



*American Institute
of Bangladesh Studies*

Annual Report

October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016

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LETTER FROM THE AIBS PRESIDENT

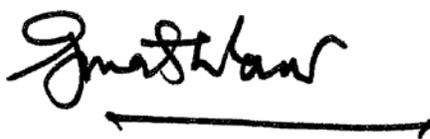
We are happy to present important activities of AIBS that took place during the year 2015-2016. This annual report includes a myriad of AIBS activities to include but not limited to fellowship awardees, language fellowships, announcement of new AIBS Office Manager hired, AIBS administrative trips, MOUs signed with different universities, and AIBS programs in US and Bangladesh. This report also includes AIBS delegation meetings with the US Embassy in Bangladesh, Bangladesh Embassy in USA, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Bangladesh, and other relevant partner institutions in Bangladesh.

We organized a national conference on “Strategic Management and Effective Leadership in Higher Education” at the request of our partner institutions of higher learning in Bangladesh in 2015. Approximately 200 academic administrators attended this event from 22 different public and private universities in Bangladesh. We were happy to compile the conference proceedings of this event and shared the report with both print and electronic Medias in Bangladesh. The report was then shared with academic administrators this year at a professional symposium on August 7, 2016. Sixty delegates from different Bangladesh universities attended. The honorable Chairman of the University Grants Commission, Bangladesh Professor Abdul Mannan served as Chief Guest for this event. Ms. Elizabeth Thornhill and Ms. Shaheen Khan of the US Embassy in Dhaka attended the event and delivered welcome remarks.

AIBS Dhaka Office organized and hosted an afternoon Seminar on “RMG Industries of Bangladesh: Trade, Industrial Relations, and Workers' Rights” on July 31, 2016 at the CIRDAP International Conference Center (CICC) located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Three distinguished speakers from Brooklyn Law School, Rajshahi University, and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology presented their empirical findings in the seminar. Honorable State Minister for Labor and Employment of Government of Bangladesh Mr. Md. Mujibul Haque was present in the seminar as the chief guest. The seminar was attended by academic scholars, representatives from labor organizations, advocacy groups, owners' associations, journalists, and other interested individuals.

We are thankful to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Bangladesh for re-instating funding for AIBS for \$140,000 for the fiscal year 2015-2016 that was discontinued in 2006. We thank Honorable Shahidul Hoque, Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for his continuous support to AIBS and for expediting this grant sanction process. We are grateful to Ms. Ann McConnell, Director of the American Center for her continued support and assistance on AIBS programs. We truly appreciate Professor ASM Atiqur Rahman, Advisor of AIBS Dhaka office for his diligent work overseeing AIBS activities and supervising AIBS Dhaka office staff. Lastly, we thank Mr. Sudipta Roy for his excellent job as a model Resident Fellow of the AIBS Dhaka Office during the past year.

We sincerely thank and appreciate the excellent job performed by our AIBS US office under the leadership of our esteemed Director, Ms. Laura Hammond. Mr. John Burmaster, Financial Specialist and Ms. Tonia Mahnke, Outreach Specialist deserves special thanks for their outstanding services in assisting us with implementing AIBS programs and activities effectively.



Golam M. Mathbor, Ph.D.

2015-2016 AIBS FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

2015-2016 AIBS Fellowships



Michael Bowler

Institution: Winona State University

Project Title: Twenty-five Years of Sustainable Development in the Village of Honey

Duration: 4 months

Status: Complete

Abstract: This is a proposal to restudy the village of Modhupur in southwestern Bangladesh, twenty-five years after I began my initial study, which became my Ph.D. dissertation in 1996. Key findings revealed the vulnerability of families headed by young widows among other extremely poor families who were not able to take advantage of most of the sustainable development programs of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee owing to their extreme poverty. The purpose of the restudy will be to chart sustainable development chiefly among these families and new widow-headed families, to check for continued disproportional benefit from programs among village factions, to monitor the effects of education upon materially poor families in Modhupur. In terms of new perspectives this restudy proposes to examine prospects for randomized control experiments as advocated by Banerjee and Duflo in and around and about Modhupur by BRAC and even some educated residents of Modhupur. Additionally, it will propose that the growing environmental threats to sustainable development be monitored and analyzed in this village.



Todd McKay

Institution: Georgetown University

Project Title: Tasks for the Transition: Identifying the practical English-language needs of Bangladeshi high-school students

Duration: 3 months

Status: Complete

Abstract: The purpose of this research project is to conduct a large-scale, task-based needs analysis to identify the numerous, real-world activities for which Bangladeshi high-school students need English in Dhaka, Bangladesh—in other words, those everyday tasks for which Bangladeshi English language learners (ELLs) need English. Although the importance of English has been foregrounded ever since early calls to globalization in the 1990's (Hamid & Baldauf, 2008), very little research has examined the needs or tasks for which English is used by this population of ELLs. This research project is a first step towards designing, implementing, and evaluating a task-based, intensive summer English program for high school students at Notre Dame College in Dhaka, Bangladesh in the summer of 2017. To guide this needs analysis, inquiry into English use is operationalized in five research questions that ask after students' reasons for learning English, perceptions of future English use, current English use venues, current English tasks, and current English task frequency. Following Long (2005), multiple methods and sources are used across three

2015-2016 AIBS Fellowships (continued)

different target areas to triangulate the needs of learners. The three target areas are community members, private and public universities, and job sector/workplace settings. Sources include English teachers, non-English teachers, staff and administration, and members of the community. Methods include interviews, focus groups, in-class observations, participant observations, and survey questionnaires. Needs analysis findings are analyzed and reported by target task type to serve as a practical resource for the design and implementation of the intensive, task-based summer English program. Needs analysis findings are also used to inform our understanding of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and to examine the potential for TBLT to act as an alternative educational endeavor in English language programs in Bangladesh.

Zachary Lamb



Institution: Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Project Title: Hold Back the Water: Planners, Politics and Design in Dhaka's Flood Adaption

Duration: 4 months

Status: Pending travel – Spring 2017

Abstract: To cope with the paired challenges of rapid urbanization and mounting flood vulnerability in Dhaka, the government of Bangladesh, with the support of international aid agencies, has constructed extensive flood control embankments. With the growth of urbanized areas outside of the current protections, international funders and government officials are renewing calls to significantly expand these protections as proposed in the Flood Action Plans (FAP) produced following devastating floods in the late 1980's. Areas inside and outside of the current protective infrastructure exhibit distinctly different forms of flood vulnerability and settlement patterns. Attempts to address flood vulnerability in Dhaka through both "hard" infrastructure methods and "soft" methods that rely on land use and building regulation are complicated by institutional capacity constraints at the national and municipal level and by the increasing role of private real estate development. With the assistance of the AIBS Junior Fellowship, I propose to study how the historical development and future trajectory of Dhaka's flood infrastructure relate to the city's patterns of growth. In examining the politics of adaptation at large and small-scales, I will draw on literatures including natural hazards planning, climate adaptation planning, political ecology, and critical urban and development studies. This research is informed by two preliminary research trips to Dhaka and similar research conducted in the vulnerable peri-urban region surrounding New Orleans. Building on previous interviews with residents and decision makers, research methods for this study will include archival research on the historical development of Dhaka's embankments as well as interviews and review of policy and planning documents related to ongoing embankment planning. As national and municipal government officials seek to guide Dhaka's urban growth, it is essential to develop a better understanding of how the historical development of the city's embankments has shaped the form of the city as it exists today. Developing a better understanding of the relationship between embankments and urban growth is a critical component of informing adaptation planning as a growing number of cities around the world face the paired challenges of rapid urbanization and climate change-related flood risk.

2015-2016 AIBS Fellowships (continued)

Pika Ghosh



Institution: University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill

Project Title: Fabricating Social Worlds: Women's Embroidered Kantha from Colonia Bengal

Duration: 2 months

Status: Pending travel – Fall 2016

Abstract: Kanthas, quilted textiles created and embroidered by Bengali women of elite as well as impoverished circumstances, and Hindu and Muslim religious orientation, have long captured the Bengali imagination. Quotidian articles of daily intimate use, when embellished with intricate embroidery they are valued as family heirlooms, celebrated by national poets, and most recently, commodified in craft emporia. My project analyzes the fabrics as sites where gender, class, and domestic identities were constituted and interrogated in nineteenth-century Bengal. I argue that they yield glimpses into the everyday lives, intimate relationships, and the social worlds shaped and negotiated by their makers before the earliest literary and autobiographical works by women are published.

2015-2016 AIBS Travel Grantees

Kasia Paprocki

Paper Title: Threatening Dystopias: Regimes of Development and Climate Change Adaptation in Bangladesh

Conference Name: American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting

Conference Date: March 29 - April 2, 2016

Abstract: This paper examines the convergence of Bangladesh's contemporary development regime with new discourses and practices of climate change adaptation that increasingly shape the country's visions of development and relationship with the rest of the world. Once infamously called a "basket case," today Bangladesh has become both the poster child and laboratory for development interventions promising to reduce vulnerability through adaptation to climate change. This emergence results both from the sense of impending (even already existing) social and ecological crisis in rural coastal areas, as well as Bangladesh's role in a broader global development regime. The result is an "adaptation regime" which de-historicizes and de-politicizes dynamics of ecological change in the region, charting new geographies of intervention by donors, policy makers, researchers, and development agencies. The adaptation regime also governs the kinds of livelihoods and futures which are seen as viable in the near- and long-term future. Strategies for pursuing these "developed" futures in the time of climate change range from the promotion of saline shrimp aquaculture in former rice farming communities to plans for resettling the populations of entire geographic regions. What many of these strategies share is a vision for a transition away from agrarian livelihoods toward urban, export-oriented production, and the radical transformation and dispossession of rural communities. Thus, the adaptation regime mobilizes dystopic visions of rural futures in Bangladesh's coastal region, even as it contributes to the construction of these new forms of social and ecological dystopia, ultimately producing conditions that it claims to avert.

2015-2016 Bangla Summer Language Fellowship Awardees

Due to the current State Department travel alerts to Bangladesh, the AIBS Language Committee recommended supporting Bangla language study by offering fellowships through the South Asian Summer Language Institute (SASLI) at the University of Wisconsin – Madison and the American Institute of India Studies (AIIS) in Kolkata, India. These intensive classes are eight weeks in length, from June to August. Two students were awarded fellowships to study beginner Bengali through SASLI. One student was awarded a fellowship to study intermediate Bengali through AIIS.

Paige Henderson

Institution: Brandeis University

Status: PhD Student, Anthropology/Women's Studies

Nazia Islam

Institution: Claremont School of Theology

Status: Graduate Student, Inter-religious Studies

Marshall McCulloum

Institution: University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

Status: Graduate Student, Marine Biology

2015-2016 Middle Bengali Retreat cum Workshop Awardees

The Department of Humanities at Sapientia – Hungarian University of Transylvania organized a Middle Bengali Retreat and Workshop in August, 2016 in which AIBS supported two students to attend. The purpose of the retreat was to bring together scholars and advanced students of Middle Bengali in an informal and relaxed setting, where reading and discussion of texts could be shared and analyzed. Our awardees listed below benefitted greatly from their experiences there. You can read more about their developments in their final reports on the AIBS website at www.aibs.net. Go to the About tab and click on AIBS Projects to read their reports under the Middle Bengali Retreat cum Workshop link.

Jessica Bachman

Institution: University of Washington

Status: PhD Student, Department of History

Ishan Chakrabarti

Institution: University of Chicago

Status: PhD Student, Department of South Asian Languages & Civilizations

AIBS CONFERENCES AND SPONSORED PROGRAMS

AIBS Conference 2015: Bengali Maṅgalakāvya and Related Literature

October 22, 2015 Madison, Wisconsin

Overview: Bengali *Maṅgalakāvya* presents us with a rich vision of the premodern era and life at all strata of society in the region. The tales cover generations and feature the amazing adventures of wise women, valiant warriors, hard-working merchants, and people from both urban and rural communities.

Presented Papers:

Topic: Devotion Through Double Entendre: Bilingual Poetry and Bitextual Commentary in Colonial Bengal

Presenter: Dr. Joel Bordeaux, Visiting Assistant Professor in Religion, Colgate University

Topic: Erotic Play, Devotion, and ‘Cords of Righteousness’: Plural Social Bonds in Tales of Love and Heroism from Eastern Bengal

Presenter: Dr. David L. Curley, Professor Emeritus, Western Washington University

Topic: Child Sacrifice in Rūparāma’s Dharmamangala

Presenter: Dr. Rebecca Manring, Associate Professor, Department of Religious Studies and Dhar India Studies Program, Indiana University Bloomington

Topic: Cannibalising the Eucharist: Catholics, Mughals and Roopram’s Dharmamangal

Presenter: Dr. Projit Mukharji, Assistant Professor, Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Pennsylvania

Topic: Self-Reflexivity in Bhāratchandra’s Maṅgalkāvya the “Annadāmaṅgal”

Presenter: Sutopa Dasgupta, PhD Candidate, Department of Religion and Society, Harvard University

Topic: Chandimangal East and West

Presenter: Dr. Ed Yazijian, Lecturer, Asian Studies, Furman University

Topic: Śāhā Mohāmmad Chagīr’s Retelling of Jāmī’s Yūsuf va Zulaykhā in Premodern Bengal

Presenter: Dr. Ayesha A. Irani, Assistant Professor, Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto

Topic: Śāh Garibullāh and the Beginnings of the Dobhāṣī Pācālī

Presenter: Dr. Thibaut d’Hubert, Assistant Professor, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, The University of Chicago

Topic: Bangla Pīr Kathā: A Parodic Bridge between traditional Hindu Maṅgal Kāvya and Muslim Premākhyān

Presenter: Dr. Tony K. Stewart, Professor and Chair, Department of Religious Studies, Vanderbilt University

“Doing Historical Research in Bengal: A Memoir”

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Richard M. Eaton, Professor of History, University of Arizona

AIBS Preconference 2016: From MDGS to SDGS: Bangladesh as a Case in Point

October 20, 2016 Madison, Wisconsin

Overview: As the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) era comes to a conclusion in 2015, the year of 2016 ushers in a new set of official commitments from the world leaders for a more ambitious and bold 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Despite its relatively young age and exposure to major environmental as well as socio-political challenges, Bangladesh has been a role model in the developing world for making substantial progress in achieving MDG targets. The country has a steady economic growth rate of 6 to 7%, reducing dependence on foreign aid significantly over the decades. In addition, Bangladesh has made remarkable social progress in the areas of poverty reduction, infant and maternal mortality rate, child health, access to and gender parity in primary school enrollment, immunization coverage, and communicable disease control.

However, Bangladesh is still in the process of regenerating its cultural, social, political, economic, physical and other structures and practices by strengthening existing institutions. As the country now accentuates the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted last September at the United Nations, engaging dialogues and critical discussions from multiple disciplines and scopes need to take place at this juncture.

Aims and Objectives: This 2016 preconference invited eight faculty members from different public and private universities in Bangladesh to participate in a week-long workshop on writing and publishing in the US at the Subir and Malini Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies at UC Berkeley. In this workshop, participants reviewed and refined their submitted proposals, ultimately for submission to refereed journals for publication. The proposals are centered around the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that focus on: no poverty; no hunger; good health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; decent work and economic growth; industry, innovation, and infrastructure, reduced inequalities; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; climate action; life below water; life on land; peace, justice, and strong institutions; and partnerships for these goals. We hope that the featured presentations will highlight how Bangladesh is now preparing to achieve the SDGs in each of the respective areas of their presentations.

Opening Remarks:

Golam M. Mathbor, Professor, School of Social Work, Monmouth University

Sanchita Saxena, Director, Subir and Malilni Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, UC Berkeley

Mahbub Hassan Saleh, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Bangladesh, Washington, D.C.

Keynote Speaker: A.S.M. Atiqur Rahman, Professor, Institute of Social Welfare & Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Topic: Ageing Situation and Support Systems in Bangladesh

AIBS Preconference 2016: (continued)

Presented Papers:

Topic: Challenges of International Water Laws for Water Management of the Ganges—Brahmaputra Basin

Presenter: M. Anwar Hossen, Professor, Sociology, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Discussant: Mokammal H. Bhuiyan, Professor, Archology, Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh

Topic: Elder Abuse & neglect: A Study in Rural Bangladesh

Presenter: Md. Rabiul Islam, Associate Professor, Institute of Social Welfare & Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

Discussant: Golam M. Mathbor, Professor, School of Social Work, Monmouth University

Topic: Bangladesh, Islam, Politics and State

Presenter: Mubashar Hasan, Assistant Professor, Journalism, University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh

Discussant: Mahbub Hassan Saleh, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Bangladesh, Washington, D.C.

Topic: Uneven Geography of Remittances among Migrant Households in Rural Bangladesh

Presenter: Mohammad Jalal Uddin Sikder, Assistant Professor, General Education, University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh

Discussant: Sanchita Saxena, Director, Subir and Malilni Chowdhury Center for Bangladesh Studies, UC Berkeley

Topic: Integrated Water—Energy—Food Nexus and the Role of Regional Cooperation in Promoting Energy Security in Asia

Presenter: Md Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow, Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University

Discussant: Jason Cons, Assistant Professor, Anthropology, University of Texas at Austin

Topic: Elderly Vulnerability to Home Care Received in Bangladesh

Presenter: Mohammad Abdul Hannan Pradhan, Associate Professor, Economics, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Bangladesh

Discussant: ASM Atiqur Rahman, Professor, Institute of Social Welfare & Research, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

AIBS Conference Co-Sponsorship: **The City in South Asia**

January 3-6, 2016 Karachi, Pakistan

AIBS supported the Collaborative Overseas Research Center Workshop, *The City in South Asia*, along with AIPS, AIIS, AISLS, and the South Asia Institute, University of Texas – Austin. The workshop was organized by William Glover (University of Michigan) and Kamran Asdar (University of Texas) in collaboration with Oxford University Press and NED University in Karachi. To attract a broad audience of scholars, students and the community at large, the panels and film showings were organized at different venues. The opening session was at the cultural space and café, T2F where the documentary, *Q2P* was shown on the evening of January 3rd. The film was about toilets and the city. It observed who has access to toilets and who doesn't while helping the audience to understand the imagination of gender that underlies the city's shape. The film maker and writer, Paromita Vohra, who travelled from Mumbai was present during the showing. Similarly, on the last day of the workshop there was a special showing of the recent film *Bombay Velvet* to a full house. Following the film, the historian Gyan Prakash, who wrote the screenplay, took questions from the audience. Between these two events were panels and round table sessions at T2F, Oxford University Press and at the NED University's Architecture Department by scholars who work on Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Topics ranged from a discussion on Colombo's Urban Poor by Udan Fernando from the Center for Poverty Analysis, Colombo, to analyzing crowds and violence related to the ambivalent state of Democracy in Bangladesh, by Nusrat Chowdhury (Amherst College). Despite the typical logistical issues involved in a conference held at multiple venues in Karachi, people participated with enthusiasm, scholarly engagement and good humor. Students and scholars from local colleges and universities came to listen, debate and discuss; making each session unique and eventful.



AIBS Conference Co-Sponsorship: The 2nd Bangladesh Development Conference at the University of Washington

April 8, 2016 Seattle, Washington

The Second Bangladesh Development Conference at the University of Washington, presented by the South Asia Center with the support of AIBS, was held on Thursday, April 8, 2016. The conference featured seven presentations on topics relevant to the study of Bangladesh ranging from mobile money to global warming to garment factories. Presentations were informal, so the audience had plenty of opportunity to discuss the ideas raised with presenters and each other. The conference served both to interest researchers (including graduate students just getting started on research) to opportunities and data available in Bangladesh, as well as to expose researchers primarily focused on other countries to relevant research in Bangladesh. Over 30 people attended the event, with one guest from a Bangladesh institution.

Presenters and Topics:

Treb Allen – "Volatility and the Gains from Trade". Treb showed how openness to trade can improve farmers' incomes but also increase the risk they face. Rural banks help them deal with this volatility.

Josh Blumenstock – "Mobile-izing Savings with Automatic Contributions: Experimental Evidence on Dynamic Inconsistency and the Default Effect in Afghanistan". Josh found that defaulting workers in Afghanistan to an automatic enrollment plan with matching contributions increased savings rates.

Jeremy Magruder - "Split Sample Strategies for Avoiding False Discoveries". Jeremy discussed a new method to avoid multiple testing concerns in experimental studies (i.e. the concern that if you test many hypotheses, some will have P-values under 0.05 just by chance), such as the large scale trials of health and livelihood interventions in Bangladesh.

Rachel Heath – "Migrants, Information, and Working Conditions in Bangladeshi Garment Factories". Rachel argued that migrants in Bangladeshi garment factories have limited information about the industry when they begin work, which can explain the empirical finding that they begin work in factories with higher wages but worse working conditions, but move towards factories with better conditions as they gain experience.

Prashant Bharadwaj – "Displacement and Development: Partition of India and Agricultural Development". Prashant argued that the migrants induced to move by partition brought new ideas to agriculture in India.

Pasita Chaijaroen – "Long-lasting Income Shocks and Adaptations: Evidence from Coral Bleaching in Indonesia". Pasita found that when global warming increased sea temperatures, fishermen's income fell in the short run, but after several years they were able to adapt.

Melanie Morten – "Migration and Consumption Insurance in Bangladesh". Melanie found that migration helped people in villages in Bangladesh by providing sources of income that are not so closely tied to the economies in the village.

AIBS DHAKA CENTER ACTIVITIES

AIBS Seminar: “Ready Made Garment (RMG) Industries of Bangladesh: Trade, Industrial Relations, & Workers' Rights”

July 31, 2016 Dhaka, Bangladesh

American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) hosted an afternoon Seminar on “RMG Industries of Bangladesh: Trade, Industrial Relations, and Workers' Rights” on July 31, 2016 at the CIRDAP International Conference Center (CICC) located in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Three distinguished speakers from Brooklyn Law School, Rajshahi University, and Shahjalal University of Science and Technology presented their empirical findings in the seminar. The honorable State Minister for Labor and Employment of Government of Bangladesh Mr. Md. Mujibul Haque was present in the seminar as the chief guest. Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, President of AIBS, chaired the event. The seminar was attended by academic scholars, representatives from labor organizations, advocacy groups, owners’ associations, journalists, and other interested personnel.

The presenters discussed that although Bangladesh is making strides to maintain favorable work environments in the garment factories, there are still numerous challenges such as lack of safety measures, labor representations in decision-making, competitive salary packages, and a social safety net. Some recommendations that were discussed included implementing a worker-centered model instead of corporate social responsibility model of development, designing sustainable and substantial social safety nets for various occupational disaster survivors, and making sure that workers were represented in the decision-making process.

In his remarks, the Labor and Employment Minister, Mr. Haque, described various measures that his ministry has taken over the years to avoid accidents like Rana Plaza. He also emphasized the need for accountability of the international buyers of the garment industries and maintained that only profit-generating motivation from the buyers and owners is not sustainable for the industry.

Topic: Opportunities and Limitations of the Accord/Alliance: Need for a Worker Centric Model

Presenter: Dr. Chaumtoli Huq, Adjunct Clinical Professor of Law at Brooklyn Law School, New York and founder/Editor of an innovative online platform focused on law and social justice called Law@theMargins (www.lawatthemargins.com)

Topic: Social Safety Nets for Disaster Survivors: the Case of Bangladesh RMG Industry

Presenter: Dr. Md. Ismail Hossain, Professor, Department of Social Work, Shahjalal University of Science & Technology (SUST), Sylhet, Bangladesh

Topic: Bangladesh’s Garment Workers’ Representative Participation: Where Do We Stand?

Presenter: Dr. Jakir Hossain, Professor, Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi, Bangladesh

AIBS Symposium: Final Report Presentation and Open Discussion on Strategic Management and Effective Leadership in Higher Education

August 7, 2016 University of Dhaka, Bangladesh

The American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) and the University of Dhaka jointly organized an academic gathering involving vice chancellors and leading administrators from more than 15 Bangladeshi public and private universities on August 7, 2016 at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban, University of Dhaka. The purpose of the event was to share key findings from the final report on the 2015 National Conference on: Strategic Management and Effective Leadership in Higher Education. Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, President of AIBS, was the keynote speaker who pertinently focused on some of the main findings from the report in his speech. The Chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC) in Bangladesh Professor Abdul Mannan was present as Chief Guest at the event. An open dialogue took place where distinguished participants discussed the various findings. The Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of Dhaka, Professor Dr. Nasreen Ahmad, Cultural Affairs Officer of the American Center in Bangladesh, Ms. Elizabeth Thornhill, and Cultural Affairs Specialist, Ms. Shaheen Khan, were among the distinguished guests of honor. Representatives from 15 universities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh Government, the American Center, US Embassy in Bangladesh, and the UGC were also present during the program.



Professor Abdul Mannan, Chairman of University Grants Commission (UGC) in Bangladesh was present as Chief Guest of the event.

AIBS Meetings and Outreach

The AIBS President traveled to Bangladesh twice this year to conduct various meetings and outreach. At the beginning of the calendar year, Dr. Golam Mathbor, along with AIBS Secretary, Dr. Rebecca Manring, conducted the following meetings and events:

- Meeting with Bangla Language Institute at Independent University, Bangladesh
- Meeting with the Director of BRAC Institute of Languages
- Meeting with Asian University for Women
- Meeting with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Dhaka
- MOU signing with BRAC University
- MOU signing with University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh



AIBS representatives meet with Lady Syeda Sarwat Abed, Director of BRAC Institute of Languages, to explore future opportunities of collaboration for Bangla language training.

AIBS President's travel to Bangladesh during the summer months additionally resulted in several meetings and outreach opportunities. Dr. Golam Mathbor met with several institutions and individuals.

- Meeting with US Embassy members, Ms. Elizabeth Thornhill and Ms. Shaheen Khan
- Meeting with academic staff from Asian University for Women
- Meeting with academic staff from Chittagong University
- MOU signing with Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University
- MOU signing with Daffodil University
- MOU signing with Leading University
- MOU signing with University of Barisal
- MOU signing with Khulna University

AIBS Dhaka new Office Manager, Ms. Meher Niger, and the AIBS President meet with US Embassy members, Ms. Elizabeth Thornhill and Ms. Shaheen Khan in Dhaka



AIBS Lecture Series

AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, was invited and delivered the following lectures during his latest administrative trip to Bangladesh to various faculty and students:

Topic: “Global Social Work Education and Practice: The US Context”

Date: August 8, 2016

Location: Jagannath University in Dhaka

Topic: “Higher Education in USA”

Date: August 27, 2016

Location: Leading University in Sylhet

Topic: “Social Development Approaches Dealing with Natural Disasters”

Date: September 5, 2016

Location: James P. Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University

The following AIBS Fellows additionally gave lectures on the results of their research while in country.

Topic: “Twenty-five Years of Research in a Jessore Village”

Presenter: Michael Bowler

Date: Independent University of Bangladesh

Location: July 13, 2016

Topic: “Tasks for the Transition: Identifying the practical English-language needs of Bangladeshi high-school students”

Presenter: Todd McKay

Date: August 14, 2016

Location: University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh



AIBS Junior Fellow, Todd McKay, gives lecture at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh at the conclusion of his fellowship research.

Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) with Bangladesh Partner Institutions

BRAC University

Date: December 28, 2015

Background: AIBS and BRAC University entered into a Memorandum of Understanding on mutual collaboration at the BRAC University campus in Dhaka. The MOU includes the exchange of educational and research staff, and the exchange of publications, academic materials and other information between the two institutions. The MOU was signed by Dr. Golam Mathbor, President of AIBS, and Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, PhD., Vice Chancellor of BRAC University. Among others, Dr. Farhat Iftekharuddin, Pro-Vice Chancellor-in-charge, BRAC University, Mr. Sukhendra Sarkar, Treasurer, BRAC University, Dr. Rebecca Manring, Secretary of AIBS and Mr. Sudipta Roy, AIBS Resident Fellow were present in the signing ceremony.

Objectives:

- A) To invite as appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or United States as scholars to BRACU for sharing their field of knowledge and for introducing them to the faculty members and students of BRACU;
- B) To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with BRACU in either AIBS premises or on the BRACU campus, as may be identified from time to time;
- C) To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;

Both parties agree to pursue cooperative initiatives. Examples of future collaborations may include articulation agreements, exchanges of academic materials, faculty/fellow exchanges, future co-sponsored conferences and symposiums, and joint research activities. Any future initiatives shall be set forth in a separate agreement and mutually agreed in writing by both parties.



AIBS President and Vice-Chancellor of BRAC University after the MOU signing

University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB)

Date: January 11, 2016

Background: AIBS and the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB), Bangladesh entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on mutual collaboration at the ULAB campus in Dhanmondi, Dhaka. The MoU covers joint research collaboration between AIBS member higher education institutions in the United States and ULAB. It also includes the exchange of educational and research staff as well as the exchange of publication, academic materials and other information between the two institutions.

The MOU was signed by Dr. Golam Mathbor, President of AIBS and Professor Imran Rahman, Vice Chancellor of ULAB. Among others, Professor H.M. Jahirul Haque, Pro-Vice Chancellor, ULAB, Dr. Shahana Afrose Chowdhury, Associate Professor, ULAB, and Mr. Sudipta Roy, AIBS Resident Fellow, were present in the signing ceremony. By signing the MoU, both institutions desire to establish meaningful collaboration in pursuit of enriching intellectual capabilities through exchange of knowledge and expertise.

Objectives:

- A) To invite appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or US as scholars to ULAB for sharing their field of knowledge and introducing them to the faculty members and students of ULAB.
- B) To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with ULAB in either AIBS premises or on the ULAB campus, as may be identified from time to time.
- C) To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;
- E) To promote internships for ULAB students to study abroad as well as create opportunities for international students intending to visit ULAB.



Vice Chancellor Professor, Dr. Imran Rahman, and AIBS President, Professor Dr. Golam Mathbor, shake hands after signing the MOU. Shown here are also Dr. Shahana Afrose Chowdhury, Professor H.M. Jahirul Haque, and Mr. Sudipta Roy.

Daffodil International University (DIU)

Date: August 3, 2016

AIBS signed an MOU with **Daffodil International University**

Objectives:

- A)** To invite appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or US as scholars to ULAB for sharing their field of knowledge and introducing them to the faculty members and students of ULAB.
- B)** To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with ULAB in either AIBS premises or on the ULAB campus, as may be identified from time to time.
- C)** To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D)** To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;
- E)** To promote internships for ULAB students to study abroad as well as create opportunities for international students intending to visit ULAB.



Witnesses observe AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor and Professor Dr. MD. Fokhray Hossain signing the Memorandum of Understanding between AIBS and Daffodil International University.

University of Barisal (BU)

Date: August 9, 2016

AIBS signed an MOU with the **University of Barisal**

Objectives:

- A)** To invite as appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or US as scholars to BU for sharing their field of knowledge and introducing them to the faculty members and students of BU.
- B)** To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with BU in either AIBS premises or on the BU campus, as may be identified from time to time.
- C)** To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D)** To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;
- E)** To promote internships for BU students to study abroad as well as create opportunities for international students intending to visit BU.



Resident Fellow, Sudipta Roy, and President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, represent AIBS at the MOU signing with the University of Barisal.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University (BSMRSTU)

Date: August 10, 2016

AIBS signed an MOU with **Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University**

Objectives:

- A)** To invite as appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or United States as scholars to BSMRSTU for sharing their field of knowledge and introducing them to the faculty members and students of BSMRSTU.
- B)** To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with BSMRSTU in either AIBS premises or on the BSMRSTU campus, as may be identified from time to time.
- C)** To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D)** To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;
- E)** To promote internships for BSMRSTU students to study abroad as well as create opportunities for international students intending to visit BSMRSTU.



AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, is shown here shaking hands with Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Khonkoker Nasiruddin, after the MOU signing with BSMRSTU.

Khulna University (KU)

Date: August 11, 2016

AIBS signed an MOU with **Khulna University**

Objectives:

- A) To invite as appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or United States as scholars to KU for sharing their field of knowledge and introducing them to the faculty members and students of KU.
- B) To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with KU in either AIBS premises or on the KU campus, as may be identified from time to time.
- C) To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;
- E) To promote internships for KU students to study abroad as well as create opportunities for international students intending to visit KU.



Khulna University Treasurer, Khan Atiar Rahman, and AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, signing the MOU for future collaboration between the two institutions.

Leading University (LU)

Date: August 27, 2016

Background: Leading University signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS). Leading University Registrar, Lt. Col.(Retd.) Munir Ahmed Quadery, and President of AIBS, Professor Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, signed the agreement at the University Hall Room in an auspicious ceremony. The honorable Vice Chancellor of Leading University Professor Dr. Md. Qumruzzaman Chowdhury was present as the Chief Guest in the program. Professor Chowdhury said “this is a great opportunity and we will work for this, and in future will have more collaboration with others for the betterment of Leading University and for providing quality of education.” The Keynote Speaker said the agreement will enhance the teaching effectiveness, research, and improve quality of instruction of the teachers of Leading University. Brigadier General Nurul Huda (Retd.) of Ragib-Rabeya Foundation, Professor Dr. Neaz Ahmed, Dean, Faculty of Social Science, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology, Professor Md. Nazrul Islam, Dean, Faculty of Business Administration, Professor Dr. Khandoker Md. Mominul Haque, Dean, Faculty of Modern Science, Engineer Md. Lutfur Rahman, Controller of Examinations, all Head of the Departments, Faculty Members and officers of Leading University were present. Muhammad Nazrul Islam, Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of English, was the coordinator and anchor of the signing ceremony.

Objectives:

- A) To invite as appropriate and convenient AIBS Research Grant Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or United States as scholars to LU for sharing their field of knowledge and introducing them to the faculty members and students of LU.
- B) To sponsor/get sponsored to conduct seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with LU in either AIBS premises or on the LU campus, as may be identified from time to time.
- C) To undertake joint research projects and attract combined funding from various organizations to conduct research programs of mutual interest;
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines;
- E) To promote internships for LU students to study abroad as well as create opportunities for international students intending to visit LU.



Dr. Golam Mathbor shakes hands with Leading University Registrar, Lt. Col.(Retd.) Munir Ahmed Quadery, at the MOU signing

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH UPDATE

A meeting between the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies (AIBS) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Government of Bangladesh was held at the MOFA office in Dhaka on July 24, 2016. The meeting was attended by AIBS President Golam Mathbor, Ph.D. and AIBS Resident Fellow, Sudipta Roy. MOFA representatives included Director General (Americas), Ms. Abida Islam; Ms. Arshuda Khan, Senior Assistant Secretary; and Mr. Tanvir Ahmed Torophder, Assistant Secretary. Mr. Md. Nazmul Islam, Director General (Administration) and Mr. Myenul Hasan, Director (Finance) were also in attendance. Both parties discussed the terms and conditions as well as plans of action to utilize the newly re-instated annual funding from MOFA to AIBS. AIBS received \$140,000 as an annual grant from MOFA effective from July 1, 2016. Dr. Mathbor thanked Mr. Shahidul Haque, Foreign Secretary, for his continuous support to AIBS and for expediting the grant sanction process. AIBS now looks forward to successfully crafting programs such as fellowships, international travel grants, and workshops and seminars for Bangladeshi scholars to further the scholarly exchange between Bangladesh and the United States.



AIBS representatives meet with MOFA in July to discuss terms, conditions and plans of action for the utilization of the MOFA grant.



AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, and AIBS' new Dhaka Office Manager, Ms. Meher Niger, meet with MOFA in September to finalize the utilization of MOFA funding.

AIBS INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

Boston University
Columbia University
Connecticut University
Cornell University
Indiana University
Johns Hopkins University
Monmouth University
North Carolina State University
Syracuse University
The University of Chicago
Tufts University
University of California, Berkley
University of Hawaii at Manoa
University of Massachusetts-Boston
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Texas at Austin
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Winona State University

PARTNER INSTITUTIONS IN BANGLADESH

Asian University of Women
Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University
Bangladesh Agricultural University
BRAC University
Daffodil International University
Independent University, Bangladesh
Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS) at the University of Rajshahi
Jagannath University
Jahangirnagar University
Jessore University of Science and Technology
Khulna University
Leading University
North East University of Bangladesh
Pabna University of Science and Technology
Shahjalal University of Science and Technology
Southeast University Bangladesh
University of Barisal
University of Chittagong
University of Dhaka
University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh

AIBS CONTACT INFORMATION

President

Dr. Golam M. Mathbor
Professor, School of Social Work
400 Cedar Avenue, West Long Branch, NJ 07764-1898, USA.
Tel: (732) 263-5523, Fax: (732) 263-5102
Email: gmathbor@monmouth.edu

US Office

Laura Hammond, U.S. Director
Tonia Mahnke, Outreach Coordinator
John Burmaster, Senior Financial Specialist
B488 Medical Sciences Center
1300 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706
Tel: 608-265-1471
Email: aibs@southasia.wisc.edu

Dhaka Office

Ms. Meher Niger, Office Manager
52/1 [8th Floor], [Hasan Holdings]
New Eskaton Road, Dhaka- 1000.
Tel: +880-2-9334675
Cell: +880-1-793-594-376
Skype ID: aibs.dhk
Email: contact.aibs.dhk@gmail.com