

2007/october

Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS) Department

Fiftieth Anniversary of Sputnik Launching

Professor A.A.Z. Ahmad was the Chief Guest at the 50th Anniversary Celebration Sputnik Fest commemorating the launching of Sputnik- the first man-made satellite to orbit the earth. The event was jointly organized by the Bangladesh Astronomical Association and the Russian Science and Cultural Centre at its office at House # 510, Road # 7, Dhanmondi R/A, Dhaka -1209 on Thursday October 4, 2007. The event also included the inauguration of the 15th Astronomy Workshop and school childrens space shuttle model making program. Dr. M. Rezaur Rahman, President Bangladesh Astronomical Association presided over the inaugural ceremony. Professor Ahmad in his inaugural address stressed the importance of application of science and technology for socio-economic betterment of the country. For this to materialize research and development work needs to be carried out in all fields of science and technology especially in advanced topics like space science, nuclear science, oceanic science, ICT etc., he added. He also distributed prizes to the winners of the Astro Olympiad held on October 3, 2007 and organized by the Bangladesh Astronomical Association.

International Symposium on Eye Banking

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury participated in the International Symposium on Eye Banking organized jointly by ORBIS, New York, USA, Sandhani National Eye Donation Society, Dhaka and the L.V. Prasad Eye Institute, Hyderabad, India and held at Hotel Sheraton, Dhaka on 20-21 October 2007. Professor Choudhury presented a paper on legal issues in eye banking.

BRACU DLC Global Development Learning Network (GLN) Centre

Video conferencing for court proceedings in Sydney, Australia

BRAC University successfully conducted a video conference today, Monday, 29th Oct 07, from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM for the purposes of Mr. David Halder from Health Education Leadership Program (HELP Inc) Bangladesh, who was required to give evidence in a matter being heard before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal in Sydney Court through Video Conference.

Department of Economics and Social Sciences

Master of Science in Applied Economics

The Master of Science in Applied Economics (MSAE) program was launched in Fall 2007 with six students. This degree has been mainly designed with an aim of creating highly competent economics professional to serve in the private and public sector of Bangladesh. The courses offered in this semester are Principles of Quantitative Analysis, Microeconomic Theory and Application, Advanced Econometrics.

Faculty Participation in International Conference

Mr. Md. Jahangir Alam Chowdhury, a faculty member of ESS presented a paper in Australian Health Economic Society Conference (AHES) 2007, held on 27th and 28th September 2007, Brisbane, Australia. The title of the paper was Economic Cost of Diarrheal Prevalence and Duration in Children under Five Years of Age in Dhaka City Slums in Bangladesh.

Seminar on Green Accounting

The Department of ESS arranged a discussion on Popularizing Green Accounting in Bangladesh at ESS Conference Room. The discussion was organized to create a network of Faculties among the selected private universities who are interested in green accounting and explore possibilities of offering a green accounting course in the future. Abu Naser Khan from 'Poribesh Bachao Andolon' and Dr. A K Enamul Huq from East West University joined in the discussion to explain how environmental activists and academic researchers could collaborate to make green accounting popular to different organizations in Bangladesh. Faculty members of Independent University Bangladesh and BRAC University also participated in the discussion.

Guest Lecture by Professor Anisur Rahman

Professor Anisur Rahman, renowned economist in Bangladesh gave a guest lecture for the students of Bangladesh Studies (DEV101) in TARC, Savar on 29th October, 2007. He discussed the political, economic and social situation of Bangladesh during post-independence period. He also answered many questions raised by the students.

Faculty members left for Higher Studies

Ms. Humayra Hossain, Lecturer, ESS has left in September 2007 to pursue a Master Program in Economics at Nottingham University, UK. She has received partial scholarship from Nottingham University for her study.

Fiona T. Rahman, another faculty of ESS has left to pursue her Ph.D in Applied Economics to University of Waterloo, Canada.

Muhammed Zafar Iqbal meet the students of Bangladesh Studies at TARC, Savar

Muhammed Zafar Iqbal, popular writer and Professor of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), Sylhet, met the students of Bangladesh Studies in residential semester at TARC, Savar on 19th October. He shared his reading habit with the students and advised them to read books and play constructive role for the welfare of Bangladesh. He also gave them some tips of writing. Dr. Anwarul Haque, Chairperson of the Department of ESS thanked Dr. Iqbal for giving his valuable time to students. Professor Iqbal gave autograph to the students.

BRAC School of Public Health (BSPH)

MPH Courses

Students successfully completed course on Aging and Health, conducted by Dr. Zahina Nahar Kabir and Dr. Mostafa Zaman, which was a two weeks course from September 2-13. Dr. Farhana Sultana worked as the teaching assistant for this course. Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Marge Koblinsky and Malabika Sarkar taught the course on Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights. Dr. Ilias Mahmud was the teaching assistant for this course.

The last courses of the academic year were Principles of Health Communication and Monitoring and Evaluation. The two courses were conducted simultaneously and were offered as electives. The course on Health Communication was taught by Dr. Muhiddin Haider and assisted by Mahrukh Mohiuddin. Dr. Ana Coghlan and Dr. Masud Ahmed taught Monitoring and Evaluation jointly.

New Student Recruitment

The admission test for new student recruitment was conducted on October 6, 2007. Selection of new students has been completed for 2008 academic year. Among 28 selected students, 14 are international, coming from countries in Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe. Students will also bring experience from a diverse discipline, ranging from biological sciences, environmental science, and liberal arts.

Seminars

Dr Khaled Hassan, Medical Officer, Human Resources for Health, Focal Point for Essential Medicines, WHO Bangladesh presented a seminar on "WHO Leadership in Health Development" on September 8th evening at the MPH student dorm in Niketan.

Dr. Hameeda Hossain, founder of Ain Shalish Kendra, presented on Human Rights and Reproductive Health on September 16th.

On September 26th, Dan Odallo, Country Coordinator of UNAIDS presented a seminar on Youth and HIV/AIDS.

Shawkat Gani, a researcher at the Research and Evaluation Division (RED) of BRAC, presented on "Epidemiology of Sexual Diseases: An example from Bangladesh" on Oct 1, 2007, Monday.

Perveen Rasheed, Managing Director, Social Marketing Company presented on "Use of Social Marketing Approach in Health Communications for Changing Behavior for Good" on October 3rd, Wednesday.

Integrated Workshop

A 3-day workshop on Integrating Public Health Skills was conducted by Jon Rhode and Cole P Dodge, 16-18 October 2007. The aim of this workshop was to a) identify essential public health functions and assess competencies, b) review learning objectives of each course and their contribution to the essential public health functions, c) assess skills and competencies needed for jobs, d) assess essential competencies for research and attributes of a sound research proposal, e) review essential information, management, and planning needs for a comprehensive public health intervention.

Proposed Thesis by Students

The current MPH students have embarked on their independent study. Topics selected by the students include a wide array of national and international health issues for their exploratory research. Some of the topics include workplace TB control program, drug abuse by street children, health micro-insurance, breastfeeding and nutrition among special populations, treatment compliance of TB, perception towards responsiveness of health workers, visceral leishmaniasis (black fever) control interventions, menstrual regulation services, mental resiliency in the face of disasters, hygiene and sanitation, obesity and physical activity, community knowledge of malaria, sexuality and sexual behavior, geriatric population, hypertensive patients, postnatal depression, perception of illnesses, spinal cord injury, children with oral cleft, and use of mobile phone as a health communication channel. The studies will be completed by the end of December.

Continuing Education Program

Courses on Healthcare Financing

World Health Organization is supporting two consecutive short courses on Health Care Financing in Bangladesh for Upazila-level health and family planning officials. Each course will be for two weeks, the first one starting November 4th. The courses deal with the dynamics of decision-making in allocation of financial resources for health. In short, it will discuss the fundamental principles of health economics as well as that of healthcare financing in the context of Bangladesh. Professor Anwar Islam is coordinating the course.

Course on Health Equity

World Bank and the World Bank Institute, Washington DC in collaboration with the James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University and ICCDR, B will be offering the second course on Equity in Health tailored for participants from Bangladesh. It will be a five day course for the health sector managers, government officials and public health experts involved in health sector reform from November 11th ' 15th, 2007 and a one day workshop on the 16th November, 2007 involving the Senior level policy makers from the Government, NGOs and development partners. The course & the workshop will be facilitated by Dr. Davidson Gwatkin of the World Bank, Dr Richard Cash of Harvard University, Dr. Abbas Bhuiya of ICCDR, B and Dr. Mushtaque Chowdhury of BRAC University. This course is the second after successful completion of the first course held in June 2007.

Faculty and Staff News:

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Assistant Professor, attended a South-South Consultation on the Interaction between Health Systems and Communities in Africa, September 10-12, Organized by AMREF International Training Centre, Nairobi.

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Assistant Professor, was invited to present a paper on "Urban Slums and Inequalities" at the Global Forum for Health Research, in Beijing Oct 29-Nov 2, 2007.

Donald Bapi Das, DCO, attended a five-day Course from September 30 to October 4 in Budget Management and Financial Reporting for Tobacco Control (Bloomberg Global Initiative to Reduce Tobacco Use). The objective of this course was to provide participants gain knowledge on budget planning and financial management.

Dr. Mushtaque Chowdhury, Dean, attended the Global Forum for Health Research in Beijing, October 29-November 2. He is a Board Member of the Forum and was also discussant at some of the sessions of the conference.

Dr. Chowdhury was also the keynote speaker at the Women Deliver Conference in the UK, October 18-20.

Dr. Shahaduz Zaman, Associate Professor and MPH Coordinator, attended an 'Expert Panel Meeting' on

curriculum development for Evaluation training in South Asia in Kathmandu from October 23-26. This was an initiative by UNICEF. Participants from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Thailand and Bangladesh joined the meeting.

Dr. Zaman also attended the Global Forum for Health Research in Beijing from October 29 ' November 2.

BIZ BEE Arranges the BIZ QUIZ Competition 2007

BIZ BEE, the Business Club of BRAC University organized the 1st Intra University Business Quiz Competition on September 27 and October 4 in the indoor games room beside the BU cafeteria. In this 2-day event 13 teams from different departments of BRAC University participated of which the majority was from the BRAC Business School. The faculty members of BRAC Business School and the Department of Economics and Social Science prepared the questions for this competition. The questions emphasized on the practical implications of the theoretical knowledge in real life and covered different aspects of business at home and abroad.

Vice Chancellor Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury inaugurated the competition at 10:00AM on September 27. In his brief speech Dr. Chowdhury mentioned that the idea of this competition originated after the BRACU team's participation the Citi Financial Quiz Competition in Channel i. The VC emphasized on the importance of organizing such events regularly in order to groom the potential BU participants at the national level and develop this culture of tough competition.

On September 27, the 1st round encounters and two quarterfinals took place and the 4 teams who reached the semifinals were: Ekra vs. Neuron and Trio Spirit vs. BU-Dynamites.

On October 4, in the same venue the two semifinals and the grand finale took place in which Ekra (Rezoan Ahmed, Md. Asif Habib & Md. Ahmed Hasan) beat the hot favorite Trio Spirit (Omar Khaiam, Mohasin Kabir & Maruf Shahjahan) to emerge as the champion. Vice Chancellor Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Pro-vice Chancellor Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, the faculty members and enthusiastic spectators witnessed the grand finale and the prize giving ceremony. The spectators could also participate and win prizes in the competition whenever any question was unanswered by the teams. Professor Chowdhury distributed the crests and certificates among the champions, the runners-up and the two remaining semifinalists. BIZ BEE's two-month-long hard work came to an end when Professor Chowdhury thanked all the participants, the faculty members who prepared the questions and the group of dedicated BIZ BEE members for their wonderful efforts. BIZ BEE promises to hold these types of events regularly to groom teamwork and leadership as well as to nurture competitiveness in BRAC University.

Residential Semester

Inter-Dorm Sports Competitions

Inter-dorm sport competitions for the Residential Semester (RS) Fall- 2007 in BRACU Campus, Savar began with the cricket match between Nikunjo and Maloncho Dorms on October 25, 2007 and Nikunjo win the match by 54 Runs. Rashel got 3 wickets. On the other hand, in handball match, Surjorasmi defeated the Surjodoy 11 - 08 goals. Raska scored 7 goals. On 26, October, The cricket match between Maloncho and Krisnochura took place and Maloncho won by 5 Wickets. In handball, Surjorasmi again defeated Surjalok by 12-0 goals and Raska scored 7 goals.

Film show at Markuly

Student of Film club organized a film show at Markuli hall on 26 October. Most of the students watched the movie and enjoyed.

Parents Day

In the afternoon of October 27th, 2007, BRACU organized a "Parents day" for the first time with the parents/guardians of the students of Fall 2007. Almost 225 parents/guardians attended in the session. The Registrar warmly welcomed the parents. Director El-pro, and some of our Teachers, the House Tutors, Lab Tutors, Librarian, Services manager and Chief Trainers of TARC were all present in the session. The Campus Superintendent facilitated the session.

A brief picture presentation on the BRACU/RS was followed by a speech by Mrs. Sarwat Abed, Director El-pro. She emphasized on the English learning and co-curricular activities, which was appreciated by the parents. Two guardians gave their speeches and finally, the Campus Superintendent spoke and facilitated the question-answer session. It was a one-hour formal session, and then they had free time to have refreshments and visit the campus including the students' dorms. Most of the guardians gave positive opinion about the RS and their children's performance. Some of the parents recommended increasing the duration of RS at Savar. It is realized that the parents consider the RS as an effective learning process. Through the activities of two-hour event, it was understood that they are very much happy with this initiative to have a "Parents day" with them. Also they are happy with the RS and its activities.

The "parents day" was a successful event for the RS. It will hopefully help in building a good relationship among the parents/guardians and the BRACU. It is also hoped that parents will be the Ambassadors for BRACU.

Department of Architecture

The spring 2006 batch students of Architecture with the help from the BUEF (BRAC University Environmental Forum) went to the Center for Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP) and painted some walls with cartoon characters much to the joy of the children there. They also painted the faces of some important personalities, foreign and national on the walls to aid the learning process of the children.

It is worth mentioning that the Department has maintained close relationship with the CRP through voluntary work in the past including the development of a landscape design for the Center.

Career Services Office

Inter University Case Competition for 'Battle of Minds'

This year British American Tobacco will conduct its 3rd 'Battle of Minds' case competition in December 2007. Fourteen teams (1 team = 4 members) from different private and public universities are likely to participate in this year's competition. Four teams had contested from BRACU and three teams went through to the second round:
Team 1: Mohasin Kabir, Omar Khaiam and Ashfaq Ul Bar Chowdhury - All from BBS
Team 2: Walid Ahmed, Mehboob Hafiz and Tanvir Dhaly - All from BBS
Team 3: Tanvir Rouf (Economics), Mishael Aziz (Economics) and Mariam Binte Faruk (BBS)

This year BATB brought a new feature to its funded program. As a rule universities had selected their own teams every year to be represented at the 'Battle of Minds' case competition; however this year BATB chose to add a jury from their end; hence a team visited BRACU on October 28, 2007. The inter university battle organized by the Career Services Office kicked off at 2 pm at the Indoor Games room. K M Shahed Zuabir, Regulatory Affairs Manager of BATB, showed great insight as he outlined the basic social welfare tasks carried out by BATB and was ably supported by Sanzid Alvi Ahmed, HR Manager-Talent & Resourcing and Jahid Shafique, Management Trainee, HR who went on to explain why BATB was such a wonderful place to work at and developing a career. Presentations were followed by case study preparation and then the presentation by the teams.

The performances of the individuals and the teams were assessed by four 'demanding' juries ' Mr. KM Shahed Zuabir from BATB and three juries from BRACU: Wasiqur Rahman Khan (ESS), S Shabazi Ahmed (BBS) & Mahmudul Haq (BBS).

There was a lot of pre-hype surrounding the event, nurtured through the various posters and banners highlighting the event and evident by the high turnout, and ceaseless support from volunteers and clubs. Much appreciation goes to Salman Rahman Khan (BRAC University Cultural Club) & Hasibul Islam (BRAC University Film Club). Much expectation is sought from the top 9 BRACU talents. Now the question lies "Will BRACU be able to succeed in national level?".

Enthusiastic BRACU students in the Indoor games auditorium made it loud without a little bit of doubt BRACU will win this year Battle of Minds. All eyes set on the national level.

Latest Internship update

Name Placed by Organization
Maruf Andalib Self Singer Bangladesh Ltd.
Shahriar Khaled CSO HSBC
Md. Fazle - E - Elahi CSO Singer Bangladesh Ltd.
Ahaduzzaman Chowdhury CSO Standard Chartered Bank
Md.Mohasin Kabir CSO Standard Chartered Bank
Ferdous Alam Patwary CSO Grameenphone
Asfia Khan Self Standard Chartered Bank
Nehal bin Hasan CSO STS Group
Md. Khaled Bin Azad CSO STS Group
Md. Akram Ali CSO RahimAfrooz

Institute of Governance Studies

The Institute has been a buzz with activity and yet more growth! We welcome to the Institute Mr Sydur Rahman Molla, Dr Akhlaq Chowdhury & Mr Saiful Bhuiyan. Mr Molla takes up the post of Project Officer; he has recently completed his Masters in Governance & Development from the Institute of Development, University of Sussex. Dr Akhlaq Chowdhury, a Fulbright Fellow and Associate Professor at The University of Alabama at Birmingham, joins the Institute to carry out further research in governance & Global Information System (GIS). Mr Saiful Bhuiyan takes up the post of Project Associate (part-time); he also holds the post of Senior Lecturer at Asa University. Mr Bhuiyan is a trained Barrister and completed his BVC from University of Northumbria.

Mr Manzoor Hasan & Dr Shahnaz Karim presented the Keynote paper, 'Harnessing the potentials of Good Local Governance', at Local Governance: Grassroots Experiences & Perspective workshop held on 12th September.

Mr Sydur Rahman Molla & Mr Haydory Akbar Ahmed provided a short presentation on the national survey for Mr. Kim McQuay, Country Representative & Mr. Farouk Chowdhury, Chief Economist, The Asia Foundation, on 30th September 2007. The meeting also provided an opportunity for discussion on possible future collaboration for research.

IGS welcomes back Dr Beata Czajkowska, Program Adviser. She will be working with the research team at IGS to finalize the State of Governance in Bangladesh 2007 report. Mr Manzoor Hasan gave a lecture on developing the National Integrity System (NIS) to civil servants at the BCS Admin Academy, Shahbagh. He was also invited by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to attend the Annual Meeting of the World Bank in Washington D.C. While in Washington Mr Hasan met Mr Praful Patel, Regional Vice President, South Asia Region of the World Bank, along with Ms Christine Wallich, Mr Rick Messick, Ms Francesca Racanantini and Mr Rand Ryterman of the World Bank; and Mr Rick Stapenhurst of the World Bank Institute.

Mr Manzoor Hasan also met Dr Paul Posner at George Mason University, Washington in anticipation of his visit to Dhaka in November 2007; he also attended the 'Sector Network Governance Asian Meeting' of gtz in Bangkok. Dr Shahnaz Karim attended a DFID sponsored workshop, 'Bangladesh: Horizon Scanning workshop' to discuss important issues facing Bangladesh over the next 20 years.

BU-IED Update

World Teachers' Day

Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Director of BU-IED, presided over the World Teacher's Day Seminar organized jointly by Teacher's Associations and Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) on 5 October at LGED Bhaban. The Secretary of Primary and Mass Education, M. Musharraf Hussain Bhuiyan was the chief guest. UNESCO Country director Dr. Malama Meleisea and Ministry of Education Joint Secretary Nazrul Islam Khan were special guests. Prof. Kazi Saleh Ahmed and Nazmul Huq presented a research report about the status of teachers. Representatives of five teachers' organizations spoke about their plans to contribute to improving the status of teacher's and teaching-learning environment in schools. An article titled "Teacher Status ' Student Learning" by Dr. Manzoor Ahmed was published in the newspaper supplement published on October 5 by the Daily Star and Prothom Alo, the Bangla Daily, on the occasion of the Teacher's Day.

Workshop with Overseas Faculty on Early Childhood Development (ECD) Course Development

A 3-day workshop from 20th to 22nd October, 2007 was held for preparing the course content of the postgraduate certificate to be offered by BU-IED. International resource personnel Dr. Faith Lamb Parker of Columbia University and Dr. Steffen Saifer of Portland State University along with two representatives from Open Society Institute (OSI), London, Ms. Sarah Klaus and Ms. Divya Lata participated the workshop. The National Resource Personnel from Dhaka University, ICDDR-B, UNICEF and Inner Force and BU-IED faculties also participated in the workshop. The participants formed teams and worked on individual course related issues and cross cutting issues such as assessment and mentorship of course participants. The visiting faculties visited BRAC Education Programme at Kaliganj and Gazipur, ICDDR-B nutrition programme (Mohakhali) and Plan Bangladesh Learning Programme at Gazipur to have a clear concept of the ECD programmes in Bangladesh. The Postgraduate Certificate Course on ECD will be started from 6th January 2008.