



BRAC University Bulletin

2012/october

Vice Chancellor Participated in a bilateral dialogue on "Indo-Bangladesh Relations"

Vice Chancellor **Prof. Ainun Nishat** visited in New Delhi last month on October 3-5, 2012 and participated in a bilateral dialogue on "Indo-Bangladesh Relations" as a member of a high profile delegation team from Bangladesh. The dialogue was held between the delegation team from Bangladesh and a set of distinguish politicians, policy makers and experts from India. The dialogue was jointly organized by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) and the Asian Institute of Transport Development (AITD). **Mr. Pranab Mukherjee**, President of India, attended in the dialogue as Chief Guest.



The dialogue focused on trade and investment cooperation; transport and connectivity; water sharing; and cooperation in the area of media of the two countries. It intended to come up with constructive and practical solutions to issues which are critical to advancing bilateral cooperation in the identified areas. The Bangladesh delegation met and interacted with high level policy makers in India and discussed issues of mutual interest concerning the two countries. The delegation team was led by **Prof. Rehman Sobhan**, Chairman, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD). **Dr. Gowher Rizvi**, Advisor to the Prime Minister; **Barrister Anisul Islam Mahmud**, MP, Former Foreign Minister, **A. K. Azad**, President, FBCCI, Ambassador **Farooq Sobhan**, Former Foreign Secretary, **Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya**, Distinguish Fellow, CPD, **Mr. Matiur Rahman**, Editor, Prothom Alo, **Mr. Mahfuz Anam**, Editor, The Daily Star was among other members of the delegation team.

Meeting on "Framework for Cooperation on South Asian Trans-boundary Waters"



A multi-lateral consultation meeting on "Framework for Cooperation on South Asian Trans-boundary Waters" was held at the Spectra Convention Centre on 13 October 2012. The event was organized by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA). The focus of the meeting was to create cooperation between the

South Asian countries. Vice Chancellor **Prof. Ainun Nishat** chaired the meeting. **Shafaqat Kakakhel** of Pakistan, **Dipak Gyawali** of Nepal, and **Partha J Das** of India were among the speakers.

6th Meeting of the Board of Trustees, BRAC University

The 6th meeting of the BRACU Board of Trustees (BoT) was held on 17 October 2012 in the Conference Room at Chairperson's Office. **Sir Fazle Hasan Abed** KCMG chaired the meeting. Renowned academics and entrepreneurs of Bangladesh were present in the meeting as members. Important academic and management decisions were taken for the university in the meeting. **Prof. Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor and **Air Cdre (Rtd.) Mr. Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury**, Registrar was also present in the meeting.

Vice Chancellor Attended the 2nd Meeting of Academic Council of South Asian University

The 2nd meeting of the Academic Council of South Asian University, a SAARC University held on 15 October 2012 in New Delhi. **Prof. Ainun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor attended the meeting as external expert member of the Academic Council. **Prof. G K Chaddha**, Vice Chancellor of South Asian University Chaired the meeting.

BBS Updates

Center for Business Excellence (CBE)

Center for Business Excellence (CBE) is an initiative by BRAC Business School (BBS) of BRAC University. Although such centers are not uncommon in leading global universities, as far as Bangladesh is concerned not many have ventured into this domain. The aim of the center will be to provide executive trainings and facilitating executive development programs. With the top notch training and resource professionals from academia as well as corporate arena, BBS' vision is to establish CBE as the center for the best available professional services within South Asian region. To advance with the establishment of the center CBE organized a "Focus Group discussion" at BRAC Business School (BBS) on Thursday, October 18, 2012. This program was designed, developed and facilitated to generate ideas and create pathways for the institution's way forward.

Participants of the focus group discussion included the honorable Vice Chancellor of BRAC University **Dr. Ainun Nishat**, Pro Vice Chancellor **Professor Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**, Registrar **Air Cdre (Retd) Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury**, Professor & Director of BRAC Business School **Mr. Mamun Rashid**, Assistant Professor & Program Manager of CBE **Dr. Md. Tareque Aziz**, distinguished top level executives from corporate houses like Sanofi Aventis Bangladesh Limited, Apollo Hospitals Ltd., Meghna Group of Industries, Enroute International Limited, Bangladesh Institute of Bank Management, DUN & Bradstreet Rating Agency, NGGL, Green Delta Insurance Company Limited, Connectika Ltd., Bangladesh MBA Association and other reputed corporate houses. The participants had formal discussion and shared ideas on taking CBE to the next level. Their valuable suggestions and guidelines in the focus group discussion have provided CBE with the knowledge and encouragement to take it's dream of becoming a regional center for business excellence, a bit further.

Seminar on 'Bangladesh the Next Hot Spot: Potential Export Sectors; Its current status & future prospects'



Who does not want a blend of infotainment and self-acknowledgement? For that BRAC University Business Club (BIZ BEE) organized a seminar on October 3, 2012, titled 'Bangladesh the Next Hot Spot: Potential Export Sectors; Its current status & future prospects' highlighting the booming export sectors like cement, ceramics, garment products and electronics which was a milestone for the history of BIZ BEE in a true sense. The Chief Guest was **Mr. Dilip Barua**, Honorable Minister for Industries, The People's Republic of Bangladesh. The audience was delighted with the presence of **Mohammed Jahangir Alam**, Chairman of Crown Cement; **Rizvi-Ul-Kabir**, Chief Operating Officer of Shinepukur Ceramics and **Lokman Hossain Akash**, Chief of International Marketing of Walton. The seminar was also honored by **Dr. Akbar Ali Khan** as the Chair of the session and **Professor Mamun Rashid** as the Key Note Speaker.

The seminar started with an inspiring video presentation, showing the glimpse of overall activities of BIZ BEE. Registrar **Mr. Ishfaq Ilahi Chowdhury** provided a short but informative welcome speech on behalf of Vice Chancellor of BRAC University. It was followed by **Prof. Mamun Rashid** who shared his valuable

thoughts and knowledge with the students. He focused on the recent economy by giving lot of facts. He said that recently the economic slowdown of other countries has an adverse impact on our economy. We came to know that our major export partners are USA, Germany, UK, France, Canada, and Italy in the year of 2010-11. At the same time our major trading partners are European Union with 54.3%, followed by NAFTA (26.0%). He also said that Bangladesh has a preferential access to the European Markets under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) which can help our country to get highest export percentage crossing Sri Lanka, China, India, Korea etc. in the Fiscal Year 2009-11. After that, he tried to focus on the flourishing export sectors like cement, ceramics and electronics. He emphasized on the growth of cement, salt and stone with 46.33% in the first eight months of FY2011-12(July-February). Apart from that, he encouraged ceramic industry by saying that, so far BDT 3000 crore has been invested in the ceramic industry from home and abroad. In terms of electronics, he admitted that still it is on infancy level but due to the increasing demand of home appliances, Bangladesh has started exporting electronic goods to Middle East and Africa.

After his enlightening speech, the stage was honored by the Chairman of Crown Cement. Mohammed Jahangir Alam was very optimistic about the emerging export growth of cement up to 30%-40% in the coming year. He also said that, the favorable geographical location, per capita consumption of cement and unexploited resources in Bangladesh like limestone or coal mine etc. can help to envision an integrated cement plant in future.

Then, **Mr. Rizvi-Ul-Kabir**, Chief Operating Officer, Shinepukur Ceramics took the floor. Being the Market Leader of Ceramic Industry in Bangladesh, Shinepukur achieved 'National Export Trophy' four times which is a remarkable achievement for them. At the same time they achieved 'Super Brand Award' for their successful branding in domestic market. Shinepukur Ceramics mostly exports to UK, Italy, USA, Canada, Mexico, Australia & Egypt and to other 18 countries. Currently Bangladesh has five competitor countries i.e. China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Eastern Europe in terms of producing ceramic. And among them Bangladesh is the most suitable place for outsourcing because of different problems persisting in other competitor countries. World Class Quality & Precision, Compliance (Health, Safety & Environment), Lead & Cadmium issue, High Production Cost, Worldwide close down of many factories, Anti-Dumping Duty on Chinese Products etc are some of those problems. As Bangladesh does not have these issues, it is most favorable place for outsourcing ceramic products. At the end of his speech Mr. Rizvi shared a few interesting facts about Shinepukur ceramics to the students. They came to that, world's best bone china plant is in Bangladesh. Apart from that, audience were charmed to hear that the official Dinnerware of Ex-US President Mr. Clinton; Rashtrapati Bhavan of India; President House of Pakistan were sourced from Shinepukur Ceramics.

After that overwhelming speech, **Lokman Hossain Akash**, Chief of International Marketing of Walton came to the stage to share his thoughts. Walton already started producing fridge, motor bike and other electronic appliances and trying to export them according to the international demand. He emphasized on high quality, low cost, availability of the resources and continuous improvement towards setting up an electronic industry in Bangladesh. He also informed that, very soon Walton Hi-tech industries Ltd. are going to have technical collaboration

with Yamaha and Honda.

The most awaited speaker finally graced the stage with his inspiring speech. Honorable minister, **Mr. Dilip Barua** shared some important facts about the government's pioneering economic management to maintain a sustainable growth in GDP. At the same time, his profound advice pointed out on the infrastructure development, R&D support and to promote private sector. He ended up saying that to generate employment; industrial sectors are more capable and they can also encourage having young talent for intellectual support.

Dr. Akbar Ali Khan, prominent economist conducted the seminar as the Chair of the session mentioning that "So far, we have done well, but we could do better". He suggested removing bottleneck in the infrastructure, non-tariff barrier constraints and turning the double digit interest rate to single digit to accelerate the development process.

Finally, the seminar came to an end with a vote of thanks to the guests and speakers from Pro-Vice Chancellor, **Professor Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**. He hoped that, Bangladeshi companies and young talents can take our country to pinnacle of the world with utmost pride. It was really a unique opportunity to be in touch with these eminent personalities and BRAC University Business Club (BIZ BEE) was very successful in making that happen.

Dialogue on 'The State of the Economy'

BRAC Business School organized a dialogue on the state of the Bangladesh economy at GDLN center on 16th October, 2012. **Professor Akbar Ali Khan** was the session chair, and **Dr. Mirza Azizul Islam**, visiting professor BRAC Business School was the chief guest. Keynote discussant paper was presented by **Professor Mamun Rashid**, Director, BRAC Business School. Among others, Dr. **Sayera Younus**, Adjunct Professor, BBS, and Deputy General Manager, Research Department, Bangladesh Bank, **Dr. Quazi Mesbahuddin Ahmed**, MD, PKSF, **Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed**, Professor North South University and former Governor, Bangladesh Bank, **Dr. Zahid Hussain**, Senior Economist, World Bank, and Dr. Shamsul Alam, Member, Planning Commission were also the panel discussants in the program.

Besides, faculties, students, and Pro Vice Chancellor, Registrar of BRAC University were also present in the program. Program was inaugurated by **Kulsum Popy**, lecturer BBS, and closed by **Showvonick Datta**, lecturer BBS.

Keynote discussant papers presented by **Professor Mamun Rashid** covered the economic situation and economic data of the 1st quarter of FY 13. After his discussion, **Professor Salehuddin Ahmed** discussed about the challenges that Bangladesh economy is facing despite all the positive statistical data. He said the climate is not investment friendly for the private sector and urgent actions are required to resolve the infrastructure deficiency for achieving higher economic growth.

Professor Akbar Ali Khan said the country will have a satisfactory achievement even if Bangladesh failed to achieve its targeted economic growth of 7.2 percent

this fiscal year. He added the country will have to raise the productivity of its investment. He mentioned despite all the investments in roads and highways one cannot save time traveling from one location to another location. For example with two ferry from Comilla to Dhaka it used to take 2.5 hours, and now with an investments of billion dollars with two bridges one still needs more time than before. He mentioned major reforms in administration are necessary for achieving the target growth rate.

Chief Guest, **AB Mirza Azizul Islam**, adviser to a former caretaker government, mentioned his concern about the budget deficit and how Government is going to finance it. He mentioned government must ensure the investment activity on the scale we needed, and improve the infrastructure shortage for sustaining a healthy economy. He also mentioned the investment activities and fiscal policies remain slow in the 1st quarter, which might be a reason for positive statistical data.

Besides them, **Shamsul Alam**, Member, Planning Commission, said the state of the economy is good and all indicators of the economy are showing positive trends. He mentioned the growth will sustain, and his speech followed by questions from students, participants and journalists. **Dr. Zahid Hussain**, senior economist of the World Bank, said though the statistical data of the Q1, FY 13 is good, but longer-term growth poses a challenge for Bangladesh. **Mr. Quazi Mesbahuddin Ahmed**, managing director of Palli Karma-Sahayak Foundation (PKSF), said the 7.2 percent growth seems to be completely unattainable under the present circumstances, but the trends are good and if continue like this still we can achieve a reasonable growth. **Dr. Sayera Younus** also discussed about the economic situation of the country.

The meeting ended with questions and answer session by guests, students, and faculties.

BDI Updates

Course on "Financial Services for the Poor: An Introduction"



BRAC Development Institute (BDI) once again organized a two-week course on "Financial Services for the Poor: An Introduction" from October 6 - 18, 2012. This was the seventh edition of the course, which is targeted mostly to an international audience with little or no knowledge of microfinance. It was grounded in the experience of Bangladesh but also provided a broad global picture of the state of microfinance, its emergence and challenges, the diversity of financial products on offer and the need to have a strong poverty focus. The course was team taught, using different pedagogical methods, and included extensive field visits to BRAC, TMSS, ASA, BURO Bangladesh and SafeSave. The course was attended by 16 participants from Japan and various African countries: Nigeria, Malawi, Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, Swaziland, Botswana and Uganda.

Seminar on "The Changing Face of Microfinance in South Asia"



BDI organized a seminar to host a prominent figure of microfinance arena, Steve Rasmussen, Manager, Technology and Business Model Innovation, CGAP. He was invited to discuss the use of technology to expand poor people's access to financial services. He also explored the changing business models of microfinance institutions and emerging issues in South Asia, especially in the politicization of microfinance in India and Pakistan. It needs to be mentioned that Steve Rasmussen has more than 25 years of experience in microfinance leadership. Prior to CGAP, Steve was the World Bank's microfinance focal point for South Asia as well as the IFC's nominee Director on the boards of two microfinance banks. The seminar was held On October 1, 2012 at BRAC University.

New exploratory study "Preliminary overview of the home based component of the garment sector in Bangladesh"

A new exploratory study has been undertaken by Centre for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST) titled "Preliminary overview of the home based component of the garment sector in Bangladesh" funded by Women in Informal Employment: Globalization and Organizing (WIEGO). This short term exploratory research aims to focus on the home-based female workers in the export garment sector. Although factory-based garment sector employment has featured prominently in academic research and activist arenas, not much is known about

the situation of home-based workers (mainly women) in this sector. One reason for the dearth of information is the invisibility of home-based workers and their lack of organization. As such, this study is going to conduct a situation analysis of home-based workers in the export garment sector.

C3ER Updates

Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction



Mr. Nandan Mukherjee, Program Manager of Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), BRAC University, attended the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR) at Yogyakarta, Indonesia from October 22nd through October 25th, 2012. The event was the unique workplace for the Ministers in charge of disaster management from the Asian region to reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA). For C3ER, the conference served as a forum to exchange experiences on successful practices and innovative approaches in implementing HFA's five priorities for action at the national and local levels.

Mr. Mukherjee participated and lectured on a side event on "Climate change induced loss and damage assessment at the local level".

Community Session/Focal Group Discussion in Satkhira for project on "Role of Governance against Climate Change Induced Migration"

Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), BRAC University organized and participated in a field trip from 11th October through 19th October, 2012, for the project titled "Role of Governance against Climate Change Induced Migration". Main objective was to learn about local environmental conditions, perception and experience on climate change phenomena, local livelihoods and income, local governance and management; and if and how these factors are related to migration out of Satkhira.



C3ER team facilitated community sessions and focus group discussion in Gabura and Munshiganj Upazila. The findings from the community sessions and focus group discussion is that the major source of income at Gabura and Munshiganj is shrimp farming or related and agriculture as a minor. Because of the rise of saline concentration, businessmen and other poor people are shifting their earning source to shrimp farming than agriculture. Complains are coming about the continuous reduction of fertility of lands for agricultural use. Thus people have very few choices to generate income. As the shrimp farming is also an expensive process so the powerful moneymakers took the opportunity thus many poor residents have no other choice than to join as a labor for the farming and the businessmen are using those advantages as much as they can. As the choice of income getting lower because of the rise of saline concentration so peoples are shifting mostly from Munshiganj to some other places like Satkhira, Khulna or even outside Bangladesh.

CSO Updates

"Networking is Building Relationships" Organized by CSO, Fall 2012

More than 150 students from all departments got up close and personal with top communication speakers **Ms. Masroora Haque**, and **Mr. Nizam Uddin Ahmed** at the Fall 12, Professional Skill Development Class hosted by Career Services Office.

The aim of the networking session was provided some insight into job search and strategies which is necessary for fresh graduates. Guest speaker **Mr. Nizam Uddin Ahmed**, Director of Finance and Operational Development, LM Ericsson Bangladesh Limited, demonstrate his lecture on Trends in the workplace, and Success at work which helped the students to have a clear understanding on

current job market. This is an in-depth, practical program designed to help students enhancing their self-confidence, self-esteem and build relationship with job market.



Ms. Masroora Haque, who is a Bachelor of Arts in Communications Studies York University, working at Toronto-based Marketing and Communications Coordinator, GFD of Canada, provided presentation on Myths and truths about networking. Her discussion was all about "getting to know people, broadening the circle of people who know you and what you can do" which are the cultivation productive relationships of the real essence of networking.

"The session was definitely an eye opener, very informative. I feel very privileged to have been participating in the session, the speakers were on point and overall it was an educational experience," said **Ms. Masroora Haque**, a member of Canadian Public Relations Association (CPRS Toronto) and International Association of Business Communicators (IABC Toronto). At the end of the 'Networking Session' **Ms. Asma Banu**, Sr. Asst. Director, CSO appreciated speakers to help put a new perspective on the world of work. Students got excellent opportunity to network with the speakers **Mr. Nizam Uddin Ahmed** and **Ms. Masroora Haque**. This helped to spark not only our interest in networking, but helped us excite about getting into the working world," remarks from **Ms. Banu**.

Counseling Unit Updates

Workshop on Depression

Depression drains out our energy, hope and drive, making it difficult to do what we need to do to feel better. Any of us, irrespective of age, gender or background, can be affected at some point in our life from depression. But while overcoming depression is not a quick process or easy, it's not impossible. We can't beat it through sheer willpower, but we do have some control-even if the depression is severe and stubbornly persistent. The key is to start small and build from there. Feeling better takes time, but we can get there if we make positive choices for own self each day. Developing awareness on Depression and learning skills to overcome from it can help individuals who are experiencing depression or related mood disorders. It also can help those who are concerned for a family

member or friend; people who are seeking to learn more about the condition, and also those who may be wondering if depression could be a factor for them.



From that perspective, Counseling Unit organized a workshop called "Understanding Depression: Facing the Challenge" which was held in 18th October 2012 at UB 0223. The topics covered in this workshop were: What is Depression? Am I Depressed? How is Depression Treated? Tips for Coping with Depression, Supporting Others,

Depression and Young People, Mood Diary etc.. Students were very enthusiastic. It was a participatory workshop and their joyful feedback helped us to understand their level of understanding about this mental health issue.

'Motivational Session' for Medha Bikash

For last two years Counseling Unit of BRAC University has been visiting the Medha Bikash, a program run by BEP (BRAC Education Program), to conduct a motivational session for the students coming from deprived families. The session generally is divided into two segments. In the first segment, the expert Counselor provides a lecture at a class room setting where common psychosocial issues are discussed. In this segment, students share their problems and also the good things happening in their lives in a large group. The second segment covers mainly the individual counseling sessions for the students who express their need for individual session.



The latest visit for the Medha Bikash group was held on 8th and 11th October, 2012 with the students of batch 02 and 03. As usual, it was a two day session for the underprivileged students coming from rural and at the same time very successful academic background. This time 45 students have participated in the session. The session was conducted by **Anjuman Ara Eva**. The content of

the session was different kind of psychosocial and motivational issues, especially focusing on self confidence. The discussion could motivate and inspire them to realize the broader picture of what they are up to. It was participatory and inspiring as well. After the class, individual counseling sessions were done with the students needed that.

ENH Updates

Study Trips of ENH students

On 6th October 2012, students of Eng 102: English Composition- I went to visit **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman** Novo Theatre at Bijoy Sarani and Bangabandhu Memorial Museum at Dhanmondi. The course teacher **Sabreena Ahmed** accompanied the students on the trip. The students submitted response papers on their experience as a part of the marked assignments of the course. Around 120 students of Hum 101: World Civilization and Culture went on a study trip to Mahasthangar and Paharpur of Bogra on 12th October 2012. The trip was organised by the course teacher **Professor Samina Sultana** and Teaching Assistant **Ayrin Ahmed**. Mahasthangar is the remnants of a 2nd Century ancient city of Bengal. On the other hand, Paharpur houses the famous Buddhist Bihar of Raja Dharmapal of the Pala reign.

Workshops and Conferences

Ms. Sabreena Ahmed, Lecturer, ENH attended the day-long workshop titled BBC Media Action Script Writers' Workshop held on Saturday, 13th October 2012 at Hotel Swiss Garden, Banani. This workshop was conducted by senior creative professionals from the BBC where participants were introduced to the strategies of developing original ideas and examining various styles of television and movie scriptwriting.

On 20th October 2012, a conference titled "Teaching and Learning English through Technology" was held at the Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, University of Dhaka. **Professor Firdous Azim** of ENH chaired a session of the conference titled "xploiting Web Resources in English Teaching."

Mahmuda Akhter, Lecturer, ENH presented her paper titled "Prospects of Podcasting at the Tertiary Level" at the same session. The paper is co-authored with **Dr Muhammed Shahriar Haque**, East West University.

Sabreena Ahmed, Lecturer, ENH and **Hamim-Al-Ahsan**, Administrator of BRACU MOODLE System, presented their joint paper "Using MOODLE @ BRAC University" at the same conference.

Guest Lectures

On 14th October 2012, **Ms. Tasneem Tayeb Kabir**, Editor of "Young and Independent" a supplement of The Independent newspaper spoke to the students of Eng 401: English for Print Media. Her lecture comprised of topics such as editing in the print media, proof reading, ways to avoid and career in journalism. The teacher of the course **Ms. Roohi Huda** had organised the lecture for the students.

M.A. students of Eng646: Computer Assisted Language Learning had the privilege to have **Ms. Mabruka Toaha** of BBC Media Action, Dhaka in their class on 15th October 2012. **Toaha** shared her experiences of designing materials for teaching English through platforms such as websites, newspapers and mobile phones with

the students. She also emphasized on how technology has transformed the way of teaching English to the common people of Bangladesh.

ENH Student attends Bangladesh Youth Delegation to India (BYDI) 2012



Niamul Kabir, M.A. student of Applied Linguistics, ENH, represented BRAC University at the Bangladesh Youth Delegation to India (BYDI) 2012 held from 6th -13th October 2012. The eight-day tour covered a visit to Delhi, Agra of Uttar Pradesh, Kolkata of West Bengal and Gurgaon of Haryana. The highlights of the trip were a banquet with the Central Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports of India, and a session with the 13th President of India, **Padma Bhivushan Shri Pranav Mukherjee** at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi. Knowing the world's largest democratic state India and letting the youth of India know about Bangladesh by exchanging different socio-cultural aspects and ideas of both the countries was the chief purpose of the trip of BYDI-2012.

MNS Updates

Bangladesh Electronics Society National Conference on Electronics & ICT for National Development

Bangladesh Electronics Society organized the above-mentioned conference at the Atomic Energy Centre auditorium, Dhaka . **Professor A. A. Z. Ahmad** chaired the technical session on "Alternate Energy Sources: Issues & Challenges" held on October 3, 2012. **Mr. A. S. M. Firoz**, Chairman, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) presented a paper titled "resent Status & Challenges for Implementation of Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP)" while **Engr. Ali Zalquarnin**, Member, Planning and Development, BAEC presented his talk on "Safety Features of Nuclear Power Plant & Related Issues & Challenges for RNPP". Two more papers on solar energy titled "Solar Energy - Present Status and Prospects" and "Development of Mini-Grid for Village using Photo-Voltaic Systems" were presented by **Dr. Engr. Shafiqul Islam** of BAEC and **Professor M. Habibur Rahman** of the University of Dhaka respectively. Lively question and

answer session ensued after the presentation of the papers.

BRACU: BRAC Synergy: Workshop on Plant Biotechnology



The Biotechnology programme, MNS Dept. BRACU in collaboration with the BRAC-ARDC organized a half-day long workshop on plant biotechnology at BRACU on 4 Oct, 2012. The workshop was organized to share information regarding the present research activities that are going on at

BRAC ARDC and BRACU in the field of plant biotechnology. At the inaugural function **Dr. Mahabub Hossain**, Executive Director, BRAC was present as the Chief Guest and **Professor Syed M Hashmi**, Director, BDI was the Special Guest. Professor **A. A. Ziauddin Ahmad**, Chairperson, MNS Dept. chaired the inaugural session. The scientific session was moderated by **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury**, Coordinator, Biotechnology Programme. At the beginning of the function **Professor Choudhury** presented the purpose and goal of the workshop. He emphasised on developing synergy between BRAC ARDC and BRACU to carry out world class research in the field of plant biotechnology. **Dr. Mahabub Hossain** appreciated the initiative and expressed full cooperation from his side. Three eminent scientists from Dhaka University , namely, **Professor Haseena Khan** and **Professor Zeba I. Seraj** of the Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; and **Professor Rakha Hari Sarker** from the Dept. of Botany were present in the workshop as experts and collaborators of BRACU. Eight papers were presented. **Dr. Md. Sirajul Islam**, Programme Head, BRAC ARDC presented a paper entitled "Overview of the BRAC Program on Agriculture and Food Security in Bangladesh". He explained BRAC ARDC's goal to achieve food security in disaster prone areas of Bangladesh by developing biotic and abiotic stress tolerant vegetable crops and rice. A detailed account of the activities taken to increase crop yield through hybrid technology was presented by **Dr. M A Salam**, Advisor, BRAC ARDC. **Dr. F. Javier Zapata Arias**, Advisor, BRAC ARDC presented the R & D activities going on through biotechnological approach like plant tissue culture. He explained the new approaches taken by the biotechnology lab to produce *in vitro* plantlets under low cost tissue culture laboratory facilities termed "*The Eco Solution*". Going toward more

advanced field of biotechnology distinguished scientist **Profesor Haseena Khan** presented a paper on 'Application of Genome Sequencing with special emphasis on Jute'. She detailed out how Bangladesh for the first time was able to sequence the genome of jute. **Professor Zeba I. Seraj** outlined different biotechnological approaches so far taken in her lab to develop submerging and salt tolerant rice which has successfully been handed over to the **Bangladesh Rice Research Institute (BARI)**. Taking the account of importance of legume crop in Bangladesh **Professor Rakha Hari Sarker** presented a paper entitled "Improvement of Grain Legumes through Transformation". He presented his work

on lentils, groundnuts, mung beans and chickpeas. In the third part of the workshop **Dr. Aparna Islam**, Associate Professor, Biotechnology Programme along with the MS students and **Mr. Samsad Razzaque**, Research Associate, BAS-USDA project outlined the activities on plant biotechnology being carried out at the BRACU and collaboration with different institutes in this regard. **Dr Islam** presented a paper entitled "Research in the Field of Plant Biotechnology: An Endeavor of BRACU". She briefed the audience regarding several collaborative research projects completed since commencement of biotechnology programme in 2007. Research completed in collaboration with other organizations included "Effect of growth regulators on *in vitro* regeneration in potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) varieties of Bangladesh" with Shere Bangla Agricultural University; genomics research in characterizing of jute genomic LTR retroposon sequences and expression of vacuolar protein pump ATPase subunit F and plant tissue culture and transformation biotechnology programme with Dhaka University to explore tissue culture potency and susceptibility toward transformation in tomato. At present independent research is going on with legume crops like peanuts and mung beans. MS students **Ms. Shahana Chowdhury**, **Ms. Kashmery Khan** and **Ms. Rabab Mahdi** presented these activities. **Dr. Islam** pointed out that the present state of plant biotechnology research at the BRACU would not have been possible if these projects were not funded by the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences through its programme on BAS-USDA programme on agriculture and life sciences. With this funding molecular lab facilities have been established at BRACU.

Following the presentations an open discussion was held. **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury** moderated the session. Several suggestions of collaborative projects were discussed. **Dr. Mahboob Hossain** assured all out support of BRAC in collaborative research between BRACU and BRAC ARDC. The workshop was participated by more than 50 scientists, researchers, faculties and research students of BRAC ARDC, University of Dhaka and BRACU. The workshop ended with a positive vibes to do more collaborative work not only with public universities but also form a strong synergy among the BRAC sister concerns. The function ended with vote of thanks to and from **Professor A. A. Z. Ahmad**.

Pedagogic Workshop on 'Innovative Teaching and Learning in and Beyond the Classroom'

Dr. Mohammad Sorowar Hossain and **Mahbubul Hasan Siddiquee** of the MNS Department participated in the pedagogic workshop titled 'Innovative Teaching and Learning in and Beyond the Classroom' jointly organized by JPGSPH and Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) of BRACU and held on October 13, 2012 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The workshop was conducted and facilitated by national and international faculty members. This workshop provided an opportunity to share global and local innovative models and methods of teaching with interested faculty in Bangladesh. This interactive one-day training workshop stressed to leave didactic instructor-to-student learning methods behind, and explore rich array of effective pedagogic methods such as peer and team-based learning, case and problem-based approaches, role play, and hands-on, field-based experiences.

Workshop on Medical Professionals for the 21st Century

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury participated in the Workshop on Medical Professionals for the 21st Century held on 15 November 2012 at the Lecture Room of the School of Public Health , BRACU. Organized by the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences (BAS) under the sponsorship of the Inter Academy Medical Panel (IAMP), the workshop dealt on challenges of the medical professionals in the 21st century in the light of changing world situation and technological developments. **Professor Timothy J. Evans**, Dean of the School of Public Health was the keynote speaker and **Professor Choudhury** was the moderator of the workshop. **Professor Abul Kalam Azad**, Additional Director General, Health, GOB, was the Chief Guest. Participants in the workshop included officials of the Ministry of Health, faculties of medical colleges in the public and private sectors, scientists from research institutions like BIRDEM, IPH, IERDC, Fellows of the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences and some NGOs. The keynote speaker highlighted the Report of the World Health Commission of which **Professor Evans** is a member. The Commission made ten recommendations for instructional and institutional reforms of medical education to meet the national and global health challenges. During the open discussion session, the participants highly appreciated the Commission's Report and discussed suitability of implementation of the recommendations in the context of Bangladesh . It was opined that more discussion workshops should be organized by BAS to disseminate the recommendations to different stakeholders in the health sector. **Professor Choudhury** thanked the participants for their constructive suggestions and assured them of full cooperation of BAS for the organizing of more dissemination workshops.

Lecture Series Titled "Green Ice Sheet and Sea Level Rise in the Indian Ocean

Professor A. A. Z. Ahmad attended the above-mentioned event organized by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS) in a local hotel on October 18, 2012. This is a result of the cooperative initiative between BCAS and Nansen Environmental & Remote Sensing Center (NERSC), Bergen University , Bergen , Norway . **Professor Ola M. Johannessen**, leading scientist in the field of oceanography delivered the above-mentioned lecture. **Professor Johannessen** is at present the Executive Chairman of the Board and the Founding Director of the Nansen Environmental and Remote Sensing Centre (NERSC). He is also **Professor Emeritus** at the Geophysical Institute, University of Bergen . **Professor Johannessen** in his lecture shared the state of the art knowledge on Greenland ice sheet and sea level rise in the Indian Ocean & the Bay of Bengal and their linkages with climate change in South Asia, more specifically Bangladesh coast. There was a large gathering of participants from different universities & R/D institutions of the country.

Observation of Full Moon Arranged by MNS Departmen

Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, BRACU arranged a lunar observation program on the day after full moon of October, 2012. The event was conducted by **Professor Mofiz Uddin Ahmed** on 30 October, 2012, precisely at 6.45 pm. The program was arranged as a part of popularization of celestial body observation in the field of astronomy and astrophysics. The full moon of 29 October had to be skipped as it fell within the Eid vacation. The moon rose 52 minutes later than the rising time of the previous day at 6.21 pm and was at an

elevation of 15 degrees when the observation was made at 6.45 pm.

The observation was started with a telescope of focal length of 700mm and object mirror 76mm. A magnification of 3.8 times was obtained. The photos of moon (illuminated 99.6% having a magnitude of approximately-12.15) were taken with a Sony Cyber Shot 26mm wide-angle lens. The moon was residing between zodiac signs Aries and Taurus having a distance of approximately 402751 km from The Earth. The observation program lasted for one hour and the details of the rough surface of the near side of the moon could be seen.

It is expected that an official lunar observation program will be launched by November 28, 2012, organized by the Natural Sciences club under the MNS Department to encourage more students as well as other to popularize astronomy and astrophysics in the country.

Visiting of ICDDR,B Labs by Microbiology Students



A batch of microbiology major students of MNS department had a tour of ICDDR,B labs. **Dr. Mohammad Sorowar Hossain**, Assistant Professor led the group. Students were highly motivated and inquisitive while visiting world-class Virology Lab (Principal investigator: **Dr. Mustafizur Rahman**, Associate Scientist) and Acute Respiratory Infection Lab (Principal investigator: **Dr. Mahbubur Rahman**, Scientist). They made a good impression for BRACU by asking many interesting scientific questions to the respective scientists. **Dr. Mahbubur Rahman** highly appreciated the students for their scientific thirst and knowledge in microbiology.

RS Updates

Drama on History of Bangladesh



As part of the course DEV-101 Bangladesh Studies course the students of Residential Semester Fall 2012 staged a historical drama in the Markuli Hall on 18

October 2012. In the stage performance, students embodied different epoch defining historical characters through role playing.

The drama concentrated on the roots and origins of the ancient people and the different stages of Bangladesh's independence struggle starting from the British rule. The drama covered Pala Dynasty, Sena Dynasty, Muslim Rule, Battle of Palasy in 1757, British Colonial Bengal, Resistances against the British Rule for example, Indigo Movement, Tevaga Movement, Sepoy Revolt, Partition of India in 1947, Pakistan Period and Rise of Bangalee Nationalism, Language Movement in 1952, United Front Election in 1954, Student Movement in 1962, Six-point Program in 1966, Mass Upsurge in 1969, General Election in 1970, Operation Search Light and Liberation War and independence of Bangladesh in 1971.

Director of BRAC Institute of Language (BIL), **Lady Syeda Sarwat Abed** was present as the Chief Guest while Campus Superintendent, **Mr. Mahfuzul Bari Chowdhury** and Assistant Campus Superintendent, **Mr. Rehan Ahmed** and other faculty members were also present.

Johari Window at Savar Campus



On 29 September, 2012 the "Ethics and Culture Course" of BRAC University Residential Campus arranged a session on "Johari Window", a tool for reaching to the people.

Johari Window is a process for strengthening personality or personal development .Basically, it focuses on the importance and dynamics of receiving and giving feedback .The session has enriched the Ethics & Culture Course without a doubt and motivated the learners to receive feedback from others. Afterwards, there was a reflection session which was presided by Pro-Vice Chancellor **Prof. Golam Samdani Fakir.**

A session on Liberation war of Bangladesh

On 20 October, 2012 a lecture on the Liberation War of Bangladesh was held at Markuli Hall of BRAC University Savar Campus as the part



of experiential learning activity of Bangladesh Studies Course.

The purpose of this session was to try to give students a clear idea about the Liberation War to uphold and enhance their sense of patriotism. The whole session was facilitated by **Major (Retd.) Kamrul Hasan Bhuiyan** and **Brigadier General (Retd). Nurul Bashir PSC. Major Kamrul** focused much on describing unforgettable incidents while **Brigadier Bashir** tried to lift up students' spirit for the development of the country. Later, the speakers attended a question-answer session.

A Seminar on Public Health



On 6 October, 2012 a seminar on 'Public Health' was held in BRACU Savar Campus for the students of present semester with a view to familiarizing them with the benefits of health and wellbeing as well as some basic things regarding sexual and

reproductive health.

Assistant Campus Super inaugurated the program while **Dr. Kawkab Mahmud** and **Dr. Hasib** conducted the sessions respectively on 'Health and Well Being' and 'Sexual and Reproductive Health'.

Story of BRAC

On 30 September, 2012, BRAC University Savar Campus organized a session titled 'Story of BRAC' which was conducted by **Mr. Md. Abdur Rahman**, former Program Coordinator of BRAC Learning Division. The speaker started the discussion with development issues, which he eventually related to different BRAC programs. The session also showed a short documentary on BRAC activities and a video speech of **Sir Fazle Hasan Abed**.

SECS Updates

CARG Update



In the 2nd annual IEEE Global Humanitarian Technology Conference - GHTC 2012, held on October 21-24, 2012 Seattle, Washington, USA that attracted over 250 attendees from 22 countries, CARG (Control and Applications Research Group) of BRAC University has presented two successful research papers: "*Solar Battery Charging Station and Torque Sensor Based Electrically Assisted Tricycle*", and "*The Solar Home System Component Testing*". The papers were presented by **Dr. AKM Abdul Malek Azad**, who headed these researches.



The presentation was followed by a conference where **Dr. Azad** had met the director of UN Sustainable Energy, **Mr. Knut Aanstad**, to discuss further prospects of CARG researches. These papers add to tally of the thirty-three researches that have already been successfully completed and appraised as novel and contributions made to the country through these researches has been praiseworthy. The IEEE GHTC conference aims in bringing together individuals who are working to improve the lives of the billions of people around the world living at the bottom of the economic pyramid.



The third D-8 (developing-eight) Ministerial Meeting on Industries and the seventh meeting, first of its kind in Bangladesh, of the working group on Industrial Cooperation was held on Monday (Oct 8), aiming to create a stronger platform for giving a boost to the establishment of an Automotive Industry in Bangladesh, and trade and investment within the member countries. **Mr. Dilip Barua**, Hon'ble Minister for Industries was the chief guest of the conference.

CARG, BRAC University was a proud participant of the program (Automotive working group) that was chaired by **Prof. Ainun Nishat** himself. The conference was attended by representatives from the member countries of the D8 summit. **Dr. AKM Abdul Malek Azad** was invited to participate the conference from CARG as a resource person, which contributed to the making of the policy guidelines for the automotive industry through the D8 meetings held at the Winter Garden, Ruposhi Bangla Hotel. Such participations are creating industrial links with our University and helping us push the researches at CARG a step further.

TLC Updates

7th TLC Follow-up workshop on Visiting the Application of Learning from TLC Workshop was held on October 4 at BRACU auditorium.

It was designed for the faculty members who attended the 7th TLC workshop during May 7-10, 2012.

The Objectives of the workshop were-

- Sharing the experiences of classroom teaching after attending 7th TLC workshop
- Applying the Art of Questioning in assessing the different learning domains

The workshop started with an opening song followed by a socialization exercise 'Mobile Reflections'. Through this exercise, each one had the chance to greet others and to share two most important areas of improvement in teaching they had from TLC workshop. The first session was on 'Revisiting the Art of Questioning'. The session started with a concise PowerPoint presentation on 'Learning Domains' (ref. Bloom's Taxonomy). It was continued with the discussion and preparing questions on different learning domains relating the story of 'Hare & Tortoise'. After a short health break, there was another session on "sharing classroom teaching experiences in group" where the participants reflected on their post-workshop commitments, they made at 7th TLC workshop. They shared how far they could apply the learning they had at TLC workshop and they committed to apply. Then they also shared what are the challenges/difficulties they faced in terms of teacher, students and system support related at BRACU. Further, the measures to address those challenges also discussed from the Pro-VC, Registrar and other senior faculty of BRACU. The workshop facilitation team was- **Prof. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir, Mr. Sheikh Mohammad Ali, Ms. Samina Anzum, Ms. Sabrina Syed and Ms. Nasreen Sultana**. The presence of **Prof. Mofiz Uddin Ahmed**, Dept of MNS **Mr. Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury**, Registrar, BRACU and **Ms. Evita Ameen**, BIL added extra values to the workshop.



TLC workshop with BBS students on Working in Groups: Approaches to Interactive Teaching & Learning at BRACU was held on October 11 ,2012.

The workshop was organized jointly by BBS and BRACU TLC. The Focus of the workshop was to creating realization about the role of Group Work for ensuring interactive and cooperative teaching and learning at BRACU. The Objectives of the workshop were- Sharing the students' perceptions about group works in teaching and learning at BRACU BBS dept, identifying the problems faced/facing working in groups, acquire meaningful relevant tools and techniques for making group works meaningful and productive. Total 31 students from BRAC Business School (already completed at least three semester and above) participated in the workshop.

The workshop started with an opening song " আগুলের পরশ-মনি" and making groups with animal name cards. In groups, the discussions were facilitated on - identifying two specific benefits and two specific problems of group work considering all three perspectives-Students, Faculty and Support system of BRACU. Later, all the identified Benefits and Problems written on IDEA cards were immediately collected from them and were clustered on the VIPP boards. After a short health break, the discussions was carried out again in groups on the Problems of group work, identified themselves earlier. Each of the groups discussed in their groups and the group leaders shared the possible suggestions addressing all those problems/challenges considering -students, faculty and support system. There was a short presentation followed by discussion on 'Organizing & managing Group formation and Group Dynamics by **Prof. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**. The workshop was organized as a process of surveying the BBS students' opinions regarding 'group works'. Again, a survey questionnaire was also tested by the students. Later on, the pre-tested survey questionnaire will be used for making further elaborated survey.

The workshop organizing and facilitation team included- **Prof. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir, Ms. Afsana Akhtar (BBS) , Md. Fazle Ilahi Chowdhury**

(BBS) and from TLC **Mr. Sheikh Mohammad Ali**, **Ms. Samina Anzum**, **Ms. Sabrina Syed** and **Ms. Nasreen Sultana Mitu**.

A day-long Pedagogical Workshop on Innovative Teaching and Learning in and beyond the classroom, was held on Oct.13th at JPGSPH, ICDDR.

This workshop was organized and facilitated jointly by TLC and School of Public Health (SPH). **Prof. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**, Pro-VC & Director, TLC opened of the workshop with a **Tagore** song followed by an ice-breaking session. He made the participants divided into five different groups with a small exercise using animal flashcards. Then the groups were asked to discuss on-introducing themselves to each another and listing down two dominant ways of learning techniques/methods they use . Then each of the group leaders shared their discussion and introduces his/her team members.



The session on "Styles of Learning" was another session facilitated by **Prof. Md. Golam Samdani Fakir**. Basically **Prof. Samdani** tried to focus on different styles of learning relating to **Haward Gardner's** Multiple Intelligence Theory. He had a short PowerPoint presentation on the very topic followed by discussion. There were several group and peer activities on the eight multiple intelligences. The session was wrapped up by a Multiple Intelligence song. The total participants of the workshop were 32 and they were from different departments, institutes of BRAC University, Dhaka University and some other private university of Bangladesh. From TLC, **Mr. Sheikh Mohammad Ali**, Sr. Lecturer and **Ms. Samina Anzum**, Lecturer-III, participated in the workshop.