

2003/february

Student Achievement

Mohammad Amirul Islam (Tusher) of the Department of Computer Science & Engineering (CSE) participated in the 'Barowari (Extempore) Speech' held in BTV on February 26, 2003. The competition was organized for those participants who had been the best speakers of the many TV debate competitions organized over the past 4 years. There were a total of 12 participants in the competition and Mohammad Amirul Islam (Tusher) secured the 2nd position. A student from Dhaka University won the 1st prize while the 3rd position went to a student from BUET. The topic of the 'Barowari Speech' was "PRACHURJOI PORIBESHER PROTI HUMKI" ("Wealth is a threat to environment").

BU Acquires Additional Space

Four Floors of a newly constructed 21-storied 'Standard Tower' within 30 meters of the University Building has been rented by BU. The 26,000 square feet of floor space now houses the Department of Architecture and the Department of Mathematics & Natural Sciences. The two Departments have relocated themselves and have started operating fully from March 1, 2003.

New Teachers/Administrative Officers in BU

The following teachers and administrative officers have joined BU during the month of March, 2003:

1. Ms. Khadiza Tahera, MS (Monash University, Australia), Lecturer, Computer Science & Engineering (CSE)
2. Ms. Maheen Islam, MSc (Dhaka University), Lecturer, CSE
3. Mr. Tanzir Ahmed, MSS (Delhi University), Lecturer Economics
4. Mr. Md Nazim Uddin, MA (Dhaka University), Deputy Librarian, Ayesha Abed Library, BU
5. Ms. Rosy Sharif, MA (Dhaka University), Human Resources Officer

President, GB Receives Gleitsman International Award

Mr. F H Abed, Founder and Chairperson of BRAC and President Governing Board (GB), BU has been awarded the Gleitsman Foundation International Activist Award 2003 on Eradication of Poverty. The Foundation, based in the USA, announces the international award every year since 1989 to honor individuals in the international community "who have inspired change and motivated others in the realm of social activism." Designed to recognize and honor widely varying forms of positive social activism, the winners are selected on the basis of exceptional perseverance, selflessness and leadership in striving to combat social injustice in their community, nation or the world. Mr. Abed will receive the award on April 14, 2003 at the Harvard University.

Freshers' Day at Rajendrapur

The Freshers' Day Program for the newly registered students of BBA, Economics and English undergraduate courses and the MBA Program was held at BRAC Centre for Development Management (BCDM) Rajendrapur on February 28, 2003. The students, parents, the faculty members and the administrative staff attended the function. Professor J R Choudhury, VC, BU deliberated on the Mission and Goals of BU while Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed Deputy Executive Director of BRAC and Treasurer, BU discussed the various programs of BRAC and the academic relationship between the BRAC programs and the BU curriculum. Professor A Rab, Chairperson Management & Business also addressed the gathering and explained the teaching methodology followed at BU. The parents and students had informal discussions on relevant issues with the Chairpersons and teachers of the departments during the daylong program.

Seminar on Management of IT Applications

Dr. Lutfus Sayeed, Professor of School of Business, Georgia State University, USA conducted a seminar on "Management of IT Applications for Strategic Advantage" on Wednesday, February 26, 2003. The session took place in the Seminar Room UB104 of BU at 3:30 PM. A large number of students, teachers and IT professionals attended the program.

Seminar on Poverty Alleviation

A Seminar on "Poverty Alleviation-Strategy and Environment" was held in BU on February 26, 2003. Bangladesh Environment Movement (BAPA) and BU jointly organized the Program. Dr. M Asaduzzaman, Director Research, BIDS presented the keynote paper which was followed by a lively discussion. Professor J R Choudhury, VC, BU and Chairman BAPA and a large number of professionals and environment scientists attended the session.

Girls Cadet College Students Visit BU

A group of students from the Girls Cadet College, Mymensingh visited BU on February 25, 2003. The students met the VC and went around to see the different facilities available at BU. Ms. Amina Hasan Abedin, Lecturer Department of CSE conducted the visit.

Seminar on World Events

A Seminar on "Recent World Events" was organized jointly by BU and the American Education Center at BU on February 24, 2003 at 4:00 PM. Dr. Anwarul Hoque, a Fulbright Scholar and a Visiting Faculty at BU and Mr. Sean O'Neill, Economic Officer, US Embassy, Dhaka conducted the session. Mr. O'Neill in his presentation dealt at length with the recent world events, US Bangladesh Relations, the US Natural Service Registration Program and the current US Student Visa Policy. Dr. Hoque raised the issue of Bangladesh-US Business/Trade Relationship. A fully packed hall room of teachers, administrative staff and students of BU attended the Seminar.

Workshop on "Time Management"

A Workshop was held on, 'TIME MANAGEMENT' for students, from February 23 to February 27, 2003. It looked at reasons for bad time management, how to plan and organize time to achieve balance in different areas of lives, tips on study skills to maximize use of time and finally, discussed how healthy eating habits, rest and exercise contribute positively towards good time management. The workshop was conducted by Ms. Najma Motaher, Student Counsellor, BU.

MDS Classes Start

The first Masters in Development Studies (MDS) Course has started from February 23, 2003. A total of 14 students have registered for the Program. This Program is totally funded by BRAC and other agencies. All students have been offered full tuition waiver for this development oriented masters program.

'Probhaat Pheri' on Ekushey February

Students and teachers of BRAC University paid their respect to the martyrs of the Language Movement by placing a floral wreath at the Central Shaheed Minar on the morning of February 21, 2003.

Seminar on "Young Minds"

Seminar, 'Insights into Young Minds' was organized on February 20, 2003, by Ms. Najma Motaher, Student Counsellor, BU for members of the faculty with the aim to throw some light on the psychological state and behavioral pattern of the youth that represent our student body at the university, and to enable them to understand and promote effective interaction between them. It discussed issues such as developmental tasks to be achieved by this age group, factors affecting them and the formation of their identity and behavior patterns.

Vice Chancellor Attends SAFLI Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka

A meeting of the Steering Committee of the South Asia Foundation Learning Initiative (SAFLI) was held at Colombo, Sri Lanka on February 18-19, 2003. President Chandrika Kumaratunga inaugurated the meeting. Professor J. R. Choudhury, Vice Chancellor, chaired the meeting which was attended by 17 Vice Chancellors and Heads of Institutions of Higher Education from six South Asian countries. Besides, UNESCO was represented by Dr. Towfiq, Director, South Asia. The details of the courses to be offered as part of the Postgraduate Diploma in Environment and Sustainable Development by all the Open Universities in the region were discussed and responsibilities for developing the course materials were allocated among the Universities participating in the SAFLI program. It was also agreed that formal launching of the program would be made on December 12, 2003. In connection with SAF's on-line learning initiatives, the meeting accepted a proposal by Mr. Jeet Singh (Founder Chairman of ATG, Boston, USA) that a design/engineering team be established to (a) understand the real needs or audiences that might be served by an online system, and (b) if these can be identified, to design and cost estimate a first functional example of the system. It is estimated that a design team can be established by May 1, 2003 to complete a design by August 1, 2003. It may be mentioned that the last meeting of the SAFLI Steering Committee hosted by BRAC University in Dhaka on December 12-13, 2002 had decided to launch the Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in Environmental and Sustainable Development (ESD) program.

Classes Resume

Following the Eid-ul Azha recess all scheduled classes and regular activities of BU resumed from Sunday, February 16, 2003.

Eid-ul Azha Recess

BU had a five-day recess for Eid-ul Azha from Tuesday, February 11, 2003 to Saturday, February 15, 2003.

Seminar on Teaching

Professor Richard Cash of Harvard School of Public Health conducted a seminar on traits to be an 'Effective Teacher' on Monday, February 10, 2003 in the Seminar Room No. UB 104. The Seminar was attended by a large number of Teachers and administrative staff.

BUCC Activity

A Developers' Community Bangla Innovation through Open Source (BIOS), which is working to promote "Open Source" Software and also trying to develop a Bangla Operating System in LINUX environment, has agreed to train our students to join in that development work. BRAC University Computer Club (BUCC) Software Development Wing arranged two workshops with them. Professor J R Choudhury, VC, BU was present in the first Workshop conducted on February 10, 2003.

Entrepreneurship Development Forum (EDF) Program

BRAC University Entrepreneurship Development Forum (EDF) members visited a Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Unit Office supported by BRAC Bank Ltd. at Madhabdi, Narsingdi on February 8, 2003. A.S.M Zillur Rahman, Lecturer of CSE Department, coordinated the daylong visit. EDF members were divided into three groups and these three groups visited different enterprises. The purpose of the visit was to gather firsthand knowledge about Small and Medium Enterprises, their business processes and also the banking system involved. BRAC Bank's "Anonno" project was chosen as this loan program is meant to support SME(s) to sustain and develop their business. EDF members prepared reports on their visit, which would be presented at the next EDF General Meeting.

Workshop on Theatre

A Theatre Workshop was held under the auspices of the Drama and Theatre Forum on February 7 and 8, 2003. The main resource people were Sukumar Saha, Kallol Barua and Narayan Chakravarti, all from Popular Theatre Program of BRAC. The workshop helped participants go through all the stages of a theatre production, from the writing of a play to its final staging. A one-hour long drama was written and staged by the student members of the forum. Ms.Afia Arafat, Lecturer, Department of English and Humanities coordinated the workshop.

BUILD Workshop

The 6th and the last BRAC University Initiative for Learning & Development (BUILD) workshop was held at BRAC Centre Inn from February 6-8, 2003. Professor J R Choudhury, VC, BU, Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed, Treasurer BU, Professor A Rab, Professor F Azim, Professor S M Islam, Dr. Y Islam, Dr. Fuad H Mallick, Dr. A A Ziauddin Ahmad, Ms. Farzana Choudhry, Ms. Husna Mehnaz Siddiqi, Ms. Shreyasee Sharma Pati, Ms. Lima Choudhury, Mr. M Sahool Afzal from BU, and Dr. G S Fakir, Dr. M Rafi, Dr. Imran Matin, Mr. Tariq Ali from BRAC attended the workshop. Professor John Rohde and Professor Richard Cash both Members, Advisory Board, School of Public Health, BU attended the sessions as Expert Witnesses. Mr. Cole P Dodge facilitated the workshop. Mr. Mohammad Ali Khan of BU assisted him.

BU Team Visit Schools

A BU team visited Aga Khan School on February 6, 2003 and Scholastica School on February 10, 2003. The team was lead by Dr. Yousuf M Islam, Chairperson, Computer Science & Engineering (CSE). The other members of the team were Ms. Husna Mehnaz Siddiqi, Lecturer, CSE and Ms. Mafruha Mohua, Lecturer, Department of English & Humanities. The team gave a presentation at both the schools highlighting the Mission, Goals and Objectives of BU. The team also deliberated on the various disciplines available and the options for undergraduate studies at BU. The Programs were attended by a large number of students, teachers and administrative staff at both the institutions. Dr. Riaz Khan, a member of the BU Governing Board was present during the visit of the team to the Scholastica School.

PGD in BMIT Launched

The Department of MGB has launched Post Graduate Diploma (PGD) in Bank Management & IT (BMIT). This is a program that leads to good prospects for in-service bank officers and for graduates who are seeking jobs in banks. The program was launched on February 5, 2003. In his welcome address, Professor A Rab, Chairman, MGB informed that the program will not only initiate the career of the would-be and in-service bank officers but will eventually help develop their career through transferring credits to MBA program at BU. Dr Salehuddin Ahmed, Director, BRAC Bank and Treasurer, BU highlighted the importance of three essential skills- communication, computer and management for a successful career in banks. Prof. J R Choudhury, VC, BU informed that the course was designed to fulfill the needs of the banks for trained manpower having balanced knowledge of both banking and IT. Students, faculty members and invited bank

executives attended the inaugural session.

MBA (3rd Course) Start

The MBA (3rd Course) classes started from February 2, 2003. The orientation Program of the Course was held on January 22, 2003 at 6:00 PM. Professor A Rab, Chairperson, Department of Management & Business briefed the new students on the Mission, Objectives and the different courses of the Program. Teachers, administrative staff and the MBA students attended the Program. A total of 17 students have registered for the Course.

Spring Semester Begins

The Spring Semester, 2003 of BU commenced from February 2, 2003 and all classes and exams will end on June 10, 2003. A total of 294 new students have enrolled in the Architecture, Computer Science & Engineering, Economics, English and Business undergraduate programs.

BU Photographers Win Top Awards

BRAC University Photography Club (BUPC) members have been awarded the 1st and 2nd prizes in the Inter-University Photography Competition 2003, held on February 1, 2003. Thirteen top universities including two international universities participated in the competition. The winners are: 1st Prize in Portrait - Tareq Hadi (BBA), 2nd Prize in Landscape - Ikhtiar Mohammad (BBA).

Professor Mofiz Uddin Ahmed Joins BU

Professor Mofiz Uddin Ahmed has joined as a Professor of Physics and Chairperson of the Department of Mathematics & Natural Sciences on February 1, 2003. Professor Ahmed is a Plasma Physicist working on Fusion and Plasma Astrophysics. His recent field of investigation is pulsars and plasmas around compact gravitating objects such as black holes and neutron stars. Professor Ahmed is a Ph.D (1983) in physico-mathematical science from People's Friendship University, Moscow, Russia. In 1984 he conducted his post-doctoral research on pulsar plasmas at the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (AS-ICTP), Trieste, Italy. Since 1985 he served as teacher and scientist at BUET, Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) and Bangladesh Open University (BOU) respectively. During his long tenure of service he supervised M. Sc, M.Phil and Ph.D students from different universities of Bangladesh. He is a referee to the Journal of Plasma Physics and The Physical Review E, USA. In 1999 he was awarded a Medal by Bangladesh Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) for his scientific research and contribution in the development of science in the country. Presently he is conducting a collaborative research program supported by AS-ICTP on Plasma Astrophysics with the scientists from Uzbekistan, Pakistan and USA. Before joining BRAC University he served twice as the Dean of Science and Technology of Bangladesh Open University (BOU). He has 100 publications including a book titled "Plasma Physics and Atomic Energy Research" published by Bangla Academy. Professor Mofiz Uddin Ahmed is a life member of Bangla Academy and an Associate Member of AS-ICTP.