

2006/november

ENH Literary Reading

The Department of English and Humanities hosted a lively literary reading by "Four Emerging Women Writers" on November 30, 2006. Sabahat Jahan and Rubana Ahmed read their poems, Shazia Omar read a chapter from a novel in progress, and Shabnam Nadiya read a short story. All four are established writers: their stories and poems have appeared in journals, newspapers, and anthologies both here and abroad. The session was chaired by Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH and conducted by Sanam Amin, a student of the English Department. Many students and teachers of the English Department attended and enjoyed the reading. Also in attendance was Professor Niaz Zaman, English Department, Dhaka University, who is the founder of the publishing house writers.ink, which published Sabahat Jahan's and Rubana Ahmed's debut collections of poetry. The session was well attended by faculty members and students as well as some other writers residing in Dhaka.

BUDTF staged Hirok Rajar Deshe

BRAC University Drama and Theater Forum (BUDTF) staged the club's annual drama Hirok Rajar Deshe at the National Theater Hall of Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy on November 27, 2006. The drama started with the VC Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury's words and the formal introduction by the director Obaidullah Al Zakir. The members of BUDTF who took part in the drama did a splendid job throughout the drama and got lots of applause. The acting of the group was admirable and was aided by sound effects. The team received a congratulatory message from the famous film maker Sandip Roy. Aarong and BRAC Bank sponsored the show in association with Mercantile Bank, Prime Bank, Tele-Talk, Southtech and Dhaka Bank".

Admission Test-1, Spring 2007

Admission Test-1 for the Spring Semester 2007, for admission to the undergraduate programs of the Departments of ARC, MGB, CSE, ESS, ENH, MNS, and Law, were held on November 25, 2006. The results of the written tests were announced on November 30, 2006.

Outreach program by the American Center

The American center Dhaka organized an outreach program followed by a question-answer session for the students of BRACU on November 19, 2006. Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman welcomed the members from the American center. Mr. Robert Dreesen, Deputy Chief of Counselor section, Ms. Melanie Rubenstein, Counselor Officer from the American embassy Dhaka and Ms. Linda Das from the American center spoke on the different aspects of graduate studies and the visa requirements and procedures for studying in the US. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-VC, BRACU, faculty members and a large number of students attended the seminar. In the question answer session the students were interested to know about the US visa application procedures and other related issues.

BU-IDE Update

BU-IED Team Joined Education Research Consortium Meeting in Delhi

A three member team from BRAC University Institute of Educational Development (BU-IED), that included Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Director; Md. Altaf Hussain, Senior Research Associate; and Md. Abul Kalam, Research Associate attended a weeklong workshop and planning meeting from November 19 to 26, 2006 of the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE). The meeting was hosted by the National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) in Delhi. BU-IED is a partner in the consortium of eight academic and research institutions from Bangladesh, Ghana, India, South Africa and U.K. The five-year research consortium, headed by the Centre for International Education at the

University of Sussex, is funded by DFID.

Midterm Makeup Exams, Fall 2006

Makeup Midterm Exams of Fall 2006 held on November 18, 2006. During the week, classes and other regular activities were held as per schedule.

Visit to George Washington University (GWU)

As a part of the current partnership between George Washington University (GWU) and BRAC University (BRACU), three representatives of BRACU were nominated to visit GWU during Fall 2006. Dr. Yousuf M Islam, Director, Teacher Learning Centre (TLC), Ms. Shreyasee Sarma Pati, Senior Assistant Registrar and Md. Arifuzzaman, Scheduling & Registration and Website Officer visited GWU as visiting scholars from October 22 to November 17, 2006. The visit was sponsored by the US Department of State. Although their work was mainly centered around GWU, BRAC University representatives also had meetings with different Organizations of Higher Education and support agencies like: American Association of Collegiate Registrars (AACRAO), International Reading Association (IRA), Academy for Educational Development (AED), Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, Association of American Colleges and University (AACU). Dr. Islam also attended a conference during this time - ISSOTL, 2006. All the visitors were given an opportunity to observe and study the work of different offices at GWU. They also had classroom observations and visited other campuses of GWU and other US universities. The main purpose of the visit was to learn from the experiences of US universities to help with challenges faced at BRACU.

English Language Program (EL-Pro) Workshop

A workshop titled 'Teacher as Facilitator' was conducted on 3 November, 2006 at EL-Pro by Professor Beth Trudell, a visiting faculty who is an English Language Fellow sponsored by Georgetown University and the US State Department. The workshop focused on some critical aspects of facilitating and creating a learner-centered classroom. Professor Trudell especially highlighted the need for creating a productive and comfortable learning environment through positive reinforcement and greater student involvement, the outcome of which would be students who are independent learners and critical and reflective thinkers. All twenty-five part-time and full-time faculty members at EL-Pro attended the workshop.

Seminar Organized by UCE Birmingham

University of Central England (UCE), Birmingham organized an information session for the students of BRACU on Tuesday, November 1, 2006. Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman welcomed and introduced the visiting team to the students. Mr. Anoop Patel, Business Manager, UCE Birmingham briefed the students on their admission procedure, scholarship policy, admission requirements and other related issues. Mr. Patel also advised the students to complete their studies at BRACU with a good academic standing and then to look for options at UCE Birmingham for Masters level program for experiential knowledge as well as international exposure. Later the visiting team met the Registrar and Senior Assistant Director, Career services to explore mutual fields of future cooperation and collaboration.

BRAC Business School (BBS) Update

1. PAXAR Plant Visit by BBS Students

On November 9, 2006, the Students of MSC 301: Operations Management went to visit the production plant of PAXAR Ltd., a multinational company that produces barcode printers, printed and woven labels, tags etc. for garments and leather industries. Accompanied by the course instructor Mr. Ashique Khan, the team consisted of 39 students and started for Savar EPZ (Ext.) at 9:30AM. They spent some interactive and informative 3 hours at PAXAR with their production personnel and Customer Service Manager - Mr. Maqsud

Sobhani, an ex-lecturer of BBS. BBS aims to arrange more of such events to make the students' learning more effective.

2. Paper presentation and publication

Dr. Mojib Uddin Ahmed, Professor and director of MBA program, BRAC Business School (BBS), presented a paper in an international Conference entitled "Corporate Takeover Bids, Growth Opportunities of Bidders, and Announcement day Effect: An Empirical Study", International Academy of Business and Economics-2006 Annual Conference, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA from October 15 -18, 2006. One of his papers entitled "Corporate Takeover Bids, Growth Opportunities of Bidders, and Announcement day Effect: An Empirical Study", has been published in the Journal of Academy of Business and Economics, Vol 6 No.1, 2006, P137-147, USA, (with Niazur Rahim).

School of Public Health (SPH) Update

Course Update

The MPH students successfully completed the course "Principles of Health Communication " during the period of October 29-November 2, 2006. The course was taught by Dr. Muhiuddin Haider, George Washington University, USA. Sabiha Chowdhuri, Research Associate, BRAC SPH, was the teaching assistant for the course.

MPH students begin fieldwork

The students have completed all modules for the MPH programme and have now began the fieldwork for their independent study, which is a 12-credit module. Students will submit a report at the end of their dissertation on January 20, 2007.

Seminar Series

Moulana Abul Kalam Azad was the guest speaker for the Seminar held at the School on November 2, 2006. His presentation was titled "Religion and Public Health". Moulana Abul Kalam Azad is a leading Islamic scholar of the country. He heads Masjid Council for Community Advancement (MACCA)-a program partner of World Bank and USAID's partner Family Health International (FHI)-that strives for promoting socio-economic development of the poor people of the country with various development interventions. He is the Secretary General of Council for Interfaith Harmony, Bangladesh (CIH, BD)-the pioneer organization to stride for ensuring harmony among various faith groups in Bangladesh. He has been speaking on various electronic media regularly on Islam and various development issues.

Student Selection for Academic year 2007-08

The selection process has begun for international and national students for the academic year 2007-08. A more detailed breakdown will be available in the next update.

Health Systems 20/20: new partnership with School and CHSS

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Assistant Professor and Coordinator of the newly set up Centre for Health Systems Studies (CHSS) attended the launching of 'Health Systems 20/20' in Washington DC on November 3, 2006. This is a new USAID funded initiative, which encourages partnerships and future work on Health Systems. The School along with 11 partners from developing and developed countries will work closely with Abt Associates, the lead partner, based in the USA. The USAID partnership is interested in building a Health Systems Network and there are some exciting possibilities to build capacity within countries, training, conferences and workshops and research. The launch essentially was a showcasing of partners with all the partners sharing information on their institutions.

Assistant Professor from School invited to present paper in Cholula Puebla, Mexico

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid was invited to present a paper on 'Urbanization and Poverty: Existing Sexual and Reproductive Health Challenges for Married Adolescent Women in Slums in Dhaka, Bangladesh.' Dr. Rashid was also invited to be part of the panel to discuss 'Reproductive Health Policies and Programs.' This conference was organized by the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), in collaboration with Center for Demographic, Urban and Environmental Studies (CEDUA), in Cholula, Puebla, Mexico, November 6-9, 2006. Out of 200 papers sent approximately only 30 were accepted for this international conference.

Faculty attends annual planning meeting at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Assistant Professor, and Sabiha Chowdhuri, Research Associate, were at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK attending a Violence Against Women training workshop and the annual planning meeting with partners of the multi-country Research Program Consortium (RPC) titled "Realizing Rights: improving sexual and reproductive health for poor and vulnerable populations". Dr. Kaosar Afsana, BRAC Health Program and Dr. Morsheda Chowdhury, BRAC were also in the team. The training and meeting took place during November 27 - December 1, 2006. Partners of the RPC include BRAC Bangladesh, African Population and Health Research Centre, Kenya, INDEPTH Network, Ghana, Engender Health, New York and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, UK.

Centre for Research on Bangla Language Processing (CRBLP), BRACU Update

Partnership with Microsoft

CRBLP has received a Local Language Programme (LLP) grant from the Microsoft Corporation to localize the next version of Microsoft Windows (Vista) and Microsoft Office (Office 2007) in Bangla. The Microsoft LLP also includes Bangladesh Computer Council, who will create the glossary of computer terminology and the translation style guide, which CRBLP will use to create the Bangla Language Interface Pack (LIP). Windows Vista and Office users will then be able to download the Bangla LIP for free from Microsoft.

Papers Selected

The 9th International Conference on Computer and Information Technology (ICCIT 2006), to be held during December 21-23 of 2006 in Dhaka, has accepted 11 papers authored by the following CRBLP team members: Munirul Mansur, Yeasir Arafat, Ayesha Binte Mosaddeque, Md. Tarek Habib, Md. Jahangir Alam, Rajib Rahman, S. M. Murtoza Habib, Nawsher Ahmed Noor, Md. Abul Hasnat, Md. Mahmudul Haque, A. M. Shoeb Shatil, Tofazzal Rownok, Md. Zahurul Islam, Naushad UzZaman, Naira Khan and Mumit Khan. Two papers by CRBLP members Fahim Muhammad Hasan, Nafid Haque, Hammad Ali, Naushad UzZaman, Matin Saad Abdullah and Mumit Khan were accepted by the International Conference on Systems, Computing Sciences and

Software Engineering (SCSS 06) of International Joint Conferences on Computer, Information, and Systems Sciences, and Engineering (CISSE 06). Fahim Muhammad Hasan and Nafid Haque presented their respective papers online from the CRBLP offices on December 5, 2006.

A paper by Munshi Asadullah, Md. Zahurul Islam and Mumit Khan was accepted by the International Conference on Natural Language Processing (ICON 2007) to be held from January 4-6 in Hyderabad, India. ICON is the premiere Natural Language Processing conference in India, and this is the first paper from Bangladesh to be accepted by ICON.

Visitor

James Fruchterman, President and CEO of Benetech, visited CRBLP on December 6, 2006 during his brief stopover in Bangladesh. Mr. Fruchterman has recently been awarded a MacArthur Fellowship, popularly known as the "genius grant" for his work on social entrepreneurship. The IEEE Spectrum magazine has recently profiled him. He met with Dr. Mumit Khan to learn of the various activities at the centre, and to discuss potential future collaborations with BRACU.