

2008/july

## **Inauguration of the IEEE Student Branch @ BRAC University**

The Inaugural Session of the IEEE (Institute of Electronics and Electrical Engineers) Student Branch at BRAC University was held on July 06, 2008 at BRACU Indoor Games room. The event started with a warm welcome and a brief presentation by the President of the IEEE Student Branch at BRAC University, Mahdin Mahboob. Towards, the end of his presentation, he showed 'IEEE Evolution', a two-minute promotional video of IEEE showing the history of engineering.

The student branch was officially inaugurated when Professor Saifur Rahman, Chief Guest of the event, launched the student branch website. The Special Guest on the occasion was Professor Aynal Haque from BUET who is currently the Chair of IEEE Bangladesh Section. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, VC, BRACU was also present in the event. Professor Sayeed Salam, Chairperson, CSE Department, Professor Mumit Khan, and Associate Professor Dr. Akm Azad from CSE Department, were also present in the occasion and spoke about the importance of an IEEE membership and expressed their feelings about the new student branch at BRACU. Mr. Mahmood Hasan, Registrar, BRACU and faculty members from different departments were also present in the occasion.

The event concluded with the 'Vote of Thanks' by the Secretary of IEEE student branch, BRACU, Nabila Naushin. She specially thanked the Chief Guest and the Special Guest for making time from their busy schedules and being present at the event and thanked all others who helped establish the student branch. The current Executive Body consists of Dr. Azad Akm, Faculty Advisor, Mahdin Mahboob, President, Sunjib Kumar Singha, Vice-President, Annajiat Alim Rasel, Treasurer and Nabila Naushin the Secretary of the branch. All of them, together with the help of a number of volunteers, worked day and night to make this event a total success. The IEEE Student Branch plans to arrange a host of events in the near future including industrial tours and seminars.

## **English and Humanities (ENH)**

### **New Appointment**

Asifa Sultana joined BU as a Lecturer in the Department of English and Humanities on 1st July, 2008. She completed her MA in English (TESOL and Linguistics) from English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad, and her BA in English Literature from Delhi University.

### **Guest Lectures by Dr. Radha Chakravarty**

Dr. Radha Chakravarty, Reader in English at Gargi College, Delhi University, gave four guest lectures as part of the course ENG 366: Major Texts of the Feminist Tradition in the West during the third and fourth week of July. Dr. Chakravarty is a well-known scholar, critic, and translator.

### **Lecturer goes on study leave for PhD program**

Tabassum Zaman, Lecturer, Department of English and Humanities, left BU to attend a fully-funded four-year PhD program in Cultural Studies at the National University of Singapore. Her doctoral research will examine reflections of urban spaces in literature and film, focusing on Dhaka.

### **Lecturer leaves on Fulbright Program**

Mahmudul Haque, Lecturer, Department of English and Humanities, left for Syracuse University (New York, USA) on the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) program for one academic year.

## **Architecture**

### **Professor Mallick attends workshops in Japan**

Professor Fuad Mallick attended a three International Workshop on Indigenous Knowledge and Disaster Risk Reduction: From Practice to Policy at the Kyoto University Graduate School of Global Environmental Studies, Kyoto, Japan from 23-25 July and the first workshop of the Asian University Network of Environment and Disaster Management from 28-29 July 2008 also held at Kyoto University. He presented the work of the Post Graduate Programs of Disaster Management of BRAC University to 24 professionals and academics

from 13 countries. BRAC University is now a part of the Network, which intends to promote Disaster Management education in Asia.

### **Imon Chowdhore awarded a Scholarship**

Imon Chowdhore, Lecturer of the Dept. of Architecture has been awarded for the Master Course in Urban Management and Development-5 (UMD-5) starting at the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, Rotterdam, the Netherlands on Wednesday 8 October 2008, until Friday 25 September 2009. He has been awarded a fellowship from the Netherlands Government. The Netherlands Fellowship Programs (NFP) are demand oriented fellowship programs designed to foster institutional development.

### **Study Trip to National Assembly Building**

The students of 1st year second semester and final year 2nd semester visited the National Assembly Building on 24th of July accompanied by the teachers Sarah N Shuchi and Muhammad Nafisur Rahman. During their trip they have gathered knowledge about the architectural philosophy of Louis I Kahn in exploiting the natural lighting and climate responsive design of the building. They have gained a good knowledge about the master plan of the Assembly building and understand the multilayer admitting light through geometric cutouts in solid. At the end of the trip they submitted sketches of the building and the spaces.

### **Otha bolbo Rural Architecture field study**

Students of the course, Rural Architecture, went to Jaflong, from 11-12 July 2008, to study and document indigenous architecture of Khashi community. They visited two settlements and documented one in detail, which includes settlement patterns, homestead patterns and construction techniques and space use pattern of houses. Course teacher Khondaker Hasibul Kabir guided the study visit. After coming back students submitted an assignment on the study.

### **Landscape Design field study**

As part of Landscape Design course students visited Bhawal National Park, on 18 July 2008, to experience and study woodland landscape. They documented their experiences in through sketches and photography which would be used in their landscape design projects in the class. Students also visited two ongoing landscape projects (in Masterbari and in Pubail) in Gazipur to see human-nature relationship in reality. These projects also helped students to understand the relationship between landscape theory and practice. Course teachers Khondaker Hasibul Kabir and Muhammad Nafisur Rahman guided the field study.

### **Angan Lecture Series**

ANGAN the forum for co curricular activities of the Department of Architecture, arranged three lectures in July'08.

The first one was about art. Sumona Hasan, daughter of renowned Artist Quamrul Hassan, presented some works from the private collection of the artist. She was very close to her father and mentioned many memorable incidents from her father's life. The lecture held on 15th of July.

DwM4, a leading architectural firm in Dhaka, presented their past and present works in a houseful and crowded lecture room the following week on 22nd July. Mahmudul Anwar Riyaad and Mamnoon Murshed Chowdhury, the principals of the firm, delivered a very live and attractive presentation. Both of them are part time faculty members of the department.

On 29th July, Architect Habib Chaudhury, Associate Professor in the Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University, Canada, also gave a lecture. His presentation was on Health, Aging and Environment. He emphasized on aged people, their physical problem and their relationship with the built environment. The lecture was very resourceful and particularly useful to students working on health issues in architecture.

## **Economics and Social Sciences (ESS)**

### **Learning From the Field: Students Visited BRAC Programs**

Students of the course Bangladesh Studies (DEV 101) participated in 'Learning from the Field' - a five days program (from July 04 to July 08, 2008), visiting development programs of BRAC. A total of 253 students divided into eight groups, went TARCs in eight different of districts - Jessore, Pabna, Rajshahi, Rangpur,

Modhupur, Mymensingh, Comilla and Srimongol. Eight groups were led by faculty members from different departments of BRACU. They were assisted by Teaching Assistants and House Tutors of the university.

Students learnt about BRAC's core programs - Microcredit program, Health program, Education program, Social Development, Human Rights and Legal Services program. Students prepared their assigned reports on different BRAC programs through interaction with Village Organization (VO) members of BRAC, staffs of BRAC and community people and made presentations on BRAC Programs on the final day of the visit. BRAC popular theatre groups staged drama in different TARCs. Students also visited to local historical sites and learned the history and tradition of Bangladesh.

Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-VC and Dr. Anwarul Hoque, Chairperson, ESS Department, Md. Mahfuzul Bari Chowdhury, CS, Savar Campus, Md. Habibur Rahman, BRAC Program Coordinator, supervised the whole program during the field visit.

Earlier on July 03, 2008, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-Vice Chancellor of BRACU gave a lecture on 'Overcoming the Negative Images: The Role of NGOs in Bangladesh' at Savar TARC. Seven Directors of BRAC conducted a seminar on BRAC for all RS students.

Faculty Participation in the Conference of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists

Mr. Jahangir Alam, Senior Lecturer, ESS, presented a paper titled 'Economic Costs and Determinants of Diarrhoeal Prevalence and Duration in Children of Dhaka City Slums, Bangladesh' in the 16th Annual Conference of the European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists. The conference was held in the School of Business, Economics and Law at Goteborg University, Gothenburg, Sweden on June 25 - 28, 2008.

### **First Theses Proposal Presentations by MSAE Students**

On July 17, 2008, two graduate students of Masters in Applied Economics Program in BRACU presented their theses proposals. Sarah Salahuddin presented the proposal of her masters thesis on 'Impact of Remittances on Rural Asset Accumulation in Bangladesh' and Rakhi Mukharjee presented her masters thesis proposal on 'Impact of Remittances on Income Distribution of Bangladesh'.

### **Seminar on PRSP and Gender Budgeting**

Dr. Kaniz Siddique, International Consultant, Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh, presented a seminar on 'PRSP and Gender Budgeting' at ESS Conference Room on July 24, 2008. Ms. Siddique discussed on the various nature of gender inequalities existing in Bangladesh and how state can provide support to eliminate gender discrimination. The session followed by the lecture Dr. Siddique gave answer to the query of the students. The chairperson and the faculty members of the ESS Department also participated in the seminar.

### **Students at CRP & National Memorial**

The Department of Economics and Social Sciences organized two visits for the students of the residential semester to the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP), Savar and National Martyrs' Memorial, Savar on 26th July 2008. A group of 86 students of the course Bangladesh Studies (DEV 101) participated in the whole day program at these two places.

Ms. Valerie A Taylor, Founder & Coordinator, CRP and the staff authorities of CRP welcomed the students & faculty members of BRAC University. They organized an orientation program and screened a documentary film on CRP's activities. Dividing in three groups, the students became acquainted with CRP's facilities and services for disabled people in Bangladesh and came to know about CRP's contribution to the physically challenged people in Bangladesh. Some students also donated their blood and wished to participate in the voluntary services for the disabled people at CRP.

On the same day, students went to the National Memorial, Savar. Students demonstrate their reverence to our martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the independence of Bangladesh.

### **Museum Visit by the students of Bangladesh Studies**

As part of their academic activities a group of 86 students of Bangladesh Studies (DEV101) went to visit

Liberation War Museum and National Museum of Bangladesh on July 26, 2008. Students were divided into two groups and both groups visited the two museums by rotation. Department of ESS organized the museum visit to enlighten BRACU students with the history and culture of Bangladesh. The authority of Liberation War Museum arranged a documentary film show and a quiz competition on Liberation War for the students. Mr. Mofidul Hoque, A Trustee of the Liberation War distributed prizes to the students after the quiz competition.

## **Mathematics and Natural Sciences (MNS)**

### **BRAC Visit Program**

Ms. Fardousi Ara Begum, Lecturer of Mathematics at the MNS Department, accompanied the students of the BRAC Visit Program at Rangpur TARC, from 4th July to 9th July 2008. Eight groups of students from the residential semester batch visited eight BRAC field areas spread all over Bangladesh, as a part of the Bangladesh Studies (DEV 101) course. The objective of this program was to make the students acquainted with BRAC activities in the development arena. The students and the accompanying faculty were enriched through this visit. The respective TARCs also had an opportunity to interact with the students and faculty of BRAC University.

### **The 33rd World Conference of WAGGGS, July 2008**

Ms. Lopamudra Chakravarty Lecturer of Mathematics at the MNS Department who is also a Ranger of Shamamana Open Ranger Unit, Bangladesh Girl Guides' Association attended the 33rd World Conference of WAGGGS (World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) held from July 6 to July 12, 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa as a young leader. WAGGGS is the largest association of women in the world. One hundred and forty four countries are members of this association. In this conference several issues regarding the development of women were discussed. Through learning sessions and workshops the participants shared and exchanged their own views and opinions. Since WAGGGS always gives special importance to young delegates, they took interview of Lopamudra as a young delegate of the Asia Pacific Region. In this conference Graca Machel (Nelson Mandela's wife) was present as the keynote speaker. The participants were inspired by the words of international advocate for children's and women's rights of the keynote speaker. She also received WAGGGS' highest honour, the World Citizenship Award. Ministers of the Government of the Republic of South Africa were present in the various events held in the evenings. This year's conference theme was 'Join in, reach out and change lives'. After three years from now the 34th World Conference will be held in Edinburgh, UK with a new theme.

### **Round Table Discussion on the Status of Science Education July 12, 2008**

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury of the MNS Department participated in a round table discussion on the status of science education in the country held at the Daily Star office on July 12, 2008. The event was jointly organized by the Daily Star and the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences. The round table discussion covered the following issues:

Government policy on science education and what the government should do to improve the quality of science education

Present status of curricula for science education at the secondary and higher secondary levels and ways and means for their improvement.

Present status of budget allocation for science education and a forward looking approach to enhance this to improve the quality of science education in the country  
Quality of teachers and facilities available for science education at the secondary and higher secondary levels and the steps to be taken for improvement both in quality and quantity.

Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University presented the keynote paper on the present status of budget allocation for science education and the necessary steps to be taken to improve science education scenario in the country. The meeting identified some problems in the present status of science education, like lack of trained teachers, lack of facilities for science experiments, insufficient budget allocation for science education, lack of incentives for science teachers, poor quality of science text books at all levels etc. The meeting also made some important recommendations for improving the present situation.

### **Bioinformatics Seminars Organized by the MNS Department**

Professor Animesh Ray of Keck Graduate Institute, Claremont, CA, USA gave a seminar entitled "The New

Biology: The Network Metaphor" on Wednesday, July 30, 2008, at 4.00 pm in Room UB 104. Professor Naiyyum Coudhury introduced the speaker to the audience and Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury moderated the seminar. Faculty members of MNS and other departments and some students attended the seminar. Professor Ray presented different features of bioinformatics tools for understanding the cellular processes at the molecular level. System biology, he explained, is the coordinated study of biological systems by investigating the components of cellular networks and their interactions by applying experimental high throughputs and whole genome techniques and integrating computational methods with experimental efforts. Bioinformatics conceptualizes biology in terms of molecules and applies informatics techniques to understand and organize information associated with these molecules on a large scale. Professor Ray mentioned that many of the common diseases like hypertension could be explained at the genetic levels through understanding the genomics by using bioinformatics tools. This discipline has great applicational potential in medicine, health, agriculture and environment. At the end of the presentation a lively question and answer session followed. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury thanked the speaker for his lucid presentation and said that it would inspire the students and the faculty members to start work in this field.

## **James P Grant School of Public Health**

### **MPH Programme**

The second module of the ongoing MPH programme started in ICDDR,B on July 13th, 2008 after a vacation. The module started with a course on Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases which would continue till July 31st 2008. Richard Cash from Harvard School of Public Health and Steve Luby, from ICDDR,B are coordinating the course along with sessions by eminent scientists from ICDDR,B. Epidemiology of Infectious Diseases is a 3-week long course and during the last week of this course students will do a short research on an infectious disease related problem in Bangladesh. Mejbah Uddin Bhuiyan is the teaching assistant for the course.

### **Events**

#### **Brainstorming Workshop on Sexuality and Rights**

A Brainstorming workshop on Sexuality and rights (funded by Realising Rights RPC) took place on July 14th, which was attended by over 20 participants from many different sectors, academics, researchers, counsellors, activists, government officials and people working in sexual and reproductive health programmes. The objective of the workshop was to get some feedback on proposed research plans and build a network of interested persons for future feedback, workshops and training. The workshop was organised by Mahrukh Mohuiddin and Dr. Farah Mahjabeen, and coordinated by Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid of the School. The research plan was presented by the principle researcher Dr. Dina Siddiqi.

### **Participants at the Session**

BSPH Received Grant for Research on Comprehensive PHC

In 2007, an international network of researchers and people involved in building comprehensive primary health care (CPHC) received funding to support research and research capacity-building. This network, associated with the People's Health Movement, includes individuals in India, Africa, Latin America, Europe, Canada and Australia.

The research will be carried out in two UHCs (Upazila Health Complex). The UHCs will be selected from a list of 'high performance area' and 'low performance areas' (as per GOB criteria) and will look at various aspect of the health system such as existing primary health care delivery model, providers and users perspective of a comprehensive user friendly primary health care, evaluation of the idea of 'need based' or 'demand oriented' comprehensive primary health care, identification of any discrepancies etc. through a descriptive cross-sectional study (mixed-method research). After completion of the study, a dissemination seminar will be conducted involving all the stakeholders to sensitize the community regarding the results. The team consists mainly of three 3 researchers. Dr. Tanvir Ahmed; Research Associate, BSPH as the Lead Researcher and Dr. Anwar Islam; Professor, BSPH as the Mentor of the team and from ICDDR, B, Dr. Aftab Uddin; Senior Manager, Technical Training Unit as the mid-level researcher (research user).

### **Roundtable Meeting with Policy Makers**

The Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW) organized the roundtable discussion with policy makers and program managers to share the findings of Bangladesh Health Watch Report, 2007, titled "The State of Health in

Bangladesh 2007. Health Workforce in Bangladesh: Who Constitutes the Health Care System?" The roundtable meeting was held on July 23rd 2008 at BRAC Centre-BRAC Auditorium. The purpose of the meeting was also to build consensus on some of the policy recommendations made in the report.

Chaired by Dr. Rounaq Jahan, Convener, the Advisory Committee, Bangladesh Health Watch (BHW), the programme was addressed by Md. Akter Hossain Director, training, NIPORT and Professor Dr. Khandakar Md. Shefyetullah, Director Medical Education, HMPD, Directorate General of Health Services. Besides the Working Group members and authors of the BHW 2007 report, participants from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Directorate of Health Services, Directorate of Family Planning, NIPORT, Population Council, RTM International, Marie Stopes, Dhaka Medical College Hospital, BRAC Research and Evaluation Department were present in the roundtable discussion. The discussion was mainly on three key issues based on BHW report findings which are:

- a) How to increase the number of qualified healthcare providers?
- b) How to provide public health orientation?, and
- c) How to monitor quality of care?

The participants shared their experiences, valuable opinion, comments and suggestions on the key issues. The meeting ended with the suggestion for BHW to arrange series of meetings with government and relevant professional bodies sector wise for more cooperative work.

Training on HIV/AIDS related issues, Monitoring and Evaluation under GFATM Package 913

A three week long training on HIV/AIDS related issues, Monitoring and Evaluation was organized by BRAC School of Public Health in collaboration with NIPSOM, Population Council, PIACT Bangladesh and CWFD with support from National AIDS/STD Program (NASP) and Save the Children USA under GFATAM Package 913. Thirty NGO personnel along with the Deputy Director, Department of Youth Development of Chadpur participated in the training course held in TARC Uttara from July 13th to 31st. In addition to the scheduled training program the participants had field visits to see the activities run by the support group of People living with HIV (PLHIV) and Drug Users.

## **Faculty News**

### **New Staff**

The School had two new members joining its team this month. The School welcomes Nakib Rajib Ahmed and Owasim Akram on board its team.

Mr. Nakib Rajib Ahmed joined BSPH on July 7th, 2008. Mr. Ahmed is currently the Project Coordinator for EU Asia Link project 'building partnership for better health' which is funded by the European Commission. He has completed his first Masters degree on Botany under the National University of Bangladesh in 2001. His second Masters degree was on International Relations from Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies (GSAPS) of Waseda University, Tokyo. He was one of the first JDS (Japan Development Scholarship) Fellows to leave Bangladesh for higher studies. He received his MA degree in 2004 and returned to homeland. Since his return he has been working with SMEC (Snowy Mountain Engineering Corporation) Australia, TIB (Transparency International Bangladesh) and recently with BRAC University's James P. Grant School of Public Health. During his tenure in TIB he has done six individual research projects of which four was released last year with national print media coverage. His fields of research was Land Administration, Local Government (Union Parishad) and Primary Education of Bangladesh. After finishing his under graduation (honours) he also has worked for US Peace Corps Bangladesh. His fields of interest are land administration and management, effect of Globalization on developing nations and quantitative research techniques etc.

Mr. Owasim Akram, joined the School on July 6th, 2008 as Research Associate in "Realising Rights: Improving Sexual and Reproductive Health in Poor and Vulnerable Populations" Research Programme Consortium. Mr. Akram completed his BSS Honours in International Relations in 2006 and MSS in the same discipline in 2008 from Dhaka University with a focus on international political economy, Middle Eastern and European affairs, Environment and Ecology, Negotiation, Diplomacy and International security. Before joining BSPH, he worked as Programme Officer in Volunteers Association for Bangladesh (VAB), an USA based NGO working for ensuring quality education in Bangladesh. He also worked as 'Research Assistant' for Sustainable International Peace Project of Hiroshima University, Japan. He also attended International Training program on Capacity Building for Ecological Sanitation held in Nasik, Maharashtra, India as a fellow of European Union's Asia Pro Project. His areas of interest are development policy, international affairs,



environmental and social Issues, Participatory Action Research (PAR), human rights and health.

### **Faculty Activities**

Dr. Anwar Islam, Professor, BSPH, gave a presentation on "Women's Health and the Health System in Bangladesh: Need for a Holistic Life-cycle Approach" at CIDA in Ottawa, Canada, on July 3, 2008.

Key Note from the Presentation:

It is argued that in order to improve women's health (and that includes pregnant women), the health systems in Bangladesh must adopt (a) a holistic perspective that takes into account clinical as well as socio-cultural aspects of health; (b) a life-cycle approach in addressing women's health issues at all phases of life; and (c) re-focus the family planning program away from population control to emphasize health timing and spacing of pregnancy for the sake of the health of the mother and the newborn. Redesigning or realigning the health system, therefore, is the most important task.

Dr. Sabina Rashid, Assistant Professor, BSPH, was invited to present a paper on "Violence against Women and Health Policy in Bangladesh: Improving Sexual Reproductive Health", at the 10th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Women's Worlds / Mundos de Mujeres, Madrid, Spain from July 3-9th, 2008.

Dr. Nasima Selim, Research Associate, BSPH completed her research training programme at CSSSC, India. She has been selected for the Dr. Jayoti Gupta Memorial Award, for the best Term Paper of the RTP Programme at Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta (CSSSC) for the year 2007-2008. She was also invited as a speaker at the "Ethnographies of Suicide" Conference organised by the department of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, Brunel University, Uxbridge, UK, on July 2-3rd, 2008. Dr. Selim presented her paper, "An extraordinary truth? The Adam suicide notes from Bangladesh", on the second day of the conference.

### **Alumni News**

Jawaid Stationwala, a student of the 2nd MPH Batch, received Fulbright U.S. Student Award to Bangladesh in Public Health, announced by the United States Department of State and the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board. Stationwala is one of over 1,450 U.S. citizens who will travel abroad for the 2008-2009 academic year through the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. The Fulbright Program, America's flagship international educational exchange program, is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

### **Institute of Governance Studies (IGS)**

Dr. Shahnaz Karim, Assistant Director of the Institute attended a workshop on Building Anti Corruption Capacities for Implementing in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 30th June to 3rd July 2008. The workshop was organized by the United Nations Regional Centre Colombo (RRC) in collaboration with Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission and The Korea Institute of Public Administration. For this meeting, Dr. Karim made a presentation on the 'Civil-society-Government Collaboration in Institutional Reforms: The Bangladesh Experience'.

Mr. Manzoor Hasan, Director of the Institute provided technical assistance to the National Democratic Institute (NDI) for the televised debate on the forthcoming mayoral elections for Rajshahi and Barisal to be covered by BBC and BTv.

The Institute organized a seminar series on parliamentary issues facilitated by Niall Johnston of the World Bank Institute. The seminars were conducted over three days and covered issues on The Budget Process, Parliamentary Approval of the Budget and Parliament and the Audit of Public Accounts. The seminars were arranged at the Institute and attendees included staff from IGS and other partner organizations.

The Institute successfully received funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), for research examining the Political economy of Annual Development Plan (ADP) allocation and Social Accountability.

The official website for the National Integrity Strategy project was launched. Please visit

www.nisforbangladesh.com for further information. The Institute provides technical assistance to the Government of Bangladesh to develop a national integrity strategy, which underpins the anti-corruption strategy from the government.

## **BRAC Development Institute (BDI)**

### **Launch of BRAC Development Institute (BDI), BRAC University**

BRAC Development Institute (BDI), BRAC University, was officially launched on July 22, 2008 at the BRAC Centre Auditorium, BRAC Center. Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury (Vice Chancellor, BRAC University) chaired the program, with Professor Rehman Sobhan (founder, Centre for Policy Dialogue) as the chief guest. Other guests included Rasheda K Chowdhury (Advisor, Care Taker Government), Professor Nazrul Islam (Chair, UGC), Rashed Khan Menon, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud and Hameeda Hossain.

BDI will act as a resource center for issues on poverty and the poor. The Institute seeks to promote research and build knowledge on practical solutions for problems of the poor in the global South. BDI intends to build knowledge around different exciting initiatives in the South, focus on developing new ideas and new strategies, pilot test such ideas and provide important lessons on good practices for practitioners, policy makers and funders. Its core functions will include:

creating knowledge: highlighting the innovative development experiences in the South and ensuring visibility and voice in the global development discourse

convening experts: providing a space for practitioners, academics and policy makers to come together to focus on specific problems of the poor and develop new strategies and new pathways

incubating ideas: field testing specific ideas through pilots, conducting qualitative and rigorous quantitative studies to understand process and impacts, and distilling good practice lessons for adaptation and scaling up

advocating policy: working with policy makers to adopt pro-poor development strategies

In addition to practitioners, policy makers and academics, it will also welcome students to participate in its programs through its Master's program, intensive courses, internships and other opportunities.

### **The South Asia launch of the Chronic Poverty Report 2008-09**

The Chronic Poverty Report is an annual publication of the Chronic Poverty Research Center. It reports on global trends and issues around chronic poverty. This year's report focused on "Escaping Poverty Traps". BRAC Development Institute hosted the South Asia launch of the report on July 24 at the BRAC Center Auditorium. Professors Tony Addison and David Hulme of the Chronic Poverty Research Centre and the Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester, presented the main findings from the report. Professor Atiur Rahman, Professor Baqui Khalily and Dr Sajjad Zohir discussed the findings of the report and their implications for Bangladesh.

The report finds that the chronically poor live their lives in poverty, and their children are highly likely to be poor as well. Many will die prematurely of easily preventable deaths.

The chronically poor are trapped by insecurity, including lack of assets such as land, as well as limited work opportunities and social discrimination. Economic growth has few benefits for them. Many live in remote areas, badly served by infrastructure. They need a 'just social compact' through social protection, public services, effective anti-discrimination legislation, gender empowerment, and policies to tackle spatial inequality. Only then can they become 'true citizens', the report argues.

The report concludes that chronic poverty will grow unless urgent action is taken. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 will still leave many people in chronic poverty. And the recent rise in global food and energy prices will drive many more into chronic poverty.

### **Seminar on "Trends in Landownership and Livelihood: Two Decades of Rural Development in Bangladesh"**

BRAC Development Institute and the Research Division (RED) at BRAC jointly organized the seminar to



present findings from a series of longitudinal surveys conducted over the last two decades. Mahabub Hossain (Executive Director, BRAC) and Abdul Bayes (Professor, Economics Department, Jahangirnagar University) discussed the changes in landownership and livelihoods in rural Bangladesh.

Landownership in Bangladesh remains unequal. The ultra-poor (owning less than 0.04 acres of land) constitutes 40 % of all rural households. In 1988, 34 % of rural households were ultra-poor implying a marked increase in landlessness. On the other hand about 4 % of households owned more than 2 hectares of land. The bottom 40% of households own only 8 % of total land, while 4 % of the wealthiest households own 32 % of all land.

An interesting feature of the rural economy has been the vibrancy of the tenancy markets and very recently the importance of market signals. In 1988 only 12 % of rural households rented out land. By 2004 the share had shot up to 29 %. But since then, over the last four years, market profitability has led more and more households to switch back to cultivating their own land.

Another very interesting feature of the rural economy has been the rise in off farm employment. Non-farm households constituted 34% of rural households in 1988 with 9% of cultivated land, but by 2008, the share rose to about 44% to command about 27% of total land.

## **Student Affairs**

### **Photography Club**

BRAC University Photography Club organized a workshop on basic photography on fresh recruitments and interested candidates on July 6, 2008 conducted by the senior students Kafi Newaz Khan, Zaquiul Deep and Tanveer Harun.

### **Global Affairs Forum**

Global Affairs Forum of BRAC University arranged a lecture session under the headline "Shantir Pothe" on July 14, 2008. The seminar was conducted by Professor Tridip Suhrud, an associate of Sabarmati Gandhi Ashram, Ahmadabad, India. The topic of discussion was Gandhi's teaching of Nonviolence, Tolerance and Peace on contemporary South Asia.

### **BU Cricket Club**

On July 17, 2008 BUCricket Club organized the prize giving ceremony at Indoor Games Room of Inter Semester "Six-A-Side" cricket tournament.

### **Cultural Club**

BUCuC organized a Jalsha of popular modern songs to promote diversity on July 24, 2008

### **Film Club**

Shekorere Sondhane

BUFC organized a three day long film festival from July 28 to 30, 2008 named "Shekorer Shondhane". Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, VC, BRACU inaugurated the festival. On July 30, Mr. Tareque Masud, the renowned movie maker shared his movie making ideas and stories with the audience. BUFC screened famous and great movies of our Bengali culture. The objectives of the event were to help the students familiarize with our culture and make them appreciate the greatness of our famous Bengali movies.

### **Football Club**

Started from July 31, 2008 BRAC University Football Club participated in the University Championships Trophy (UCT) 2008 organized by the Source.

### **AIIESEC**

On July 31 to August 2, 2008 AIIESEC organized the summer conference at Elenga, Tangail. All delegates of AIIESEC from different universities like - BRACU, NSU, IUB & AIUB, attended that conference.

### **Presentation**

Nazia Roushan, a freshmen student of architecture department who attended the year-long 2007-2008 Near East and South Asia (NESA) Undergraduate Exchange Program in the US gave a presentation on her

experience for students and teachers at BRACU on July 28, 2008. The presence of the honorable VC, Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury provided a great encouragement to her and other students on her presentation.

## **Career Services Office**

### **Job-ICT Private Ltd. (JIPL) Road Show on Soft Skills Development**

On July 09, 2008 JIPL has run a seminar on soft skill development of students for their future career. Ms. Tatiana Palvosky, HR Specialist, JIPL gave a presentation on related issues in this area. She stressed that along with technical skills, soft skills also need to be improved. Soft skills included the communication, interpersonal skills, writing skills and so on. The seminar concluded with a question and answer session which gave students a broader view on this topic. 25 students participated in the road show. The seminar stressed how to enhance proficiency of students from different disciplines to confidently to get a smoother career ladder.

### **All University Fair 2008**

Career Services has organized the stall setup for BRAC University at All University Fair 2008 on 17-19 August, 2008. The fair began on July 17 and 57 institutes have participated with 72 stalls. Institutes included private universities, local representatives of international universities, recognized educational institutions, educational consultancy firms, training institutes and fashion institutes. The focus of the fair was to provide prospective undergraduate students with education information for further studies after HSC and onwards. BRAC University representation was a success with the joint effort given by our administration and students.

### **Job-ICT Private Ltd. (JIPL) skills development seminar with CSE Students**

With great support of Professor Sayeed Salam, Chairperson, Department of CSE and Professor Mumit Khan on Thursday, July 17, 2008 Career Services has successfully organized a skills development seminar for our students from CSE department. Ms. Tatiana Palvosky, HR Specialist, JIPL along with her colleague has given an overview on the current industry demand of skills from young professionals.

### **Bdjobs.com Campus Career Festival Official Announcement**

On July 21, 2008 bdjobs has officially announced the Campus Career Festival on at a press conference. The campus career festival is going to be held at six universities including North South University (24-25, July), Jahangir Nagar University (5-7, August), BRAC University (13-14, August), United Int. University (18-19, August), East West University(27-28, August) and Dhaka University(date to be announced later). There will be participation of more than 20 organizations with job openings for fresh graduates from different disciplines and they believe that at least 100 job placements will be done through this fair.

### **Seminar on Project management by Continuing Education Center**

A seminar on Project Management held on 24th July, 2008 conducted by CEC jointly with Career Services. Both BRACU staff and students actively participated. The seminar included defining how to develop a project plan, defining project goals and objectives, how goals will be achieved, what resources are needed, associating budgets and timelines for completion.

Job Placement:

Md. Abu Hanif Banglalink(Corporate Sales)  
S. M. Ahtashamul Hoque VU Mobile (Sr. Marketing Executive)  
Moslesh Uddin Tech View Ltd. (Corporate Sales)  
Sayera Tasneem BracNet  
Shakila Ayub BracNet  
Noor-E-Ferdous Future Development Real Estate

Following students have joined Grameenphone as Part-Time Call Center Manager:

<b>ID</b>	<b>Name</b>
06304036	MD. Ashfikul Islam
07104040	Sadia Mubarra

06204031 Sarmiz Fatema  
06204011 Jannatul Marfua  
05204018 Maisia Hussain  
07104077 Farzana Amin  
06304067 Saifur Rahman  
06304027 Radiah Noor Ahmed  
06304015 Meherunnisha  
07304031 Talukder Mohammad Shabbir  
05304055 Tasnim Hossain  
07104023 Shifat Ferdous  
07104139 Tasmiat Hossain

**Career Services Officials**

Ms. Emu Sharmin has joined career services as Jr. Admin Officer from July 01, 2008. Our colleague Shafqat Rana Sayed, Jr. Admin Officer is leaving for his Masters Degree in Financial Economics in University of Greenwich, UK. We wish him very best of luck for his studies.

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