

## **Progress Report of Pinki Debnath**

Dear OIRC Committee,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Oslo International Rotary Club (OIRC) for awarding me the scholarship in 2023. Your support has been a great encouragement in my academic journey and has helped me continue my studies with confidence and dedication. I am pleased to share a brief update on my recent progress.

In July 2025, I started my Master of Science (MS) in Plant Pathology at Sylhet Agricultural University. My MS research topic is “Eco-friendly management of damping-off disease of tomato using chitosan and botanical extracts.” Through this work, I am trying to find environmentally friendly alternatives to chemical fungicides. I completed my Bachelor of Science in Agriculture from Sylhet Agricultural University in March, 2025 with a CGPA of 3.854 out of 4.00 (with distinction).

Over the past year, I have been involved in four research projects related to crop improvement and stress management. These include studies on quinoa under acid soil conditions, the use of biochar and wood vinegar in crop production, and plant responses to salinity stress. These projects have helped me gain practical experience in fieldwork, laboratory techniques, and research data analysis.

I have also been fortunate to contribute to scientific publications. One of my research papers was published in Crop Design journal of Elsevier in 2024, and another Bioinformatics based research work has been shared as a preprint and submitted to an international journal. I am currently working with co-researchers on a study that combine agriculture with ML and GIS techniques.

I participated in several national and international conferences where I presented research work with my co-authors. In 2025, one of our research posters on using deep learning to detect plant diseases received the Second Runners-Up Award at an international conference.

Recently, I was honored to receive the National Science and Technology (NST) Fellowship (2025-2026), awarded by the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Bangladesh. I also received Sylhet Agricultural University Research scholarship from SAURES in 2025.

Along with my studies, I am involved in volunteer and cultural organizations at my university. I currently serve as a Vice President of MRITTIKA, a volunteer group that works with agriculture-related activities. I am also serving as the Cultural Secretary of Krishnachura Shangha and the Festival Affairs Secretary of Lubdhak Theatre, which are cultural and social organizations at my

university. These roles help me develop leadership skills and stay connected with community work.

The financial assistance provided through the OIRC scholarship has been very helpful in supporting my studies. It has allowed me to pay my semester fees, manage part of my living and meal expenses, and devote more time to my academic and research activities. I am truly thankful for your support and encouragement. I hope to keep working hard and make meaningful contributions to agriculture in the future.

I hope to pursue a PhD abroad in the future so that I can gain advanced knowledge and contribute to developing sustainable plant disease management practices that benefit farmers and agriculture. Also, if I become capable, I would like to support disadvantaged but meritorious students in their academic journeys, just as the OIRC committee is kindly supporting students like me.

Thanks, OIRC.

With sincere gratitude,

Pinki Debnath

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