

2007/january

## **Make-up Final Exam of Fall 2006**

The Make-up Final Exams of Fall 2006 were held between January 25 to 31, 2007.

## **BIZ BEE Stands Beside the Cold-affected People**

To help cold-affected countrymen, BIZ BEE collected winter clothing as well as cash donation from January 11 to 28, 2007 from BRACU students, faculty members and staff. People not only donated cash but also brought all kinds of used clothing to join this noble activity and stood beside the distressed. The cash donation of Tk 13,000 helped BIZ BEE buy 101 new sweaters and 50 new blankets. With the generous help of the BU transport authority, BIZ BEE made two trips to "Prothom-alo" on January 16 and January 29 and delivered the accumulated items. BIZ BEE promises to continue activities in future that will help its members to stand by the distressed and needy.

## **RS Workshop**

A two-day Introductory Workshop for the students of the Residential Semester (RS) was conducted on January 21-22, 2007. Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro-VC, BU conducted the Workshop. Dr. Yousuf M. Islam and Mr. Shafaat Ahmad acted as the facilitators. The theme of the workshop was 'Programs to build motivation and focus toward self-development'. On day 1, students deliberated upon 'Goals in Life', 'Qualities required to achieve the Goal' and 'Leadership Qualities'. On day 2, students talked about the ways in which they learn and the relevance of RS in their learning process. Later students formulated their own 'Code of Conduct for the RS'. The parents of the students were invited to attend the second half of the Workshop on January 22, 2007, in which the Aims and Objectives of the RS were elaborated. They also attended the student presentation on 'Code of Conduct'. Later the parents were shown around the Campus.

## **Spring Semester-2007 Begins**

Spring Semester 2007 began with all regular activities on January 21, 2007.

## **Residential Semester Spring 2007**

Students departed for Residential Semester, Spring 2007 at BU Campus, Savar on January 20, 2007.

## **Library Orientation Program for Spring Semester 2007**

Ayesha Abed Library arranged a Library Orientation Program on January 17, 2007 for the new students of Spring Semester 2007. The program started with a brief welcome address by the Librarian Md. Abdul Hayee Sameni. Eighty-six new students of various departments attended the program under the guidance of respective DCOs. The students were introduced to the library facilities, rules & regulations, policies (including membership procedure, members' book borrowing procedure), cyber library resources & facilities, library web resources and online catalog searching through a power point presentation prepared and presented by Zahurul Md. Tamim, Junior Librarian, IT. In addition to the direct communication, a nice printed Bookmark was distributed to the students. The bookmark contains all essential information about the library.

## **Orientation Program Spring 2007**

Orientation Program for new students (Spring Semester, 2007) was held in BRAC Centre Inn on January 17,

2007 and at Savar Campus on January 18, 2007.

## **Advising and Registration for Spring 2007**

Advising and the registration of the students for Spring-2007 took place from January 14 to January 18, 2007.

## **CSE Seminar**

Mr. Jalal Mahmud, Department of Computer Science, State University of New York at Stony Brook, USA, gave a seminar on "Web Transaction with Constrained Modality: Problems and Solution" at 3:00 PM on Wednesday, January 10, 2007 in Seminar Room UB 104, BRAC University.

## **Grade Sheet of Fall Semester 2006**

Grade sheets of Fall Semester 2006 were published on the website on January 8, 2007.

## **MNS Update**

### **MoU between ICDDR'B and BRACU**

BRACU has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the ICDDR,B for academic collaboration in undergraduate and postgraduate programs in biotechnology, microbiology and pharmacy on January 17, 2007. Under the MoU the ICDDR'B will allow the students of BRACU to use its laboratory facilities, accept the BRACU final year B.Sc/MS students in microbiology, biotechnology and pharmacy for research work on relevant topics, including environmental microbiology, medical microbiology, biotechnology, and immunology, at ICDDR,B laboratories under the joint supervision of ICDDR, B and BRACU staff; and ICDDR,B personnel will serve as faculty at BRACU teaching at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels in environmental biotechnology and medical biotechnology. Professor J. R. Choudhury, Vice Chancellor, BRACU and Dr. David A. Sack, Director, ICDDR'B signed the MoU on behalf of the respective organizations. Dr. Alejandro Cravioto, Deputy Executive Director, ICDDR'B, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Pro Vice Chancellor, BRACU, Professor A A Ziauddin Ahmad, Chairperson, MNS Department, BRACU, Professor Naiyyum Choudhury, Co-ordinator, Biotechnology, BRACU, Dr. G.B. Nair, Director, Laboratory Sciences Division, ICDDR'B, Dr. Firdausi Qadri, and Dr. Shah Md. Farooque of ICDDR'B were present at the signing ceremony.

### **Participation in the 13th National Space Science Training Workshop**

Alliance Francaise, Dhaka and Bangladesh Astronomical Association jointly organized the 13th National Space Science Training Workshop. The inaugural ceremony of the workshop was held on January 13, 2007 with Professor J. R. Choudhury, Vice Chancellor, BRACU as the chief guest. Dr. Dipen Bhattacharya, Associate Research Professor of Astrophysics (Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, University of California, Riverside, USA) and now working as a visiting faculty at the MNS Department, BRAC University gave a seminar talk entitled "Aajker Bisshe Jotirbiggan Gabeshana" on January 27, 2007.

## **ENH Update**

### **ENH Chairperson Attends Centenary Seminar**

Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson, ENH Department attended the centenary conference of the English Department of the University of Calcutta from January 9-11, 2007. This also coincided with the 150th founding anniversary of the University, which along with the Universities of Madras and Bombay were the first institutes of higher education in South Asia. She delivered a paper entitled 'Regional Literatures in an Age of Globalisation'.

### **ENH initiates Writing Lab**

The Department of English and Humanities (ENH) has instituted a Writing Lab, a student run writing tutorial centre. This centre is aimed to help ENH students identify and overcome various writing difficulties through peer review and individualized tutorial sessions by the students of the department. The four tutors of the writing lab, Sanam Ara Amin, Shayera Moula, Afreena Chowdhury, and Anami Kabir have brought in a combination of good academic writing skills and experience in professional writing in newspapers and magazines. Each tutor has two designated hours per week for the tutoring task that includes providing support at all stages of the writing process. Students can drop by the Writing Lab during available hours or sign up for a specific slot of time with a specific tutor of their preference. Tabassum Zaman, Lecturer, ENH is in charge of the lab. The lab is situated in AH 702.

## **BRACU-IED Update**

### **Dr. Manzoor Ahmed to interview Princeton University Applicants**

Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Director, BRACU-IED was appointed by Princeton University in the US as the chair of the Alumni Schools Committee in Bangladesh. He will, himself or with the help of other Princeton Alumni, arrange to interview applicants to Princeton University and make recommendations for admission. Some 40 applications have been submitted from Bangladesh for admission in the academic year 2007-8.

### **Field Testing of Primary and Secondary "learning packages"**

Field testing of learning packages consisting of teacher's guide, workbooks for students, supplementary materials, and basic teaching aids for Bangla and Math in Class 1 and English, Math and Science in Class 6 in schools, respectively in Chandia and Manikganj has started. The materials will be revised based on the trial and will be offered to the government for wider use. A primary teacher-training model, combining short face-to-face instruction and supervised classroom practice has also started in cooperation with FIVDB in primary schools in Sylhet. BRACU-IED plans to develop learning packages for key subjects in primary and secondary grades. The goal is to enable at least 80 percent of the students achieve 80 percent of the competencies specified in the curriculum.

## **CRBLP Update**

### **OCR released**

CRBLP released first "test" version of the HMM-based Bangla OCR, under the GNU Public License. Source and binary for BanglaOCR can be downloaded directly from sourceforge <[http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group\\_id=158301](http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=158301)>. It currently runs only under the .NET platform, but the developers plan for a platform independent port in the near future. Development team of the BanglaOCR includes, Md. Abul Hasnat, S M Murtoza Habib and Dr. Mumit Khan.

### **Paper presented at International Conference in India**

Munshi Asadullah and Md. Zahurul Islam participated and presented their paper in the International Conference on Natural Language Processing (ICON 2007) on January 4-6, 2007 in Hyderabad, India. ICON is the premiere Natural Language Processing conference in India, and this is the first paper from Bangladesh to be accepted by ICON.

### **Papers accepted at International Conference in Jordan**

Five papers by CRBLP members, Md. Zahurul Islam, Md. Abul Hasnat, Firoj Alam, S M Murtoza Habib, Altaf Mahmud and Dr. Mumit Khan, got accepted in 1st International Conference on Digital Communications and Computer Applications (DCCA2007), Irbid, Jordan, 2007.

### **Papers accepted at International Conference in Abu Dhabi**

Two papers by CRBLP members, M. Hammad Ali and Nafid Haque got accepted in Education Without Borders, 2007 Student Conference, February 25-27, 2007, Abu Dhabi. One of the paper titled "A Decentralised Approach to Information Retrieval for a developing country like Bangladesh" by M. Hammad Ali and Nafid Haque has been identified by the reviewers to be among the top 36 papers of the entire conference. First author of the paper, M Hammad Ali received full scholarship for attending the conference.

### **CRBLP's Head attended meeting in Bhutan**

Dr. Mumit Khan, Head, CRBLP and Associate Professor, CSE Department, attended a meeting with other Team Leaders of PAN Localization Project in Bhutan during the third week of January 2007.

### **CRBLP researchers invited for workshop in Thailand**

CRBLP researchers Naushad UzZaman and Md. Zahurul Islam have been selected to attend the ADD-2 training in Thailand with full financial support. The workshop is sponsored by Thai NECTEC's NICT Asia Research Center. Selection in this workshop was based on applicant's educational background, career, current project experiences, intention and potential to carry out and establish NLP (Natural Language Processing) research network in the region and the quality of paper submitted to the ADD workshop.

## **Club/Forum Activities**

### **Cultural Club**

BRACU Cultural Club, BUCuC organized an hour-long cultural program for the new students in Orientation Spring 2007 on January 18, 2007 at Savar campus.

### **MBA Forum**

After a long hibernation MBA Forum started its activities. Currently there are 78 members actively attached with this forum. MBA Forum organized a general meeting on January 28, 2007 for all MBA students. Professor Iftekhar Ghani Chowdhury, Dean, School of Business and Professor Mojib U. Ahmed, Director, MBA Program were present in the meeting. Professor Chowdhury and Professor Ahmed identified the existing challenges that an MBA student may face when s/he enters the professional world, and advised the students about ways of handling those challenges. After the meeting a film 'KUNG FU HUSTLE' was screened in collaboration with BRACU Film Club.

### **AIIESEC**

AIIESEC attended the National Congress 2007 conference on January 11-13, 2007 at Elenga Resort, Tangail; and National Excel Conference 2007 on January 25-27, 2007 at Hotel Eastern Residence, Dhaka. A seminar entitled 'Being a Global Citizen' was organized by AIIESEC on January 31, 2007.

### **BU Film Club**

BUFC screened the film 'KUNG FU HUSTLE' at BRACU main campus, on January 28, 2007 and on January 29, 2007 BUFC screened the film 'PINK PANTHER' at Savar Campus.

### **Entrepreneurship Development Forum**

EDF arranged the souvenir items for the 2nd convocation 2007 of BRAC University.

## **New Appointments**

Dr. A K M Abdul Malek Azad joined as an Assistant Professor in Department of CSE. After graduating in Electrical & Electronic Engineering from BUET, Dr Azad did his second MSc (Engg) in Control Systems and Automation from the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. Later he obtained Ph.D. in Systems and Control Engineering from UNSW, Australia. Dr. Malek worked as a Casual Academic in Macquire University, Sydney, Australia. He was a Biomedical Engineer in North Shore Private Hospital, Australia and also worked as a System Development Engineer in a Biomedical Engineering Project in Australia before joining BRACU.

Dr. Tarik Ahmed Chowdhury joined as an Assistant Professor in Department of CSE.

Dr. Tarik, a graduate from Rajshahi Engineering and Technology Institute, did an MSc from the School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Dublin City University, Ireland. He completed his Ph.D. from the same University. Dr. Tarik worked as a Research Assistant and also as a part-time lecturer in Dublin City University before joining BRACU.

Dr. Manjur Karim joined as an Associate Professor in ESS Department. A graduate in Political Science from Dhaka University, Dr Karim completed MA and Ph.D. in Sociology from Kansas State University, USA. Dr. Karim has held posts of Assistant and Associate Professors in a few universities in the USA, including University of Nebraska and Kansas State University. Thirteen of his articles have been published in various

