead!"

Nafisa Matin
(Head of Creative)



"BRACU Express has been a wonderful journey for me. From a journalist to the off campus editor, it was a great experience. No doubt, I have learned a lot of things during my tenure which widened my boundaries and helped me to embrace my potential. Finally signing off and wishing a bright future for this platform."

Ammarah Laaika Mohiuddin
(Off campus editor)



"As the Web Content Manager of the 8th Student Editorial Board, I've scheduled posts, battled deadlines, and possibly traumatized my keyboard. It's been real, it's been chaotic. Now, someone else gets to panic!"

Adib
(Web Content Manager)



"Before joining BRACU Express, I wasn't into videos, fast forward 1.5 years, and it has become a passion! BRACU Express is where I got to improve my skills and work with incredibly talented people. Best of luck everyone!! onwards and upwards!"

Maheer Helal
(Director of Multimedia)

SPECIAL FEATURE



"Yeee, the days of being the 'HR' and chasing people for work have come to an end; I'll truly, truly miss this beloved place. Thank you, BRACU Express, for the amazing memories!"

Labiba Tahia
(Director of HR)



"From joining in my first year, leading as News Editor in the second, and completing my tenure in the third - BRACU Express is something I'll cherish more than my own major at BracU! Hold thy horses Bracuians, for SEB 9 is going to take BRACU Express to even greater heights this year!"

Tabassum Hasnat
(News Editor)



"I have been a part of BRACU Express almost all of my University time. Now, as I stand on the cusp of graduation, I find solace in reminiscing the countless memories woven into pages. Yet, there's a bittersweet ache in knowing that my dream of being the Sub-Editor, one I cherished and lived so fully—has reached its inevitable conclusion all too soon."

Labiba Alam
(News Sub-Editor)



"Every piece I put forth, from the articles to editing Features, BRACU Express has been a place of love and growth for me... To new beginnings and cherished memories..."

Kinnory Boishakhi
(Features Editor)



"As the Entertainment Editor of BRACU Express, I've witnessed amazing writers come up with incredible ideas and beautiful writing. It has been an honor to work with such a fun team, and a wonderful group of journalists who continue to inspire me. Let the wild rumpus start, again!"

Raina Isabela
(Entertainment Editor)



"BRACU Express has been such a huge part of my life for the last 2 years. I will miss BRACU Express as much as the Mohakhali Campus and all the carefree days with friends. Enjoy the little things and use the BRACU Express office as your own little hangout spot like we used to do in Mohakhali. What else is there to live for, eh?"

Sayed Hossain Shanto
(Sports and Alumni Editor)



"I never knew that my love for writing would bring me to such an amazing group of people. As a journalist to a writer, every piece that I've worked on has taught me immensely. BRACU Express has been an integral part of my journey at Bracu and letting it go is perhaps one of the most bittersweet things I've experienced. I wish SEB 9 the best of luck. I hope you cherish BRACU Express as much as we did but please don't forget to have fun and make the most of it!"

Zaima Imtiaz
(Opinions and Academics Editor)



"This has been a wonderful experience working alongside talented designers and writers. Wishing the new team all the best on their journey at BRACU Express."

Sumaiya Shams Joyeeta
(Creative Director)



"Every story has its chapters, and this one comes to a close. But the fire we lit, the path we carved—it all remains. The mission doesn't end, only the hands that carry it forward change. Stay hungry, stay fearless. Until we cross paths again."

Shehraj Osman
(Director of Marketing)

Illustrated by:
Raian Kibria Rohan

OFF CAMPUS

From BracU to Oxford: A mathematical journey

Ishmam Suhrawardy
Journalist

Nazmoon Falgunnee Moon, a Brac University graduate of 2021 from the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS), recently completed her Master of Science from the University of Oxford with distinction. Moon embarked on her higher studies as a medical student. After two years, her passion shifted from Physics to Mathematics, guiding her to Brac University.

She took advanced mathematics courses like Category Theory and Differential Geometry under Dr. Sayed Hasibul Hasan (MNS) and Professor Tibra Ali (Associate Dean, Research, SDS). These courses intensified her passion for the subject, eventually leading her to select it as a minor in Mathematics. She states “Mathematics is a beautiful subject that uncovers the foundation of everything.” Her inexplicable academic record earned her the prestigious Optiver Foundation Scholarship for M.Sc. in Mathematics and Foundation of Computer Science at Mansfield College, University of Oxford.

Her simple yet powerful advice to young students is, “Focus on your coursework and study diligently.” She is a research assistant for Professor Chowdhury at Brac University and is interested in the Quantum Foundation.



Nazmoon Falgunnee Moon

BracU_Crows soar to victory at KUET CSE National Fest

Faria Alam
Journalist



BracU Crows after the victory at the 3rd KUET CSE National Fest

BracU_Crows won the Miaki presents Khulna University of Engineering and Technology Inter-University Programming Contest (IUPC) at the BITFEST 2025 3rd KUET CSE National Fest, held on January 5th at the university's premises. The team, which has previously represented Brac University at national-level contests for two years, consists of MD Mazed Hossain (Senior, CSE), Ruhan Habib (Senior, CSE), and Arman Ferdous (Junior, CSE).

BracU_Crows went to the top, defeating DU_Primum of the University of Dhaka and SUST Fanatics of the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in the Mock and Final rounds. Their speed, prior experience, and guidance from Imran Bin Azad (Senior Lecturer, CSE), Kabbaya Kantam Patwary (Lecturer, CSE), Dr Mohammed Kaykobad (Professor, CSE), and the unwavering support of Dr Sadia Hamid Kazi (Chairperson, CSE) helped them to win.

Mazed said, “Our biggest achievement was securing the 75th position at the 47th ICPC world final, held in April 2024 in Luxor, Egypt.” The team is preparing to qualify for the ICPC Finals 2025 by finishing in the top position at the ICPC Asia West Continental Final in March 2025.

The creative brilliance of BracU at Ekushey Book Fair 2025

Samia Chowdhury
Journalist

Brac University students and faculty have published three books at the Ekushey Book Fair this year, covering the genres of poetry, psychological fiction, and translation.

Hibernation by Upama Adhikary (Graduate, EEE) is a collection of seven psychological short stories. She reflects, “These stories closely depict my melancholic self. I wish to reach the psychological story genre lover through my book.” Maisha Rashid (Junior, MNS) published a translated self-help book titled *The Miracle Morning* which first came out at the 2024 book fair. She stated, “Hal Elrod introduces a productive morning routine in this book, focusing on six key practices known as SAVERS. I'm honoured to bring this transformative experience to Bengali readers.”

Esteemed faculty member Dr. Moien Zalal Chowdhury (Assistant Professor, ESS) has published a collection of his poetry, ‘রাষ্ট্রের এক্সোডাস ও রুহানি ডিভোর্সের গল্প ০.১’, under the poetic pseudonym of Sharat Chowdhury, along with two BracU students. In a conversation with BracU Express, he remarked, “I truly believe that thought-provoking books, songs, and cinema have the power to expand the depth of people and their thinking and understanding. Hence, I wrote this book to inspire people for in-depth thinking.”



The three books published by BracU students and faculty at Ekushey Book Fair 2025

SPORTS NEWS

BracU student wins national level chess tournament

Maisha Marium
Journalist

On January 3rd, the Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman Memorial Rapid Rating Chess Tournament was held at the University of Dhaka, organised by the Dhaka University Chess Club. Brac University students showcased their exceptional skills in this prestigious Swiss league tournament with nine rounds and nearly 300 participants, including one Grandmaster and two International Masters.

Among them, Anata Choudhury (Senior, MNS) claimed the unbeaten Champion title, scoring 8 out of 9 points. Inspired by his uncle, Anata started chess at a young age, playing his first tournament in eighth grade. Reflecting on his journey, he shared, "I have been a national player for two years but had limited exposure to top-level chess before university." His success continues to pave the way for international recognition, inspiring aspiring players in the competitive world of chess.



Anata Chowdhury claiming the trophy at the Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman rapid rating chess tournament.

Introducing 'Moydaan', BracU's football field

Sajal Hossain Dhaly
Journalist

Brac University's permanent campus now has a football field named Moydaan. If you're not a sports enthusiast, its existence may be a surprise since it is tucked away from the bustling campus. It is located beyond the Multipurpose Hall, behind the serene ponds and lush greenery, beside the on-campus Arabika café.



'Moydaan,' BracU's new football field. Photo: Sajal Hossain Dhaly

The field is often locked during peak class hours and mealtimes, but security opens it for players in the early mornings and after 5 PM classes when they arrive with footballs and jerseys. Though smaller than a standard football field and slightly uneven in some areas, improvements are expected as the university plans to host official tournaments there soon.

Despite its limitations, 'Moydaan' provides students with a dedicated space to enjoy football, fostering a growing sports culture on campus. As a bonus, it even features a water hose, allowing players to freshen up after practice.

Women's football team leads wellness campaign on campus

Rishov Aditya
Journalist

On December 9th, Brac University hosted the 'Healthier in Motion Wellness' campaign with USAID, featuring Bangladesh's national women's football team stars Maria Manda, Ritu Porna Chakma, Masura Parvin, and Sabina Khatun. They played a friendly match against the BracU girls' football team.

The game started with Dr. Syed Mahfuzul Aziz (Pro-Vice Chancellor, BracU). Despite close chances, the first half ended goalless. During halftime, Shazia Omar (Founder, Dhaka Flow) led a yoga session promoting mental well-being. Sabina Khatun scored first, but Nazida Sumaiya Chowdhury (Junior, Architecture) equalised in the final minute. In the tiebreaker, Sabina secured the national team's victory.

The event highlighted the benefits of fitness, ending with cheers, selfies, and unforgettable memories.

Love that's more than a valentine

Love was around, I had blinders on

Rifah Tasnim Suha

The world turned over—
an unverifiable hypothesis.
I kept burning the pages of self-explanatory
mistakes
that seized days, dazed my sleep—
With a heart full of disdain.

Warmth wraps me, tracing a path down my neck.
As I turn over, the sun brushes against my cheek
like a soft, imperial kiss—
Maa.

Standing there, watching me with gentle eyes—
That's when I found love.
Hours travel slowly in my desolate land,
beneath all the visible, tumultuous, worldly things.
Things can be ethereal—
the mythological story books, nestled in
unforgotten dust,
kept like mystic charms.
Love found me—
when we cramped up on the red leather couch, all
five of us,

holding our stomachs, bursting into laughter,
gasping for breath.
In the cracks of the leather lies the map
of every joyous summer afternoon.

(This poem was selected as one of the best submissions of BracU Express's Valentine's Day 2025 prompt. To read more of them, check out our Facebook page)



How Kendrick Lamar Owned the Super Bowl

Umayrah Iram
Journalist

In the 2025 Super Bowl, Kendrick Lamar beat Michael Jackson for the most-viewed halftime performance. Kendrick Lamar performed a show and established a cultural moment for reasons none of us had anticipated. It was not merely the menacing smile at the camera that made Drake consider drafting his will, but so much more.

This performance was one for the history books. It included many symbolic moments, a direct dig at political agendas, memorable cameos, and things you would least expect from a major football game on national television. From the appearance of Samuel L. Jackson and Serena Williams to the symbolism of the performers, the show was an indirect call for protest and revolution against the hardships faced by Black Americans even today, making the so-called American dream a facade.

The Super Bowl unforgettably exposed the nation's polarized politics and operations. Donald Trump witnessed it all in the audience, making matters more compelling. The setlist shook the crowd with the diss track of the decade, "Not Like Us." It left viewers wondering if that was why Drake was nowhere to be seen or if there were many other factors.



Kendrick Lamar at the Super Bowl 2025

Parasomnia: The Return of Portnoy with Dream Theater

Ahnaf Ishmam Prithul
Journalist

Progressive metal subgenre fans will be aware of the band Dream Theater, which pioneered the newer prog era. The band started with John Petrucci, John Myung, and Mike Portnoy. Later, James Labrie and Jordan Rudess joined them, and the rest is history.

In 2010, Parasomnia, Mike Portnoy left the band due to creative differences, and Mike Mangini joined as the new drummer. However, in the fall of 2023, Mike Portnoy rejoined Dream Theater after thirteen years. With their legendary lineup, they released their sixteenth studio album "Parasomnia". *Parasomnia* is a conceptual album, and its story takes place right after their tenth studio album, *Black Clouds* and *Silver Lining*.

This album delves deep into the enigmatic world of sleep disorders and heralds the much-anticipated return of founding drummer Mike Portnoy. The album structure is reminiscent of their earlier work, "Six Degrees of Inner Turbulence," where individual songs collectively contribute to a cohesive thematic journey. Could Portnoy's return bring a renewed vigour to *Parasomnia*, with his dynamic drum playing a pivotal role in shaping its direction?



Members of Dream Theater



840

840: Fiction or flashback?

Friyana Zaman
Journalist

840 is a bold political satire directed by Mostofa Sarwar Farooki that explores the nuances of power and censorship. Nasir Uddin Khan masterfully plays the main character, Mayor Kaji Dablu, who is on his way to monopolising the town. The plot follows Kaji Dablu before an election as he gets caught up in a murder. Like an autocratic leader, he carries out sting operations and spying schemes and delivers threats until his eventual demise.

The film often blurs the lines between reality and fiction, making viewers question the nature of authority, democracy, and free speech in Bangladesh. Farooki, known for his fast-paced scenes and witty dialogue, has also weaved humour into serious political discourse. While praised for daring storytelling and highlighting the complexities of governance, viewers have criticized *840* saying the background music was disconnected from the movie.

The striking themes of political manipulation and unrestrained power have made this film a popular conversation starter. These themes make one wonder whether the movie is purely a work of fiction or a story citizens of Bangladesh have lived through.

Executive Panel

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