

The Daily Star

US resumes Fulbright Program, launches Academy for Women Entrepreneurs in Bangladesh

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The US today resumed its Fulbright Program that was suspended following the 2016 Holey Artisan Bakery attack.

US Ambassador Peter Haas announced its resumption and also jointly launched the "Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE)" – a Department of State global initiative – with BRAC University at an event at its premises.

The objective of AWE-BRACU initiative is to promote small and medium enterprise (SME) and fostering local women entrepreneurs, especially from underprivileged backgrounds.

This is the first time a Bangladeshi university will be conducting such program through which 50 women entrepreneurs will have access to mentorship opportunity with successful businessowners as trainees to understand the practical challenges on the ground.

Under the Fulbright Program, Dr Sharon Hart, the first US Fulbright Specialist, will work with the Women Empowerment Center of BRAC University's Business School (BBS) for six weeks to help develop a curriculum for women entrepreneurship and leadership training.

She will also design research questions on gender and women economic empowerment issues and build the capacity to conduct workshops for researchers and BBS faculty members.

The Fulbright Program is one of US' flagship exchange programs that strengthens and expands people-to-people ties and educational linkages between the US and Bangladesh.

So far, more than 4,000 State Department Exchange program alumni, including 650 Bangladeshis, travelled to the US under the Fulbright exchange programmes, while more than 250 Americans have conducted research and/or taught in Bangladesh.

US Embassy Dhaka continues to fulfill its commitments toward ensuring quality education in Bangladesh by offering academic and professional development opportunities for students, teachers, and scholars.

Addressing the event, US Ambassador Peter Haas said Bangladesh is going to become a middle-income country in a couple of years and the role of women in economic empowerment is very important. Therefore, it makes it all the more special to resume the Fulbright Program.

US Fulbright Specialist Dr Sharon Hart, BRAC University Board of Trustees Chairperson Tamara Hasan Abed, BRAC Vice Chancellor Prof Vincent Chang, BRAC Prof Sang H Lee, Prof Matin Saad Abdullah, Prof Mohammad Mujibul Haque also spoke.