

2010/january

Architecture Update

Workshop held with community people on "Climate Change"

A workshop titled "Adaptation to Climate Change in Cities: Lessons learnt" was held on 18th January, 2010 as a follow up of the research programme entitled "Climate Change and the Urban Poor" by Huraera Jabeen, Senior Lecturer and Co-ordinator of the program. Department of Architecture, BRAC University and Development Planning Unit, University College London have been conducting research on 'Adaptation to Climate Change in Cities' since April 2008 under the British Council funded Higher Education Link Program. The research focuses on the built-in resilience and coping strategies by the urban poor who are likely to be most affected from increasing occurrence of flooding and urban heat island effect in cities like Dhaka. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, the Vice Chancellor of BRAC University was the chief guest and Professor Simon Guy, Head of School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester was the guest of honour in the event. It was chaired by Professor Fuad H Mallick, Chairperson, Department of Architecture.

New faculties

Mr. Muzibur Rahman and Mr. Hasibush Shaheed joined in the Department of Architecture on 03 January, 2010 as a full time faculties.

Mr. Muzibur Rahman graduated from Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology in 1999 with a professional bachelor's degree in Architecture, Muzibur Rahman worked as an architect in Dhaka, Bangladesh. He received a master's degree in Development Studies from University of Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2005 and his major was Development and Policy Economics. In December 2008 he received a master's degree in Construction Management from Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA. During his studies at Texas, he received the Cecil O. Windsor Jr. Endowed Fellowship. His graduate research topic was to develop a 3D Model of construction phases and incorporating schedule with that to detect time-space conflict in advance due to unexpected changes in schedule using BIM. He has also been involved in television journalism and has hosted talk shows related to development issues since 2003. He is interested in research and activism for sustainable habitat.

Mr. Hasibush Shaheed has completed his B.Arch degree from BUET in 2000 and then worked as an associate architect in different architectural companies in Bangladesh. He did a 3D animation and visualization program of study in Singapore in 2006 and worked in Singapore at Raffles design institute and RSP architects and Engineers PTE. Ltd. for 2 years. Digital painting, animation and photography are his field of interest.

Shakil Ahmad Shimul has started his career as a teaching assistant in the department of Architecture BRAC University on 09 January, 2010. He has just graduated from BRAC University on 7 January 2010. His final year thesis title was " Global warming and sea level rising in future design for Bangladesh". He did his internship in the office of renowned Indian Architect B V Doshi.

BBS Update

BBS RETREAT 2010 AT MADHUPUR TARC

The BRAC Business School (BBS) retreat 2010 was held at Madhupur TARC on 29 January 2010. A presentation of the First Draft Strategic Plan of BBS (followed by a discussion) was done by Dr. Sanaul Mostafa, Director, BBS. Prof. Dr. Golam Samdani Fakir, Pro-VC, BRAC University, Prof. Dr. Mojib U. Ahmed, Director, MBA Program, and the faculty members of BBS participated in the discussion.

BDI Update

Book Launching Ceremony - The Unheard Truth: Poverty And Human Rights By Irene Khan

BRAC Development Institute (BDI) at BRAC University hosted the Bangladesh book launch of internationally acclaimed human rights activist, Irene Khan's latest installment, "The Unheard Truth: Poverty and Human Rights" on 21 January, 2010 at BRAC Auditorium.

Irene Khan, a citizen of Bangladesh, was the first woman and first Asian to hold the position of Secretary General of Amnesty International from 2001-2009. Currently she is a member of the Board of Governors for BRAC.

In the book, Khan argues ardently to secure and uphold respect for human rights. She sees poverty as the denial of human rights and an affront to human dignity. She also states that economic growth, while important, is by no means a panacea for eliminating poverty and puts forth the idea that poverty should instead be viewed through the lens of human rights violation. Poverty is due to voicelessness of poor people, the discriminatory practices against them, and the general insecurity in which they are surviving. The book is a manifesto for the campaign against rights violations and a more equitable world.

The event was graced by the Honorable Minister of Finance, Mr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith. Fazle Hasan Abed was the Special Guest at the event. Distinguished panel of speakers praised the book for its urgent message to uphold human rights and dignity of the people to fight against poverty. Speakers included Dr. Akbar Ali Khan, Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, Professor Rehman Sobhan. Professor Syed Hashemi, Director of BDI, chaired the event.

Nagorik Adhikar Mela - Citizenship Research Team, BDI

The Nagorik Adhikar Mela or Citizen Rights Fair was held on 22-23 January 2010 at the Shilpakala Academy. This two-day fair was the culmination of the efforts of 57 grassroots organizations and five months of planning, meetings and sheer hard work.

The concern with citizenship and in particular equal citizenship arose from the research on the role of grassroots organizations in building citizenship from below by the Citizenship Research Team at BDI. The research concluded that people are not aware or conscious of their right as a citizen at the grassroots. The fair aimed to raise that awareness and celebrate citizenship while keeping in mind the concurrent issues of rights and responsibilities as citizens.

57 organizations participated at the fair from every part of Bangladesh - Dinajpur, Rajshahi, Kushtia, Pabna, Jessore, Khulna, Barisal, Chittagong, CHT, Sylhet, Fardipur, Mymensingh. These organizations have been working on the rights of children, landless, women, basic human rights, workers, sexual rights, adivasi, environment rights, sex workers', minority groups, etc.

Each organization had a stall displaying information and selling products. 600 cultural participants who are the grassroots members of these organizations performed songs, dances and dramas on the particular rights they work for. 350 photographs and posters were on display. 110 videos on the various rights were screened continuously.

Justice Mohammed Habibur Rahman, Fazle Hasan Abed, Jostina Nokrek (Upazilla Parishad Chairman) and Wahiduddin Mahmud were at the opening ceremony. A panel discussion on "Fulfilling the Rights of Equal Citizenship" was organized for the closing ceremony where the Honourable Finance Minister, Mr. AMA Muhith Atiur Rahman, Governor, Bangladesh Bank, Hossain Zillur Rahman, PPRC, Matiur Rahman, Prothom Alo, Mohammed Ibrahim, CMES, Mahabub Hossain, BRAC, Rasheda K Choudhury, CAMPE, Shireen Huq, Naripokkho, Abdullah Abu Sayeed, Bishwa Sahitya Kendra and Khushi Kabir, Nijera Kori spoke on the matter from their personal and professional experience and standpoints.

Other than BDI, members of Nijera Kori, Ain o Salish Kendra, BRAC, Media Nagorik Forum, Karmojibi Nari and Steps Towards Development formed the Organizing Committee which coordinated and led the fair. The Citizenship research team at BDI acted as the secretariat.

PATHWAYS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMME, BRAC DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Mobilizing Resources workshop with Banchte Shekha

The Mobilizing Resources for Women's Empowerment Research team visited Banchte Shekha in Jessore from 19-21 January. During the workshop, the team learned about the history of the organization, its donor relationships and development partners and the agendas they work on. The researchers were also able to understand how the organization defines resources and the way they utilize the resources they have. The team also conducted in-depth interviews with key persons of the Executive Committee of the organization,

collected secondary documents, and their visited agricultural farms and other projects.

Discussion on Dance and the Nation

The Cultural History Research project invited Munjulika Rahman, PhD candidate in Performance Studies at Northwestern University, USA to share aspects of her research on dance and the nation with the team. Ms. Rahman spoke about the politics and evolution of dance in Bangladesh from the 20th Century to contemporary times, highlighting her discussion with pictures and videos. Her elaboration of the changing landscape of cultural patronage in Bangladesh and the challenges of conducting field work in performance studies were insightful for the team.

Participation in Nagorik Adhikar Mela

The Pathways of Women's Empowerment Programme took part in the Nagorik Adhikar Mela by highlighting various aspects of its work that affect women's lives. An exciting quiz competition on the History of Bengali Women was organized and the highest scorers (both male!) were awarded prizes for their apropos knowledge. The BDI stall screened the Digital Stories of the Pathways Programme and the Participatory Videos of the Citizenship Programme. A panel at the stall highlighted the Cultural History research of the Pathways Programme, which generated a lot of interest. The photo exhibition on the "Changing Images of Women in Bangladesh" and the documentary film "Stories of Change" were also screened at the Mela.

Start of field research on sex preferences

The research on sex preferences among women in Komorpur, Faridpur began in January. M. Kamruzzaman and Sakiba Tasneem are accompanying a team of surveyers and are carrying out the research.

Preparation of research booklets for Boi Mela

The Pathways team has been busy finalizing reports on the various researches in order to produce them as booklets for the Boi Mela 2010. The research reports on Media, Religion, Work and Women's Organization will be available in Bangla at the UPL stall at the Boi Mela.

Work Theme Writeshop

Members of the Empowering Work Research Theme convened in Dhaka during 25-28th January to review each others papers and finalize them for publication. Participants from Pakistan, India, UK and Egypt took part in the writeshop that was held at the BRAC Centre for Development Management at Rajendrapur. The papers are expected to be published in a book titled "Empowerment in the Belt of Patriarchy", due to be out later this year.

CfL Update

Paper Presentation of Golam Jamil and Aminul Islam

Md. Golam Jamil and Mohammad Aminul Islam, two faculty members of Centre for Languages (CfL), presented a paper at the first International Conference on Child Friendly Inclusive Education 2010 organized by the Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka on 7th - 8th January, 2010. The theme of the conference was 'Make the School Effective for All' and the focus was 'Promoting a Child Friendly Inclusive Educational Environment'. While presenting the paper titled "Intervening 'Trait Emotional Intelligence' in Formal Schooling at Custodial Institutions: A Shishu Polli Plus Perspective," the presenters tried to reflect on how Shishu Polli Plus, a local custodial institution, has been rehabilitating destitute children by providing formal primary education and essential life-skills along with 'psycho-social interventions' in formal schooling.

An Online Learning Forum 'Wiki' Created for Development Professionals

A Wiki has been launched for Dev-Pro participants by BRACU CfL instructors. Dev-Pro is a course designed for BRAC mid-level managers to address their English language skills development. The major objective of the Wiki is to have the current and graduated Dev-Pro participants connected to each other and their instructors for the continuum of their English language learning and improvement. By using this Wiki, participants can join online discussion forums, contribute to online debates, submit assignments online, stay in touch and share ideas in more interactive way. Please visit www.devnet.wikispaces.com for more information.

ENH Update

Study Tour to Cox's Bazar

A two-day trip from January 4th to 6th to Cox's Bazar was arranged to give the students an opportunity to gain first-hand experience of the tourism industry in Cox's Bazar. During the trip, students visited Inani Beach, Himchori, and Burmese markets. They took pictures, talked to the visiting tourists, and the local people to have a thorough understanding of the tourism potentials of the longest sea beach of the world. Two faculty members, the DCO, and the Office Assistant accompanied the group of students. Students have to do a follow up presentation on their visit experience as a part of the course 'Cultural Studies.'

Poetry Recitation Session at the American Centre

Budding poets from the department of English and Humanities were invited to attend a poetry recitation session at The American Centre on the 21st January 2010. Lauren Lovelace, the Director of the American Centre who started by reciting one of her own poems, conducted the programme. She then introduced a visiting poet, Courtney Sato, who is a Wellesley college senior and has been awarded the Watson Fellowship for her project, "Writing toward Home." Home rightly captured the theme of the session.

Students who presented their poems were Mushira Habib, Zarin Rafiuddin and Sonika Islam from ENH, Adnan M.S.Fakir from ESS and Farah Ahmad from SoFEA BRAC. Sabreena Ahmed, a faculty of the English department also recited one of her own poems.

ENH Students Attend an International Festival

Students of ENG331: Cultural Studies students attended an international festival on 28th January namely, the 3rd International Children's Film Festival held in Dhaka from January 23rd to 29th 2010. The films were presented by UNICEF and produced by Children's Film Society Bangladesh.

The ENH students accompanied by faculty members of their department, visited Alliance Francaise, one of the venues of the festival, to watch Golpo Holeo Sotti, a classic Indian film in Bengali, written and directed by Tapan Sinha.

The students appreciated the socio-cultural elements of love, family ties and moral values explored in the film. The movie was highly entertaining and kept the entire audience glued to their seats till the very end.

Professor Firdous Azim chairs a presentation

On 23rd January Professor Firdous Azim chaired a presentation titled " Bengali Nursery Rhymes: International Perspectives" by Dr. Afia Dil, a Professor of Emeritus Alliant International University, San Diego USA. This was held at the British Council.

New Appointments

Abu Sayeed Mohammad Noman has joined as a lecture from January 3rd 2010. He completed his BA and MA in literature from Jahangirnagar University. His MA thesis was titled 'The Flowers of Evil: Charles Baudelaire's Politics of Protest'

Sabreena Ahmed has joined as a lecturer from January 3rd 2010. She completed her BA in English from Dhaka University and MA in Applied Linguistics from Curtin University of Technology in Australia. Her MA thesis was titled 'Same old, Same old ♦? (from boring to creative presentations)'

Final Thesis Presentations

Linguistics and ELT

The thesis presentations took place on 2nd and 3rd January 2010. Following is the list of students along with the topics they presented:

Masuma Rahman "Teaching speaking to the beginner level learners in Bangladesh"

Tanzia Siddiqua "Creating opportunities for STT (Student Talking Time) in a large class: An essential tool for ELT classroom management"

Mahmuda Akther "Influence of peers' feedback on the students of Tertiary level in second language learning"

Safa Zerine "Classroom management: Seating arrangements in ESL classrooms."

Joynab Nabila Obeyed " Modernism in Eliot, Pound and Williams"

Ridwana Kabir Orchi " Theme of otherness and writing back: A contrapuntal analysis of colonial and post colonial novels"

Upashana Salam " The old made new: A postmodern investigation into Mario Vargas Liosa's El Hablador and Thomas Pynchon's The Crying of Lot 49"

Media and Cultural Studies

Imrana Yasmin "Multi-Faceted Aspects of Print Media Journalism ♦The Daily Star"

Faiza Mohsina Chowdhury "A 360 Degree Exposure to Print Media at Campaign Bangladesh"

The external examiners were Professor Shawkat Hussain, Mr. Bijoy Lal Basu, Ms. Nehreer Khan from Dhaka University, Dr. Shamsad Mortuza from Jahangirnagar University and Mr. Mir Ashfaquzzaman from The New Age.

ESS Update

ESS faculty Presented a Research Proposal

Mr Haydory Akbar Ahmed, Lecturer, and Mr. Fahim Subhan Chowdhury, Research Associate, Department of Economics and Social Sciences presented a research proposal titled "What explains Investment in Sylhet?♦" and "Water Pollution, The Costs of Mitigation and Investment Climate" respectively on 17th January 2010 at a research and training workshop in AIUB on Investment Climate. Professor, Wahiduddin Mahmud and Professor Amirul Islam Chowdhury were also present at the seminar.

Ms. Nirvana Mujtaba and Ms. Sarah Salahuddin, Lecturer, Department of Economics and Social Sciences, completed a 3 month certificate course on "Competition Policy and Law" from November 2009 to January 2010. The course was funded by International Finance Corporation and CUTS International and organized by United International University.

A K Iftekharul Haque, lecturer of ESS department attended the Eleventh Annual Global Development held in Prague, Czech Republic during January 16-18, 2010. The conference was organized by the Global Development Network (GDN). Mr Haque presented a paper in a session titled 'Strengthening Institutions to Improve Public Expenditure Accountability'.

Research Outcome

A Policy Brief titled "Basic Hygiene Can Beat Diarrhea ♦ A Lesson From the Slums of Dhaka" based on an earlier research done by Md. Jahangir Alam, Senior Lecturer, ESS Department was published by the South Asian Network for Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE) on December 2009. The study has looked at the causes and impacts of this disease in the slums of Dhaka. The study finds that overcrowding and poor basic amenities, coupled with a lack of attention to basic personal hygiene, results in a high risk of infection. The study assesses the financial cost of diarrhea to households and finds that they spend approximately 1% of their annual income on diarrhea related costs. For detailed information on the policy brief please visit

http://www.sandeeonline.com/uploads/documents/publication/872_PUB_Policy_Brief_40.pdf

Lecture Series of Bangladesh Studies at Savar Residential Campus (RS)

Professor Syed M. Hashemi, Director of BRAC Development Institute and Acting Chairman of the Department of Economics and Social Sciences, BRAC University, delivered a lecture on 'Development Paradigms in Bangladesh: Discourses and Practices' as part of the lecture series scheduled for the students of residential semester at Savar Campus, BRAC University. The lecture was held on January 30, 2010. He shared his experiences of various development practices in Bangladesh, for examples microfinance, health and women empowerment, which inspired the students a lot. Two more lectures titled "From Nurulddin to Noor Hossain: History of Protests and Struggles" & "The Politics of Identity: Debates in Nationalism and Secularism" will be held on March 20 and 27 respectively.

SECS Update

Seminar on Quantum Cryptography

The Department of Computer Science and Engineering organized a seminar titled "Quantum Cryptography ♦ An Unreal Reality?", which was held at the Conference room of the MNS department on 25th January, 2010. The speaker, Prof. S. M. Deen is an emeritus professor of computer science in the University of Keele, UK. Prof. A. A. Z. Ahmad, Chairperson, Department of Mathematical and Natural Sciences introduced Prof. S. M. Deen to the audience.

Born in Bangladesh in 1938, Prof. S. M. Deen got his PhD in 1965 from Imperial College (London) in Particle Physics, the area in which he had carried out research for a number of years, before moving into Computer Science in 1970. He is the first person in the UK and second in the world to write a book on Computer Databases ♦ a book that had been translated into several languages, including Chinese, Dutch, Italian and Spanish. Some people call him "the father of British database research", because of his pioneering research activities in that area, including holding of international conferences and creating the British National Conference on Databases (the BNCOD series) which runs the UK Database Research Conference every year since 1981.

Prof. Deen started the talk with a discussion on the weird and counter-intuitive properties of Quantum Mechanics and explained the nature of entangled pairs of photons. He talked about the concepts of reality and locality, and went on to discuss the Protocol BB84, which is one of the two protocols for Quantum Cryptography. He then discussed the possible applications and limitations of Quantum Cryptography. The seminar ended by a lively discussion on the interpretation of reality, with Prof. S. M. Deen showing that according to the rules of Quantum Mechanics, we are creating reality by observing and not the converse. Dr. Sayeed Salam, Chairperson, Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering and Prof. Mofiz Uddin Ahmed, Professor, Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences were present along with other members of the faculty from CSE, EEE and MNS.

IEEE BRAC University Student Branch Updates

IEEE BRAC University Student Branch had its first general body meeting of the 2010 Membership Year on the 27th of January. The year started successfully with the interaction between the new Student Members and the Executive Body Members. The program started with video clips that clearly reflected the importance of IEEE in the field of engineering and relevant experiences of the people around the globe. Secondly the ex-chair Nabila Naushin of IEEE, BRACU SB 2009 introduced the newly elected EB members. Shiblee Imtiaz as Chair, Md. Eftakhairul Islam as Vice-Chair, SK. Adnan Rabbi as General Secretary, and Adnan Al Moshi as Treasurer for the year 2010. After that the Chair briefly explained the activities of 2010 that includes technical tours, seminars, film shows, workshops etc.

The first event the members decided to organize is a technical tour of Aircraft Hangar and Civil Aviation Control Tower at Zia International Airport. After that event, the members voted have a BBQ party at BRAC University campus, which would be the first of its kind in BRAC University. One of the most important agendas of the meeting was the announcement of four new executive (EB) positions in this SB which are Project Coordinator, Publication Manager, Public Relation Manager and Media Manager details of which will be available in the official Branch website: <http://ieee.bracu.ac.bd>. This is definitely a great opportunity for the new members to take the responsibilities in this prestigious organization. Another important suggestion that came out from a new member is to arrange a student discussion forum where all the members can share and present their ideas and suggestions in a formal manner that will help them immensely in publishing papers and journals for international conferences.

Finally, the IEEE BRAC University Student Branch is proud to announce that Dr. AKM Abdul Malek Azad, the Councilor of the Student Branch, got selected as the Professional Activities Coordinator of the IEEE Bangladesh Section. This is great opportunity for us to use his support in highlighting the accomplishments of our IEEE Student Branch. And we are looking forward to a 2010 full of achievements!

The Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, or IEEE, is an international non-profit, professional organization for the advancement of technology related to electricity. It has the most members of any technical professional organization in the world, with more than 365,000 members in around 150 countries.

MNS Update

Farewell of Professor Mezbahur Rahman

A programme was arranged to bid farewell to Professor Mezbahur Rahman on January 04, 2010, who taught courses in statistics during Summer 2009 and Fall 2009 semesters on sabbatical leave. He would be resuming his duties at the Minnesota State University, USA. Professor A. A. Z. Ahmad, Professor Naiyyum Choudhury and a few other faculty members of the MNS Department spoke on the occasion.

Study Tour to Kaptai Hydroelectric Project and Bandarban

Students of the Department of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS) went on a study tour to Bandarban and Rangmati from Wednesday 6 January to 10 January 2010. The team visited Bangladesh's only hydroelectric power project at Kaptai and gathered practical knowledge about the hydroelectric power 'Nilgiri Hil' at Bandarban generation. One of the engineers on duty described in details the process of hydro electricity generation. The team also visited different sights of Kaptai Lake at Rangamati, which has been artificially created by making a dam across the Karnafuli river for the purpose of generating hydroelectric power. The team was comprised of nine students and was led by Dr. Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, Assistant Professor in MNS Department.

Annual Botanical Conference 2009, Chittagong, 9-10 January 2010

Dr. Aparna Islam, Assistant Professor, Biotechnology and Ms. Jebunessa Chowdhury an MS student of Biotechnology participated in the Annual Botanical Conference 2009. This year the Conference was arranged jointly by the Department of Botany, University of Chittagong and Bangladesh Botanical Society. The event took place at University of Chittagong from 9-10 January 2010. Theme of this Conference was "Coastal and Marine Plant Resources of Bangladesh: Management and Exploitation". The Conference was divided in four technical sessions having themes of biodiversity, mycorrhiza and arsenic pollution, experimental botany, and biotechnology. Ms. Chowdhury presented a research paper entitled 'Comparison of regeneration frequency of the locally grown tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum* Miller) varieties with commercial Indian variety. The work presented was part of the MS thesis project of Ms Chowdhury carried out under the supervision of Dr. Islam. The Conference was attended by plant scientists from all over the country. MNS Departmental Meeting, 14 January 2010

A meeting of the Department of Mathematics & Natural Sciences (MNS) was held on Thursday 14 January, 2010 at 10.00 a.m. in the MNS Conference Room (UB 1521). Professor A. A. Ziauddin Ahmad presided over the meeting and faculty and staff members were present in the meeting. The Chair announced the tentative course distributions for the Spring 2010 semester. He expressed his hope of starting soon the undergraduate programmes in biotechnology, pharmacy and microbiology after getting the final approval from the UGC.

New Teaching Assistants Joining the Department

Mr. Md. Riajul Hossain joined the Department as a Teaching Assistant in Biology while Mr. Md. Kamruzzaman joined as a Teaching Assistant in Physics. Both of them joined BRACU on January 17, 2010.

IAP Conference on Biodiversity and General Assembly, Royal Society, London, UK

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury participated in the above- mentioned IAP Conference and General Assembly jointly organized by the Inter Academy Panel on International Issues (IAP) and the Royal Society, London, UK and held at the Royal Society premises on January 12-25, 2010. The occasion coincided with the celebration of 350th anniversary of the Royal Society. The aim of the conference was to explore how the ecosystem services concept could be integrated into biodiversity management. The inaugural ceremony was chaired by Professor Martin Rees, FRS, President, Royal Society and Mr. RT Hon David Miliband, Foreign Secretary, UK was the Chief Guest. The Conference drew together experts from around the world including some Fellows of the Royal Society to share innovations, successes and challenges in ecosystem and biodiversity research. Speakers addressed topics like insights on the science of ecosystem and biodiversity, technical innovations to meet the challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss, research gaps and the science and policy interface.

Faculty Rejoining the Department of MNS

Mr. Mohammad Maruf Ahmed a lecturer in mathematics, who was on study leave at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale USA joined the Department of MNS after his return from the USA.

Annual General Meeting of National Oceanographic & Maritime Institute (NOAMI) and Election of its Board of Governors

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of NOAMI was held on Saturday, January 23, 2010 at 4 p.m. at the office of NOAMI at 10/8 Eastern Plaza (9th Floor), Hatirpool, Sonargaon Road, Dhaka- 1205 with Professor A.A.Z Ahmad in the chair. At the AGM Dr.Abdur Rahim, General Secretary of NOAMI submitted his report on the activities of NOAMI for the reported period. Dr.Delwar Hossain Sikder, Treasurer of NOAMI placed the Audit Report and the Budget for the fiscal year 2009-2010. These submissions were discussed in details by the members of NOAMI. After a thorough deliberation these reports were approved and accepted by the general body. The proposed budget was also approved. Then the Election Commissioner Mr. Hafiz Ahmad announced the names of the members of the Governing Board elected for 2009-2011. He informed that all the members have been elected uncontested. Professor A.A.Z Ahmad was reelected the Chairman for the fifth consecutive term. Professor Naiyyum Choudhury was elected a Vice Chairman. The AGM was followed by a dinner.

International Symposium on Cancer and Developmental Biology: Latest Clinical and Biochemical Advances

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury and Mr. Md. Rijul Hossain participated in the International Symposium jointly organized by the Bangladesh Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and the International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and held at the Senate Bhavan, University of Dhaka on January 29-30, 2010. Prof. ASMS Arefin Siddique, Vice Chancellor, University of Dhaka was the Chief Guest at the Inaugural Ceremony. Three distinguished plenary session speakers, Prof. A. Nakagawara, Prof. T.C Wu and Prof. H. Tanaka and many distinguished scientists from home and abroad participated in the Symposium dedicated to the memory of Late Professor Harun Kader Mohammad Yusuf, Former President of the Society who died of cancer recently. The first plenary lecture on "Translational Oncogenomics and Molecular Carcinogenesis of Neuroblastoma" was delivered by Prof. Akira Nakagawara, President Chiba Cancer Centre. The second plenary was delivered by Prof. T.C. Wu of Johns Hopkins Medical Institute on "Perspectives in the Development of Vaccines against Human Papillomavirus for cervical cancer. The third plenary lecture entitled "A novel repulsive axon guidance protein, Draxin" was delivered by Prof. Hideaki Tanaka", Researcher, Department of Developmental Neurobiology, Graduate School of Medical Science and Global COE, Kumamoto University, Kumamoto, Japan. In addition a large number of papers on recent developments in cancer research were presented by eminent scientists present in the symposium.

RS Update

Residential Semester Spring 2010

The Residential semester commenced on the 15th January 2010 with 202 students from BBS, CSE, ECE, EEE, ESS, LAW, ENH and ARC Schools and Departments. Among them 95 are female and 107 are male. 13 weeks semester will end on 15th April 2010.

Semester Orientation

A daylong orientation program for the newly enrolled students of RS was held at Markuli hall on January 16, 2010. The session was facilitated by Dr. Golam Samdani Fakir, Pro-VC of BRACU and Mahfuzul Bari Chowdhury, Campus Superintendent of Savar Campus, where all the staff and teachers of Savar Campus introduced themselves to the students. In the second session CS gave a briefing on RS and Savar Campus. Course teachers of three basic courses of RS (Bangladesh Studies, Ethics and English) gave short briefings about their courses. In a session students worked in groups to make some campus norms which they themselves would follow during their stay at Savar Campus. Also, two senior students of RS fall 2009 shared their experiences with the new-comers in RS.

Seminar on Drug Abuse

A seminar on drug abuse was held on January 23, 2010 at 10:00 am to 12:00pm. It was moderated by Brother Ronald Drahozal, CSC, director of APON (Ashokti Punarbashan Nibash). He explained how APON is working to provide drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation services and make these services readily available and accessible for the drug addicts. One of those persons who got recovery from addiction with the help of APON was present in the seminar to share his experiences. All the students of RS as well as some of the staff and teachers were present in the seminar. The audience got a real picture of drug abusing practices in Bangladesh.

Presentation on Chinese Language & Culture

A Presentation on Chinese Language & Culture was held on January 23, 2010 at 3:00 pm and it was conducted by Mr. Abdur Rahim & Mr. Quilong, two Chinese Instructors of CfL. All the students of RS were present in the session.

Co curricular Activities

On 26th January 2010 an open Badminton competition was held. Students were divided into three groups. One male with one female and another mix Group. Students of Film club organized film show at Annondopur on January 23 and 30, 2010.

SPH Update

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS
MPH PROGRAM

Integration Workshop 2010

The MPH programme concluded with the final integration workshop titled Integrating Public Health Skills instructed by Dr. Jon Rohde and Mr. Cole P Dodge. Dr. Mofijul Islam Shuvro, Research Associate from the School, served as the Teaching Assistant. The workshop took place in January 18-21, 2010.

MPH students submits final theses

As part of their final project for the MPH programme, the fifth batch students submitted their theses which were reviewed by external examiners.

Fifth Batch Graduates' Forum 2010

The fifth batch of students concluded their year-long MPH programme from the James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH), BRAC University with a Graduates' Forum held on January 31, 2010 at the Sasakawa Auditorium at ICDDR,B.

The forum was attended by the graduating students and their families, JPHSPH faculty and staff, and adjunct faculty, supervisors, and examiners from ICDDR,B, BRAC, and BRAC University.

Dr. Nasima Selim served as the Master of Ceremony, and smoothly kept the event on schedule as she introduced the various speakers. Dr. Anwar Islam, Associate Dean and Director of JPGSPH, provided opening remarks where he read out famous quotes as important messages for the graduating students to retain as they proceed on to new frontiers. Dr. Ronald Labonte, Research Chair, Globalization and Health Equity at the Institute of Population in the University of Ottawa were this year's valedictorian speaker. Dr. Labonte gave quite a lively speech where he emphasized that public health practitioners also need to be politically active in order to be successful. Dr. Jon Rohde, Chair of International Advisory Board, also gave a speech where he congratulated the students wished them illustrious careers.

Three MPH students, Abdul Qahar from Afghanistan, Ingrid Heidemarie Schaffer from Germany, Annet Naguudi from Uganda, and Monsural Haq from Bangladesh spoke on behalf of the student body. They thanked the School, the faculty, the staff, and the other students for making their time in Bangladesh and at the School an enriching learning experience.

The certificates and awards were then handed out to all the MPH graduating students. The following people were recipients of the awards.

Sir Fazle Hasan Abed Award for Leadership ♦ Htun Lin OO from Myanmar

Allan Rosenfield Award for Best Overall Performance ♦ Matthew James Reeve from Australia

W.B. Greenough III Award for Best Dissertation ♦ Matthew James Reeve from Australia

Richard Cash Award for Best Poster ♦ Annet Naguudi from Uganda and Md. Shahidul Hoque from Bangladesh

Then Dr. Sabina F Rashid, Associate Professor and MPH Coordinator, spoke on the components of an

independent study as the final thesis to complete the MPH programme. She proceeded to call forth the five students who were randomly selected to present their dissertation to the audience. The five students selected were Matthew James Reeve, Yasir Arafat, Neelima Das, Abu Md. Naser, and Sara Liza Bauman.

The Forum was concluded by a speech by Professor Golam Samdani Fakir, the Pro-Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, who spoke on the history of the University and of the School, the students, and bade them good fortune on their future endeavors. The audience was then invited to review the student's final theses and posters in detail during the poster-displaying session.

CENTRES AND RESEARCH INITIATIVES

CENTRE FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS STUDIES

A regional workshop began on January 31, 2010 under the Comprehensive Primary Health Care project. Participating partners from India, Iran, Pakistan, and Bangladesh are attending the workshop. Dr. Thelma Narayan from India and Dr. Ronald Labonte, Canada Research, Globalization & Health Equity, University of Ottawa are the distinguished guests at the event.

CENTRE FOR GENDER, SEXUALITY AND HIV/AIDS

Nagorik Mela (Citizens Rights Fair)

The Centre for Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS participated in the Nagorik Adhikar Mela (Citizen Rights Fair) from January 22-23, 2010. The event was coordinated by BRAC Development Institute and included 60 national and local grassroots development organizations from across Bangladesh. The Centre had a stall at the fair along with other organizations working with issues ranging from human rights, education rights, health rights, land rights, legal rights, women's rights, rights of indigenous people, workers rights, child rights, environmental rights and many others. The fair was held to recognize the work and struggles of Bangladeshis to establish their rights and created a space where people could learn about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Grassroots members of organizations performed songs, dances and dramas. The fair also featured video screenings, photography and poster exhibitions.

GFATM PROJECT - 913

A three-week long course for mid level managers on HIV/AIDS related issues, Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

A three-week long course (2nd batch) was held at BRAC Training and Resource Center (TARC), Uttara, Dhaka, on January 10-28, 2010. A total of 21 participants including six females attended the course from 11 project districts. The main purpose of the training was to contribute to better management and quality implementation of HIV/AIDS prevention program in the field level through developing the capacity of the mid level managers.

The major contents of the course included updated information of HIV/AIDS, HIV transmission, HIV infections & OIs, management of OIs, VCT, diagnosis of HIV, preventive measures of HIV/AIDS, behavior change communication, vulnerability, peer education, self help group, gender & HIV/AIDS, human rights & HIV/AIDS, care and support for PLHA, management and health management, planning, team building, monitoring and evaluation. Besides, two field visits were also included in the course design. One field visit was made to two of the Drop-in-Center (DIC) of Padakhep Manabik Unnayan Kendra (IDUs intervention) and another was made to two Integrated Health Center (IHC) of Badhan Hijra Sangha (Hijra intervention).

A formal concluding session was held at the end of the course. The participants awarded with certificate for successful completion of the course. Dr. Mohd. Ali Belal, Line Director, National AIDS/STD Programme and Safe Blood Transfusion Programme, Dr. Hasan Mahmud, Deputy Programme Manager, National AIDS/STD Programme, Ms. Ismat Bhuiya, Team Leader of JPGSPH, BRAC University Consortium & Senior Programme Officer of Population Council and others GFATM staff of James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University attended the session.

ACADEMIC STUDY GROUPS (ASG)

Academic Study Group in January, 2010

Mr. Nazmul Huda answering questions from the School staff regarding his research methods.

On January 13, 2010, epidemiologist Nazmul Huda presented his study on "Risk estimates of arsenic related skin lesions in two large villages in Rajshahi Division, Bangladesh" as part of the ASG at the School. The event was attended by the School's staff and faculty.

FACULTY NEWS

Dr. Anwar Islam, Associate Dean and Director of the School, and Ms. Nuzhat Chowdhury, Research Associate at the School, attended a regional workshop on Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB) organized by the World Bank Institute and UNICEF in Kathmandu, Nepal from January 10-15, 2010. The workshop was a part of the DICA project and attended by participating partners such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

Dr. Anwar Islam, Associate Dean and Director of the School, attended a meeting and workshop on the Asia Network on capacity building of strengthening public health systems. Dr. Islam presented a paper at the workshop titled Hospital Restructuring in Bangladesh: Challenges and Constraints. The event took place from January 27-29, 2010 and organized by the School of Public Health, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Owasim Akram, Research Associate of the School, attended the 1st International Congress on Women's Health and Unsafe Abortion from January 19-23, 2010 in Bangkok, Thailand. Mr. Akram presented a paper titled, "Sexual and Reproductive Health Concerns of Married Women and Their Access to Services in Bangladesh". He was sponsored by Royal Thai Ministry of Public Health and Realising Rights Research Program Consortium.

Student Affairs Update

Computer Club (BUCC) Activities

Seminar on Studying Abroad

BUCC organized a seminar on Studying Abroad, Specially Sweden in collaboration with Career Services Office (CSO) on Wednesday, 6 January 2010 in UB223. The speaker was Mr. Fazle Munim Sayket. He has been a member of the computer club, conducted several semester long club workshops to train members. He is currently doing his MS in Sweden. He is a BRACU CSE Alumni.

The theme of the seminar was Swedish Education System, Student Life at Sweden, Choosing the right University, Application System for Sweden, Things a student should take to Sweden, Scholarship System, Visa Processing, Living Expense, Language, Part Time Work etc based on speaker's own experience of approaching Masters level studies in Computer Science at Sweden, while doing academic research besides being an entrepreneur.

Workshop on Game Development for Speech Impaired Kids using Scratch

On Thursday, January 21, 2010, the workshop began in UB223 with a presentation on the project giving ideas on autistic children. Then it moved into a lab and showed how to program in scratch. Scratch is a game designing platform where one can design games just by dragging and dropping blocks. In 10 minutes, participants were able to design games in scratch regardless. The best way to learn something is by doing it. This was an opportunity for the participants to design their own game at the lab. The software is available at http://info.scratch.mit.edu/Scratch_1.4_Download

Funding and support for this workshop come from IEEE gold humanitarian fellowship, MIT public services center, MIT Media Lab, One Laptop per Child (OLPC) and BRAC University Computer Club (BUCC). Prior to this workshop, CSE Faculty Shamsul Kaonain Noman visited Autism Welfare Foundation. Previously, on an invitation from Mr. M. Ehsan Hoque, the presenter, about 300 volunteers responded out of which, a bit less than 50% were believed to be from BRACU. These volunteers were invited to the workshop.

Participation in CUET NCPC 2010

A programming contest was organized by Chittagong University of Engineering & Technology (CUET) on Saturday, January 23rd, 2010. Two teams titled BRACU Octave and BRACU Alchemist participated in the programming contest at Chittagong. The teams consisted of 6 students named Sadat Sakif Ahmed

(09301005), S.Mahbub-Uz-Zaman (09301004), Imran Farid Shuvo (09310041), Sayma Jasmine (09301001), Md. Risul Karim (09301002), Syed Shaiyan Kamran Waliullah (09301019) and two faculty members, Md. Omar Faruque and Annajiat Alim Rasel as coaches. Students were from both CSE and EEE program. On the way back, the student have briefly visited the Kaptai dam which powers the Karnaphuli Hydroelectric Power Station, the only Hydro-electric power plant of Bangladesh, followed by the Patenga Beach.

Participation in IUBAT Inter University Programming Contest

On Saturday, January 30, 2010, a team of BRAC University ACM Programming Training Wing (BUACM) members participated in a programming contest arranged by IUBAT-International University of Business, Agriculture and Technology. The team consisted of Md. Imran Hossain Shaon, Shiblee Imtiaz Hasan and Md. Eftakhairul Islam Rain (09221175). CSE Faculty member, Md. Omar Faruque accompanied them as the coach of the team.

BUEEC @ CLUB FAIR, Spring 2010

French novelist Marcel Pagnol once said, "One has to look out for engineers ♦ they begin with sewing machines and end up with the atomic bomb." This is what the members of BUEEC have proved to be right. In the club fair of 28th January Spring 2010, BUEEC designed its own booth, something out of the box and probably one of the best in its own history. The color blue on white background gave a touch of superiority to the booth which consisted of the various projects made by the students. There was a hand sensor, a water level detector and a digital display. Students were being explained about the function of the water level detector by one of the members and the digital display showed several messages all being fed in by the members. A LCD screen was incorporated in the booth which displayed a presentation on the various activities of the club so far. Through this club fair we launched two new things ♦ the changed name of the club from BUECC to BUEEC and besides pen and paper we also introduced registration forms on laptops. The number of people who signed up this time broke all our previous records and reached 75. In fact at one point of the fair there was a long queue seen in front of the BUEEC booth, all waiting to be a part of this achievement. Our members were showered with appreciation and admiration by the faculties, students and honorable VC sir for such a good job.

All in all, the club fair was a great success and the hard work of our members has brought colors. Let us hope that our upcoming events are as successful as this one.

Cricket BRACU

Cricket BRAC University (CBU) toured to South Bengal (Satkhira) during the semester break between Fall'09 and Spring'10. The purpose was to play matches with the South Zone Cricket Academy and to prepare the team for the Inter Private University Cricket Tournament. The cricket matches were very much enjoyed by not only the two teams but also the people of Satkhira. CBU's arrival was mentioned in bold in the local newspapers and they also published the match updates. The tour proved to be highly fruitful as the players developed themselves greatly and showed their responsibility.

Study tour at Kuakatta by BIZ BEE

BRAC University Business Club (BIZ BEE) arranged a 3 days study tour to Kuakatta on Wednesday, January 13th to visit and get knowledge about the fishing sector of Bangladesh and also the prospect of tourism and learn about the people who are related with these activities.

Students visited to shrimp factories and the land where dry fish are processed to gain an understanding about the fishing sector of Bangladesh. Student went to Rakhine colony to meet the people who are directly or indirectly related with the fishing activities. Students found that tourism sector of Kuakatta can flourish if the communication and road networks are improved.

In a nutshell, trip was relaxing and educational as the students learned lots about the tourism and fishing sectors from the native people of Kuakatta. Mr. Shamim Ehsanul Haque, lecturer of BRAC Business School, also went with the students.

BRACU Rural Development Club

"Bani Archana" - is the occasion to worship goddess Saraswati, who blesses all with knowledge. Even though it is known to be an occasion of the followers of Hindu religion but on the 20th of January 2010 BRAC University for the first time celebrated the Saraswati Puja in the University premises with the

wholehearted participation of all the students and faculty members irrespective of them belonging to any particular religious background. The initiative was taken by the students belonging to BRAC University Rural Development Club (BURDC) and supported by BRAC University National Heritage Forum (BUNHF) and after the puja a cultural show was organized by the Cultural Club. The occasion was celebrated with all the necessary rituals. The divine vibe of the Puja was something incredibly sacred and the environment with the idol and the fragrance of the flowers made the moments really special. All the students attentively followed as the priest recited the Mantras and the essence of the occasion was simply unforgettable. It will remain in the memories of the students for a long time especially for the students who worked really hard for making this event happen along with the support from the University Authority.

Career Services Update

January 2010 Job Update

Nahid Nazim | BRAC International HR Officer
Nazia Islam | BRAC Enterprise HR Officer
Shahjahan Talukder | Eastern Bank Limited Collection Officer
Sabit Farizma | Therap BD
Khadijatul Rasul | Therap BD
Khandker Mohd. Sabbir Morshed | Augere (Qubee)
Md. Ahaduzzaman | Bank of Pakistan
Md. Shorab Hossain | bracNet
Fahima Akhter | Nestle Bangladesh
Khodokar Mostrakim Ahmed Fahim | Nestle Bangladesh
Muhit Hossain | GMG Airline Limited

On-Campus Interview by BRAC Internship Unit

On January 06, 2010 BRAC Internship Unit conducted an on-campus interview session for prospective interns. Three interns have been selected and got internship offer.

Internship Orientation Session for Architecture students

Batch of Spring 2010 interns from Architecture department attended the Internship Orientation Session conducted by Ms. Sabrina Shahidullah, In-Charge, Career Services Office on January 12, 2010. The session briefed them how to complete a successful internship and acquire valuable experience through it.

Seminar by Jobsbd.com

Career Services organized a seminar on CV writing and interview tips along with Jobsbd on January 26, 2010. The key presenter was Mr. Aslam Parvez, Operation Manager, jobsbd.com (former Job Street. com). He presented a good number of important tips of facing interviews. He clarified the common questions of interview boards as well as some other topics about grooming necessities before the interview. A number of 16 students attended the session and ended with an interactive question and answer round.