

# Quarterly Newsletter

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## Content

Launching of SoC 2016	01
Press launch of SoG 2016	02
National seminar on Citizen Engagement in Public Procurement	02
National seminar on Sharique	03
BIGD & FES signing ceremony	04
In-house seminars of BIGD	04
Divisional workshops on GPMS	05
Workshop on Qualitative Analysis using Diverse Mixed Methods	05
BIGD Research Fellow at University of California	06
Meeting with A2i	06
ED participated at SAES IX	07
Researchers' other activities	07
Publications	07
Executive Director's activities	08

## State of Cities 2016

### Traffic Congestion in Dhaka City - Governance Perspectives report launched



*Naim Ahmed, Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Professor Nazrul Islam and Dr. Shanawez Hossain are seen at the launching ceremony (from left)*

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD), BRAC University launched one of its annual flagship research reports titled The State of Cities 2016: Traffic Congestion in Dhaka City - Governance Perspective on 27 December 2016 at a hotel in Dhaka.

Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University and Professor Nazrul Islam, Chairman, Centre for Urban Studies (CUS), attended the event as the Guests of Honour. Mr. Naim Ahmed, Former Commissioner, Dhaka Metropolitan Police, discussed the report, while Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BIGD chaired the event. Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow of BIGD presented the findings and recommendations of the research report.

A Q/A session followed the formal launching. The event was attended by relevant professionals, academics, experts and media who discussed the report and shared their opinions.

This is the fifth report of its kind, this time focusing on the problem of traffic congestion in Dhaka city. The study's main objective was to examine the governance

and institutional issues underlying traffic congestion in Dhaka, and develop proposals to tackle the issues and strengthen the institutions responsible for Dhaka's transport management.

The study focused on the Dhaka Metropolitan area and six key government agencies in particular – Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC), Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC), Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), Dhaka Transport Coordination Authority (DTCA) and RAJUK.

The report examined the institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms for transport in Dhaka as well the issues related to enforcement. A major questionnaire survey of 774 transport users was also carried out to obtain people's views of the main traffic issues and priorities for action. The survey of transport users found that most people identified management issues as the main causes of traffic congestion. Therefore effective traffic management, including restraining the demand for private transport, is crucial for reducing Dhaka's congestion.

It was found that entry to the mass transport (bus) sector in Dhaka was very difficult due to informal payments and the need for political connections, which tended to reduce healthy competition. As a result, bus service quality was compromised since the operator's survival depended on management of informalities and their focus was shifted from passengers to patrons.

The report further identified the informal management of hawkers and sidewalks: Dhaka's 2.6 lac hawkers are actually highly regulated and pay significant sums to the authorities for the privilege of trading on the streets.

The report also examined the costs and impacts of traffic congestion on Dhaka's citizens, particularly the economic and the social costs. With a case study of a particular route

of 26km in Dhaka, the average off-peak journey speed for motor vehicles was measured at around 22 kph, while the peak period average speed fell to around 9 kph. The economic cost of this delay was estimated at around Tk. 227 crore per month (\$28.4m per month), or roughly Tk.53 for each passenger trip, most of which was due to lost time rather than vehicle operating costs. If other components of Dhaka's traffic congestion are taken into account, such as environmental and social costs, the results are even more alarming. The study also identified that the impact was heavily clustered among service holders, who had a higher willingness-to-pay to avoid or reduce congestion.

*Soft copy of the report is available at BIGD website: <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/images/SoCReports/SoC%20Report-2016%20Final.pdf>*

### Press launch of the State of Governance in Bangladesh 2016 held

BIGD launched one of its annual flagship research reports The State of Governance in Bangladesh 2016: Regulation Process Performance on 20 December 2016 in presence of a huge gathering of reporters and journalists from print, online and electronic media.



*Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud and Dr. Wahid Abdallah are seen at the Launching of SoG (From Left)*

BIGD Executive Director Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, along with Dr. Wahid Abdallah, Research Fellow, BIGD; Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, a renowned economist, and Dr. Iftekharuzzaman, Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) launched the report in

front of the media.

On behalf of the SoG team, Dr. Wahid Abdallah made the presentation on the findings and recommendations of the report. A lively Question-Answer session followed the presentation, where the SoG Research team addressed the queries and comments of reporters and senior journalists.

The report analysed democratic process, especially electoral politics, public sector governance, economic governance, and health governance, specifically governance of Upazila Health Complexes. In the area of democratic governance, the report focused mostly on the local government elections in Bangladesh and looked into the role of competition in election, voter turnout, voter list, electoral expenditure and electoral violence. The report said that Bangladesh has seen deteriorations of electoral competition in the recent years. There was an increased pattern of election time violence, low participation of female candidates in local government elections and increased gender gap in the final voter list prepared in 2014 before the 10<sup>th</sup> national election.

*Soft copy of the report is available at BIGD website: <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd/images/SoG/SoG2016/SoG%202016%20converted.pdf>*

### Citizens have every right to know and oversee where and how their money is being spent

Speakers stressed at a national seminar on Citizen Engagement in Public Procurement

Citizens have every right to know and oversee where and how their money is being spent. Citizens also have the right to know government procurement rules and whether the government is following the procurement laws, rules and precedents and maintaining transparency and accountability in terms of purchasing goods and services, said Abul Kalam Azad, MP, Chair, Parliamentary Standing

Committee on Ministry of Planning at a Seminar titled 'Citizen Engagement in Public Procurement'.

CPTU, IME Division of the Ministry of Planning and BIGD co-organised this national seminar at a hotel in the capital on 1 December 2016. Farid Uddin Ahmed, Secretary of IMED chaired while Md. Faruque Hossain, DG, CPTU and

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BIGD made the welcome remarks. Dr. Mirza Hassan, Adjunct Fellow of BIGD and Dr. Zafrul Islam, Senior Procurement Specialist of World Bank Dhaka also spoke at the seminar.



Dr. Mirza M Hassan, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Mr. Farid Uddin Ahmed, Mr. Abul Kalam Azad MP, Dr. Zafrul Islam and Mr. Md. Faruque Hossain are seen at the seminar (from left)

To improve transparency and accountability in the huge amount of public spending in public procurement and stop wastage to ensure the best use of public money, the government has taken the initiative to involve the citizens in public procurement as a third party. BIGD is providing technical assistance to the CPTU, IMED to help design and implement the social accountability mechanism that aims to institutionalise and develop this third party monitoring system in the public procurement process in the country.

**Local MPs will not interfere in the workings of local governance institutions**

- says State Minister Mashiur Rahman Ranga

Conflict between the Member of Parliament and elected local government officials is the main barrier to ensuring services to the people, said Mashiur Rahman Ranga, State Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives. He made the remark while addressing a national conference on Local Governance Programme of Sharique project as the chief guest jointly organized by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Bangladesh and BIGD at a hotel in the city on 7 December 2016.

Emphasizing on the local government system Mani Shankar Aiyer, former Panchayet Minister of India said 'both democracy and development facilitate each other. If development is not equitable it will pose a threat to democracy. The former member of Lok Shabha and Rajya Shabha in India also shared experience of the performance



and challenges of the local government of different Indian provinces.

The programme was attended by Mr. Md. Shah Kamal, Secretary, Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, BIGD, Kaspar

Grossenbacher, Country Director of HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation, Bangladesh; Dr. Badiul Alam Majumdar, Country Representative, The Hunger Project, Dr. Tofail Ahmed, local governance expert and Ms. Melina Papageorgiou Trippolini, Programme Manager of SDC, among others.

The event was held to celebrate 10 years (2006-2016) of Sharique and also to launch a step-by-step guide that captures Sharique's ten years of experience in the local governance sector. This guide is to make the practical lessons learned from the programme available to other stakeholders including the Union Parishad themselves as well as a range of public and non-governmental partners.

**BIGD and Bangladesh Economic Forum co-sponsored conference on Institutions for Development -Urbanization & Land Issue**

Bangladesh Economists' Forum (BEF) – a non-political group of independent economic professionals of Bangladesh origin residing at home and abroad – organized its 3rd annual conference on "Institutions for Development –Urbanization & Land Issues" on December 31, 2016 in Dhaka, was co-sponsored by BIGD. Advocate Anisul Huq MP, Hon'ble, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs was the Chief Guest in the Inaugural Session. Country's leading economists, development thinkers, current and former civil servants, civil society members and media people participated in the day-long conference.

After the inaugural session there were two academic sessions on "Urbanization in Bangladesh" and "Land Management in Bangladesh". BIGD's Senior Research Associate Mr. Mohammad Sirajul Islam presented a paper titled "Institutions of Urban Governance: Issues and challenges" in the First Session and BIGD's Research Fellow and Head of Governance and Politics Cluster Dr. Wahid Abdallah presented a paper titled "Digitalization of Land Registration in Bangladesh" in the second session.

**MAGD programme student receives highest distinction**

BIGD conducts an internationally acclaimed Master's programme, titled MA in Governance and Development (MAGD). As in the previous batches, this year civil service officials from Myanmar, Afghanistan and Nepal shall be participating as students along with the Bangladeshi government officials.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> convocation of BRAC University held on 5 December 2016 in Dhaka, 19 students from MAGD programme graduated. Mr. Khan Md. Nurul Amin, Student, MAGD 6th batch had been honored the highest distinction among the attended MAGD students



### BIGD and FES signing ceremony held

The agreement signing ceremony between BIGD and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) was held on 8 December 2016 at BIGD. BIGD is to partner with FES (a German foundation) to develop the curriculum for the Academy of Work (AoW) on modules - Field of Management & Organisation and Economics, and the course - Gender, Trade Unions and Decent Work. The certificate/diploma programme will be co-ordinated by BIGD, FES and Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS).



*Franziska Korn, Resident Representative of FES, Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, ED of BIGD and others participants are seen at the signing ceremony (From Left)*

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of BIGD, and Franziska Korn, Resident Representative of FES, Bangladesh signed the contract on behalf of BIGD and FES and expressed their hope of continuing this partnership for the long term. BIGD Research, Training, Programme and Communications team attended the ceremony.

### BIGD and Cabinet Division held Pre-LAB Exercise under CoP

On 14 December 2016, the Cabinet Division of the Government of Bangladesh, in cooperation with BIGD, held a Pre-Lab Exercise at the Cabinet Division Conference Room, under the World Bank funded Community of Practice, Phase 2 (COP-II) programme. The exercise comprised of opening remarks made by Cabinet Secretary, followed by presentations made by each ministry with regards to GPMS and the adoption of APA – a Performance Management System (PMS) for public sector organizations.



APA is essentially an agreement between the Cabinet Secretary and the Secretaries of the concerned ministries/divisions where the Secretaries commit to deliver the results described in the document. Deputy Secretary, Mr. Altaf Hussain, also presented on the Malaysian Experience with Lab Exercises and the adoption of APA. The objectives of the LAB was to assist the selected Ministry/Division in developing a Model APA with the formulation of proper strategic objectives and aligning them with SDGs, 7th Five Year Plan and other relevant policies of that Ministry/Division. Two staff from BIGD involved in COP-II, Ms. Ramizah Ahmed, Programme Associate and Mr. Mahbub Hossain, Research Assistant were present at the event.

### In-house seminars of BIGD

BIGD organised three in-house seminars titled Bangladesh Nano loans, Gender Norms, and Social Entrepreneurship on 29 November, 4 December and 21 December respectively at BIGD. Ms. Iris Braun, a research manager and technical lead on the KGFS financial inclusion study in Tamil Nadu; Professor Wendy Olsen, the University of Manchester; and Prof. PK Biswas, Director, IFMR, India presented their papers respectively and discussed related issues.

### Returning to BIGD

By Ramizah Ahmed, Programme Associate

The decision to return to BIGD was something that came to me instinctively. When I left for my Master's in September 2015, I had already worked at BIGD for a year as a Research



Assistant. I was somewhat unsure of the direction I was taking in terms of my career choice at that point of time. I had left to pursue my Master's in Development Administration and Planning from University College London (UCL). I wanted to get involved in the management and administration of "development projects", especially because my Master's allowed me to gain an academic understanding of development administration.

For me, what makes BIGD stand out is that although it is primarily a research institution, it offers equal opportunities for those interested in programme or project management. BIGD staff may split his or her time between research and programme management. Given my inclination towards programme management, as well as my desire to do more research in social development issues, I knew that returning to BIGD will give me the flexibility I needed to sharpen my skills while pursuing my interests. After returning to BIGD, I am working as a Programme Associate- a job role that has allowed me to explore and sharpen my programme management skills already in a short span of time. At the same time, I've also been given the professional scope to get involved in research opportunities that interest me.

Whether it's research or programme management, BIGD offers its staff ample opportunities to find a path to flourish in. As a young development professional, I may not be able to determine the foreseeable future of my career, but I am certain that BIGD has provided me with a platform that will direct me towards optimizing the best of my abilities.

### BIGD researcher's interview screened at 7<sup>th</sup> Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

S. M. Gubair Bin Arafat, Research Associate of BIGD, was invited to participate in the 7th Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (AMCDRR7), held on 2-5 November 2016 at New Delhi, India, through an online interview to share his experiences with respect to ecosystem-based adaptation and the benefits of this approach in reducing risk of disasters to fragile habitats, at-risk species and vulnerable communities. The interview was screened at the side event of the conference titled 'Scaling-up Ecosystem-Based Disaster Risk Reduction in Development Planning and Practice in Asia'.

### Divisional workshops on Government Performance Management System across the country

BIGD and Cabinet Division, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, jointly hosted a series of workshops on Government Performance Management System between October and November in Sylhet, Barisal, Rangpur, Faridpur, Chittagong and Mymensingh. The purpose of the workshops was to orient and train officers from different departments at the district and divisional levels on how to design their Annual Performance Agreement (APA), which is a new initiative of the government for target based performance. The government has introduced Annual Performance Agreement (APA) at field level offices from FY 2016-17.

The trainers of the workshop included Mr. N. M. Zeaul Alam, Secretary (Coordination & Reforms) Cabinet Division; Mr. Md. Mahiuddin Khan, Additional Secretary and Mr. Md. Kamrul Hasan, Senior Assistant Secretary of Cabinet Division, Md. Jamal Uddin, Divisional Commissioner, Sylhet; Mr. Md. Ruhul Ameen, Divisional Commissioner, Chittagong, among others.

### Workshop on 'Qualitative Analysis using Diverse Mixed Methods'

The Gender and Social Transformation (CGST) unit of BIGD, in collaboration with Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and Cathie Marsh Institute for Social Research (CMIST), has organized a one-day workshop on "Qualitative Analysis using Diverse Mixed Methods" for practitioners, lecturers, researchers with experience in empirical research on 6 December 2016. The workshop was facilitated by Dr Wendy Olsen, School of Social Sciences, from CMIST of University of Manchester. The objectives of the workshop was to make the participants feel confident about analysing a text of an interview, and considering deeper issues of mixed methods in setting up research design.

After completion of the workshop, Simeen Mahmud, Head of CGST awarded 'Certificates of Participation' to the participants.

Around 20 participants from different renowned organizations like JPG School of Public Health, BRAC-RED, Drishti Research Center (an anthropologist center), Agroni Research Limited (UK) etc. took part in the workshop.

### BIGD Visiting Fellow attends roundtable on Multi Stakeholder Engagement in Reducing Women's Heavy and Unequal Unpaid Care Work

"Anyone can do household work although it has been socially established that only women will do this kind of job," said Maheen Sultan, Visiting Fellow of BIGD, at a roundtable titled Multi Stakeholder Engagement in Reducing Women's Heavy and Unequal Unpaid Care Work held on 15 November 2016, organised by Prothom Alo in association with Oxfam Bangladesh and UKAID. She also urged to increase woman's participation at the policy level along with equal distribution of household activities between men and women.

Meher Afroz Chumki, the State Minister for Women and Children Affairs attended the roundtable as the Chief Guest. Abdul Qayyum, Associate Editor of Prothom Alo



Maheen Sultan, Meher Afroz Chumki and other participants are seen at the roundtable moderated the event. Among others MB Akhter, Programme Director of Oxfam and Syed Alamgir, Executive Director of ACI also spoke at the event.

### BIGD researchers attended NGAFF seminar and workshops

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow and Harun-Or-Rashid, Research Associate, BIGD attended the Seminar on National Governance Assessment Framework (NGAF) held on 16 November, 2016, jointly organised by Governance Innovation Unit (GIU) of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and ARENA project of UNDP. GIU and UNDP have joined hands to assess the governance scenario in Bangladesh



and develop a country contextual National Governance Assessment Framework for Bangladesh. A working group

has been set up to provide input to the draft framework. BIGD is one of the working group members with the Department of Public Administration and the Department of Development Studies of the University of Dhaka. As part of finalising the process of framework, the seminar was organised to consult the field level government and non government stakeholders to get a comprehensive feedback and also to create a sense of ownership among them. A wide range of representatives from different ministries and members of the working group attended the event. Prime Minister's International Affairs Adviser Dr. Gowher Rizvi was also present at the event.

Earlier Dr. Shanawez Hossain also attended NGA's divisional workshop held in Sylhet on 2 November 2016. GIU and UNDP, Bangladesh organised the workshop. Yet another GIU-led workshop was held on 27 October 2016 in Chittagong. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman attended the workshop as a Chief Guest while Dr. Shanawez Hossain and Mr. Harun Or Rashid from BIGD were present as facilitators. In his speech, Dr. Rahman welcomed the participants and emphasised on the needs of the governance assessment initiative in Bangladesh. The program was chaired by Ms. Sayeda Sarwar Jahan, Additional Divisional Commissioner of Chittagong. Ms. Quamrun Naher Siddiqua, Director, GIU, Ms. Sheela Tasneem Haq, Advisor, UNDP, Mr. Radwan Siddiq, National Consultant of UNDP-Bangladesh also spoke in the program. Prof. Kazi Maruful Islam presented the draft framework.

### BIGD Research Fellow at University of California, Berkeley

BIGD Research Fellow Dr. Md Shanawez Hossain participated in the Faculty Workshop on Research Writing & Publishing in the USA from October 11-18, 2016. Hosted by

Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, University of California, Berkeley in partnership with the American Institute for Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) and the US Embassy in Dhaka eight faculty members from top universities from Bangladesh participated in the program.

From October 20-23 he participated in the 45th Annual Conference on South Asia organized by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. On 20 October Dr. Hossain presented a



paper on 'Regional Cooperation for Resource-Centered Strategies: Analysis from Energy Security Perspective in Asia', at the daylong session titled, 'From MDGs to SDGs: Bangladesh as a Case in Point'. The event was attended by more than 750 scholars, students and professionals. Dr. Jason Cons, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of Texas at Austin was discussant of the paper.

### Revision workshop of CIPS held

Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) arranged a revision workshop for Cohort-7 for the CIPS Advanced Diploma in Procurement and Supply (Level-5) in order to prepare the participants for the examination of November 2016. CIPS expert, Mr. Tony Davies visited BIGD and conducted the workshop from 16 - 30 October 2016. To prepare the participants for the examination, Mr. Davies arranged group session; re-seat examination and one-to one sessions. BIGD partners with CIPS to provide these procurement courses in Bangladesh.

### Meeting with A2i held

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director and Dr. Wahid Abdallah, Research Fellow of BIGD met a team of A2i officials led by Mr. Anir Choudhury, the Policy Advisor, of the Prime Minister's Office on 10 October, 2016. The purpose of the visit was to highlight BIGD's research undertakings on A2i projects. The team presented four such projects which are currently under way. The A2i has also made some suggestions on what other areas BIGD could work on. The role of each organization has also been discussed on how to further the current and future research initiatives.

### Study tour to Philippines

A 14-member delegation from Bangladesh comprising government officials and BIGD researchers visited Manila, Philippines from 27th November to 1st December 2016 for an exposure visit under the project 'Community of Practice (CoP) on Performance Management in South Asia'. The delegates had the opportunity to visit six Philippine government agencies during the trip: the Development Academy of Philippines, Department of Health, Department of Education, Civil Service Commission, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Budget and Management. The Bangladesh delegation was exposed to the performance management system of the government agencies of Philippines. Mr. Faiz Ahmed Chowdhury, Senior Research Associate and Mr. Nahid Ferdous Pabon, Research Associate of BIGD were part of the Bangladesh delegation.



### ED participated in the 9th South Asia Economic Summit (SAES IX) as panelist

Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, BIGD participated as a panelist in a session titled 'Sustainable Transformation of South Asian Economy by 2030: What are the Possible Pathways?' at the 9th South Asia Economic Summit (SAES IX), held on 15-16 October 2016 at a hotel in Dhaka. The overarching theme of the SAES IX was "Reimagining South Asia in 2030." Within this broad theme, the Summit focused on a set of cross-cutting issues and a cluster of thematic issues. The event was organized by Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) in partnership with Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), India; South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal; Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan and Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS).

### CIPS delegation visited BIGD

Ms. Paula Steele, Global Public Sector Manager, Ms. Rhiann Sharman, Programme coordinator and Mr. Haward Selden, MCIPS from Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS), UK visited BIGD on December 5, 2016 to discuss implementation on issues of the ongoing collaboration. They met with Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director, Mr. Shahrukh Safi, Sr. Manager (corporate affairs) and the training team of BIGD.

### Researchers' other activities

- Simeen Mahmud, Head (Ad Interim) Centre for Gender and Social Transformation (CGST), BIGD, Maheen Sultan, Visiting Fellow; Kabita Chowdhury and Nuzhat Sharmeen, Research Associates participated in the country level project design workshop under GAGE, organized by BRAC RED at GDLN Center on 8-10 November 2016.

- The interview of Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow of BIGD was featured in the website of the Institute for South Asia Studies during Faculty Training workshop held at Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center at the University of California Berkeley.

- Maheen Sultan, Visiting Fellow of BIGD attended as discussant of the papers titled 'Zila Parishad Election' and 'Multi stakeholder Engagement in Reducing Women's Heavy and Unequal Unpaid Care Work' at a program organized by Governance Advocacy Forum on 23 November 2016 in Dhaka.

- On December 10-11, Nazneen Ahmed, Program Officer and Mohammad Ashikur Rahman, Research Associate of BIGD attended a two-day long "International Seminar towards Effective, Accountable and Inclusive LGIs (Local Government Institutions): learning from South Asia and beyond organized by UNDP.

- Mohammed Misbah Uddin, Research Associate of BIGD and Md. Tarek Hossain, Sr. Research Associate, James P Grant School of Public Health at BRAC University jointly presented a paper titled WASH intervention: Exploring the gaps between knowledge and practices in coastal area of Bangladesh at the 7th Regional Public Health Conference organized by Bangladesh University of Health Sciences (BUHS), in collaboration with Department of International Health of the University of Oslo on 6-7 December, 2016.

- Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow of BIGD attended the Desh Tv Talk Show titled "Sojakatha", on BIGD's annual flagship research report STATE OF CITIES 2016, on December 28, 2016

- Md. Harun - Or - Rashid, Research Associate of BIGD attended the Independent TV Talk Show titled "Khatunganj theke Matijheel", on BIGD's annual flagship research report The State of Governance Bangladesh 2016, on December 21, 2016

### Publications

**\* Working Paper No. 34:**  
**Role of electoral competition in explaining political violence in Bangladesh – a district level analysis**  
By Syeda Salina Aziz, Farhana Razzaque

This paper examines the difference in political violence in Bangladeshi districts and attempts to explain the reasons behind the difference. Using a district level dataset of political violence for a period between 2007 till 2011, the paper hypothesizes that variation in political violence can be explained by difference in political competitiveness. Findings suggest that political competitiveness positively and significantly explains political violence. The paper also finds that allocation of development expenditure; population density and urban centrality along with location of regional headquarters are strong determinant of political violence.

**\* Working Paper No. 33:**  
**Medical expenditure and household welfare in Bangladesh**  
By Nabila Zaman, Md. Shahadath Hossain

The study estimates the catastrophic impact of health expenditure on household welfare. Welfare loss is associated with reduction of 'food expenditure' and 'non-food expenditure'. The study finds that compared to households with no healthcare expenditure, households with non-catastrophic healthcare expenditure reduced food expenditure by 3.1% and households with catastrophic healthcare expenditure reduced food expenditure by 15.2%. Catastrophic health events did not reduce food consumption significantly but it has a significant impact on non-food expenditure. Non-hospital medical expenditure such as cost of medicine was the primary cause of facing catastrophic health event.

## Executive Director's activities

BIGD Executive Director Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman had several meetings in the last quarter of 2016 with a number of distinguished personalities such as prominent academics, policy makers and researchers regarding the research collaborations and other relevant issues of BIGD. Dr. Rahman had meeting with Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, Chairman of BRAC; Dr Anindya Chatterjee, Regional Director, Asia, International Development Research Centre (IDRC); Mr. Md. Shahidul Haque, Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Dr. Nasiruddin Ahmed, Commissioner of

Anti-Corruption Commission; Mr. David Rinnert, Program Manager of DFID from the UK; HE Mr. Munir M. Merali, Resident Diplomatic Representative to the People's Republic of Bangladesh of Aga Khan Development Foundation (AKDN); H.E. Mr. Toe Aung Myint, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce of Myanmar; Radwan Siddiq, National Consultant of the UNDP- Bangladesh; Ms. Sylvia Bitter, Director, Sharique, HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation Bangladesh; Lady Syeda Sarwat Abed, Director of BRAC Institute of Languages; Dr. Abu Shonchoy, Research Fellow, Institute of Developing Economics, IDE-JETRO; Ms. Jane Edmondson, Head of DFID,

Bangladesh; Mr. M Alamgir, Consultant of Asian Development Bank; Ms. Franziska Korn, Resident Representative of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), Bangladesh; Ms. Erum Mariam, Director; BIED; and Dr. Mohan Manandhar, senior official from the Government of Nepal.

Dr. Rahman attended different meetings and seminars throughout the quarter and also attended different programmes of International Growth Centre (IGC), BRAC, BRAC University etc.

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