

Achievements of “AUST Little Step” team in “European Rover Challenge – 2018, Poland”



Fig: The rover team on the site of competition.

AUST Little Step, a multidisciplinary robotics team, from Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST), Bangladesh was formed with students from four core engineering principles viz. Mechanical, Electrical, Computer Science and Civil Engineering in March 2017. Since then, the team has been working very diligently for participating in three prestigious international competition named University Rover Challenge, Canadian Rover Challenge and European Rover Challenge held respectively in United States of America, Canada and Poland each year.



Fig: AUST Little Step team with their second rover along with honorable Vice Chancellor of AUST and other faculty members, prior to their flight to Poland.

Very recently the team participated in European Rover Challenge (ERC) in Poland, held from 14th September to 16th September, 2018. ERC is one of the three most prestigious international space and robotics events in the world. This event gathers not only specialists in planetary robotics and rovers designers but also teams from other internationally acclaimed engineering colleges round the world. The main purpose of this competition is to bring young and bright minds into the field of space engineering and foster international collaboration in extraterrestrial exploration. ERC is organized by European Space Foundation and supported by NASA and Mars Society every year.

AUST Little Step team secured 27th position among all the 65 participating teams and 4th position among Bangladeshi teams in ERC-2018 at Museum of Nature and Technology, Starachowice, Poland. It is to be noted that, AUST Little Step is the first robotics team from AUST to represent the institution in an international rover challenge outside Asia and is also the first interdisciplinary team to be comprised of students from four core engineering departments.

AUST Little Step team was supervised by a selection of faculties from four departments. They are Prof. Dr. Dewan Hasan Ahmed, Prof. Dr. Kazi A. Kalpoma, Dr. Mohammad Harun-Or-Rashid, Mr. Fazlar Rahman, Dr. Fazle Rabbi, Mr. A. S. M. Fahad Hossain, Mr. Azmyin Md. Kamal, and Mr. Md. Istiaque Rahaman. Mr. Azmyin Md. Kamal also fulfilled the role of team coordinator and was responsible for monitoring the overall progress of the team.

The team would like to extend its gratitude to Prof. Dr. M. H Khan whose invaluable tips and swift action allowed the team to find the much needed sponsors for travelling to Poland. The team also extends its heartiest gratitude to Mr. Md. Jubayer Hossain of MPE for giving his support and expert guidance on the field in Poland during ERC 2018.

Now, the team is working in implementing autonomy in the rover. It is to be noted that until now no rover team from Bangladesh has ever been successful in properly participating in Autonomous section of the competitions. The team is working very actively in finding new sponsors and preparing themselves for the **upcoming University Rover Challenge 2019**, the most prestigious of the three rover challenges.



Fig: AUST Little Step team with their first rover.