

2008/january

Department of Architecture

Angan Lecture by Professor Peter Rowe

Peter Rowe, Professor and formerly Dean of the Graduate School of Design, Harvard University visited the Department of Architecture and gave a lecture, the 51st in the Angan lecture series. His lecture was titled East Asia Modern: Urban Forms, Local Experiences and Shaping the Space of Time, largely based on his research work in China, Italy and the USA. Professor Rowe is the author many well-known books on urban design and has researched extensively on the topic. He was accompanied by his wife Lauretta Vinciarelli who was formerly a professor of architecture at Columbia University. She is also a very well known artist with works in the permanent collection of the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC and the Museum of Modern Art in New York amongst others.

'Experience the Cloud'

Angan Travel Sketch: 'Experience the Cloud' was held on January 29, 2008. It was an informal experience sharing session on the trip to Shillong and Cherapunji in Meghalaya, India by Dr. Fuad H Mallick, Dr Zainab F Ali, Huraera Jabeen, Hasibul Kabir, Imon Chowdhoree and Nafisur Rahman, all faculties of the Department of Architecture. It was a lively event attended by students and teachers.

Exhibition of research documents

An exhibition 'Exploring Extreme New Urbanism in Asia' has been organized in the Olive Tjaden Gallery of Cornell University in USA from January 28 to February 01, 2008. The exhibits were the research documentations of Dr. Quazi M Mahtab-uz-Zaman, Associate Professor of Department of Architecture and now a Fulbright Visiting Fellow in the College of Architecture, Art and Planning, Cornell University. They showed the extreme innovative architectural analysis in Asia, that symbolically demonstrate the possibility of Extreme New Urbanism, and an alternative to the conventional notion of making/re-making cities in Asia.

School of Public Health

Orientation Day

Orientation day for the fourth batch of MPH students was held on 5th January at Savar TARC. The students were introduced to faculty, staff at Savar and the MPH programme. The Dean, Professors and other faculties of the school were present on this day. There are 30 students in the fourth batch, with 12 international students coming from 11 different countries Afghanistan, Ethiopia, India, Japan, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Tanzania, The Netherlands, Uganda, and the United States of America. There are 18 students from Bangladesh. Among this group, 50% are medical graduates.

Introduction to Public Health (MPH 501)

This first course of the MPH programme began on 6th January and ended on 15th January at Savar campus. The course was co-taught by Dr. Alayne Adams, Dr. Richard Cash, Dr. Mushtaque Chowdhury, Dr. Damian Walker and Dr. Steve Luby.

Anthropological Approaches to Public Health (MPH 512)

This second module of the MPH programme began on 20th January and ended on 31st January 2008 at Savar campus. The course was co-taught by Dr. Sjaak van der Geest, Dr. Shahaduz Zaman and Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid.

Other Courses/Training

Healthcare Financing

The School has successfully completed the capacity building training in Health Care Financing for the second batch of 16 UHFP Officials (6-17 Jan). The World Health Organization provided financial support for the course. The course dealt with the dynamics of decision-making in allocation of financial resources for health and discussed the fundamental principles of health economics as well as that of healthcare financing in the context of Bangladesh. Professor Anwar Islam coordinated the course.

Health Systems Research and Development (HSRD)

The School is about to start (Feb 17th) a short course on Health Systems Research and Development (HSRD) in collaboration with ICDDR,B. Dr. Anwar Islam is the primary resource for this training course and will provide overall leadership and coordinate the Health Systems Research and Development course.

Executive Certificate in Public Health Management programme

MoHFW has approved the School's proposal for strengthening the capacity of public sector health professionals through a 10-week long Executive Certificate in Public Health Management programme. It is likely to start by July 2008.

Writers without Borders Workshop

The James P Grant School of Public Health organised the Writers without Borders workshop on January 6 and 7 and January 11 and 12. The participants were mainly MPH students (previous batches) and some staff from RED, BRAC and ICDDR, B. The workshop was facilitated by teachers from the USA - Dr. Tim Brooks and Dr. Omar Khan. The workshop covered the following: review progress, evaluate writings, share lessons learned from each other to write scientific information for a general audience and for peer-reviewed type of journals. Participants brought their work-in-progress to develop during the workshop time together. The venue of the workshop was Niketan at the Bangladesh Unnayan Parishad (BUP). The workshop was coordinated by Drs. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Farah Mahjabeen and Kausar Iqbal at the School of Public Health, BRAC University.

EU ASIA LINK Programme Preparatory Workshop

The James P Grant School of Public Health recently hosted a preparatory workshop in Rajendrapur from January 21-23, 2008 as the first activity for the EU ASIA LINK Programme. Partner institutions, including the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology (India), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (UK), Karolinska Institutet (Sweden), and the University of Amsterdam (Netherlands), participated in the two day workshop followed by a field trip to BRAC's microfinance, education, legal, and health projects in Manikonj. The partners also met with the current MPH students in Savar to learn about their backgrounds and thoughts on the dynamics between students coming from different academic trainings. Robin Heffernan, Research Associate of the James P Grant School of Public Health organized the workshop and coordinates the EU grant at the School.

Awards

Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM) Package 913 Signed with Save the Children USA

On January 24th, 2008, James P Grant School of Public Health (BSPH) signed a contract with Save the Children USA, to receive funds for the GFATM 913 package Building and Strengthening the Technical and Institutional Capacities of Government, NGOs, and Implementing Partners. The School is the lead partner in a consortium with Population Council, PIACT Bangladesh, NIPSOM, and Concerned Women for Family Development (CWFD) and will be responsible for the overall management of the 913 package and for two of the five activities. BSPH will work in collaboration with Population Council to develop standardized tools, guidelines, and protocols for targeting HIV prevention interventions. It will also work with NIPSOM to develop and implement training courses in HIV related issues for GFATM implementing partners.

Dr. Mushtaque Chowdhury, Dean of the James P Grant School of Public Health, was conferred the PESON Oration Medal for his work in the field of maternal and new born health by PESON, the most prestigious and respected professional association of top health experts in Nepal in January 2008.

Dr. Farhana Sultana, Research Associate at the James P Grant School of Public Health has been awarded the 'Endeavour Postgraduate Award 2008' by The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Australia to pursue her postgraduate studies in Epidemiology from the University of Melbourne, Australia.

Faculty News

Dr. Shahaduz Zaman, Coordinator of MPH programme at the James P Grant School of Public Health visited the University of Amsterdam to chair a module titled "Historical Social & Cultural Dimensions of Infectious Diseases" of the Medical Anthropology Department, University of Amsterdam. The course started on 7th

January and ended on 18th January 2008.

Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Assistant Professor attended the Annual Planning of the Realising Rights Research Programme Consortium on 23-25 January 2008, IDS, UK.

Ilias Mahmud, Research Associate attended the National Conference on Emerging Issues in Public Health 10-13, January 2008 at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India. In the conference he gave a presentation on "Sexual and Reproductive Health Concerns of Married Men and Access to Health Services in a Rural Area of Bangladesh". Dr. Farhana Sultana's abstract titled Urban TB control programme of BRAC in Bangladesh-'The Challenges' was accepted and published in the abstract book of the same conference.

Dr. Kausar Iqbal, Research Associate attended the "National Dialogue on Women's Empowerment" on 21st January 2008 at BRAC centre Inn, 75 Mohakhali, Dhaka. The event was organized by Pathways of Women's Empowerment Programme, South Asia.

Harvard Students' Visit

A group of Harvard students visited the fourth batch of MPH students at the Savar campus on 6th January 2006. During their visit they observed a session of the MPH class and had discussion with the students and faculties to share and exchange ideas and knowledge.

BRACU Global Development Learning Network

Video Conference on Trade and Logistics in South Asia

BRACU in collaboration with World Bank's Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) organized a Video Conference on "Connecting to Compete: Trade Logistics in the Global Economy", connecting South Asian countries and Washington DC on January 8th 2008 at the GDLN facility in BRACU. Mr. Yussuf Abdullah Haroon, former President, FBCCI and ex-VP, SAARC Chamber chaired the event in Bangladesh and Dr. Zaidi Sattar South Asia Region Poverty Reduction and Economic Management and Consultant of World Bank on Trade and Logistics moderated the event from Bangladesh with 15 other participants attending the session from Bangladesh including participants from BGMEA Ministry of Planning and Bangladesh Enterprise Institute. Mr. Ejaz Ghani, Economic Adviser, South Asia PREM of the World Bank made a presentation in the event. The full report on Trade Logistics and related press releases can be found at: <http://www.worldbank.org/lpi/>

BRAC University Institute of Educational Development (BU-IED)

A seminar by Dr. Sukomal Modak

Dr. Sukomal Modak presented a seminar on "Percentile Ranking Based Grading and System Performance Measures for Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh" on January 25, 2008 at BU-IED. Dr. Modak is a US-based Research Engineer who has been taking a keen interest and studying the reliability and validity of our SSC and HSC examinations, which are of crucial importance in a student's life. This seminar attempted to measure success of the Boards of Education, advocated incorporating systematic research, and suggested steps that would be geared towards elimination of subjectivity bias, elimination of difficulty bias, establishing a national standard and establishing a rational level of precision. Dr. Modak, an advocate of the percentile ranking as a fair and fine-grained grading system, envisions that implementation of this system will only require procedural changes and software modification.

The seminar was chaired by Mr. Nazrul Islam Khan, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Education, and attracted a number of controllers of examinations and other academics and researchers.

Dr. Modak is the author of a book, Percentile Ranking Based Grading and System Performance Measures- A Viable Option for the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education in Bangladesh, to be published in 2008.

Two talks by Dr. Harun Rashid

BU-IED hosted two seminars given by Dr. Harun Rashid, one on "Motivating Today's Learners" on January 02 and the other, "Differentiated Instructions" on January 03, 2008 at BU-IED conference room.

Dr. Rashid is currently the Principal at Frontier International Academy and an adjunct faculty at the College of Education at Wayne State University, Michigan, USA. Through both the seminars, Dr. Rashid demonstrated strategies necessary to foster an emotionally engaging classroom where students feel

connected to school, learning, and one another. He also provided necessary tools to eliminate unself-responsible student behavior and empower them to achieve personal power, positive mental model, and sense of self-responsibility. Dr. Rashid explored with the participants' basic thinking styles, learning style preferences, and dominant multiple intelligences.

Postgraduate Certificate Program on Early Childhood Development (ECD)

The Postgraduate Certificate Program on ECD at BU-IED has commenced on January 06, 2008 as scheduled. The program started with an inaugural session with the presence of Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-vice Chancellor, BRACU, Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Director, BU-IED, all the faculties and course participants and ECDRC team members. The first course "Foundations of Early Childhood Development" is being facilitated by Dr. Faith Lamb Parker, Associate Professor, Columbia University, Ms. Farida Akhter, Developmental Psychologist, Inner Force, Dr. Quamrul Hassan, Chief Pediatrician, Apollo Hospitals, Dr. Mahmudur Rahman from Dhaka University and Dr. Jena Hamadani, Head of Child Development Unit/ICDDR,B. Three ECDRC members, Ms. Mahmuda Akhter, Dr. Nishat F. Rahman and Ms. Sazia Zaman, are co-facilitating the sessions. A total of 24 participants from various ECD backgrounds including school teachers, ECD professionals, medical professionals, students, psychologists, IT professionals are taking the course. February 29, 2008 is the last day for the intro course on "Foundations of Early Childhood Development".

Agreement between BU-IED and the World Bank

World Bank has commissioned BU-IED to develop a proposal for a sustainable Early Childhood Development (ECD) model for the urban poor in two secondary cities- Narayanganj and Munshiganj. This is a part of World Bank support to the Government of Bangladesh for a project on Social Protection of the Poor. An agreement has been signed recently between BU-IED and the World Bank. The Early Childhood Development Resource Centre (ECDRC) at BU-IED will design a low-cost and replicable ECD model for slum dwellers in the two cities. This will include operational guidelines and definition of responsibilities of local/municipal governments, communities and mothers/parents groups in the provision of services. The proposed model, after its trial in the two cities, could be implemented more widely through implementation mechanisms involving the government, the non-government organizations and academic/research institutions.

Pathways of Women's Empowerment, South Asia Hub

The Pathways of Women's Empowerment Programme has had a very busy and exciting month in January. The program had organized a "Dialogue on Concepts of Women's Empowerment" on 21st January, 2008 that was very well attended. The panel presentations broadened the scope, depth and perspectives from which to approach issues around empowerment and opened up new areas for exploration and research. Pathways also hosted its Advisory Committee meeting on January 20th and convened an international working group meeting of researchers working on the theme "Building Constituencies for Gender Justice and Equality" with participants from Ghana, Nigeria, Palestine, Brazil, Pakistan and the UK during January 22-24th.

The photography exhibition "Changing Images of Women in Bangladesh" that was organized by Pathways traveled to Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna over the past month. It provoked a lot of thinking and discussion on the changing images of women in Bangladesh. At each of these places, Pathways also organized focus group discussions with students, journalists, garments workers, teachers, NGO workers, etc to talk about the photographs and participants ideas of empowerment and change. Pathways has submitted a proposal to Inter Asia Cultural Studies, a refereed journal, to highlight this exhibit as a photo essay.

Maheen Sultan, Coordinator of Pathways will be attending the Management Meeting of the Pathways Research Consortium at the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex this month while Firdous Azim, Advisor of the Global Hub, will be attending the advisory committee meeting, also at IDS, Sussex.

Department of English and Humanities

Undergraduate Thesis Presentation

As a requirement of the ENG 466: Thesis course, the graduating students (Fall 2007) of the Department of English and Humanities gave their thesis presentations on 3rd January 2008. The following is a list of thesis presentations given by the graduating batch:

Afrina Chowdhury: "The Postmodern condition and the fiction of Kurt Vonnegut Jr. and Milan Kundera" Pinky Dutta: "Recent Trends in Teaching Writing at East West University in Dhaka" Tanzia Zaman: "The Role of a Teacher in a Language Classroom"

Faculty Member rejoins BU

Nazia Husain has rejoined BRACU as a Lecturer in the Department of English and Humanities on 8th January, 2008. She recently completed an MA in Applied Linguistics with Distinction from the University of Nottingham (UK). Nazia has taught at BRACU since 2002.

Department of Economics and Social Sciences

Faculty Participation in International Workshop

Mr. Tanzir Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Lecturer, ESS and Mr. Jahangir Alam, Senior Lecturer, ESS participated in SANDEE 15th Biannual Research and Training Workshop held on January 8-11, 2008 at AIT, Pathumthani, Thailand. Tanzir Ahmed presented a progress report on his project titled 'Valuing Health Benefits of Air Pollution Reduction in Dhaka City: Cost of Illness Approach' and Jahangir Alam also presented a progress report on his project titled 'Changing Behavior through Dissemination of Information and Technology for Reducing Child Diarrhea'. They also participated in a workshop on Global Climate Change and its Economic Implications.

New Faculty Recruitment

Mr. Navil Monsur Chowdhury has joined as a lecturer in Economics in the Department of ESS. He has obtained his MA in International Development from International University of Japan (IUJ), Japan.

Faculty Participation in National Seminar and Workshop

Dr. Manzur Karim, Associate Professor, ESS was the main speaker in a seminar titled The Political Economy on Globalization: The Phase of Resistance on January 04, 2008 organized by Research and Development Collective NGO. He participated in a seminar as a discussant titled The Political Economy of Bangladesh on January 06, 2008 organized by the same organization. He also was the main discussant in a seminar titled 'Critical Theory of 21st Century' on January 06, 2008 organized by Aid Accountability Group, Bangladesh. On January 26, 2008 he participated in a seminar titled 'Global Action and Mobilization' organized by World Social Forum as a discussant.

Institute of Governance Studies (IGS)

The Institute held its first Strategic Planning meeting to provide guidance on the future direction of the Institute. The meeting was convened by the Pro-VC, with the Dean of the Business School, Professor Iftekhar Ghani Chowdhury and the Director of the Institute, Manzoor Hasan, was also present. The Institute provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Law, Justice & Parliamentary Affairs (MoLJPA) in producing 'UNCAC: A Bangladesh Compliance & Gap Analysis' report. Ms Gretta Fenner, Basel Institute on Governance provided expert advice during the formulation and the eventual culmination of the report. This was approved by the Inter-Ministerial committee, Government of Bangladesh for submission to the UN conference on UNCAC held in Bali Indonesia.

The MoLJPA presented the report to the second Conference of the States Parties for UNCAC held in Bali. The Bangladeshi delegation was headed by Mr Manzoor Mannan, Commissioner, Anti-Corruption Commission, other delegates included several senior government officials and from the Institute, Mr Manzoor Hasan, Ms Tahmina Rahman & Mr Saiful Bhuiyan. Highlights of the Report compiled by IGS, included:

- Formulation of a National Integrity Strategy (NIS) that will provide a vision for the development and implementation of reforms;
- Proper implementation of reforms in public procurement in partnership with beneficiary groups, civil society and NGOs;
- Coherent approach to institutional reforms that would address independence, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency;
- Development of specific training modules and courses on anti-corruption issues, strategies and mechanisms for public sector capacity building;

- Adequate provisions to protect witnesses, experts, victims and reporting persons;
- Adequate provisions to ensure widest mutual legal assistance to other UNCAC States Parties;
- Acquiring of membership by Bangladesh in the Egmont group
- Addressing capacity needs for the upgrading of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) within the Bangladesh Bank.

The Institute also held a two-day workshop on the Election Commission as part the Institute of Accountability Series, where a background paper was presented to a selected audience for discussion. A short policy note will be published in the near future. The students from the Masters programme provided a presentation of their international study tour to South Korea & China to the VC of BRAC University, Ambassador of the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Ms Bea ten Tusscher, and the Secretary to the Ministry of Establishment, Mr Abdus Salam Khan.

Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS) Department

National Symposium "Advanced Materials", Dhaka, 15-16 January, 2008

Professor A.A.Z. Ahmad presided over the Theme Session of the National Symposium "Advanced Materials" held at Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) on January 15, 2008. This two-day (Jan 15-16, 2008) conference was jointly organized by the Bangladesh Physical Society, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission and Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden. The keynote paper was presented by Dr. Sten Eriksson of Chalmers University of Technology. His keynote talk was titled "The benefit of neutron diffraction in materials science research". He elaborated on the work of his group performed mainly at Chalmers University and at ISIS, Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in UK. Their work focussed on perovskite and provskite related materials. Hydrogen conducting materials like $Ba_{1-x}Zr_xO_{3-x/2}$ were also studied. These materials showed interesting magnetic and electrical properties. Working scientists in the field of material science from different universities and R/D institutions of the country participated in the conference.

Seminar

Professor A.A.Z. Ahmad gave a seminar talk entitled "Oceanography and Status of Oceanographic Studies and Data Management in Bangladesh" on Thursday, January 31, 2008 in Room 603 of the Civil Engineers' Bhaban from 11.30 am to 12.45 pm. With an introduction to oceanography at the very outset of the seminar Professor Ahmad touched upon the many broad aspects of oceanography such as geological oceanography, physical oceanography, chemical oceanography, biological oceanography, economic oceanography, ocean pollution etc. He elaborated on the different past oceanographic expeditions and put forward facts and figures which are not only interesting but are intriguing at times. He talked about the status of oceanographic studies in Bangladesh and the issues related to oceanic sciences which need to be addressed urgently. Oceanographic studies are all the more important and pertinent because of the fact that about one-fourth of the country's total area is coastal and approximately twenty-one percent of the total population lives in the coastal area which has undergone geo-morphological changes throughout the entire life of this deltaic region, he added. The seminar was participated by the faculty of the MNS Department and also by some students. The participants took part in a lively discussion which followed the presentation of the seminar.

ACI Bangladesh Ltd Scholarship for MS Biotechnology Programme

Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Vice Chancellor of BRACU along with Professor A. A. Ziauddin Ahmad and Professor Naiyyum Choudhury of the Mathematics and Natural Sciences Department met with Mr Anisud Dowla, Chairman of ACI Bangladesh Ltd on January 9 to inform him about the biotechnology programme at BRACU. Postgraduate Programme at BRACU was launched in Spring 2007 and at present ten students are enrolled for the course. The programme envisages to develop human resources in this new and emerging area so that the trained graduates from BRACU can serve in different academic institutions and R&D organizations of the country. Students are attached to ICDDR,B, BIRDEM, DU and BRACARDC for their research projects in different areas of biotechnology. The Vice Chancellor requested Mr Anisud Dowla to look into the possibility of sending employees involved in biotechnology work at ACI for pursuing MS in biotechnology at BRACU. Mr Dowla highly appreciated the programme and showed his interest in such collaboration. ACI Bangladesh Ltd. gave Taka ten lakh for providing scholarships/financial assistance to MS biotechnology students. He also assured the Vice Chancellor of all cooperation in the future.

Student Affairs Office

Executive Director, BRAC receives donation money collected for the SIDR victims from BRACU students Members of all Clubs and Forums in collaboration with the Student Affairs Office have collected clothes and medicine for the SIDR victims, which have been given to BRAC for distribution. They have also collected some money for the victims. Dr. Mahabub Hossain, Executive Director, BRAC has received the money from the students on Thursday 17 Jan 08 at 12 pm in his office at BRAC Center. A few of the directors, BRAC and director Student Affairs Office, BRACU were present at the event. The students requested the E. D. about helping in rehabilitation of the affected people. Dr. Hossain has kindly agreed to help arrange a program for the willing students.

Residential Semester Spring 2008

The residential semester commenced on the 20th January, 2008 with 152 BBA, CSE, ECE, ESS, LAW, ENH and ARC students. Of them 69 are female and 83 male. The 13 week semester will end on 17 April.

Student Orientation

On January 21-22 a two-day long orientation was held for the students at Markuli Hall. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-VC and Mr. Habibur Rahman, Campus Super facilitated the session. On the second day the parents of the students were invited and 170 parents participated in the session. Regular classes started from January 23 2008.

Co curricular Activities

On 1st January, 2008 an open Badminton competition was held. Students were divided into two groups. One male and another female Group. The student of Film club organized a film show at Murchona on January 25, 2008 and at Markuly on 27 January.

On January 30, 2008 the Savar Campus experienced a beautiful, enjoyable and amusing cultural evening organized and participated by the students. The audience reveled in the rendition of music, dance, fashion show and Drama to their heart's content. The name of the program "TO BE CONTINUED".... We the youth will prevent the DRUGS.