

2007/april

Department of Architecture

ARC Chairperson attends meeting at Karachi

Prof. Fuad H Mallick, Chairperson Department of Architecture attended the 2nd meeting of the Thinking Group for conceptualizing a School of Architecture and Human Settlements at the Aga Khan University in Karachi held on the 7th and 8th of April. The first meeting of the group was held in Geneva in December 2006.

IAB Lecture by ARC Lecturer

Landscape Architect, Khondaker Hasibul Kabir, Lecturer, Department of Architecture, delivered a lecture on Design of Ecological Gardens, which was organized by the Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) at Dhanmondi, Dhaka on April 12, 2007. With a brief theoretical background and importance of the issue the lecture focused on current practice and experiments of ecological gardens in Bangladesh done by the lecturer. Three things were highlighted in the lecture knowing our place, placing things in the right place, and we have resources in the place. The lecture was followed by a discussion.

Angan Event 49

Angan 'Odyssey at Dinajpur' by the students of Rural Architecture was held on 19 April 2007. Students shared their experience of the trip 23-26 March 2007 to study rural architecture of Bangladesh in Dinajpur through photographs and videos. They visited Asrayan Prokalapa, Gucchagram and did some hands on construction there. The Chairperson, teachers and students of the department of architecture attended the event.

BRAC Business School

BIZ BEE Seminar on HR

BIZ BEE arranged a seminar on HR and related issues on April 5, 2007 facilitated by Mr. Akhtar Uddin Mahmood, Organization Development Manager, British American Tobacco Bangladesh (BATB). Mr. Mahmood talked about the skills and talents expected from the employees by BATB. He also focused on the criterions of evaluation followed during employee selection by the interview board of BATB and in general, the recruitment procedure and criterions. The seminar was highly interactive with students and teachers asking questions ranging from the most preferable field of specialization to the preference of candidate of BATB for internship and for regional officer. The seminar was one and half hour of enlightenment and ended with an inspirational documentary followed by refreshments.

BIZ BEE Seminar on CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)

BIZ BEE arranged a seminar on CSR on April 8, 2007. Ms. Rebecca I. Moudud, a former BATB manager and currently an MBA faculty member of BRAC University, conducted the seminar. Ms. Moudud demonstrated the role, scope and the importance of CSR in an organization and in the society. Among the audience, was present Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-VC, Professor Iftekhar Ghani Chowdhury, Dean, BRAC Business School and Professor Mojib U. Ahmed, Director of MBA Program, BRAC Business School. The Pro-VC participated in the discussion and explained how BRAC University plays its role of CSR thus helped the students and all the others present at the spot to expand their horizon of understanding of the topic.

El-Pro

A two hour workshop on 'Vocabulary' was held by Beth Trudell on Saturday, the 28th of April. She focused on vocabulary learning at every stage of Language proficiency.

El-Pro's first FSDM (Functional Skills Development Managers) batch 3 graduated on the 13th of April. This course dealt with mid level managers of BRAC and worked on their English language and other related skills.

El-Pro has further been involved with BRAC, PACE (Post primary and continuing education) in training of their teacher trainers, which comprises of ELT (English language Teaching) methods and communicative learning in Bangladesh. This requires the El-Pro faculty to go for tours outside Dhaka and observe classroom teaching at the rural areas and design courses that help rural teachers to implement their teaching methods more effectively. This course not only enables the teachers to be more efficient in their classrooms, but also contribute towards the overall development of English language teaching in Bangladesh.

Department of Computer Science & Engineering

Regional Youth Leadership Conference

Mahdin Mahboob, a student of CSE department attended the Regional Youth Leadership Conference held in New Delhi and Faridabad, India between 15th and 19th April 2007. Sixty students from six countries (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan) participated in this conference, which was organized by the Embassy of the United States of America (in New Delhi, India) and the US Educational Foundation in India. Mahdin was the only student from BRAC University to have been selected among the ten participants from Bangladesh.

Department of Economics and Social Sciences

Musical Soiree and Guest Lectures

Dr. Mridul Kanti Chakrabarty, noted singer and Professor, Department of Music and Theatre, Dhaka University will give a guest lecture on the "Evolution of Bangla Music" and rendered Bangla songs in the evening on 4 April 2007 at Markuli Hall, TARC Savar. The lecture was followed by a musical soiree where singers Dr. Mridul Kanti Chakrabarty, Mr. Zhidul Kabir Liton and Mr. Sabuz rendered various genres of Bangla songs. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor, BRAC University gave a lecture on the Role of NGOs in the Socio-Economic Development of Bangladesh for the students of Bangladesh Studies (DEV101) on 5 April at Markuli Hall, TARC, Savar. Dr. Ahmed discussed the history and development approaches of NGOs in Bangladesh, and addressed many questions raised by students about role of NGOs and their activities in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Fair

Bangladesh Studies course, offered by the Department of Economics and Social Sciences (ESS), BRAC University organized Bangladesh Fair for the second time in Savar campus on 13 April 2007. Mr. Fazle Hasan Abed, Founder and Chairperson, BRAC, Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor, BRAC University were present at the Fair and visited different stalls. Chairpersons of different departments of BRACU, faculty members, students, administrative staff and support staff of both BRAC and BRACU also visited the Fair. The Fair was organized to give students an opportunity to reflect on what they learn from Bangladesh Studies course. Students put up colorful stalls and displayed rural culture and urban culture, different types of rural and urban occupations. Hindu and Muslim marriage ceremonies were also staged by students. In addition display of traditional Bangla food, pottery, snack-charmer, carpenter, merry-go-round, pithas (cakes) and so on marked the Fair. El-Pro displayed different items such as funky jewelry, masks, candles, pottery etc prepared by the students throughout the Residential Semester and Mr. Kabir, Lecturer of Department of Architecture, BRACU and his students displayed findings of his research project on Sustainable Rural Architecture at the Fair. The Fair was also marked by cultural program and captivating folk songs of Bangladesh. A minstrel of 8 singers from rural Kurigram rendered Bhaiwaiya songs and enthralled the audience. On this occasion, the whole TARC took a festive mood.

MNS Department

International Conference on Promotion of Biotechnology in Bangladesh: National and International Perspectives

BRAC University, Ministry of Science and ICT, University of Dhaka, ICDDR,B, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, Incepta Pharmaceuticals and Square Pharmaceuticals Ltd jointly organized a three-day long International Conference on "Promotion of Biotechnology in Bangladesh: National and International

Perspectives" at the ICDDR,B Auditorium, on April 6-8, Dhaka. Mr. Tapan Choudhury, Honourable Advisor, MOSICT was the Chief Guest in the Inaugural Ceremony and Dr. C.S. Karim, Honourable Advisor for the Agriculture Ministry was the special guest. Conference Chair, Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury explained the objectives of the Workshop in the Inaugural Ceremony and Professor Naiyyum Choudhury presented a paper on the "Current Status and Prospects of Biotechnology in Bangladesh." Professor M. Shamsheer Ali, President, Bangladesh Academy of Sciences, Professor Yusuf Haider, Pro-Vice Chancellor, University of Dhaka; Dr. David A. Sack, Director, ICDDR,B also spoke in the inaugural ceremony.

Over three hundred and fifty participants from home and abroad participated in the Conference. Some distinguished foreign scientists from Turkey, Pakistan, Malaysia and a number of expatriate scientists from Canada, USA, Australia also actively participated in the Conference. The foreign scientists included Professor Mehmet Ozturk, Chairman, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, Bilkent University, Turkey; Dr. Anwar Nasim, Science Adviser, COMSTECH, Pakistan and Dr. Asma Binte Ismail of Medical Biotechnology at Universiti Sains Malaysia. TWAS Research Professor of BRAC University, Dr. Ahmed Abdullah Azad, Professor Naiyyum Choudhury, Professor A.S. Islam and Dr. Shah M. Faruque jointly prepared a position paper on "National Biotechnology Policy and the National Institute of Biotechnology" and circulated the paper to all the participants of the Conference. Incorporating the comments of the biotech community both from home and abroad, the position paper on "National Biotechnology Policy" was modified and presented to elicit the opinion of the participants. The finalized version along with the recommendations of the Conference will be presented to the Government of Bangladesh for necessary action.

Second Star Gazing Session

BRAC University Natural Sciences Club (BUNSC) arranged a STAR GAZING SESSION on the rooftop of BRAC Center on the 4th of April, 2007. Dr. Dipen Bhattacharya, Associate Research Professor of Astrophysics, Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, University of California, Riverside, USA, now a visiting faculty at the MNS Department, conducted the event. Mr. Naimul Islam, a member of the Science Club "Anushandhitshu Chokro", assisted him. Students of various departments of BRACU and some faculty members of the MNS Department attended the session. The participants looked at Mars, Venus and the Moon using a 14-inch telescope provided by Dr. Dipen Bhattacharya.

BRAC School of Public Health (BSPH)

MPH Students complete Biostatistics Course

The MPH students successfully completed the course on "Biostatistics" during the period of March 25th - April 19th 2007. Dr. M. Shahidullah, of University of Illinois, USA taught the course. Dr. Mizanur Rashid Shuvra, lecturer, BSPH, also served as faculty for the course. Dr. Abbas Bhuiya, ICDDR,B, was the course coordinator.

BSPH wins European Commission Grant

The BRAC School of Public Health has recently won a competitive grant from European Commission (EC), Brussels under the latter's 'Asia-Link' program. The grant of Euro 749,000 will support some of existing activities of the School with its European partner universities and initiate new activities. The activities that will get support through this include curriculum review and development, participation of European faculty in teaching, capacity building (including pedagogic and PhD level training), promoting South-South partnership in higher education, and institutional system development. BRAC SPH's partners are Kerala School of Public Health in India, Karolinska Institute in Sweden, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and University of Amsterdam.

School of Law

Presentation at Consumer Leaders' Training Workshops

Assistant Professor Tureen Afroz of the School of Law was invited as a resource person by the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB) to conduct two working sessions of national workshops and to make presentations before the district level consumer leaders. The workshops took place on 16-17 April 2007 and on 25-26 April 2007 at BIAM Auditorium, Dhaka. Tureen's topic was 'Consumers Protection Law: Bangladesh Perspective'.

Key Note Paper Presentation

Assistant Professor Tureen Afroz of the School of Law presented the Key Note Paper, 'Energy Consumers' Bill of Rights for Bangladesh' at the Discussion Meeting on 'Drafting the "Energy Consumers" Bill of Rights for Bangladesh', jointly organized by the Consumers' Association of Bangladesh (CAB), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Association of the Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) at CIRDAP Auditorium, Dhaka on 22 April 2007.

The meeting was attended and actively participated by the members of the Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC), Power Development Board (PDB), Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI), Nagorik Shomaj, LawDev (Bangladesh), Farmers' Voice, German Development Cooperation and many other social workers and energy sector activists.

In her keynote presentation, Tureen highlighted the current status of 'energy insecurity' suffered by the energy consumers in Bangladesh. She claimed that according to the Constitution of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh, the people are the actual owner of all energy resources. However Tureen stated that the consumers in Bangladesh had been suffering a lot because of the continuous mismanagement in the energy sector. She explored the status of energy consumers in reference to each of the broad categories of energy, such as, gas, electricity, coal, petroleum and renewable energy. Tureen sketched out the current regulatory structure of Bangladesh energy sector and criticized its major limitations. She argued that BERC should play a more people-friendly role to protect the rights of common people. Tureen also stressed the need to have an Energy Consumers' Bill of Rights to protect the rights of Bangladeshi energy consumers.

BU-IED

Workshop on Non-Formal Education (NFE) and Lifelong Learning (LLL)

Dr. Claude Bobillier, an international consultant and Dr. Kla Somtrakool, senior adviser to the Thai Ministry of Education and former Deputy DG of DNFE Thailand, were invited by BU-IED to explore areas of collaboration with BNFE (Bureau of Non-Formal Education) in the domain of non-formal education (NFE) and lifelong learning (LLL). To this end, both the consultants visited Bangladesh between March 30 and April 13 and consulted with concerned parties including BNFE, BU-IED and key NGOs running different variations of community learning centres. Findings of the visit were discussed with BNFE and other stakeholders in a daylong workshop held on April 11, 2007 at BU-IED. Dr. Bobillier outlined future steps for collaboration between BU-IED and BNFE and Dr. Somtrakool presented NFE experiences of Thailand, which have a highly acclaimed national program in non-formal education and lifelong learning. Director General of the Bureau of Non-formal Education, Mr. M. Rafiquzzaman, was the guest of honour.

Education Policy Roundtable Co-hosted by BU-IED

BU-IED, jointly with Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE), UNESCO, and the Daily Star, hosted a Roundtable on Education on 28 April 2007 at Hotel Sheraton. Over 30 invited participants including senior government officials, former Ministers of Education and Members of the Council of Advisers, civil society leaders and academics joined in the roundtable, which was moderated by Mr. Mahfuz Anam, the Editor of the Daily Star. Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Director, BU-IED, presented the background paper to kick off the discussion, highlighting "where we are" in education and "major action points." The event received considerable attention of the print and the electronic media.

The Roundtable was a key event of the Education for All Global Action Week, which was observed worldwide to raise awareness and renew commitment for achieving the Education for All Goals and fulfilling the right to education. The Roundtable was preceded by three thematic forums on preschool and primary education, secondary and technical/vocational education and literacy and non-formal education held on 25 and 26

April at the Spectra Centre, organized jointly by BU-IED, CAMPE and UNESCO. Each of the three sessions drew over a hundred participants and was addressed by policy-makers, practitioners and representatives of non-governmental organizations. BU-IED prepared and presented an issues paper for each of the forums.

Training Course for Staff of Child Development Project in Chittagong Hill Tracts

Early Childhood Development Resource Centre (ECDRC) conducted a two-week long course for trainers of the Child Development Project in the Chittagong Hill Tracts at BU-IED from 28 March till 10 April 2007.

Having completed the BU-IED training, the trainers will carry out regular training for the facilitators of child development centres in the hill districts. The Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) has implemented the Integrated Child Development Project (ICDP), supported by UNICEF.

The content of the training included early learning, child health, child nutrition, water & sanitation, birth registration, child rights and gender. The main objective of the training course was to develop a group of master trainers in ICDP for greater effectiveness of its activities. Ms. Mahmuda Akhter, Head of ECDRC, BU-IED coordinated the training course.

School Visits

Oxford International School Visit Program

A BRAC University team with Dr. Mumit Khan, Associate Professor, CSE Department, Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman Asst. Director RMO, Mr. Aminul Islam, and Asst. System Administrator visited the Oxford International School on Sunday, April 22, 2007. Mr. G. M. Nizam Uddin, Coordinator, O & A level Section greeted the team. Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman briefed the students about the program.

Dr. Mumit Khan in his introduction spoke briefly about BRAC's various programs such as its microfinance, non-formal primary education, enterprises such as Aarong and BRAC Bank. He mentioned that BRAC decided to establish a university to nurture and develop the next generation of leaders. A video presentation on BRAC University was shown to the students.

In the question answer session Dr. Mumit Khan spoke about the Residential semester program with its unique features, the high quality of BRAC University faculty, scholarship program and also about credit transfer system.

St Joseph College

A presentation session on BRAC University was organized for the grade eleven students of St. Joseph College on Thursday, March 22, 2007. Nearly 300 students attended this presentation. Professor Fuad Hassan Mallick, Chairperson ARC, Dr. Mumit Khan, Associate Professor CSE, Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman, Asst Director, RMO, Mr. Aminul Islam, Asst System Administrator with two former students of the school Mr. Salman Raihan and Mr. Imran Sattar were in the BRAC University team. Principal Brother John Razario welcomed the team members and Mr. Nirmal Sarkar, Lecturer, introduced them to the students. After showing a Video presentation on BRAC University Professor Fuad Hassan Mallick briefed the students on BRAC and its facilities. Dr. Mumit Khan and Professor Fuad Hassan Mallick interacted with the students and briefed them about BRAC University's scholarship policy, credit transfer policy and other related issues. At the end Salman and Imran Sattar briefed the students about their experiences at BRAC University. Dr. Mumit Khan, Salman and Imran received huge applause from the students for being Joshephite students.

Chittagong Visit

A BRAC University team with Dr. Mumit Khan, Associate Professor, CSE Department and Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman Asst Director RMO visited William Carey Academy and Summer Field School and College in Chittagong on April 11, 2007.

William Carey Academy

Ms. Marilou Long, Administrative Director, William Carey Academy welcomed the BRAC University team and briefed the BRAC University team on the school and facilities that they are providing to the students. Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman introduced the team from BRAC University to the attending students. Dr. Mumit Khan spoke briefly about BRAC and its vision for establishing BRAC University to produce the leaders of tomorrow, and to contribute to the national development in general. A preview of BRAC University was presented before the students. In the question answer session students along with the senior teachers of the school asked questions on BRAC's project on T.B., credit transfer, SAT requirement for admission and scholarship, etc. The students were also interested in internships opportunities at BRAC to fulfill their community service requirement for high school graduation.

After the seminar the BRAC University team attended students individually and answered their queries about admission criteria and different programs at BRAC University.

Summerfields School and College

After finishing at William Carey Academy the BRAC University team visited Summerfields School and College at Pachlaish Residential Area in Chittagong. Mr. Narayan Chowdhury, Principal Summerfields School and College welcomed the team from BRAC University.

Dr. Mumit Khan, after his presentation on BRAC University, advised the students to explore the facilities that different private Universities are offering in Bangladesh. At the end of the session Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman thanked the principal for his help in organizing the seminar on BRAC University.

Notre Dame College Visit

A BRAC University team with Pro -VC Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Professor Fuad Hassan Mallick, Chairperson, ARC, Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman, Asst Director, RMO and Mr. Aminul Islam, Asst. System Administrator visited Notre Dame College on Wednesday, March 21, 2007. Father Benjamin D'Costa, Principal, and Notre Dame College welcomed the team. Mr. Nirmal Chandra Sarker, senior teacher of the college introduced the BRAC university team members to its students in their large auditorum. Pro-VC and the two former students Mohammad Yusuf Hasan and Salman Raihan in the introduction received huge applause from the students for being Ex -Notre Demeans. After showing the video presentation on BRAC University, the Pro-VC Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed briefed the students about BRAC and the successes that BRAC has achieved so far at home and abroad. He also mentioned about the recently declared "Shadhinota Podok "award, which BRAC has received in recognition for its outstanding social services.

Professor Fuad Mallick after a short brief on BRAC University interacted with the students and explained them about different academic sides that they will encounter in future for perusing their higher studies. He also briefed about rich faculty resources and job placement facilities at BRAC University. At the end of the seminar Salman Raihan Khan along with Mohammad Yusuf Hasan enthralled the students by their experiences at BRAC University and Savar Residential semester, which created great impact among the students.

Career Services Office

The Interview



In BRAC University's continuous effort to promote greater understanding of needs and issues with the employment industry, "The Interview" program was organized and held on April 18, 2007 at BRAC Centre Inn. The Career Services Office (CSO) organized the program as a modular component of the Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) conducted every semester by Ms. Mirka Rahman. This was the first of its kind and the purpose of "The Interview" program was to strengthen its existing academia-corporate relationship and to:

- * Help students gain experience and practice in answering questions, which are likely to be asked by the recruiters during an actual job interview
- * Facilitate collaborative arrangements for students' internship placements
- * Understand employers' expectations about employability criteria

Fourteen companies had taken part in The Interview Program, conducting approximately 200 interviews with 140 students from BRAC Business School, Department of Economics & Social Sciences and Department of Computer Science & Engineering:

1. Ardites - IT Company
2. BRAC Bank
3. BRAC Net
4. CityCell
5. GrameenPhone
6. HIIT
7. Microserve
8. Navana Group
9. Pran Group
10. Standard Chartered Bank
11. TherapBD - IT Company

12. TNT Express
13. Transcom
14. Square

Employers had evaluated the interviewees using an evaluation form provided by the CSO. The evaluations have been disclosed to the students. Employers like: Standard Chartered Bank, TNT Express and Transcom have already made internship placement offers to few of the students. BRAC Bank, BRAC Net and Ardites have made few job offers.

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