



BRAC University Bulletin

2012/february

BRAC University 7th convocation

The 7th Convocation of BRAC University was held on Sunday, 19th February 2012 at the **Bangabandhu International Conference Centre**. The ceremony began at 10.00 am with taking seats of all guests and participations.



Mr. Md. Zillur Rahman, Hon'ble President, People's Republic of Bangladesh and Chancellor of BRAC University attend the ceremony as Chief Guest. **Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid, MP**, Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Education attended the ceremony as Special Guest, **Justice Muhammad Habibur Rahman**, delivered the Convocation speech as Convocation Speaker. Former **Ambassador Mr. Faruq Ahmad Choudhury**, Member of BRACU Board of Trustees, also addressed the convocation with **Professor Ainun Nishat, Vice Chancellor** of BRAC University, will preside over the convocation. Hon'ble **President, People's Republic of Bangladesh Mr. Md. Zillur Rahman** congratulated the graduates and praised BRAC University authority for keeping the good standard of education.

Honorable **Education Minister Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid** said that BRAC University is one of the top leading Universities who are maintaining the standard of education.

Convocation Speaker **Justice Habibur Rahman** extended his heartfelt congratulations to all graduates. He added that the job of a University should be to create a bright, educated and conscientious generation of citizens who are aware of their rights and responsibilities. He said that University must be an inclusive place and inculcate the capacity for thought and exploration of new ideas.

The president awarded three chancellor gold medals to **Nusrat Jahan Dipa** and **Maria Matin** in the Bachelor of Social Science in Economics while **Nowrin Nowshaba** in the Masters of Biotechnology for their outstanding academic results. A total of 608 students including graduates and post graduates were conferred degrees at the convocation.

Architecture Updates

Book on "Muzharul Islam, Architect", published by BRAC University Press



Muzharul Islam, Architect
Eds: Zainab F. Ali and Fuad H. Mallick
Brac University Press

"**Muzharul Islam, Architect**", a book on the major projects of Architect **Muzharul Islam**, Bangladesh's first modern architect has been published by BRAC University Press.

The 188 page book consists of colour photographs, reproductions of the original drawings and a commentary on each of the architect's important projects covering 4 decades. The foreword is by

the famous American architect Stanley Tigerman, who is close friend of **Muzharul Islam** and has collaborated with him on several projects.

Kazi Khaleed Ashraf, Professor of Architecture at the University of Hawaii in his article for the book, reflects of the architect's life and works. The book also contains a translation of the public lecture delivered by **Muzharul Islam** at BRAC University.

Zainab F Ali and **Fuad H Mallick, professors** at the Department of Architecture, BRAC University are the editors. Architect Islam has been a strong influence on the contemporary architecture of Bangladesh and is revered as a pioneer of the modernist movement in the sub-continent.

The book is distributed by University Press Limited and is available in all major bookstores.



Prof. Fuad H Mallick chaired a session and presented at an international Seminar on Architecture

Prof. Fuad H Mallick chaired the session on Environmental Issues and Architectural Design at the International Seminar on Architecture: Education, Practice and Research, held at BUET celebrating 50 years of Architectural education in Bangladesh. He and **Khandaker Hasibul Kabir** also made a presentation on Architecture Department

at BRAC University: New Dimensions at a special session on Architectural Schools, at the Seminar.

Study tour arc 327: history of Bengal art and architecture

Department of Architecture arranged a study tour for the students of 3rd year, named 'Discover Ancient North'. The tour was held from 9th to 11th February, 2012. Assignment, documentation, lectures and preliminary identification process



of historical building related to ARC 327 History of Art & Architecture of Bengal were carried out in this tour. The Varind Track that is Pundrabardhan-Bogura, Paharpur-Nawgaon, Rajshahi, Choto Sona Mosque, Darasbari, Shah Niamatullah mosque complex at Shibgonj and Puthia Temple complex were the focal points of the site study tour. Students were asked to collect information from those sites and finally they will prepare group presentation and photographic display, the historical model making workshop is a part of the course. Some historical buildings and monuments will be assigned to the students to make as built replica model in any media. By making these models 'hands on' they can recognize better the essence of historical magnificence. 22 students participated in this event.

Study tour ARC 401: Urban Design studio

As the part of the study of 'Urban Design', students of studio 401 have visited Rangpur city. During the five day visit from 1st to 5th February they have studied the spatial arrangement, socio-economical features, heritage as well as the environmental issues by rigorous field studies. Discussions were arranged with the city mayor and many other responsible persons regarding the issues of the city's history, present status and future development. Learners have documented the city through mapping and analyzing the findings. Consequently they are preparing strategic designs for Rangpur city with a vision of development for 2050. Studio teachers **A.K.M. Sirajuddin, Ferdous H. Khan** along with **Intiaj Rasul** from BDI guided the field study.

Presently there are 310 municipalities in Bangladesh. In future many of this will turn into city corporations. Urbanization has been getting shape in this territory in the course of these municipalities. One of these municipalities is Rangpur, which will be the first instance of 'City Governance' in Bangladesh.

Ten year celebration "Cultural program "

Students of the Department of Architecture arranged a cultural program. There

was active participation from Freshmen 1 to Senior 4. It was a refreshing and recreational evening with a difference. It was a part of ten year celebration of architecture department, BRACU. Faculty members and students were present in the cultural program.

BDI Updates

Fourth Annual Global Network of MDP Programs Summit, 2012 - Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Fourth Annual Master's in Development Practice (MDP) Summit took place from Sunday, February 5, through Friday, February 10, 2012 at BRAC Centre for Development Management (BCDM) facility in Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh, with the support of the summit host, BRAC Development Institute (BDI). Representatives (vice chancellors, rectors, deans, directors, and others) from all 22 MDP programs and 5 universities that are interested in developing MDP programs-Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Kazakstan; Birla Institute of Management Technology, India; Lund University, Sweden; Royal University of Bhutan, Bhutan; and Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia- were in attendance, bringing together close to 70 individuals representing 18 different countries; a truly global gathering.

A preeminence of this year's meeting was to allow formal and informal network building as well as the establishment of cross-network collaborative projects. Discussion areas covered during the week included: discussions on MDP field training as a whole, internal governance structure for the Global Association of MDP programs, in-depth discussions surrounding the MDP curriculum, and program evaluation and accreditation.



A highlight of the week was a widely attended special presentation by Kirsten Lundberg, Director, Case Consortium @ Columbia, on using "teaching" cases in the classroom. This was followed up with **Dr. Lundberg** leading a workshop on writing effective teaching cases, in anticipation of the Global MDP Association's plan to build a repository of sustainable development-based case studies. **Jeffrey D. Sachs (right)**, the Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and

the co-chair of the International Advisory Board (IAB), was present and made remarks on MDP summit overview and vision.



Each MDP Summit includes a visit to the host university's MDP program field site. These fieldsite visits highlight the cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to the challenges of sustainable development. This year, the tour took place at Manikganj, Bangladesh, and the participants experienced firsthand the microfinance, health care, community empowerment and primary

education initiatives that BRAC has implemented.

Overall the Fourth Annual MDP Summit offered substantial networking and collaboration opportunities, with lively discussions surrounding key aspects of the Global MDP Association.

The Research on "The Social Impact of Microfinance on Gender Norms and Behavior" is Underway

Citizenship, a research wing of BDI is conducting a research on "The Social Impact of Microfinance on Gender Norms and Behavior," in collaboration with Institute of Microfinance, the Population Council, New York. The research undertook 300 rural and urban PSU's (Primary Sampling Units) located all over Bangladesh. A community survey and mapping have been conducted in Phase I of this research.

In the current phase, a household survey, with 9000 respondents, is underway in these 300 PSU's. Concurrently, the qualitative research is also being conducted in six selected PSU's. Components of the qualitative research include social mapping, institutional mapping, key informant interviews and in-depth case studies of selected respondents. During the month of February 2012, the qualitative research team completed their fourth village study in Meherpur village, Golapganjupazilla, Sylhet district.

Seminar on Responsible Finance and Consumer Protection

BRAC Development Institute (BDI) and Credit and Development Forum (CDF) organized a seminar on "Responsible Finance: What's Relevant for Bangladesh from the Global Movement?" on February 2, 2012 at the YWCA Guest House. **Beth Rhyne, Managing Director**, Centre for Financial Inclusion and **Kate McKee, Senior Advisor**, CGAP presented at the seminar. **Kate and Beth** shared their experiences with the Smart Campaign and discussed what lessons might be useful for Bangladesh. The seminar, attended by over 50 microfinance practitioners, stimulated discussion around the seven Client Protection Principles

(CPPs) included in The Smart Campaign and the tools which the campaign uses to assess and improve microfinance practices, products and policies.

The seminar also explored the business case for financial education and consumer protection and how incentives for providers could be strengthened. Issues of how sectors in other countries can learn from the evolution of group lending and product diversification in Bangladesh were also highlighted.

Course on "Financial Services for the Poor: An Introduction"

BRAC Development Institute (BDI) organized a two-week course on "Financial Services for the Poor: An Introduction" from February 3 - 16, 2012. This was the fifth edition of the course, which is targeted mostly to an international audience with little or no knowledge of microfinance. It was grounded in the experience of Bangladesh but also provided a broad global picture of the state of microfinance, its emergence and challenges, the diversity of financial products on offer and the need to have a strong poverty focus. The course was team taught, using different pedagogical methods, and included extensive field visits to BRAC, Grameen, ASA, BURO Bangladesh and SafeSave. The course was attended by 18 participants from Japan, Indonesia, the Republic of Cameroon, Denmark and USA.

CfL Updates

CfL faculty members at the 17th NELTA International Conference

Five faculty members from CfL presented papers in the 17th NELTA (Nepal English Teachers Association) International Conference on "Beyond Binaries: Sharing ELT Practices and Creating the Future" held in Katmandu, Nepal from 18 to 20 February, 2012.



The paper titled "Drama: proven essentials of BRACU CfL to create competent learners" was presented jointly by **Roxana A. Chowdhury** and **Golam Kader Zilany**, while two other faculty members from CfL, **Effat Hyder** and **Hasna Khanom** had their presentation on "Engaging Students into Developing Rubrics to Ensure Learner Autonomy". In addition,

Golam Kader Zilany presented a paper titled "CLT Materials and Modes of Assessment at the Secondary Level Education in Bangladesh: Teachers'/Learners' Perception"

The conference had been a tremendous opportunity for ELT practitioners to exchange experiences about English language teaching across the globe, since 90 working papers were presented by 65 representatives from 17 different countries.

TESOL Certificate Course launched at Cfl

Centre for Languages (Cfl) launched "Certificate Course on TESOL" on 10 February 2012 through a formal orientation program at BRAC University premise. ELT expert **Prof. Dr. Dil Afroze Kader** and **Dr. Syedur Rahman** spoke in the program. In the occasion, **Ms. Tamanna Maqsood, Senior Lecturer** of Cfl gave a brief introduction about the activities of the centre to the participants. The speakers said that the course would be unique in terms of teaching learning process as learners will get ample opportunity to gain knowledge through intensive practicum and experiential learning.

Paper Presented at IIUC, Chattagong

Ashik Sarwar, Lecturer of Cfl, BRAC University presented a paper titled, "The backwash effects and challenges of testing reading of the intermediate learners in Bangladesh", in the Conference on English studies in Bangladesh organized by the Department of English Language and Literature of International Islamic University of Chittagong (IIUC). The day long program was held on 14 February 2012 at the university premises.

ENH Updates

Presentation in International Conferences

Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson of ENH was invited to the 3rd Karachi Literary Festival held on 11-12th February 2012 and hosted jointly by Oxford University Press Ltd. Pakistan and The British Council. She spoke in a special session on "71 Liberation War" at the festival.

Teaching Assistant of History minorprogramme (ENH), **Ms. Ayrin Ahmed** presented a paper titled "The Combination of Beauty and Planning: **Taj Mahal**" in an international conference organized by the Itihas Academy held on 17th February 2012 at the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh.

Trip to Ekushey Boimela



Students of Eng 115: Introduction to English Prose and Eng 102: Composition-1, went on a visit to the Ekushey Book Fair on 11th February 2012 with their course teachers **Ms. Mahruba Tasneem Mowtushi** and **Ms. Sabreena Ahmed**. The visit was part of the students' courses where they are required to critically evaluate different aspects of the fair and write an essay on their visit.

Study trip to Mahasthangar and Paharpur

Around 70 students of the course Hum 101: World Civilization and Culture of Spring 2012 went on a study trip to Mahasthangar and Paharpur in Bogra. This trip was organized to show remnants of the ancient Bengal civilization of the 2nd Century BC, to the students. They also visited the Buddhist Vihara of King Dharmapala of the Pala reign. **Professor Samina Sultana**, and **Ms. Ayrin Ahmed** accompanied the students on the trip.

Publications by the ENH members

A paper titled "Indo-Bangla Economic Relations: Hopes and Prospects" by **Ms. Ayrin Ahmed**, has been published in Itihas Academy Journal-2012.

Ms. Sabreena Ahmed's short story "Different Strokes" was included in the collection of short stories titled 9th Edge. It was published by the Department of English, Eastern University. This anthology is Eastern University's first venture combining writings of emerging Bangladeshi writers in English.

School visit to UCEP Ismail School

Students of the courses Eng 439: Teaching Practicum and Eng 653: Teaching Practicum visited English classes of UCEP Ismail School at Shah Alibag, Mirpur on 20th February and 23rd February 2012. They observed how listening skills are being aided by using technology such as Nano i-Pod under the UK project of English in Action (EIA). The trip also included a visit to the vocational training unit of the organization Underprivileged Children's Education Programs (UCEP) where the street children are given vocational training enabling them to work part time in different workshops, garments' factories, welding shops and hospitals etc. while continuing their general education.



ESS Updates

Seminar Organized by ESS

Dr. Mahabub Hossain, Executive Director, BRAC, guest lectured at the Department of Economics and Social Sciences on 31st January 2012. The lecture entitled 'Micro-Finance and Poverty Reduction: The Bangladesh Experience' was arranged as a part of Economic Growth and Development course, one of the core courses of Economics.

On 13th February 2012, ESS Department organized another seminar entitled 'Current Macroeconomic Challenges in the Bangladesh Economy'. **Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya**, Distinguished Fellow, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) presented a review of the state of the macro-economy in Bangladesh, focusing on areas on

economic growth and inflation, savings and investment, public finance and fiscal deficit, external sectors and balance of payments. He also articulated the major challenges facing the Bangladesh economy in the current context and highlighted the possible policy options available to mitigate those challenges in this seminar.

Publication by ESS Faculty

Dr Farzana Munshi, Assistant Professor of ESS coauthored paper on "Small and Micro Enterprise (SME) Development in Bangladesh" is published in Sixth Five Year Plan of Bangladesh 2011-2015 Background Papers Volume 4, Chapter 5. Publisher Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies and Planning Commission of Bangladesh.

BRACU Valedictorians from ESS

7th convocation of BRAC University took place on 19th February, 2012 where **Maria Matin** and **Nusrat Zahan Deepa**, students of ESS became the Valedictorians with a CGPA of 3.99 out of 4.00 scale. The faculty, staff and students of the Department of Economics and Social Sciences are proud of their accomplishments and wishes them an outstanding future.

IED Updates

Workshop on 'Child Centred Quality Education and Challenges in Implementation'

IED organised a Sharing Workshop on 'Child Centred Quality Education and Challenges in Implementation' at IED, on 27 February 2012. The aim of the workshop was to enhance professional development for teachers and other stakeholders working in the field of education. This sharing workshop has been a forum for information sharing and networking among notable educational institutes. 15 participants from 11 English medium schools, INGOs, NGOs participated in the half day workshop. The participants contributed towards the workshop through their feedbacks on some of the good things happening in their organisations and how IED can help to meet the challenges they face and build a relationship to work together.

Training for the Second Chance for the children of Post-primary Education (SCOPE) teachers

Three training courses for the teachers of Grade VII of the SCOPE centre were conducted during February, 2012. The entire course of Grade VII has been divided into three modules and this training was on the second module on different subjects which covered Bangla, Social Science, Mathematics, General Science, English, Religion, Agriculture and Home Economics. A total of 12 teachers participated in each of the trainings at IED. In addition to that, students and teachers have been selected to open six new centres in Kamrangirchar and Savar.

Training of Trainers to the Mother Leader

A three days ToT was conducted between 28th February and 1st March, 2012 for

the Women Leaders and the Community Researchers. They were trained to provide training to the new mother leaders for the newly selected Registered Non Government Primary Schools (RNGPSs) and Government Primary Schools (GPSs) on their roles and responsibilities on how to build relationship with the schools, ensure attendance of the students, how to conduct mother group meeting etc.

Training for the Head Teacher and Assistant Upazila Education Officer (AUEO)



Professional Development Group has conducted a six days training for the Head Teachers and AUEOs between 11th and 16th February, 2012. Deputy Director, Directorate of Primary Education, inaugurated the session. The training was embedded with classroom participation and also field visit to different primary schools. The field visit was carried out with the view

to relate the learning with the practical experience. The verbal and written comments from the participants revealed the success of the training.

Visit to Philippines

The Programme Head, Professional Development Group went to Davao, Philippines in February, 2012. She went there to provide support to BRAC Philippines in curriculum development for opening of schools in Mindanao, Philippine.

Curriculum Research and Development Group organised a day long consultative session with **Dr. Mainus Sultan** on February 9, 2012. The group has been involved in a research project on School Contact Hours and Use of Instructional Time. The group prepared a literature review and analysed qualitative data collected from 2 Case Studies and 3 Focus Group Discussions. The review and the analysis were presented to Dr. Sultan. He gave valuable feedback on those presentations.



IGS Updates

Procurement Training

Completion of CIPS, Cohort II, Level 5 Course

Cohort II, level 5 courses, (250hrs lectures/166 sessions) has been completed. **Dr. Glynis Davies**, FCIPS, CIPS, UK, conducted the level 5 revision classes during 14-18 February at JATRI Office of IGS.

Certificate (Cohort I, CIPS) Awarding Ceremony at the British High Commission



On 22 February, Cohort I awarding ceremony took place at the British High Commission, Dhaka. Cohort I, Cohort II and private cohorts attended the event. 17 participants from Cohort I were awarded with MCIPS certificates. **The British High Commissioner, Robert Gibson, World Bank Country Director, Ellen Goldstein, Director, Business Solution, CIPS,**

UK, Andrew Coulcher, Global Public Sector Manager, CIPS, UK, Paula Steele, Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, Dr. Ainun Nishat, Secretary IMED, Md. Mozammel Haque Khan, DG (CPTU of the Planning Ministry), Amulya Kumar Debnath and many more significant personalities were the guests of the ceremony. The Director of IGS along with some staffs involved with CIPS program were also present at the ceremony.

Technical Consultancy Service to Asia Foundation

Under the technical support to Promoting Democratic Institutions and Practices (PRODIP), of the Asia Foundation-Bangladesh, IGS prepared a draft advocacy manual on Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy through Able and Active Civil Society. The manual was shared with the representatives of the Asia Foundation. Based on this manual, an advocacy training course was also designed for CSO representatives. The first Training of the Trainers (ToT) on the said advocacy manual was held from 22-23 February. A total of 15 participants from different CSO organisations attended this 2-day training.

Public Lecture Conducted at Dhaka University

Department of Political Science, Dhaka University, Institute of Governance Studies (IGS) of BRAC University and the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany jointly organised a public lecture on 'The Transformation in the Arab World: Why do dictatorships survive, when do they fall' at **R. C. Mojumder Auditorium** at Dhaka University on 22 February.



Director of Social Science Research Centre and Professor of Comparative Political Science and Democracy Research at the Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany, **Dr. Wolfgang Merkel**, was the key note speaker. Acting Chairman of the Department of Political Science, **Gias Uddin Molla**, at Dhaka University presided over and Research Fellow of IGS, **Dr. Elvira Graner** moderated the lecture programme. Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, **Dr. Ralf Matthias Reusch, Registrar, BRAC University, Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury** also spoke at the occasion. Research and Communications staff of IGS and about 160 students of Dhaka University attended the public lecture and participated in an open discussion session.

Trainings, Presentations, Conferences and Workshops Attended by IGS Staff

Research Assistant of IGS, Jannatul Ferdosh, presented at the International Conference on "Leadership and Social Changes: Challenges and Future Prospects", organised by the International Islamic University, Malaysia (IIUM) from 11-13 February. The topic of her presentation was "Urge of Promising Leadership for Combating the Present Crisis of Muslim World" where she highlights what the nations, across the Muslim world (Middle East to North Africa) are very recently experiencing i.e. emergence of independent political upheaval and unrest.

Visiting Research Fellow of IGS, Dr. Sahidul Islam, made a presentation on "Trade and Commerce in Bangladesh: Challenges Ahead" at the Round Table Conference organised by Policy Research Center, Bangladesh on February 12 at the Ruposhi Bangla hotel.

Sr. Research Associate, Salina Aziz and Research Assistant of IGS, Fatema Samina Yasmin attended the "BRAC Global Learning Meeting 2012", at Rajendrapur, BCDM, which was held on 7 February. They have presented some key findings of Youth Survey in that meeting. **Research Associate of IGS, Farhana Razzaque**, has participated in a training program named "Strengthening Parliamentary Democracy through Able and Active Civil Society" from 22-23 February. Research Assistant of IGS, **Rigan Chakma**, participated in

a workshop on "Linkage between Climate Change and Migration in Bangladesh" organized by RMMRU on 23 February.

Affiliated Network of Social Accountability (ANSA)



Launching of Third-Party Monitoring System

The World Bank (WB), in collaboration with ANSA-SAR and Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), organised an event on 8 February to launch a Third-Party monitoring system for the WB-financed schemes. MJF

will conduct the monitoring process for the WB. Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, **Dr. Ainun Nishat**, spoke at the launching event, which was followed by a one-a-half-day training for MJF on "Tools for Third-Party monitoring" with a special focus on "Citizen's Report Card". Research Officer of Public Affairs Center, Bangalore, India, **Dr Prabhakar Kollapudi** was the key resource person for the training.

Meetings and Presentations in Pakistan

A partner review meeting was held in Karachi, Pakistan, from 13-18 February. A Stock-taking Round Table was also held in Islamabad where fifteen organisations based in Islamabad and neighboring cities attended. The Round Table aimed to build an information/evidence base for the current and emerging accountability agenda, especially for South Asia. COO of ANSA-SAR, **Naimur Rahman**, made a presentation to the World Bank, Pakistan Country Office on social accountability and possible way forward for Pakistan.

Design Workshop on Communities of Practice on Social Accountability (CoPSA) Tools

The workshop, held from 29 February to 1 March, was organized by CUTS, who will anchor the Communities of Practice on Social Accountability tools. The workshop was attended by various organisations from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka, who took part as the core group of this "Communities of Practice". The outcomes and the summary of in-country consultations were analysed. They shared the challenges being faced for information sharing and confrontation they experienced during the in country consultations. The workshop suggested ways to make an effective online network with website components with a benchmarking example from The Center for Civil Society of India. The capacity building of the core teams as well as the other CSOs were emphasized. Operational strategies with the usability and effectiveness of the tools were discussed. The discussions also identified ways to make the tools useful. Preparations for this workshop and the country level consultations were held throughout February. The workshop ended with summarised outcome of the learnings from both the workshop and country specific action plans for the year and beyond particularly for the next 6 months.

Journalism Training and Research Initiative (JATRI)

Planning Meeting with Fellows and Mentors

A planning meeting with fellows was held on 10 February. Chief of Party, USAID PROGATI, **Denis Gallagher**, Deputy Chief of Party, PROGATI, **Beth Cunningham**, Consultant, DAI-PROGATI, **Ralph Framenlino** and all fellows and mentors of CAG-JATRI fellowship 2012 were present at the meeting. Fellows shared their experiences with Ralph. He discussed on investigative reporting, its process and things that need to be kept in mind while writing a report. He also discussed about the audit reports of Bangladesh Government and showed them ways the fellows could dig out more from the reports or investigate those reports further. Discussions were also held on the submission of the RTI request.

Orientation on Reaching MDG - 5 Goals: Role of Policy Makers

On 18 February, JATRI and White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) jointly organised an orientation for the Member of Parliament. WRA, Bangladesh, (WRA,B) is a civil society coalition working at the national, district and grassroots levels to advocate for a stronger, more effective and safe motherhood. The objective of this orientation was to engage a select group of female Parliamentarians to advocate for commitment to maternal and newborn health initiative (MNH). Orientation was organised for the parliamentarians on advocacy for Maternal Health particularly to increase the focus on MNH in parliamentary sub-committees of Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs. It was expected that the Parliamentarians will become active members and initiate efforts in their constituencies to promote MNH following the efforts taken by the WRA,B. Representative from WRA,B gave presentation on their activities and the scenario of Maternal Health. **JATRI Chief, Jamil Ahmed**, moderated the session. Members of Parliament gave specific commitments to promote maternal and newborn health in their constituencies.

Orientation for Fellows of JATRI-PIB Fellowship

On 20 February, JATRI organised an orientation for the fellows of JATRI-PIB fellowship 2012 on Tobacco control issues in Bangladesh. Selected fellow names were announced on the accession. 5 journalists from print and electronic media were awarded the fellowship for this year. Associate International Communications **Director, Rajika Jayatilake** and **Advocacy and Media Coordinator, Bangladesh, Taifur Rahman**, along with 5 fellows and 2 mentors attended the orientation. **Taifur Rahman** gave a presentation on anti tobacco issues. **Chief of JATRI, Jamil Ahmed**, shared the fellow and mentor selection process and fellowship objectives with the participants. The fellows shared their topics of reports.

Planning meeting with the fellows



A planning meeting was organised with 5 fellows of the Anti Tobacco Fellowship and Associate International Communications Director, CTFK (Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids), **Rajika Jayatilake**. During the meeting, she shared the main focus of fellowship. The fellows planned the total program with her where they fixed the topic, developed an action plan and shared a draft proposal in accordance to the defined templates.

Seminar on Major Threats to Quality Journalism: Global and Bangladesh Context

A seminar on "Major Threats to Quality Journalism: Global and Bangladesh Context" was organised at JATRI on 28 February. Executive Director of International Press Institute (IPI), **Alison Behel Mckenzie**, was the key note speaker while the CEO and Editor in **Chief of Boishakhi Television, Monjurul Ahsan Bulbul**, performed the role of the chair. **Advisory Editor of the Financial Express, Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury**, was the guest speaker. **Ms. Mckenzie** addressed the issues of the top challenges facing quality journalism around the world. She talked about things which influence the media environment and the quality of journalism, including physical and political environment, cultural attitudes and basic infrastructure.

Article Published by IGS staff

Research Fellow, Dr. Elvira Graner, Sr. Senior Research Associate, Syeda Salina Aziz and **Research Assistant, Fatema Samina Yasmin** have coauthored an article titled "Giving Youth a Voice" which was published in "The Daily Star" on 27 February. You may visit the link at: <http://www.thedailystar.net>

MNS Updates

Eighth Training Course on Oceanography: Principles and Applications, Dhaka, 26 February, 2012

The Inaugural Ceremony of the Eighth Training Course on Oceanography: Principles and Applications was held on Sunday, February 26, 2012 at 5pm at the auditorium of the Atomic Energy Centre, Dhaka(AECD).

Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury, Former Vice-Chancellor, BRAC University and Former Adviser, Caretaker Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh was the Chief Guest. **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury** gave the welcome address. **Professor A. A .Z. Ahmad** presided over the ceremony. The function was attended by NOAMI members, resource persons, participants in the course, BAEC scientists, and representatives of the news media.

Seminar on "Understanding the Guidelines for the Safety Assessment of Foods Derived from Genetically Engineered Plants"

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury participated in the seminar on "Understanding the "Guidelines for the Safety Assessment of Foods Derived from Genetically Engineered Plants" held on 07 February 2012 organized by the South Asia Biosafety Program (SABP) in collaboration with Bangladesh Standard and Testing Institution (BSTI) at BSTI Conference Room. A large number of scientists, representatives of the government departments and NGOs participated in the seminar. **Donald J. MacKenzie**, Pioneer Hi-bred, USA; **Dr. B. Sesikeran**, Director, National Institute of Nutrition, India; **Dr. Vibha Ahuja**, Biotech Consortium India, Ltd. and **Dr. Andrew F. Roberts** were present in the seminar as resource persons. The seminar discussed the guidelines developed in this regard by the BSTI and how these could be disseminated to different stakeholders dealing with GM foods.

6th International Workshop on Algorithms and Computation, 15-17 February 2012, Dhaka

The 6th International Workshop on Algorithms and Computation was held at the BUET Campus

Professor Naiyyum Choudhury was present as Guest of Honour at the inaugural ceremony. **Architect Yeafesh Osman** was the Chief Guest on the occasion and **Professor SM Nazrul Islam**, Vice Chancellor, BUET presided. It may be mentioned that WALCOM is held every alternate year in Dhaka jointly organized by the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology and the Bangladesh Academy of Sciences. 57 submissions were made for the workshop from 17 countries of which 20 papers were accepted for presentation by the Programme Committee after a thorough review. The workshop provided an excellent platform for researches in different areas of algorithm to exchange ideas about recent developments and trends of research around the most versatile technology. The proceedings of the workshop has been published by Springer in its prestigious LNCS series and distributed to the participants during the workshop.

International Symposium on Science for Society, BARC Auditorium

Bangladesh JSPS (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science) Alumni Association (BJSPSAA) organized an international symposium on Science for Society on 24 & 25 February 2012 at the auditorium of Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council (BARC). The event was organized to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of Bangladesh-Japan diplomatic relationship, The symposium's main theme was Science for Society and it also covered several sub-themes of contemporary importance such as biotechnology and nanotechnology, climate change and natural disasters, environmental and resource management, poverty alleviation and food security, e-society and society's perception toward science, sustainable technologies in agriculture, health, energy and engineering. **Prof. Dr. M. Muhibur Rahman**, Member of the University Grants Commission of Bangladesh and **H. E. Mr. Shiro Sadoshima**, the Ambassador of Japan to Bangladesh were Special Guests and **Mr. Mahfuz Anam**, Editor of the Daily Star and **Mr. Akihiko Satomi**, Chief of Overseas Fellowship Division of JSPS, Tokyo, Japan were Guests of Honour on the occasion. **Professor Dr. Tsutomu Kimura**, Adviser to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of the Government of Japan and Special Appointed Professor, National Institute for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation, delivered a keynote speech on the state-of-the-art report on science and technology in Japan. **Professor Naiyyum Choudhury** delivered the second keynote lecture on Science - an instrument of change for society. On the second day of the symposium **Professor Ainnun Nishat**, Vice Chancellor, BRAC University presented the plenary lecture on impact of climate change on food security, ecosystem and biodiversity. More than 300 scientists from different organizations in Bangladesh and Japan participated in the symposium.

National Conference on Advances in Physics



Professor Mofiz Uddin Ahmed of the MNS Department participated in the 'National Conference on Advances in Physics 2012' held at the Department of Physics of Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Sylhet, Bangladesh, from 28-29 February

2012. He presented two papers titled 'Introduction to an enigmatic star-pulsar' and 'Growing modes in pair plasma around compact gravitating objects' in 'Relativity and Astrophysics' Session of the conference. He also participated in the 'Open Session' of 'Popularizing Science Education in Bangladesh'.

'Metagenomics in Human Health and Nutrition' Course

Mahbubul Hasan Siddiqee, Lecturer, Microbiology program at the MNS Department attended the course on Metagenomics- a recently emerging interdisciplinary science as an aftermath of recent breakthroughs in DNA-sequencing technology. International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research,

Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) and Colorado University, Boulder, USA jointly organized this course spanning from 6-17 February, 2012. This course was the first of its type in Bangladesh with a view to capacity-building amongst scientists and university-teachers for successful accomplishment of Human Microbiome Project (HMP) which is being undertaken jointly by more than three hundred laboratories worldwide. Professor Rob Knight, one of the key facilitators of HMP, from Colorado University, along with three others from the same institution, was the Chief Instructor. In this course, participants were given hands-on experience on management and analysis of HPM-data set, downstream analysis of high throughput sequencing technologies, Cloud-Computing for customized work, running QIIME- a software for metagenomic analysis, and so many relevant features. **Mahbubul Hasan Siddiquee** is now working closely with ICDDR,B to form a society of researchers on Metagenomics in Bangladesh.

MS in Biotechnology



Nowrin Nowshaba got Chancellor's Gold Medal for year 2012 for her outstanding result in MS in Biotechnology programme. She scored a CGPA of 4.0 out of 4.0. In this years convocation held on February 19, 2012 ten students, Nowrin Nowshaba, **Fazlima Parveen, Samsad Razzaque, Sadaf Saaz Siddiqi, Amitav Das, Luke Donald Halder, Nayeema Nushrat, Abul kalam azad, Md. Abdul Quayyum and Md. Ahasanur Rahman** received their MS degrees in Biotechnology.

A Report on the Tour to the Dhaka Saidabad Water Treatment Plant

Thirty two students of the biotechnology and microbiology programs accompanied by two teachers of the Department of MNS of BRAC University visited the Saidabad Water Treatment Plant (SWTP) of Dhaka on February 12, 2012. The group of students and teachers was led by **Dr. M. Mahboob Hossain, Associate Professor, and Mr. Fazle Rabbi, Lecturer.**

At the beginning a presentation was shown about SWTP through which the students and the teachers came to know about the establishment of the plant, about its operation and the water supply scenario of the city of Dhaka and future possibilities regarding water supply in this area. After the presentation, there was a short discussion session.

The SWTP collects water for treatment from two rivers, Shitalakhya and Balu. The distance between the plant and the river is about 8 to 9 kilometers. The total water treatment process is divided into seven steps where the very first step is water collection. Water is collected from Shitalakhya and Balu rivers by Sarulia pump station and through RCC culvert the water comes to the DND canal, which was actually used for irrigation, near the plant where a twin culvert has been made to be the final gateway for the entry of water into the raw water building of the plant. Five vertical pumps, three of which run at a time while two others remain stand by, do this. After collection of water through culverts the pumping of water into raw water building constitutes the second step. The third step uses the dividing chamber where mixing of chemical starts. Three types of chemicals are used in the total treatment procedure: chlorine gas (95% or above),

aluminum sulfate, and lime. Chlorination is done in two stages, pre-chlorination and post-chlorination. From dividing chamber water flow is divided equally into four clarifiers for clarification, which are operated simultaneously and in parallel. Clarification is the fourth step of the treatment process and the clarifiers are called pulsator clarifiers because a pulse is generated downward in those clarifiers. The sludge extraction valves extract depending on the sludge volume created by the pulsator clarifiers sludge. The clarified water is separated in this way and goes to clarification bed where 80 to 90 percent of waste has been removed already in the process. Filtration is the fifth step where rapid sand filter is used consisting of sand and gravel placing sand over the gravel layer in twelve separate filters. Here back washing is done through four sub steps: draining, blowing by air, unclogging by air and water and finally rinsing by water. The filtered water then goes to filter bed. The next step is the final water quality adjustment in terms of chlorine and pH of water and storage of this treated water. The last step is the pumping of treated water by treated water pumping station where seven pumps are there five of which are active at a time while others two are kept stand by. The plant does not provide water directly to the consumers. The reason is the high pressure created to supply water through the transmission network needs to be maintained until it reaches the entrance of zonal distribution channel which is about 36 km far away from the plant. Then at the zonal distribution channel, which is 10 in number for Dhaka, with the help of valves for lowering the water pressure, finally the water goes to the consumers through different zonal distribution channels. The Saidabad Water Treatment Plant at its Phase II project meets only 30 percent of total demand of water supply that is 225 million litres per day. DWASA (Dhaka WASA) is furthermore looking to increase the capacity to 450 million litres per day in the third phase of this project.

From the conference room, the students along with the faculty members of the group were taken to the laboratory where continuous assessment is done for raw water, clarified water, filtered water and finally for the treated water. The laboratory of the test various parameters (for raw and treated water) on daily basis, such as TDS, turbidity, pH, fecal coliform etc and some are tested on a weekly and on a monthly basis. The laboratory is conducting jar test, chemical dosage test daily for water treatment purpose.

The students then went outside for the field visit and observed the entry of water through twin culverts to the raw water building where around 125 cubic metres of raw water is pumped every minute. Then they saw the chlorination building, alum tanks, lime tanks, dividing chambers, the pulsator clarifiers, filter beds and finally the operation building where pre- and post-chlorination is maintained and finally treated water from the storage tank is supplied to the transmission network from the treated water pump station. With the brief of total operation of the treatment plant starting from the raw water entry ending with the treated water supply the team ended their visit thanking the engineers and officials of the Plant.

Pharmacy updates

Study Tour

The first study tour organized by the department of Pharmacy of BRAC University took place on the 24th of February, 2012 at Dhanbari, Tangail. The tour was

headed by the chairperson of the department **Prof. Ashik Mosaddik** and included all the faculty members and 75 students from all the semesters. The aim of tour was to get familiar with various plants that have diversified medicinal uses. Hence, students got an opportunity to observe practically how nature can provide us with medicines for different therapeutic uses.



After refreshment we had a look all around the historical places of Royal resort of Dhanbari, Tangail and were particularly impressed with the beautiful gardens, Nawab places and mosque. The students along with the faculty members went on boat rides following the lunch which was full of fun. In the end, a cultural program was arranged by the local people who showed their spectacular dance skills. Our very own talented students and faculties performed beautifully in the show as well.

The tour turned out to be very successful one that not only enhanced the students' knowledge but bridged the gap among the freshers and the old students and allowed the students and the faculties to have an interaction outside the class in a different environment that is important to build up a good teacher-student relationship.

Sessions with counseling team of BRACU

The Department of Pharmacy and Student Counseling Team of BRACU jointly organized a counseling sessions on two days, 16th and 23rd of February, 2012 at UB 1521 where the all faculties and 48 students actively participated. The aim of the session was to find out the root cause of why students lack interest in their studies and what can be done to motivate them. The session proved to be extremely valuable for the students and helped the faculties to understand the different psychologies of the students to a great extent.

SECS Updates

Google Visits BRACU

In February, Google made their first official visit to Bangladesh. As part of this trip, a representative from Google was at BRAC University (BRACU) on February 16. BRACU happens to be the only university in Bangladesh that Google has visited so far, with the dual intent of meeting some of the faculty members from the Computer Science and Engineering Department (CSE), as well as having a Question-Answer session with the students.

During their meeting with SECS faculty members and research staff at the Center for Research on Bangla Language Processing (CRBLP), Google representative Divon Lan expressed their interest in collaborating with BRAC University in further research on Bangla Language Processing, as well as the development of more resources for Bangla such as parallel corpora and other relevant data. The meeting was attended by **Prof. Dr. Mumit Khan** (Head, CRBLP & Chairperson, CSE), **Matin Saad Abdullah** (Associate Director, CRBLP & Asst. Prof. CSE), **Shammur Absar Chowdhury** (Sr. Research Assistant, CRBLP & Lecturer, CSE), **Rabia Sultana Umami** (Research Programmer, CRBLP), **Muhammad Abdur Rahman Adnan** (Associate, CRBLP & Lecturer, CSE), **Abu Mohammad Hammad Ali** (Sr. Lecturer, CSE), **Muttakinur Rahman Choudhury Souro** (Associate, CRBLP), **Md. Shamsul Kaonain** (Lecturer, CSE), **Annajiat Alim Rasel** (Lecturer, CSE).



Later in the day, **Divon Lan** met a full house of BRACU students eager for an opportunity to interact with a Google employee. Students present were aware that this is the first time Google was visiting a university here, and the excitement was palpable. The Q and A session was highly enjoyed by the students, with a lot of interesting and often insightful questions. In the course of his answers, Divon spoke about what Google looks for in a potential employee, what he thinks should be the priority for undergraduate students who are set to enter the job market over the next couple of years, and what might be possible future avenues for Google to expand to.

After an hour-long Q and A session that only had to be cut short due to other appointments on the part of the speaker. Students, staff and faculty members thanked **Divon Lan** for taking the time to speak to them. **Professor Mumit Khan**, chairperson of CSE Department, presented the speaker with a souvenir of his visit to BRACU amidst applause from the entire audience. Some of the enthusiastic event volunteers were **Amit Kumar Dey, Md Refaat Ali, Tanvir Roushan, Nasrat Sharif Aveek, Md. Syeed Chowdhury, Khalid Hossen,**

Pritom Chowdhury, Tasmia Tabassum, Mafruzul Murshed Bhuiyan, Dipankar Chaki Joy, Golam Kayas, Onishim Hasdak, Fahim Al Hasnaeen, Md Sadaf Noor, Javed Hasan Ahmed, S M Rakibul Hasan, S. Mahbub -Uz-Zaman Ananda, Nowrin Zahan Mitu, Farah Nazifa and many others. Among the SECS faculty members, Prof. Mumit Khan, Matin Saad Abdullah, Abu M. Hammad Ali, M. Abdur Rahman Adnan, Md. Shamsul Kaonain, Annajiat Alim Rasel, Dilruba Showkat and Dr. Supratip Ghose were present in this session.

SPH Updates

JPGSPH HAS MOVED TO NEW PREMISES AT ICDDR'B

The JPGSPH has moved to its new premises at the 6th floor of ICDDR'B (68 Shaheed Tajuddin Ahmed Sharani, Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212). The School's new PABX and fax numbers will be given once it is functional.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM

JPGSPH is going to offer a short course on climate change and health in collaboration with Institute of Public Health of Heidelberg University and Department of Architecture and Disaster management and Center for Climate Change and Environmental Research of BRAC University on June 2012. As such, a workshop on curriculum development was held on February 25 at 7.30 pm at BRAC Inn. **Vice Chancellor Professor Ainun Nishat** chaired the session. **Dr. Timothy Evans, Professor Syed Hashemi, Professor Fuad H Mallick, Ferdous Jahan, Professor Malabika Sarker, Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid, Professor and MPH Coordinator, Dr. Monjurul Hannan Khan and Dr. Enam Hasib** attended the workshop.
Master of Public Health

7th Batch MPH students receive gold medals

Dr. Sumangala Chaudhury (India), Dr. Ahmed Ehsanur Rahman (Bangladesh), **Ms. Emily Kathleen Eck** (USA) received gold medals during BRAC University Convocation held on February 19, 2012.

EVENTS

Launch of Bangladesh Health Watch Report 2011

The launch of the Bangladesh Health Watch Report 2011: Moving Towards Universal Health Coverage was held on February 20, 2012 at BRAC Inn Auditorium, Brac Centre. Hon'ble **Finance Minister, Mr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith** was the Chief Guest. Hon'ble Health Minister, **Prof. A.F.M. Ruhul Haque, M.P.** was the Special Guest. and Nobel Laureate **Prof. Amartya Sen** was the Guest of Honour. **Dr. Rounaq Jahan**, Convener, Advisory Committee of Bangladesh Health Watch chaired the session. MPH Coordinator, **Professor, Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid** was the Master of Ceremony.



The report focused on Universal Health Watch (UHC), a new approach being spearheaded by the World Health Organisation and implemented by several countries like India, Thailand, Vietnam, Rwanda and Ghana. The challenges that have been hindering the progress can now be mitigated with the implementation of the UHC which proposes to lower out of pocket expenditure and ensure coverage for all.

This was the fourth issue of the report to be launched. The first one was published in 2006.

WHO PIAT Project

A national level stakeholder consultation meeting was held on February 5, 2012 from 2.00 to 4.00 pm for the study "Human Resources for Health Policy Impact Assessment in Bangladesh". The whole session was chaired by **Mr. SM Ashraful Islam**, Joint Secretary and Line Director - HRM, MOH&FW and **Dr. Timothy Grant Evans, Dean** of JPGSPH. The meeting was jointly organized by the HRM Unit, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University. In the meeting **Md. Nuruzzaman, Research Associate**, JPGSPH presented the pilot version of the tool that was developed by the Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA) for review. **Professor Dr. Shah Abdul Latif, Director**, Medical Education and Health Manpower Development, Directorate General of Health Services, **Professor Md. Ismail Khan, Dean**, Faculty of Medicine University of Dhaka, **Dr. Khaled Shamsul Islam, Deputy Chief** and HRH Focal Point, HRM Unit, MOHFW, **Mr. Ashadul Islam, Deputy Secretary**, MOHFW were among the distinguished participants.

COE organizes two day workshop on Curriculum Development

The Centre of Excellence for Universal Health Coverage organized a two days workshop on curriculum development on UHC on 5th and 6th of February at its own premises. The workshop brought together experts from government of Bangladesh, academia and research institutions, and policy makers. Discussion was held around concept and application of UHC and competency mapping and needs assessment for UHC. A group work explored relevant courses on UHC focusing three key actors in the health care triangle. The participants focused on the content, participants, method and duration of the course.

FACULTY AND STAFF NEWS

Dr. Timothy Grant Evans, Dean of JPGSPH, visited Public Health Foundation of India, Bangalore, India to attend its Board meeting "Strategic Directions for PHFI" from February 27 - 28 2012. Through the creation and strengthening of institutions, PHFI is cultivating approaches to public health training, issues and policy development. JPGSPH enjoys a growing number of linkages with PHFI through shared curricula e.g. health systems and in research e.g. 5-C study. One of our long-serving faculty **Dr. Richard Cash**, is also visiting Professor at PHFI.

A public lecture in honor of **Prof. Wendy Graham** at BRAC Centre on Sunday, February 26, 2012 at 4:00 pm was held at BRAC. **Dr. Graham**, a Professor of Obstetric Epidemiology, University of Aberdeen is a world renowned public health researcher with specific focus on maternal health. She spoke on "Maternal health: Evidence gaps and measurement traps". **Dr. Timothy Grant Evans, Dean of JPGSPH** moderated the discussions. The 8th batch MPH students attended.

MPH Coordinator **Professor Dr. Sabina Faiz Rashid** spoke at Brac International Global Conference on Youth, Voice and Rights Identity. Her topic was on Understanding Adolescent Rights in Urban Slums. The event was held from February 6-8 at CDM Rajendrapur.

The MNCH Review Team members **Professor Malabika Sarker** (JPGSPH), **Ahad Mahmud Khan** (JPGSPH), Shanon Mc Nab (AMDD), and Saroj Sedalia (AMDD) went for an initial field visit with **Riad Mahmud** of UNICEF to observe UNICEF's MNCH program field activities from February 7-9. The team went to Sherpur, Jamalpur and Mymensingh and visited communities and several health facilities of different level such as community clinic, Upazila Health complex, District Hospital, Mymensingh Medical College Hospital etc which are supported by the programs. They also observed the activities of different partner NGOs and a missionary hospital. They talked to the service providers of different level from government as well as from the program. They also attended a Focus Group Discussion, and observed one-to-one counseling between service providers and users.

Some of the JPGSPH Senior Management Committee members along with staff and faculty met with **Mr. Steven Smith**, Health Attached, South Asia, US Embassy, when he visited the School of Public Health on February 27 at 12 noon. There were a series of presentations made on the School, MPH program, and research projects - MOVE IT, FSNSP, GFATM, Universal Health Coverage, Bangladesh Health Watch, etc. He also met with the current batch of 44 MPH students in the afternoon.

Career Services Updates

Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) Orientation Session Spring 2012

Orientation Session for Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) was held on February 2nd, 2012 at the Indoor Auditorium of BRAC University. Out of 153 registered students, a number of 151 attended this program.



Professor Md. Golam Samdani Fakir, Pro-VC, BRACU was the key speaker of the session. His presentation was sparked on 'What Employers Seeking for?' And 'Soft Skills needed by the graduates to enhance their employability.'

The presentation was both informative and engaging. Students gets inspiring message that will help new graduates in the future world of work.

Mr. Ishfaq Ilahi Choudhury, Registrar, BRACU opened the session and shared some of strategies for building a career in the workplace. **Ms. Asma Banu, Senior Assistant Director** of Career Services Office, BRACU delivered a presentation on the objectives of PSDP. **Ms. Ismat Shereen, Head, Relationship Management Office,** BRACU, **Ms. Samina Anzum Chowdhury, Lecturer,** TLC, also attended the seminar.

Applied Microsoft Excel Training (AMET) Open Day Session Spring 2012

Orientation for AMET was held on February 23, 2012 at UB0223. **Dr. Md. Khalilur Rahman, Assistant Professor** and **Mr. Farazul H. Bhuiyan, Lecturer,** Computer Science Department along with **Ms. Asma Banu, Senior Assistant Director** of the Career Services Office conducted the orientation program. Various aspects of the training have been highlighted during the session. A total number of 71 students from different departments attended this program.

Career Talk - "Are You Ready To Get Hired?"

BRAC University Career Services Office (CSO) and JobsBd have jointly organized a session of Career Talk for Graduating students - "Are You Ready To Get Hired?" on 26th February, 12 (Sunday) from 3:00pm to 5:30pm in the Indoor Games Room of BRAC University.



Mr. Kazi Shahnoor Kabir, Career Services Executive of BRAC University opened the session with his welcome speech. The key speaker of the program was **Mr. K. M. Hasan Ripon, Director,** Bangladesh Skill Development Institute (BSDI), Founder & President of National Youth Development Forum. **Mr. Ripon** discussed

about the job search process for the fresh graduates. He shared some Interview tips for the graduating students and also talked about choosing career paths. He emphasized on doing research about the organization before applying for any job. A question answer session was held at the end of the session. **Mr. Md. Shumsud Doha, Manager-Finance** & Admin from Jobsbd Learning, **Ms. Asma Banu, Sr. Asst. Director**, BRAC University, **Ms. Shanzida Shahab Uddin**, Career Services Officer was also present in the session.

CP (Counseling and Psychosocial) Services Updates

Workshop on Stress Management



Balancing stress is key to living a healthy and happy life. Stress is normal, but too much of this is bad. Based on this need BRAC University Counseling Unit Organized a workshop on 29th February 2012 on what stress is, how to recognize the

signs of stress and burn out in yourself and others and, of course, what to do about it! This Workshop was for the students where seats were limited and by registration first 50 students got chance to attend this workshop. Workshop contents included:

- Understanding stress
- Recognizing stress in you
- Monitoring stress levels
- Differentiating between stressors
- Coping with stress
- Tools to manage stress effectively

This workshop was participatory where students became aware about their stress level and gained knowledge of how to manage stress.

We Do Have Problems In Study

BRAC University is committed to meet the necessary demands of all the stakeholders of the institution to ensure first-rate academic performance. There was a need from the side of the faculty that



something is needed to be done to increase the motivation of the students to study more. In general, a happy-go-lucky attitude towards study is seen among a large number of students. Department of Pharmacy, especially the chairperson of the department **Professor Ashik Mosaddik** noticed the issue and approached the Counseling Unit of BRAC University, as the matter falls under the psychosocial aspect of human behavior, to arrange a relevant seminar with the students of the concerned department. The total number of students of the

department was divided into two groups and two workshops were held on 16th and 23rd of February, 2012 from 11am to 1pm at the Pharmacy Department. The workshops were facilitated by the Consultant of the Counseling Unit, renowned Psychologist **Farida Akhtar** and co-facilitated by the Psychosocial Counselors working for BRAC University. In the workshop, topics like motivation towards study, problems and facilities of study in the department and at home, imaginary exercises, relaxation etc. were covered. The workshop was actively participated by some of the faculties of the department as well.

In the workshop, both cognitive and emotional aspect of motivating a student towards study was touched. The students seemed to be moved by the workshop and the faculties also had their share of gaining new insight in promoting study.

RS Updates

International Mother Language Day celebrated at Savar



On the 21st February BRAC University Savar Campus celebrated International Mother Language Day with great honor and festivity. The day started with the morning procession at 7am. Walking slowly, everyone sang the mourning song, 'Amar bhaiyer rakte rangano ekushey february ami ki bhulite pari' (Can I forget the 21 February reddened with

the blood of my brothers?). Moving through the campus the procession paid a wreath of flowers on the premise of Shaheed Minar to pay homage to the veterans of the Language Movement. The first part of the day ended with an oath taking session conducted by **Mr. Rehan Ahmed**, Student Affairs and Campus Management Officer.

In the second phase, a photo exhibition started at 3pm at Murchhona. Prior to that, **Mr. Mahbub**, Coordinator, Bangladesh Studies briefed the participants about the background and significance of the Language Movement, and finally **Mr. Ahmed** inaugurated the Photo Exhibition. Lastly, the day ended with screening a bangla movie, Aalor Michhil at 6.30 pm.

Student Affairs Updates

Club and Forum Updates

BUCC arranges Fresher Orientation of Spring 2012

It was a duty of BRAC University Computer Club (BUCC) to welcome the new comers to the club. BUCC got huge response from the fresher in the club fair this semester. Over 160 new members joined the club in Spring 2012. The fresher

orientation was arranged at Prangon on 15th of February. Entire Prangon was decorated beautifully by Chinese lamp and candles. Junior club members hosted the entire ceremony, with the executive body members holding the fort from the back end. An hour long program included an attractive quiz session by **Mahbub uz Zaman** (09301004), slide presentations and short films on screen made by the executive members. Faculty member **Abu Hammad Ali** shared his experience and memories with the new club members at the end of the ceremony. Refreshments were served.

BUCC Organizes Microsoft Talkz

Microsoft Talkz was held on 8th February at GDLN Conference Center on the 18th floor where the session was chaired by **Mr. Omi Azad**, Developer Evangelist at Microsoft. Advisor of BUCC, **Annajiat Alim Rasel**, was present along with BUCC members and many other students who showed their interest about the Imagine Cup 2012, which is going to be held in Australia, organized by Microsoft. Later on a meeting was arranged with the teams who came up with their proposed project plans. T-shirts were provided by Microsoft.

BUCC Organizes Mock Presentation for Microsoft Imagine Cup 2012

On February 14th, Tuesday, a follow up meeting was arranged for the teams willing to participate in Microsoft Imagine Cup 2012. Five teams came up with their six proposed project plans. Each team consisted of one to four members. Students came up with brilliant proposals including educational software to help rural school, college and university students, Storm notification system for fishermen, both projects by **S. Mahbub -Uz- Zaman Ananda, Anik Momtaz, Tanjina Islam**, and **Sadika Amreen**, Save Energy, Save the Green, a Sustainable energy saving system by **Mustafa Al Momin**, Electricity generating staircases by **Mohammad Oliur Rahman**, Intelligent Blood Donor Seeker by **Md. Sadaf Noor**, Project Analyze, an automatic question generator for self learning/evaluation by Mohammed Rayed etc. Microsoft sponsored T-shirts were distributed to the presenters and volunteers.

BUCC member projects have been selected for Imagine Cup 2012 Round 2

Team Dexterous with the project Save Energy, Save the Green and **Mohammad Oliur Rahman's** Team Green Tech with the project Green Staircases have been selected for Imagine Cup 2012 Round 2. Team Dexterous consists of the team lead **Mustafa Al Momin** along with **Anik Hasan, Fahim Al Hasnaeen** and **Naima Zaman Mou. Md. Shamsul Kaonain**, Co-Advisor of BUCC and a faculty member of CSE department is the official mentor for both of the teams. List of the selected teams is available at <http://www.imaginecup.com/bd/sd.aspx>

TLC Updates

BRAC field visit program

TLC organized a day long BRAC field visit program on February 4th. It was a part of TLC Experiential Learning Programs and 32 enlisted participants were taken to Manikgong for learning from the field activities of BRAC. The visit was basically

planned for TLC graduates but few more people from BRACU Admin and Management office also joined on their own interest. The journey started by 7:40 am from Mohakhali campus and the participants reached at Ayesha Abed Foundation, BRAC Manikgong Regional office around 10:00 am. After a short health break the participants were split half into two groups and started for the scheduled visit programs of BRAC into two separate villages. The programs included BRAC Microfinance program, BRAC Health program, Human rights and Legal Education Class, Visit of a BRAC Primary school and Visit on the Ayesha Abed Foundation (Handicraft Production and Training Centre).



When the participants reached inside the courtyard of a house where the BRAC Micro- finance program was conducting, they found the field officer was having his monthly meeting with the team members. It was in a very organized and informal way. After reciting all those eighteen commandments the meeting was started. Later the members shared their experiences how they were supported by the micro finance program and how they invested the money in small businesses like, shop, restaurant, poultry etc. They seemed satisfied, confident and empowered for their present self-sufficiency. Next visit was to a BRAC Health Program, where the health workers demonstrated the visionary test and the spectacles they offer to the clients with a very nominal price. One Tuberculosis patient was present there who was nursing under one 'BRAC Shastho Shebika'. The visit to Human Rights and Legal education class found discussion was going on the topic of 'Marriage'. The main purpose was to create awareness on underage marriage, protest against dowry etc. The next visit was to a BRAC Primary School. The children who are over aged for regular primary education and who are dropped out from Government Primary school or never get the opportunity for regular schooling are enrolled for BRAC primary schools. They follow the curriculum of Govt. primary education from grade one to five but they complete it within four academic years. The teacher students' ratio of these schools is 1:33. After lunch, the visit was in the Ayesha Abed Foundation where the participants found hundred of poor women were doing embroidery, waving, doing tie-die, coloring etc. for Aarong outlets. On the way back to Dhaka, the last visit of this day long program was made at Noyadingi to see the BRAC Napkin and Nursery Project.

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