

2009/march

Japanese Ambassador Meets MAGD Students

H. E. Ambassador of Japan Mr. Masayuki Inoue visited Savar campus of BRAC University on 04 March 2009 to meet the MA in Governance and Development (MAGD) Batch 3 students. First Secretary Mr. Hiroshi Omura and Economic Researcher Ms. Tomoko Inagaki of the Embassy of Japan accompanied him during the visit. Drawn from mid-level civil servants, a group of 25 students are currently doing their residential semesters at Savar campus. The program is run by the Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) of BRAC University.

H. E. Mr. Inoue joined the Japanese Foreign Service in 1973 and picked up his current position in April 2006. In his keynote address at Sulla Bhaban, Mr. Inoue explained about the emergence of Japan as an Industrial and Economic Power after the World War II and her present 'soft power' role in the international arena. He also touched upon Japan's liberal ODA policy, high quality aid and trade investment in Bangladesh. The session was chaired by BRAC University Vice Chancellor Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, while Coordinator of the MAGD program Professor Dr. M. Emdadul Haq delivered the well coming address. Among others, BRAC University Pro-Vice Chancellor Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed and campus super Mr. Mahfuzul Bari Chowdhury attended the occasion. It may be mentioned here that the MAGD students are regularly exposed to the high profile dignitaries coming from multiple professional backgrounds.

ARC Update

ANGAN Lecture by Marina Tabassum

Architect Marina Tabassum, one of a well known female well-known architect in Bangladesh, delivered a presentation of her selected works in ANGAN lecture on 17 March 2009. She is the principal of MTA (Marina Tabassum Architects). She shared the journey through her career. The lecture was very lively as she has been a big inspiration to the students.

Lecture by Moushumi Bhowmik

Moushumi Bhowmik, the famous Indian Bengali singer delivered four lectures on folk music for the course ARC 293: Music Appreciation of the Department of Architecture on 17 & 24 March 2009. She is working on a research project on Bengali folk music with the India Foundation for the Arts since 2004. Her lectures reflected her research findings as well as her experience as a singer and composer. Moushumi Bhowmik is popularly acknowledged as one of the diverse singers of modern Bangla songs. Her albums, including "Ekhono golpo lekho" and "Ami ghor bahir kori" enjoy great popularity in Bengali-speaking areas of India and in Bangladesh. She composed for several Bangla documentary and art films. Her most recent film Matir Moyna (The Clay Bird) won the Critics' Prize at Cannes in 2002 and Best Music at Kara Film Festival, Karachi in 2003.

Study Tours

Freshmen students visited Panamnagar area in Sonargaon as part of their design and graphic communication courses on 21 March 2009 along with their studio teachers. Panamnagar has been included as the reserved archeological sites in Bangladesh for its rich heritage value. They analysed the buildings and documented details through sketches and measured drawings.

Students of the course ARC 501: Design Studio IX and ARC 394: Contemporary South Asian Architecture visited Bogra on 20th March, 2009 for a day trip. They visited two contemporary projects: SOS Children's Village and Training & Resource Center (TARC), BRAC, Bogra as well as Mahastangor museum. Faculty members accompanied the students. SOS Children's Village is designed by architect Raziul Ahsan. It is an orphanage for 100 children comprising ten family homes, an administration building, a community house, faculty residences, a primary school, and a secondary school. The other building TARC, which is designed by architect Jalal Ahmed, another promising architect of Bangladesh is mainly a Training & Resource Center. There are residential facilities for the trainee and the staff. Courtyards, low height forms, pitch roof, intimate scale- make these projects excellent. This tour aimed at increasing students' analyzing power and their perception about space and form as well as inspiring the future architects to search the identity of our Architecture.

BDI Update

Management of Land Acquisition Resettlement and Rehabilitation

BRAC Development Institute (BDI) is designing a semester long post-graduate certificate course on Management of Land Acquisition, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLARR). The pilot course is due to commence in May 2009. Designed primarily for professionals, the program aims at giving participants the knowledge and skills necessary to specialize in resettlement and land acquisition services as consultants, professionals, or practitioners. The course covers the general theory and practice of resettlement and focuses on Bangladesh as the "terrain." It provides an understanding of international best practice and a comparative reading of the Bangladeshi context, from the legal, policy and pragmatic perspectives.

100-Day Employment Generation Programme (EGP)

The 100-day Employment Generation Programme (EGP) is a social safety net programme of the government of Bangladesh that aims to provide guaranteed employment for the targeted extreme poor citizens during the lean seasons. This initiative came in response to the soaring food prices, which are especially hard to keep up with for the poorest and jobless poor.

I. Evaluation of Phase I of EGP

BDI and the Research and Evaluation Division (RED) of BRAC worked on this evaluation with the National Food Policy Capacity Strengthening Programme (NFPCSP). NFPCSP, which is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, was requested to carry out a programme evaluation by the Government of Bangladesh. The paper resulting from this programme review is available here http://www.nfpcsp.org/100_day_final.pdf

II. Qualitative Research on EGP

BDI's work provides the qualitative component in the overall evaluation. The institute was asked to collaborate because of its clear competitive advantage in terms of gathering field level qualitative knowledge and its capacity to carry out extensive field research. After being submitted to the government, the paper has received positive feedback and corresponds with, as well enriches much of the other studies conducted on the programme. Findings from the qualitative research reveal that beneficiaries mostly reported positive impacts and want the programme to continue. They have been able to survive through the price hikes, as well as escape the unemployment the lean period brings with it. Food consumption remained steady for beneficiaries and many reported being free from loan dependency as well.

III. CPD Organized Workshop

Syed Hashemi participated as a discussant in the CPD (Centre for Policy Dialogue) organized workshop on the 100 Day Employment Generation Programme. Chaired by Professor Rehman Sobhan, the workshop was attended by HT Imam, advisor to the Prime Minister, Akbar Ali Khan, former caretaker government advisor and Dr. Atiur Rahman, chairman of Unnayan Shamunnay.

Impact of the Food, Fuel and Financial Crises in Bangladesh

BDI has recently completed research to communicate the urgency of the food, fuel and financial crises impact in Bangladesh to policymakers and a global audience at the G20 meeting. The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) designed this pilot qualitative research with the aim to generate rapid, responsive research outputs that can speak to policy debates in this early part of the crisis. BDI's work provides the qualitative research carried out in Bangladesh, which is one of the five strategically selected developing countries in IDS' overall research. The other countries are Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya and Zambia.

Pathways to Women's Empowerment

I. Pathways Screening at Bashundhara Cineplex

The Pathways of Women's Empowerment Research Programme in collaboration with BEGINNING Productions hosted a screening of the video documentary "Stories of Change" on March 8th, 2009 at the Star Cineplex, Bashundhara City, to celebrate International Women's Day.

Noted filmmaker Morshedul Islam, Barrister Sara Hossain, and journalist Munni Saha participated in a discussion on the film after the screening, which was moderated by Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson of the English and Humanities Department at BRAC University and a Lead Research of the Pathways Programme.

II. To celebrate International Women's day, The Daily Star published a special feature on women's empowerment, which included the following pieces written by members of the Pathways of Women's Empowerment team:

- "Meaning of Empowerment" by Firdous Azim.
- "Agents of Change," reflecting on women health workers by Sheikh Tariquzzaman.
- "Women organizing: new forms and challenges" by Samia Huq and Sohela Nazneen.
- "New spaces, New Choices," that television viewing offers women by Samia A. Rahim and Aanmona Priyadarshini.

III. Prothom Alo news paper's issue on the 25th of March highlighted the different issues that the Pathways team has been researching on.

IV. Workshops that were attended by members of the Pathways team in March 2009

- Aanmona Priyadarshini attended a SEPHIS funded workshop from 14th March-21st March at Dhaka University on "Sexuality and Modernity Research Training."
- Sahida Khondaker and Samia Afroz Rahim attended a workshop on "Sexuality, Health and the Media" from 13th-14th March.
- Maheen Sultan attended a management meeting to plan the second phase of the Pathways Research Programme at IDS in England.
- Sohela Nazneen planned and facilitated a reflection workshop on empowerment with the Pathways Team, BDI and Director, Andrea Cornwall. She edited the workshop report with Samia Rahim.
- Samia Huq attended "Reflections on Empowerment" organized by Pathways of Women's Empowerment, which took place at Spectra Convention Centre on February 26th.

V. FOKUS

FOKUS, a Swedish based women's forum for women and development, held a four day workshop in Dhaka with the partnership of Naripokkho and Pathways of Women's Empowerment, BDI, from 18-22 March, 2009. Shahana Siddiqui, Research Associate, BDI, who had earlier worked on Climate Change and Urban Poverty issues, made a presentation at the workshop on Gender and Climate Change. The presentation highlighted the impacts climate variability will have on women in both urban and rural areas. It also provided a summary of the key gender related issues that had emerged during the International Conference on Climate Change and Urban Poverty: Infrastructures of Development, last January.

VI. Other Publications

- Sohela Nazneen's article with Maheen Sultan-- 'Struggling for Autonomy or Survival: NGOisation of Women's Organizations in Bangladesh' was published by Development 52:2; Special issue on AWID conference "Power in Movements"
- "Something is Better than Nothing?: Political Party Discourses on Women's Empowerment," by Sohela Nazneen got accepted for publication in the South Asian Journal, Special Issue on Women's Status in South Asia
- "Opportunistic Overtures, Distancing and Reciprocity: Women's Organizations Negotiating Legitimacy and Space in Bangladesh" by Sohela Nazneen is under review.

Deepening Democracy Building Citizenship and Promoting Participation Project

I. John Gaventa, Director of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at University of Sussex and the Coordinator of DRC on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability, came to BDI during his short trip to Bangladesh to share his experiences on using participatory research methods and the ethical dilemmas researchers face in their work. The Citizenship research team briefed him on their current research and discussed plans for the next phase of their work.

II. The first draft of their paper "Changing the Habits of the Heart: Development NGOs and the Struggle for

Democratic Values in Bangladesh," co-authored by Simeen Mahmud and Naila Kabeer, was submitted to Zed Book Publication.

III. The team has prepared their research brief "Seeing like a Citizen- Vision of Shorkar" for publication. The research findings answer the following questions:

- How do citizens in rural communities perceive government?
- Who do they consider as representatives of the government?
- What are their expectations from the government?

Public Lecture by Professor Per Pinstrup-Andersen from Cornell University

BDI, BRAC University, and the Bangladesh Agricultural University hosted a public lecture by Professor Per Pinstrup-Andersen on the 9th of February at BRAC Center Auditorium.

Professor Andersen was Director General at the International Food Policy Research Institute from 1992 to 2002 and recipient of the World Food Prize in 2001. He is currently the H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy at Cornell University.

Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, Executive Chairman, PPRC, and former Advisor to the Caretaker Government and Abdus Sattar Mandal Vice Chancellor BAU chaired the event. Professor Per Pinstrup-Anderson spoke on "Eradication of Hunger in the Context of Higher Food Prices. The event was followed by a four day training session, "A social entrepreneurship approach to Graduate and Undergraduate Training in Policy Analysis for Global, National and Local Food Systems."; which was conducted by Professor Per Pinstrup- Anderson.

Moving towards Quality Education: Understanding the challenges and identifying prospective solutions for ultra-poor communities

BRAC- Development Institute (BDI) is working with the Institute of Educational Development- BRAC University (BU-IED) on their research project, "Moving towards Quality Education: Understanding the challenges and identifying prospective solutions for ultra-poor communities."

The key aims of the study are as follows:

- To provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and constraints of meaningful access and quality education for ultra-poor children
- To advocate for policy changes that will lead to an overall improvement of mainstream primary education
- To suggest alternative approaches and strategies that will guide the design of future educational interventions and action-research by key stakeholders and partners of this scoping study.

New research program on freedom movements and economic struggles in Bengal

BDI, along with Dhaka University's Department of History, is starting a new research program on freedom movements and the economic struggles in Bengal. The purpose will be to rediscover our history and highlight those who have made sacrifices for political and economic emancipation.

Personalities will include Nurul Din, Titumir, Khudi Ram, Bagha Jatin, Binoy-Badal-Dinesh, Surjya Sen, Preetilata, Kalpana Datta, Netaji, all the way to Rafiq, Salam, Barkat, Shamsuzzoha, Asad, Shiraj Shikdar, Bhashani, Mujib, Tajuddin, Taher, Milon and Nur Hossain.

Movements will include, Nil Bidroho, Shautal Bidroho, the first Indian war of independence, the Faraizi movement, Nankar Bidroho, Tebagha Andolon, Nachol bidroho, the naval rebellion, Azad Hind Fouj, Khapra Ward, Bhasha Andolon, Six points, the 1969 democratic movement, the war of independence, jail killings, the anti-autocratic movement, etc.

Book Fair on Gender and Development

BDI was part of a book fair hosted by USAID from the 8th - 10th March, the theme of which was "Gender and Development."

CfL Update

CfL Workshop Conducted by Sanjoy Banerjee

Sanjoy Banerjee, CfL Lecturer, conducted a workshop titled "Learner Autonomy and Teacher's Role" at

BRACU on February 28, 2009. The twenty-four attendants participated in the two-hour session and took part in several authentic activities and discussion with enthusiasm and comprehended their roles and implementation in the language classroom.

Teacher Training: Making BRAC Primary School an Interactive Haven

An MOU was signed between the Directors of BRAC CfL Mrs Sarwat Abed, and BRAC Education Program (BEP) Dr. Shafiqul Islam to train BRAC Primary School (BPS) teachers. This Teacher Training, conducted by CfL faculty members, was initially planned through several focused group discussions to assess the needs of teachers in terms of teaching English language in the context of Bangladesh. It aims to support BPS teachers to adopt and apply Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach in their classrooms, and be able to communicate the language effectively in real-life context. This initiative is in its piloting stage, divided in four phases: Fluency, Accuracy, Methodology, and Micro Teaching, started on January 17th, 2009 and will end in August 2009. BRAC Primary teachers will then be able to implement CLT in BRAC's Primary Schools countrywide.

Language Pedagogy Workshop with Lisa Ponzetti

English Language Fellow Lisa Ponzetti facilitated a workshop on Saturday March 14, 2009 to explore approaches, beliefs and attitudes in teaching. Teachers spent the first part of the session being creative with Legos, followed by a reflective discussion on their vision of education. This session was conducted in connection with CfL's role in the development of an integrated curriculum for the Savar Residential semester.

Pre-University Enhancement on SongKran's Day

Sunida Witayakarn, CfL Lecturer, facilitated an Enhancement class for seventy-five Pre-University students at BRACU on March 19, 2009. Mrs Sarwat Abed, Director of CfL, Beth Trudell, former BRACU English Language Fellow and other faculty members were also present. Sunida, in Thai traditional attire, shared life experiences and cultural differences between Bangladesh and Thailand. This enhancement was a continuation of a writing class in which the students watched a cultural documentary on SongKran ♦ the Thai New Year Festival, and compared it with the Bangla New Year. In short, the session provided an authentic opportunity not only to strengthen their knowledge of the diverse culture, but also to rediscover the beauty in their own country through the eyes of the foreigner.

Chinese Language Scholarship Seminar

On March 22, 2009 BRACU CfL held a seminar for the students applying for Chinese Government's scholarship. Chinese Language Instructor Lu Min gave a brief introduction to Chinese learning from a global perspective. Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro Vice Chancellor of BRACU, Mrs Sarwat Abed, Director of CfL, and Lisa Ponzetti, CfL English Language Fellow, delivered speeches to encourage the students to learn Chinese. Thirty students attended the seminar, out of which six of them were chosen for 10 day long Chinese language training.

Russian Film with Film Club & CfL

Russian Center of Science and Culture, Ms. Elena Bass, CfL Russian Language Instructor and BU Film Club, organized a Russian Film Show at BRAC University on March 22, 2009.

BRAC University Celebrates Freedom Fighters

March 24, 2009 was a day the stories of our local heroes were brought to light by a CfL organised tribute to the 1971 Freedom Fighters. Major Qamrul Hasan Bhuiyan (Retd.), guest speaker, related awe inspiring war anecdotes to the BRACU students, faculty and guests. Among the guests, Mrs. Abed, Director of CfL, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor BRACU, Dr. Naseer Uddin Jamadar, Professor of International Development Graduate School of Social Design Studies from Rikkyo University, Tokyo, Japan, graced over the occasion. BU Drama & Theatre Forum (BUDTF) had a story telling session and a short drama written and acted out by the students.

CfL Lecturer Attended TESOL Convention in US

Liza Reshmin of the Centre for Languages (CfL) was selected to attend the 43rd Annual TESOL Convention in Denver, Colorado in the USA. This convention was held from March 26th to March 28th 2009. Liza also attended both Pre and Post Convention Institutes and workshops dealing with different aspects of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Recently, she has also been promoted to Lecturer II as of April 1st

2009.

A Talk with Actor Apurba @ BRACU

BU Drama & Theatre Forum (BUDTF) and Nisha Alam, CfL faculty member, invited actor Apurba for a chat with the students on March 31, 2009. The talk was casual and full of interesting pieces of his life including secrets to become successful in career. The students' enthusiasm also led to the active chat in which the famous actor expressed his thoughts through his humorous anecdotes. "Gombhira," and "Osomapto" written and directed by BU students were then beautifully performed on stage by the BUDTF crew.

ENH Update

Chairperson edits special issue of the Feminist Review

Prof. Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH, was invited to be a guest-editor for a special issue of the Feminist Review, one of leading international journals in its field, entitled South Asian Feminisms: Negotiating New Terrains, published by Palgrave (London). The special issue appeared in March 2009 as Feminist Review 91.

Chairperson delivers lecture at IUB

Prof. Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH, delivered a special lecture at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) entitled "New Directions in Feminist Literary Criticism" on 31st March, 2009. The lecture was well attended, and students and faculty members from ENH also attended and participated.

Faculty member attends conference in Chennai

Sohana Manzoor, Senior Lecturer, ENH, presented a paper titled "Sylvia Plath's Three Women and the Position of Women in Today's World" at a conference titled Defining the Ethos of the New Millenium: Literature from the United States and the Indian Subcontinent. The conference was held on 12th and 13th March at Ethiraj College in Chennai, India.

Eng 439 Study Trips

Students of Eng 439: Teaching Practicum went on study trips to Sunbeams International School, Engineering University School and Shahid Anwar Girls High School and College for classroom observation on 5, 21, and 28 March. The course Eng 439 focuses on the techniques and methods of language teaching in the classroom, so this trip allowed students to observe these methods in practice.

Eng 439 students also visited a BRAC school in Savar on 14 March, to observe the teaching methodology used there. Unlike the other classrooms observed in traditional schools, the BRAC school class was much more learner-centered with emphasis on group activities and student interaction.

As part of their coursework, the students will be required to write observation reports based on the visits. The study trips were coordinated by the course teacher Ms. Asifa Sultana, Lecturer, ENH.

Eng 653 Study Trips

Students of Eng 653: Teaching Practicum went on study trips for classroom observation at Happy Times International School and CfL (BRAC University) on 8th February and 31st March, respectively. Eng 653 focuses on providing students with a practical orientation to teaching; students are expected to receive hands-on training on practical aspects of teaching, and these study trips were intended to provide students with such hands-on training. At Happy Times, the students learned about classroom management, creating interaction, teaching vocabulary and grammar, etc. And in the CfL class, they observed different teaching techniques and also how to teach the four skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. The study trips were coordinated by Tamanna Mostafa, Teaching Assistant, ENH.

ESS update

ESS Seminar Series: Sexuality in Popular Discourse

Zubaida Nasreen, a course contact faculty member of the Department of ESS presented a seminar on 'Sexuality in Popular Discourse' on Thursday, March 16, 2009 at ESS Conference Room. In her presentation Ms. Nasreen focused on Gender and Sex; Historical, Political and Social views of sexuality as well as her own view on this issue. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor of BRACU, Dr. Anwarul Hoque, Chairperson of ESS and students and faculty members of various departments were present in the seminar

and participated in the lively discussion.

Village Visit by the Students of Bangladesh Studies

On March 14, 2009, a total of 125 students of Bangladesh Studies (DEV101) went to visit villages of Savar, as part of their academic activities. Department of ESS organized this visit for the students of Bangladesh Studies. The purpose of the visit was to give students real life experiences about the life and livelihood of rural people of Bangladesh.

The Campus Superintendent, Coordinator of Bangladesh Studies, Faculty members of ESS and House tutors of TARC, Savar accompanied the students. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro Vice Chancellor joined with the students and listened to student's experiences of the visit. Dr. Ahmed encouraged both faculty and staff to organize such events and wished to continue these types of activities in future. Students shared their experiences with the large audiences in the evening under the sky.

Faculty Participation in 'Global Partnership for Development' Workshop

A. K. Iftekharul Haque, Lecturer, ESS, participated a workshop titled 'Global Partnership for Development' jointly organized by Shamunnay, UNDP and Planning Commission on March 14, 2009. Dr Selim Jahan, director, Bureau of Development Policy of UNDP and Dr. Selim Raihan, Associate Professor, University of Dhaka presented the background papers. Participants provided their inputs regarding the topic in the plenary session.

Faculty gave Lecture in Seminars

Dr. Manjur Karim, Associate Professor, ESS was the Guest of Honour in a seminar titled 'Law, Capitalism and Colonialism' on March 19, 2009. The seminar was organized by 'Empowerment through Law of Common People'. Dr. Karim gave lecture in a session of the seminar.

Dr. Karim was a speaker in a seminar on 'International Political Economy', organized by a student association of University of Dhaka on March 26, 2009.

Rural Games Competition at Savar Campus

For the first time ever Bangladesh Studies (DEV 101) course organized a Rural Games Competition at Savar Campus on March 26, 2009. The purpose of the competition was to introduce students to rural games and traditional culture which dying out due to the effects of cosmopolitan culture

Students, teachers, house tutors and staff of Savar Campus enjoyed this competition for the whole day. The campus super, faculty and TA's of DEV 101 distributed prizes to the winners of the competition.

Liberation War Museum and CRP Visits by the Students of Bangladesh Studies

On March 28, 2009, a total of 67 students of Bangladesh Studies (DEV101) went to visit Liberation War Museum and Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP), Savar, as part of their academic activities. Department of ESS organized the visit for the students of Bangladesh Studies. Students were informed about the history and culture of Bangladesh as well as the various activities and programs of CRP for physically disabled people. The campus superintendent, Coordinator of Bangladesh Studies, faculty members of ESS and house tutors of TARC, Savar accompanied the students.

IEEE Student Branch Update

An Academic Visit to Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka

Members of IEEE BRACU student branch visited the Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka (AECD) on February 23, 2009, a place that has been the home to a wide range of research works, widely accepted both nationally and internationally. From environmental pollution to tracing melamine in milk, AECD has been contributing for more than decades to almost every possible aspect of the nation.

The Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka started its journey, when Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) was formally constituted in 1973. BAEC is a scientific research organization committed to ensure peaceful utilization of atomic energy through acquisition, development and application of scientific and technological knowledge by undertaking research and development (R&D) in various fields of science. The Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka is the pioneer institution of BAEC and one of its prime research establishments. The Centre stands proudly at the core of Dhaka carrying out research and development works on some specialized

branches of physical sciences, which includes Accelerator facilities division, Chemistry division, E & GS Division, Materials Science Division, Electronics Division and Non-Destructive testing Division.

Upon reaching the facility, they were cordially received by one of the officers of AECD and from there they were led to the Accelerator Facilities Division. Here they were given a short description of how this part of the research centre operates and what its uses are. They learned many interesting facts and it was fun to see that the things, which we have learned, so far only in books, are coming to reality. This department provides many services including, multi-elemental analysis of samples related to environment, health, agriculture and industry, nuclear reaction analysis and many other services of technological and scientific importance. Then they moved on to the room where real things were happening! The room was equipped with a 3 MV Van de Graff Accelerator and its auxiliary system which were installed in 1964. The Van de Graff generator was left open for maintenance services, so luckily we got a chance to have a full interior view of the accelerator. The Accelerator is capable of producing proton, deuteron and alpha particles of energy 0-3 MV with beam currents in the range of nano to microamperes.

They visited Analytical Chemistry Division. This department carries out R&D works in various branches of chemistry focusing the socio-economic development of the country, particularly in the field of environmental pollution, nutrition, nuclear analytical techniques in materials analysis and the application tracer technology in industry. One of the main functions of this lab is to check records of environmental pollution throughout the country on a regular basis.

The interesting part of the tour was the GC-MS (Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry) Lab. When they entered this lab, the senior scientific officers of AECD were having an important meeting (were discussing about a problem related to tracing melamine in powder milk). Quite interestingly, this is the lab where the content of melamine in powder milk was detected. They were quite fortunate to see the whole procedure of melamine detection in front of our own eyes. It is a fully computerized procedure, where samples are fed into a device. This device separates the samples into different compounds into two steps the GC & MS, which are two different procedures. These compounds are identified by the computer, through different graph readings, which are further analyzed by the scientists to figure out the required material.

Trip ended with the visit to the AECD library. It is a well-equipped library with an atmosphere that would give anyone the urge to read and learn more. "The urge to read and learn more!" Perhaps this is the foundation of all advances in science, starting from the tiniest atoms to the vast, endless universe!

Trip members included Dr. A K M Abdul Malek Azad, (Adviser, IEEE BRACU Student Branch), Prof. A. A. Ziauddin Ahmad (Chairperson, Mathematics and Natural Science Department), Mr. Apurba Saha, Mr. Annajiat Alim Rasel, Shiblee, Rain, Nabila, Russel.

MNS update

International Conference on Plant Breeding and Seed for Food Security (ICPSFS 2009), Dhaka

The International Conference on Plant Breeding and Seed for Food Security, organized by the Plant Breeding and Genetics Society of Bangladesh was held at the auditorium of the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council, Dhaka. Professor Naiyyum Choudhury and Dr. Aparna Islam participated in the conference. The theme of the conference was Plant Breeding and Seed System for Food Security. Professor Naiyyum Choudhury chaired the scientific session of the conference on intellectual property rights and related issues on 12 March, 2009.

Science Fair at the City International School, Dhaka

Professor A. A. Ziauddin Ahmad was invited as the Chief Guest at the Annual Science Fair of the City International School at Banani, Dhaka on March 12, 2009. A. A. Ziauddin inaugurated the fair and visited different science projects done by the students. Dr Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, Assistant Professor, at the MNS Department acted as a judge at the fair.

BAS-USDA Workshop on Prioritization of Research in Agricultural and Life Sciences

The Bangladesh Academy of Sciences organized a two-day national workshop on prioritization of research in agricultural and life sciences funded under the joint BAS-USDA endeavour in agricultural and life sciences.

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury was the coordinator of the workshop. More than two hundred delegates from different universities and research organizations in the public and private sectors participated in the workshop and made important recommendations on priority areas of research in crop sciences, fisheries, livestock, and forestry and also on new and emerging areas of life sciences. Professor Choudhury presented the background paper explaining the BAS-USDA initiated endowment fund for supporting research in agricultural and life sciences. He mentioned that the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences and the US Department of Agriculture have made an agreement for funding research projects in agricultural and life sciences through the creation of an endowment fund. The Academy has developed a guideline for the support programme and working paper for discussion in the workshop. The launching of the programme would be made based on the recommendations of this important workshop. Dr. Aparna Islam, Mr. Nustak Ibn Ayub, Ms. Adeeba Raihan and Ms. Jedunnessa Chowdhury of the MNS Department participated in the workshop with Ms. Raihan acting as the Master of Ceremony.

UNESCO Workshop on Bioethics

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury participated in the UNESCO Workshop on Bioethics organized jointly by the UNESCO, UGC and the Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The workshop focused on methodologies of application and integration of Asian (and international) ethical knowledge, epistemology and ideas into practice and how to improve ethics of research, policy making and decision making with examples from medical ethics, biotechnology, public health and environmental issues and teaching ethics. Professor Darryl Macer, Regional Advisor, UNESCO, Bangkok, Thailand delivered the keynote paper on "Implementing the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (UDBHR) into Teaching, Research and Policy". Professor Naiyyum Choudhury chaired the scientific session on bioethics in Bangladesh.

Inception Workshop on "Strengthening the Legal Framework for Biotechnology"

Dr. Aparna Islam, of the MNS Department, participated in a day-long inception workshop on "Strengthening the Legal Framework for Biotechnology". The workshop was organized by the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Dhaka on 19 March 2009. The speakers in the workshop discussed the present status of the legal framework existing in the country and what modifications were needed to attain safe and sustainable use of biotechnology, especially to boost the agricultural productivity. Regulatory measures in the fields of intellectual property rights (IPR), plant variety protection (PVP), food law and food safety, sanitary and phytosanitary were emphasized got priority in various sessions. Relevant stakeholders from the government, non-government, research and academic institutions and organizations of the country participated in the workshop.

It is worth mentioning that in December 2008, BRACU in collaboration with the International Center for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB) organized a similar symposium entitled "Regulatory and Safety Issues in Commercialization of Biotechnology Research in Developing Countries". During that symposium various issues like IPR, patents, biosafety, bioethics, regulatory affairs, and other regulatory issues involved in the fields and clinical trials, and in the commercialization of biotech products were discussed. Participants were informed about the international practice and legal obligations to be followed prior to releasing any biotech products.

IAP Executive Committee Meeting, Amsterdam, Netherlands

At the invitation of the Inter Academy Panel on International Issues(IAP), Professor Naiyyum Choudhury participated in the Executive Committee Meeting of the IAP held at the Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW), Amsterdam on 23-25 March 2009. Apart from the members of the Executive Committee, the Meeting was attended by representatives from the Royal Society, UK, the Academy for the Developing World(TWAS), US National Academy of Sciences, Science Council of Japan, International Council for Science(ICSU), Inter Academy Panel(IAC) and Inter Academy Medical Panel, and All European Academies(ALLEA). The Meeting discussed at length some important global issues like food security, present financial crisis and role of science, young scientists' congress, biodiversity, GMOs etc.

Departmental Study Tour 2009

On March 25 2009 eight faculty members and staff and sixteen students from the Department of MNS started off on a study tour towards Cox's Bazar and St. Martin's by road. The group traveled for more than thirteen hours throughout the night of March 25, 2009 and the better part of March 26, but nobody seemed to be tired once they saw the sand and water. After quickly checking into the hotel everyone jumped into

the Bay. A refreshing dip in the water was followed by a fresh coconut to beat the heat. But it was still a study tour and that fact seemed to be present in everyone's mind. The MS Biotechnology students could be seen assembled on the beach with data collecting sheets and thermometers trying to understand the abiotic conditions of the environment of Cox's Bazar better.

After having their lunch, the group rushed off towards the Bangladesh Meteorological Department's Radar Station. They went to the display centre from where the changes in weather were monitored. Then the participants were escorted into the hi-tech instrument room where microwave radiation was sent up into the atmosphere, reflected by the clouds and back to the radar station where they were analyzed. The tour was not only interesting for the students studying physics, but also for those in mathematics, geography and biotechnology. The day ended with another mouthwatering dinner at one of the popular cafes. Later some sat on the beach listening to the soothing sound of the waves with the cool breeze blowing on their faces.

The team set off towards Teknaf at 6am on March 27, 2009 to take the ferry to St. Martin's. The drive itself was wonderful especially that early in the morning. On both sides one could see the greenery which was slowly replaced by fields of salt farms. The trip to St. Martin's took three hours from Teknaf and the view from the ferry of the river Naaf was simply breath-taking. Only three hours were available to explore the island and that was put to optimal use. After a quick lunch everyone went off on colourful three-wheeler vans to the Abakash Beach. The turquoise blue, crystal-clear water was too tempting to resist. All the participants waded in to find out that the water level was knee deep for at least a km. Fun in the water ended with another data collection session .

The return trip from St. Martin's to Teknaf gave the group a chance to see the sunset over Naaf river. On arrival at Cox's Bazar a hot BBQ dinner was awaiting the team on the beach with a bonfire in the centre. After a long day everybody was starving and ate to their fill while being entertained by local children who sang and danced for them.

On March 28, 2009 The participants visited the Beach Sand Mineral Exploitation Centre(BSMEC), where its Director, Mr.Mashrur Zaman gave a fascinating lecture about the various minerals isolated from the beach sands. He was showered with questions from the interested students. Later he took the group for a tour of their laboratory. The rest of the day was spent shopping at the Burmese market which ended with a trip to Himchori.

It was definitely quite a memorable trip, which was evident from the saddened faces as the team waved goodbye to Cox's Bazar and the waves of the vast blue Bay of Bengal. The participants arrived in Dhaka in the early morning of March 29, 2009.

Seminar on Higher Education in Russia, Dhaka, 30 March, 2009

Dr Mohammad Rafiqul Islam, of MNS Department was a special guest in the seminar entitled "Higher Education in Russia" held on March 30, 2009 at the Russian Centre of Science and Culture, Dhaka. The seminar was organized by the Russian Centre of Science and Culture. Dr Islam was a speaker in the seminar and discussed the various aspects of education system in Russia. Director of the Russian Centre of Science and Culture and Head of the Visa Section of the Russian Embassy were also present in the seminar. People of different professions and some students participated in the seminar.

SPH Update

Academic Programs

MPH PROGRAM COURSES

The course "Anthropological Approaches to Public Health" (MPH512) began on March 1, 2009 and was completed on March 12, 2009. Professor Sjaak van der Geest, Dr. Shahaduz Zamana and Nasima Selim taught the course. "Qualitative Research Methods" (MPH511) started on March 15, 2009 and ended on March 26, 2009. Dr. Shahaduz Zaman and Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid taught in the course. Taufique Joarder acted as the Teaching Assistant and took 2 classes. "Epidemiology" (MPH521) course started on March 29, 2009 and the faculty for the course are Dr. Shams El Arifeen, Steve Luby and Kazi Mizanur Rahman. Enamul Hasib served as Teaching Assistant for the first week of the course.

FIELD VISITS

During the Anthropological Approach to Public Health and Qualitative Research Methods courses students had several fieldworks. They had field works in Kaliakoir village of Savar to observe health seeking behavior of the villagers. They also conducted a qualitative study in pairs in the village. Students had another field work/group work to observe the campus through the 'gender lens' and 'social hierarchy lens'.

OTHER ACTIVITIES AS SAVAR CAMPUS

On 11 March the students participated in the Holi, the Hindu festival of colors at the Savar campus.

HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR SERIES

Dr. Bejon Misra is the Executive Director of Consumer VOICE, New Delhi, India. Dr. Misra was invited to present a lecture for the MPH students on 3rd March 2009. He spoke on "Patient orientation in the Bangladesh Health System". His lecture followed by 15 minutes Q & A session for the students.

SHORT COURSES

TRAINING ON "QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH SYSTEMS

As a part of the capacity development effort, James P. Grant School of Public Health organized a training on Quality management in Health systems at James P Grant School of Public Health from 1-12th March, 2009. The aim of the two week long training was to provide health professionals with the knowledge, tools and skills in improving and sustaining quality in healthcare services and systems in order to strengthen the health system through enhanced quality of services and their effective and efficient management. An Inaugural Ceremony was held at the James P. Grant School of Public Health on the 28th of February from 4-6pm that was attended by the Honourable Secretary Mr. Sheikh Altaf Ali, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, and Government of Bangladesh as the Chief Guest.

Events

WORKSHOP ON SEXUALITY, HEALTH AND THE MEDIA

The Center for Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS at JPGSPH organized a workshop on Sexuality, Health and the Media on March 13 & 14, 2009 at BRAC Centre in Dhaka. This workshop was funded by Realising Rights Research Programme Consortium (DFID funded) and International Women's Health Coalition, New York. Among the participants were correspondents from various newspapers and media houses who are also Salma Sobhan Fellows or members of the Health and Environmental Journalists' Network of Bangladesh (HEJNB). A number of participants were also from the leading advertising agencies in the country.

Dr. Hilary Standing from IDS, Dr. Anwar Islam (Director), Dr. Sabina F Rashid (Associate Professor), and Mahrukh Mohiuddin (Lecturer) at the opening session of the workshop. Participants of the workshop after the training session with their trainer Ms. Shohini Ghosh (Centre)

The trainer of the workshop was Professor Shohini Ghosh, who is a faculty at the AJK Mass Communication Research Centre, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India and also a feminist film maker. Barrister Sara Hossain and Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, who is an Associate Professor of JPGSPH and Coordinator of Realising Rights in Bangladesh also facilitated sessions on legal issues and ethics at the workshop.

The objective of the workshop was to sensitize the professionals working in the media to issue of sexual rights and health and promote further social awareness amongst women and men alike. Among the issues discussed at the workshop were concepts of gender and sexuality, relationship between sexuality and the law, popular culture, gender identities and sexual orientation, sexual wrongs vs. sexual rights, pleasure, desire and fantasy, and sexual rights campaigns. Several relevant films were screened at the workshop including "Teen Kanya" by Satyajit Ray and "Tales of the Night Fairies", a film on sex workers' rights movement in Kolkata, directed by Shohini Ghosh.

At the end of the workshop, a dinner reception was hosted where participants were given certificates. Eminent media personalities and rights activists like Hamida Hossain, Shireen Huq, Sara Hossain, Tareq Masud, Catherine Masud, and Luva Nahid Chowdhury were present at the reception.

PRESENTATION ON "LEARNING FROM THE DAILY FOOD ROUTINE OF ULTRA POOR BANGLADESH WOMEN HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS"

James P. Grant School of Public Health, and the Department of Community Health Sciences Faculty of Medicine, University of Calgary jointly organized a dissemination framework presentation on the topic of "Learning from the Daily Food Routine of Ultra poor Bangladeshi Women Heads of Household". This presentation was held on 17th March JPG SPH Conference room and was conducted by Lynn McIntyre, Professor and CIHR Chair in Gender and Health, from University of Calgary, Canada. She was accompanied by Dr. Anwar Islam, Prof. & Director JPG SPH. The presentation was designed for local NGO's, BRAC, JPG SPH faculty members and others. Dr. Ariful Bari was working as a coordinator for this dissemination project.

VISIT OF SEPHIS COORDINATOR

On March 22, 2009 SEPHIS Coordinator Dr. Marina de Regt and the Sexuality Research Methodology Workshop participants from Brazil, Mexico & Zimbabwe visited the department.

RETREAT TO 'NAYA KRISHI ANDOLON' A VISIT TO UBINIG (UNNAYAN BIKALPER NITINIRDHARONI GOBESHONA) CENTER AT TANGAIL

Some of the Staff of the James P Grant School of Public Health has got the pleasure of paying a visit to one of the NGOs who have been working for ecological agriculture, production of food without any chemicals and pesticides and about developing new organic technologies.

As a movement Nayakrishi Andolon is a message to regain and reinterpret the value of agriculture in order to transform the destructive and unsustainable industrial civilization. As UBINIG puts it Nayakrishi Andolon is more than introduction of technologies; it is not merely sustainable agriculture. More precisely it is rather appropriation and regeneration of the life activities of the communities, the joy of living creatively, without which human existence is meaningless. It is a quest for good and happy life, here and now. Nayakrishi is about real life activities and pleasure of living, enjoying and growing up with all the entities around us, visible or invisible.

The team from the School of Public Health went to one of the two UBINIG centers. The center is located at Delduar Upazila of Tangail District. The team returned in the same day after the day long trip.

Researches and Initiatives

CENTER FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS STUDIES

COMPREHENSIVE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE (CPHC)

To achieve the study objective study questionnaires have been developed. The study team members had several meetings to finalize the questionnaires. For quantitative component two sets of questionnaire have been developed, one for the in patient and out patient clients of the Upazila Health Complex services and the other one for the health service providers of the Upazila Health Complex services. The team has also developed the checklist for non users of the Upazila Health Complex services. An initial training of the data collectors was done. Second phase of training and the pre-testing of the study instruments will be done by next week. The team is aiming to start the actual data collection by last week of this month.

CENTER FOR QUALITATIVE INQUIRY

GLOBALIZATION AS A SOCIAL DETERMINANT OF HEALTH: INFLUENCES ON PATTERNS OF FOOD CONSUMPTION AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN ASIAN UNIVERSITIES

Data analysis has been finished and write-up of the draft report has been started.

CENTER FOR GENDER, SEXUALITY AND HIV/AIDS

PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV STIGMA INDEX

The draft report of "People living with HIV Stigma Index" study in Bangladesh has been prepared to hand over to the UNAIDS, Bangladesh.

BANGLADESH HEALTH WATCH

SUB STUDY: PHARMACEUTICAL MARKETING PRACTICES

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTS FROM PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES:

A round table discussion was organized by Bangladesh Health Watch on 11th March 2009 at ARANG House. The meeting was organized as part of the BHW 2008 Sub-Study on "Pharmaceutical Marketing Practices" by James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University. The agenda of the meeting is to discuss the

measures to strengthen the norms and legal practices in pharmaceutical marketing.

The C.E.O's and Marketing Directors of various national and multinational pharmaceutical companies were invited in the meeting. Participants from following pharmaceutical companies joined the discussion- Square, Beximco, Incepta, Eskafey, Jayson, Gonoshasthay Pharmaceutical, Renata, Glaxo SmithKline Bangladesh, Novartis, Sanofi-Aventis Bangladesh and Nuvista pharmaceutical Ltd.

Academic study group

SEMINAR ON "END OF LIFE CARE AND GOOD DEATH IN GHANA AND THE NETHERLANDS: IRONIC CONTRASTS" BY PROFESSOR SJAAK VAN DER GEEST

There was a seminar titled "End of life care and good death in Ghana and the Netherlands: Ironic Contrasts" by Sjaak van der Geest, Professor Emeritus, Medical Anthropology, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands at James P Grant School of Public Health conference room on Monday, 16 March 2009 at 3:30 pm.

During the session he raised questions about established cultural values and practices around end-of-life care in his own country The Netherlands (where euthanasia was legalized some years ago) and Ghana where he has been doing research among older people and their care-givers. The participants discussed the issue of end-of-life care in Bangladesh.

FILM SHOW: "A JIHAD FOR LOVE"

Academic Study Group arranged a film screening of 'A Jihad for Love' (2007) on Sunday, 22 March 2009 at JPGSPH conference room at 1:00 PM. Directed by Parvez Sharma, and produced by Parvez Sharma and Sandi DuBowski, the film is the world's first documentary film on the coexistence of Islam and homosexuality. The film premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival in September 2007, and has been screened to great acclaim at several film festivals around the world.

After the screening of the film there was a lively discussion with Dr. Dina M. Siddiqi on the film. Dr. Siddiqi is a Visiting Scholar at the Center for the Study of Gender and Sexuality at New York University and the principle investigator for the ongoing study at the School on Sexuality and Rights and adjunct faculty member at the Centre for Gender, Sexuality and HIV/AIDS at the James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University, Dhaka.

MEETING WITH DR. SHOHINI GHOSH

On 12th March 2009, faculty and Staff of the James P Grant School of Public Health have got the opportunity to meet and have an interactive discussion session with Ms. Shohini Ghosh the Zakir Hussain Chair Professor at A J K Mass Communication Research Centre of New Delhi. She is the co-founder of Mediastorm Collective, India's first all women documentary production collective which received the Chameli Devi Jain Award for Outstanding Work among Women Media Professionals in 1992. Her first independent documentary Tales of the Night Fairies (2002) won the Best Film award at Jeevika 2003- the National Livelihood Documentary Competition and went to festivals in Australia, USA, UK, Canada, The Netherlands, China, Korea, Mexico, Croatia, South Africa, Thailand, Hong Kong and Brazil. Professor Ghosh writes extensively on popular culture and the media for both academic journals and the popular press. Ms. Gosh talked all about her works, inspirations and motivations. She also talked about the popular culture that she writes on.

Faculty news

NASIMA SELIM

Nasima Selim participated in a SEPHIS/Ford Foundation funded "Research Methodology Training in Sexuality Research" on 14-21 March, 2009. History of sexuality studies, Sexuality & identity politics, Methodological aspects, Theoretical approaches, Methods of data collection, and Sexuality studies in Bangladesh were discussed in the workshop. The workshop was organised by SEPHIS & The Department of Gender & Women's Studies, Dhaka University.

ILIAS MAHMUD

An article by Ilias Mahmud on Vocational Reintegration of People with Spinal Cord Lesion in Bangladesh has been included in a book published from India. The book title is Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities; edited by Bhanushali Kishorekumar and published by Icfai University Press.

Student Affairs Update

BRAC University Electronics and Communication Club

Talentfest

BRAC University has always been encouraging the blooming of new talents. Being a part of this institution, we are quite acquainted with the term Talentfest. The name suggests it all that it's a festival seeking talented people from our respective CSE department. On that note, keeping this intention in mind, BRAC University Electronics and Communication Club organized such fest where aptitude showed a new dimension.

Total 18 groups consisting of 3 people in each were formed. At the primary quiz level, all the groups got the opportunity to participate. The underlying motive was not only to testify their basic knowledge but also the finalist get to go to the tour to ENERGOPAC. At the initial level 5 groups were selected to take part in final round based on their quiz marks. The next day competition was quite different from that of the first one. It was divided into 4 segments with an exception of 2 buzzer rounds. The winning team and the runner up team were awarded with pen drives of 2 GB and 1 GB respectively.

ENERGOPAC Tour

Following the above mentioned event Talentfest, our next big event was the tour to the ENERGOPAC Electronics Ltd. Pre-arrangement with the company was made before hand. With 25 members from the club including the winning teams, we headed off for its factory located in Gazipur. A briefing on the company and their energy saving operation was given to us by one of their able engineer. After small refreshment, we were soon introduced with their assignment related on this field. ENERGOPAC takes pride in making their own ballasts, fan regulators (named as Amigo), energy saving lamps etc. We found the workers working diligently with the maneuver ordained for them, like some were at the PCB integration section, some in assembling the ballasts and others with the final testing jobs. At noon we had lunch. Finishing off with the lunch, we were again ushered to the DGM's room, Mr. Alomoy Bishshoy, who was nice enough to share his views and experiences with us, regarding our club and of course the field of Engineering. At around 3 o'clock in the afternoon, we journeyed back to Dhaka-completing a very informative and pleasant tour where we learned through fun.

Overall BUECC has been fully on the run in the month of March. Hope memories of the tour remain fresh amongst all participants and the spirit of the members remains high as always.

BIZ BEE

BRAC University Business Club BIZ BEE organized a seminar on "Success Story of a Leader" on March 16, 2009.

Mr. Annisul Huq, President, FBCCI. (Federation of Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry) was the keynote speaker. After a warm welcome speech of Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, VC, BRACU the main event began. Mr. Annisul Huq took the microphone and started sharing his success journey with students. He has told them how he started his journey towards his dream. How he fought for his ambitions against all odds. He made us believe that Dreaming is the first step to be a successful person in life. Apart from his story of life, he also talked about the current economic situation of Bangladesh and enriched them with many industrial information. He has also shown us many opportunities that Bangladesh have which needs to grow. There was a small Question Answer Session after his delightful speech, which was indeed a very fruitful one. And the seminar came to an end by giving some souvenirs on behalf of BIZ BEE family.

Trip to Mymensing, organized by BIZ BEE

BRAC University Business Club (BIZ BEE) organized a one day study trip to Mymensing on March 20, 2009, to experience two of the luminous and time-worthy entrepreneurial ventures in Bangladesh, Reptiles Farm Ltd. Mymensing (A Closed Cycle Captive Breeding Crocodile Farm) and Crimson Strawberry Farm at Mymensing Agriculture Institute

Mr. Mostaque Ahmed, founder, Reptiles Farm who is also popularly known as Mr. Crocodile has a very lucrative and ambitious vision which stated "To strive hard to be a provider of world class crocodile skin and position the country in the higher value segment of the international leather market". He started this venture from 2004 in Mymensing. At first there were only 74 to 80 crocodiles. With an aim to export over 5000 pieces of crocodile skins annually, the farm is expected to create a base for earning up to US\$ 5 million by 2015. They are now ready to make export of their first batch of crocodile baby. Most of their

buyers are from European countries and some are also from Japan. Mr. Mostoque was very enthusiastic to have us in his farm and gave us an elaborate tour of 15 acre land full of ferocious reptiles each of about 14 feet long.

Strawberry cultivation is really a profitable effort that should be practiced commercially in Bangladesh. Experiencing the beauty and cultivation method of the strawberry farm for the first time was really great. The management of that strawberry farm to let them pluck the strawberries (Per piece 20 taka) fully at free of cost.

School Visit

St. Joseph School

A BRACU team with Mr. K. Shamsuddin Mahmud , Head, Undergraduate Program, Sol, Ms. Shamsun Nahar Rahman, Mr. Rezaur Rahman, Assistant System Administrator and Mr. Abdul Ahad a former student visited the St. Joseph School on Wednesday, 25th March, 2009. The Vice Principal, Brother Leo Parara, welcomed the BRACU team .Nearly 100 senior students attended the seminar on BRAC University.

Notre Dame College

A BRACU team with Mr. Ali Salman, Program Coordinator and lecturer, BBS, Ms Shamsun Nahar Rahman , Mr Sadat, Assistant System Administrator along with Mr. Salman Raihan, a former student visited the Notre Dame College on march 18,2009. Father Benjamin D'Costa, Principal, welcomed the BRACU team. Nearly 200 students attended the seminar on BRAC University.

Mastermind school

A BRACU team with Professor Fuad Mallick ,Chairperson Architecture Department, Mr. Sadat, Assistant System Administrator and Ms Shamsun Nahar Rahman visited the Mastermind school on Wednesday, March 4, 2009.The team was welcomed by Mr Fakhruddin Ahmed, the Principal of the School. Nearly 100 senior students of the school attended the seminar on BRAC University.

Maple Leaf school

A BRACU team with Professor Mumit Khan, Professor, CSE, Ms Shamsun Nahar Rahman, Mr. Sadat, Assistant System Administrator with Mr. Rahib, a former student of the School visited the Maple Leaf school on Thursday, March 5, 2009. Mr. Abdur Rakib, Senior Science Instructor of the school welcomed the BRACU team in their large auditorium. Nearly 150 senior students of the school attended the seminar.

RS Update

Seminar

As part of the course HUM103 a seminar was held on March 12, 2009 from 3pm to 4:30pm at Markuli hall. The topic "Fighting Corruption to Fight Poverty: Raising Voice for Accountability" was discussed by Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive director of TIB. Dr. Iftekharuzzaman talked about various forms of corruption, their causes, how corruption is related to poverty, and the ways to get rid of corruption. His speech was followed by a lively question-answer session.

Independence Day Celebration

On March 26, 2009 independence day was observed at savar campus. The daylong program started with a rally and with paying tribute by leaving flowers on the martyred memorial made by the students. After that teachers, staff, students, and participants of TARC engaged in various local games, like frog jump, cockfight, kanamachi, musical ball, musical chair, gollachut, chocolate searching, bodhur kapale tip, harivanga, dress as you like, and tag-of-war. In the afternoon there was a cultural program where students performed patriotic songs, dance,drama, and poetry recitation. A movie based on the liberation war, Ora Egaro Jan (The Eleven of Them) directed by Chashi Nazrul Islam, was screened in the evening.

Sports

On March 10, 2009 three volleyball matches were held between krishnochura and chhayaneer dorms where krishnochura won by 2-1 matches. In the cricket of girls held on 13 march Surjalok won defeating Surjamukhi. On 27 march, 2009 a friendly football match was held between krishnochura and chhayaneer dorms and chhayaneer won by 1-0 goal defeating krishnochura. In the final of chess game held on 31

march Krishnochura became the champion and Surjalok runner-up.

Cultural Program

On 24march dorm Surjalok organized a cultural program at Anandapur. The girls of Surjalok performed dance, song, drama, marshal art, fashion show, etc. The rest of the students, teachers, and staff of RS, and also the participants of TARC were present as audience and enjoyed the cultural program.

2nd Cfl Weekend

The second Cfl Weekend was held on 21 march, 2009 for the students of RS. The students continued exploring the different uses of English language in authentic atmosphere in their selected activities. The activities include Games, Bamboo Candle Stand making, Song, Quiz, Creative Writing, Block Printing, T-Shirt designing, Sketch, Jewellery Box Making, and Table Lamp designing. Students enjoyed the activities, acquired various skills, and at the same time learnt the English related to those activities.

Milad Mehfil

A milad mehfil was held at dining hall on March 15, 2009 in the afternoon. In this program all the teachers, staff and students of Savar Campus prayed for the departed soul of Saqueeb's (a student of RS) father colonel Elahi who has been assassinated in an incident took place at BDR Headquarters during February 25-26, 2009. Also, they prayed for the recovery of Mr Salamat Ullah, Senior Accounts Officer at TARC, who is suffering from cancer.

2nd Social lab and Visit

The 2nd social lab of the present RS was held on March 28, 2009 . A total of 64 students participated in this social lab. On that day the whole central management went off and the students took over the responsibilities to run the campus for the day. The responsibilities they took includes CS, Service Manager, Admin Officer, cleaner, dish washer, cook, etc. By this exercise the students learnt to respect the people of all working classes and to value all works. On the same day the remaining 58 students went to visit CRP and Liberation War Museum. The students were charmed to see the different initiatives of CRP to bring the physically injured to normal life and the effectiveness of those initiatives. Having finished their lunch in CRP, they went to liberation war museum. At first they saw a documentary on the history of liberaion war. Then they went from one room to anoher of the museum and looked at the reminders of the liberation war. The purpose of the tour was to make the history of liberation war more alive and realistic in the imaginaion of the students. Having finished the visit to the museum, the students returned to the savar campus in the afternoon.

Village Visit

As an activity of the course DEV101 all the students of RS went to visit some of the villages nearby the Savar Campus on march 14. The students were divided into ten groups to visit ten different villages. Each group was led by a teacher or staff of RS. Through this visit students experienced the life and culture of some of the villages of Bangladesh. The pro-VC and CS also accompanied the students in this visit. After returning from the villages they took part in a reflection session in the evening.

Career Services Update

British Council Seminar on Study in UK

On March 07, 2009 the seminar held at UB302 by British council. This seminar has been conducted by Mr. Alex Ingold, International Officer London South Bank University and Mr. Md. Ashak-Un-Nabi. The duration of this seminar was an hour long and concluded with light refreshment. Mr. Alex covered the entry requirements, tuition fees, living cost and so on. He stressed that those who want to work and study will have a work hour limitation imposed by government. He has also highlighted the scholarship and its criteria's such as good academic record, good command over English language proficiency, enormous extracurricular and job experiences.

On Campus BRAC Bank Road Show at BRAC University (BRACU)

On Wednesday, March 18, 2009, BRAC Bank Road Show was held at Indoor Games Room, BRACU. Career Services has successfully organized the BRAC Bank Road Show for MTO recruitment with BRAC Bank. Our Pro-VC, Faculties along with some Admin members were present at the event. From BRAC Bank Ms. Tahniyat Ahmed Karim and 30 current MTOs were there to conduct the show. A number of about 120

percipients were present. The Road Show gave the future prospects of the candidates and highlighted the issues involved in the recruitment process. The event wrapped up with a question and answer round. The Head of HR, BRAC Bank and her team patiently answered all the inquiries by the students. Career Services will collect CVs from BRACU students and submit them for the MTO recruitment.

A seminar by Embassy of Japan on Scholarship Opportunities

On the 22 March 2009, at 3.00pm, a seminar has been organized by the Embassy of Japan, Japanese University Alumni Association in Bangladesh (JUAAB) along with Career Services. The seminar has been inaugurated with short presentation by Mr. Hiroshi Omura, Head, Information & Cultural Affairs Division, Embassy of Japan, where students came to know about various activities and technological advancements of Japan. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor, BRAC University gave a short and motivating speech to the audience followed by shared experience of Mr. Saeed Mahmud Ullah, Associate Professor, University of Dhaka, who has just completed his Ph.D from Japan in 2008. Dr. A.K.M. Moazzem Hossain, President, JUAAB, shared a real life time experience on Social Life In Japan as he has spend 10 years in Japan and he is the first scholarship holder from Bangladesh in 1980. Dr. Hasina Ferdousi, Education Adviser, Embassy of Japan, talked about the Scholarship in Japan. She explained the three types of Scholarship available in Japan such as i) Monbukagakusho Scholarship (MEXT); ii) Asian Youth Fellowship (AYF); iii) Japanese Grant Aid for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS). Then she discussed about the available scholarship fields, required academic qualifications and the schedule of MEXT, AYE and JDS scholarship exams. The process of MEXT scholarship program starts from April and it is a year process. Then the process of AYF scholarship program starts on September by distribution of Application Form from Embassy of Japan. The session ended with an interactive question and answer session.

Job Placements March 2009

- 1 Md. Shafequl Alam Nitol Tata
- 2 Asraf-Ull-Bari Ericsson
- 3 Najmun Nahar The City Bank Ltd.
- 4 Zahid Islam The City Bank Ltd.
- 5 Md. Khorshed Alam BRAC
- 6 Shahida Akther Chowdhury International Turkish Hope School
- 7 Sunjib Kumer Singha Track Innovative Technologies