



*American Institute
of Bangladesh Studies*

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2014-15 AIBS Fellowships



Melia Belli

Project Title: Emerging Artists of Bangladesh (1971-present)

Duration: 12 months

Status: Pending travel – December, 2014

Abstract: Media and scholarly coverage of Bangladesh focuses on disasters, poverty, and the rise of Islamist politics, presenting a negatively biased view of the country and overlooking valuable sources of visual documentation on its recent history. Bangladesh's creative talent is largely ignored; accomplished artists and compelling works of art remain unrecognized outside the country. This is surprising, as over the past two decades vibrant art movements have developed in Dhaka. Thus, Belli's research will focus on contemporary Bangladeshi art, which will inform her forthcoming book, *Emerging Artists of Bangladesh (1971-present)*. The first critical work on the subject, the book examines how artists document, critique, and reshape aspects of their national history and identity.



Dr. Chaumtoli Huq

Project Title: Aftermath of Rana Plaza: Can the Binding Accord Improve Global Workplace Standards

Duration: 9 months

Status: Currently traveling

Abstract: When the building with garment factories in Savar, Bangladesh collapsed on April 24, 2013, the world observed the tragic death of over 1,200 workers. Since then, many have asked what could have prevented this tragedy, and how could the deplorable labor standards in the garment industry in Bangladesh be improved. Local labor organizations and international labor rights organizations have called for stricter safety enforcement measures, including holding retailers on the global labor supply chain responsible for workplace standards. Labor advocates in Bangladesh have discouraged calls for consumer boycotts of retailers here in the United States and in Europe for fear that those companies would leave Bangladesh in search of cheaper labor, devastating Bangladesh's garment industry labor force. One such measure that has been advocated by the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity is the Accord on Fire and Safety in Bangladesh in partnership with labor and non-profit organizations, and retailers. This is an historic binding agreement among labor advocates and global chain suppliers to improve workplace standards. Such a multi-national and multi-party labor agreement has never existed. In contrast to the Safety Accord, U.S. retailers like Children's Place, Gap and Walmart have joined the Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety, advocating for a non-binding monitoring group



called the Bangladesh Worker Safety Initiative as the ideal regulatory mechanism for improving workplace safety standards. Given the existence of two parallel mechanisms in the garment industry, it is a unique time to study the impact of these proposals on improving labor standards for not only Bangladeshi workers, but also workers globally. While both proposals operate in the private regulatory sphere, as opposed to the nation-state legislative sphere, they both reflect different views on how to improve workplace standards within that private sphere. The Accord seeks to bring the agreement into similar force as a law, with remedies for enforcement in arbitral forum. In contrast, the Safety Initiative does monitoring and provides loans to companies to make necessary safety repairs. In labor and employment law, this reflects a long-standing tension on how labor laws interact with free market private regulation, and in particular in a transnational setting. Dr. Huq's research project centers on the impact of both the Safety Accord and Safety Initiative on the ground in terms of improving workplace standards. For this research, Dr. Huq will interview relevant stakeholders, including workers, trade unions, and garment factory owners, who are under the Accord or the Initiative. In doing so, she will gather data on the workplace conditions on factories that produce garments for companies under the Accord and compare them to the factories that produce garments for signatories to the Initiative. Without field research, it is difficult to assess which mechanism is in fact more effective. Thus, Dr. Huq's research project assessing the impact of these mechanisms on the ground will inform future public policy decisions aimed at improving global workplace safety.



Katherine Cierniak

Project Title: Education in Dhaka's Slums: Understanding Opportunities and School Choice

Duration: 7 months

Status: Pending travel – June 2015

Abstract: Cierniak's dissertation research focuses on educational opportunities, school choice, and religious education for the urban poor in Dhaka's slums. Through ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Dhaka's largest slum, Korail, Cierniak's research investigates how families make choices about schooling based on the options available to them, including the ways in which religious identity affects choice. In discussing these topics, her study will also consider the impact of national and local education policy on schooling experiences of the urban poor, and the ways in which schooling opportunities shape children's life pathways. The need for substantive research on education for children living in Dhaka's slums is a pressing one, as the population of the city continues to grow significantly each year. The World Bank estimates that 300,000 to 400,000 individuals migrate from rural areas to Dhaka each year, and that over a third of the city's population lives in the city's slums. Additionally, Bangladesh's Primary Education Development Programme 3 (PEDP 3) specifically targets children who are poor and disadvantaged, and emphasizes reducing disparities in rates of participation and completion of primary education. As the scope of the PEDP 3 is the entire education sector, including NGOs and certain types of madrasahs, investigating the educational opportunities and subsequent choices made by families will shed light on this particular issue. Given that few government schools are found in Dhaka's slums, and none are found in Korail, Cierniak's study focuses on how families go about choosing between primarily secular NGO schools and madrasahs. Additionally, her study considers the role of religious identity in this decision-making process.



Within Korail, two NGO schools and two madrasahs and the communities associated with them (e.g. parents of students, teachers, etc.) will be the primary research sites for this study. In total, a minimum of 20 parents, 20 students, eight teachers, and four administrators will be interviewed over the course of Cierniak's research. She will conduct both school-based and community-based research in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of her research questions. Cierniak's study will contribute not only to the existing international and comparative literature on issues on in urban education, such as equity and access, but also the growing literature on school choice. Indeed, the scholarly conversation on school choice is occurring not only in the U.S., but internationally as well, evidenced by texts such as the 2008 volume *The Globalization of School Choice?*. Furthermore, her research will add to the limited scholarly literature on urban education in Bangladesh. In particular, literature on madrasahs in urban Bangladesh, especially in the slums, is scarce. For these reasons, this study is particularly timely and relevant and will contribute to literature in the field of international and comparative education.



Elizabeth Sibilja

Project Title: The Geographies of Becoming Waste on the Beaches in Bangladesh

Duration: 1 month

Status: Complete

Abstract: The past three decades have witnessed the production of modern “developing” states as spaces for dumping toxic and hazardous waste, a practice known as “toxic imperialism.” Ship breaking is indicative of this “toxic imperialism.” Every year a percentage of the world fleet is sold into the global demolition market, where the steel embedded within the ship's hull and structure will be extracted and recycled into the national, regional, and local economies. Bangladesh, a country that lacks iron ore mines, has come to depend on the steel recycled from the ship breaking process for infrastructure development and large-scale urbanization projects. In Bangladesh thousands of laborers work in some of the most toxic landscapes in the world, extracting value from the largest sea-faring vessels ever built while they suffer from health related issues and debilitating accidents that sometimes lead to death. These laborers are cast into a global arrangement where their labor power is not enough to inhibit their transformation into waste, or into becoming disposable. Sibilja's research fills a crucial gap in scholarly research on ship breaking and waste geographies by placing two narratives of waste production side by side: the ship as waste and the body as becoming waste. Sibilja's research also asks how Bangladesh has come to carry the world's toxic burden for ship breaking. During her one-month fellowship, Sibilja investigated who the people are that come to labor in this toxic landscape and what are the social relations of production and reproduction that bring them there. What are the maritime and trade related legal geographies that allow for some of the most dangerous forms of toxic and hazardous waste to be ‘dumped’ on some of the poorest people in the world? By approaching this subject through the waste/value dialectic, Sibilja's research draws out the connections between the most intimate experiences of the everyday life of the laborers to the most geographically expansive system in the world, that of global trade. Only by drawing out these waste-producing trajectories is it then possible to identify patterns of the production and reproduction of waste that will ultimately inform work on how to change those patterns.



2014-15 AIBS Travel Grantees

Neilesh Bose

Paper Title: Periodization and the Twentieth Century: Grappling with the Pre-Histories of Bangladesh

Conference Name: Annual Conference on South Asia

Conference Date: October 17-20, 2014

Abstract: Bose's paper at the 2014 Annual Conference on South Asia discusses the first and second partitions as well as the history of Pakistan movement in Bengal within a larger twentieth century history of Bangladesh. As one of the nation-states formed partially, but not completely, out of the colonial structures of power embedded within the British Empire, it invites reflection about the nature of nineteenth century political change as well as comparisons with other regions of South Asia, namely Sri Lanka. Bose's paper begins with a review of the relevant historiography on both the first (1905-1911) and second (1947) partitions of Bengal. Second, the paper offers thoughts on how the first and second partitions point not to the result of Bangladesh, but to multiple points in a broader regional history, including a history of connections with the Indian Ocean and a history of the trans-regional world of modern Islam; both of these histories demonstrate the search for political community outside the nation form. Finally, his paper offers thoughts on how to situate the comparability of Bangladesh with other South Asian states like Sri Lanka and the fates of the Indian location of West Bengal. The paper offers points for reflection about the current revisions to Bangladesh's history via periodization as well as reflects on recent work in the field by Andrew Sartori, Kris Manjappa, and Dilip Menon.

Kimberly Thomas

Paper Title: Undercurrents: Non-water flows along a transboundary river

Conference Name: Dimensions of Political Ecology

Conference Date: February 27 – March 1, 2014

Abstract: On August 17, 1947, the same stroke of Sir Cyril Radcliffe's pen that established Pakistan and India as independent states also transformed the Ganges River into an international watercourse. Fed by tributaries originating in Nepal, flowing 2240km across India, and culminating its overland journey in Bangladesh, the river carries vital water resources across two national borders and has been the focus of protracted and on-going transboundary disputes for decades. While water conflicts over the Ganges have been well documented, an unconventional analysis of the articulation of the river with the Indo-Bangladeshi border exposes surprising dynamics of non-water flows. Thomas's paper at the conference "Dimensions of Political Ecology" traces the peculiarities and consequences of the 1947 boundary designation, from India's disinclination to recognize the river as an international watercourse to the militarization and securitization of the river's banks, to argue that attention to non-water flows along the Ganges is critical to understanding how the river-border complex mediates the differential concentration and distribution of wealth and risk exposure across the international divide.

Shirin Sultana

Paper Title: Local Capacity Building as an Intervention Strategy to Address the Natural Disaster: A Bangladesh Perspective

Conference Name: AIBS Pre-conference: Extreme Weather, Disasters, and Indigenous Practices in South Asia

Conference Date: October 16, 2014



Abstract: Bangladesh has a long history of natural disaster. In between 1980 and 2008, the country experienced 219 natural disasters including cyclones, floods and tornados, causing over US\$16 billion in total damage (UNDP, 2009). The natural disaster has also impacted a majority of Bangladeshis in their social and human life. The main causes behind these natural disasters are the high vulnerability of people (unaware), housing (dilapidated), location (coastal area), and infrastructure (lack of dam, embankment, and shelter house) (Shafiullah and Mathbor, nd). Local capacity building intervention strategies as a part of disaster management can address the country's natural disasters given a comprehensive approach before, during and in the post-disaster period comprising disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery (USAID, 2011). Capacity development involves broad participation by a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in determining goals and taking civic action (Rothman et al., 2007). Disaster Management can be defined as "The body of policy and administrative decisions, and operational activities which pertain to the various stages of disaster at all level" (USAID, 2011). Here, "policy and administrative decisions, and operational activities" refer to the disaster cycles that include disaster mitigation, disaster preparedness, disaster response, and disaster recovery (USAID, 2011). Disaster mitigation is a set of programs, which are taken to limit the adverse impact of hazards. It focuses on long-term measures for reducing or eliminating the risk. In the disaster preparedness phase, a disaster manager develops plans of action for the time when disaster strikes. Disaster mitigation also refers to the effective readiness measures to expedite emergency action, rehabilitation and recovery. Disaster preparedness includes emergency warning, emergency shelter, emergency evacuation disaster plans, maintenance of resources and training of personnel. The response phase includes the mobilization of the necessary emergency services and first responders in the disaster-affected area. Here, necessary emergency services include search and rescue, evacuation, demand analysis, resource analysis, emergency relief (food, water, sanitation, first aid, etc.) and logistic supply (tent). In addition, fire fighters, police, social workers, volunteers, Community Based Organizations (CBOs), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) work as first responders toward natural disasters. The aim of disaster recovery is to restore the affected area to its previous state. It includes a) rehabilitation (cleaning up the debris, rebuilding destroyed houses and property, re-employment, etc.) and b) reconstruction (rebuilding or repairing the essential infrastructure e.g., roads, hospital, schools, etc.). Therefore, Sultana's paper at the 2014 AIBS Pre-conference "Extreme Weather, Disasters, and Indigenous Practices in South Asia" aims to identify key causes of natural disaster and how the disaster management strategies with an emphasis on capacity building process can address the natural disaster in Bangladesh. Finally, Sultana's paper offers recommendations for effective disaster management in Bangladesh.

Md. Ashiqur Rahman

Paper Title: Governance Matters: Power, Development, and Climate Change in Coastal Bangladesh

Conference Name: AIBS Pre-conference: Extreme Weather, Disasters, and Indigenous Practices in South Asia

Conference Date: October 16, 2014

Abstract: Adverse effects of climate change touch every sphere of lives both in the developed and developing countries. But people from the global south are more vulnerable than the global north, because of their scarce resources, socioeconomic, political, and weak governance systems. Ashiqur Rahman's paper at the 2014 AIBS Pre-conference "Extreme Weather, Disasters, and Indigenous Practices in South Asia" addresses whether unequal power relations, under the umbrella of governance, plays any role in shaping peoples' livelihood resilience to the impact of climate change. Based on six months of intensive field work in the coastal Bangladesh, this study



claims that uneven power relations enhance local peoples' resilience to the adverse effect of climate change for the short period of time in a micro level, but it decreases livelihood resilience to climate change in the long run. Moreover, development institutions do not deal with this uneven power issue in a way that helps local marginalized people to adapt to the environmental stressor.

AIBS Preconference 2013

AIBS organized its inaugural Preconference on October 17, 2013, in The Madison Concourse Hotel, Madison, Wisconsin, before the annual South Asia Conference. The pre-conference, co-sponsored by CAORC, was titled, **“Forty-Two Years of Bangladesh: Identity, Culture, Economy and Politics”**.

Overview:

Bangladesh achieved its independence in 1971. The country is small in size but the seventh largest in population. People of many ethnic groups, linguistic communities, major religious persuasions, and numerous economic and professional categories inhabit this country. It boasts the largest mangrove forest, the longest unbroken sea beach, the most fertile soil, and the hardest of peoples. Its songs and dances, its poetry and literature, its folklores and philosophies, its sages and saints draw on a tradition that is thousands of years old.

This land has been conquered many times for its riches but never completely defeated. The Pathans, the Mughals, and the British have all had their day but people have stood firm, fought back, and, in the end, prevailed. Bangladesh has lost much. The poverty, for which the country is often cited in the media, is the result. But the country has gained too. The language, the literature, the arts, the culture, and the people as a whole are richer because of those contacts. Among all the countries that are striving for development, Bangladesh has made great strides in its economic programs achieving 6 to 7% steady growth rates. It has made remarkable gains in its market-oriented liberal economy, primary education, especially for girls, and better health services for its people. The country notably improved both its economic performance and its human development indicators and reduced dependence on foreign aid significantly over the decades. It has been able to hold on to its democratic processes, in spite of the numerous obstacles thrown at it periodically. But, most importantly, it has achieved tremendous successes in its social development, and is very close to achieving the millennium development goals.

Aims and Objectives:

This preconference looked at the processes of social transformation occurring in Bangladesh over and beyond the timeline and landscape of Shahbagh 2013. There were a number of events including paper and panel presentations as part of this preconference. The presentations focused on the identity of Bangladesh on the world map; its history, language and motion; and the socio-political and economic issues the country is trying to reconfigure.



Presented Papers:

Topic: Such a Long Journey: Navigating Borders

Presenter: Dr. Annu Jalais, National University of Singapore, Singapore

Topic: Such a Long Journey: Beyond Polar Opposites

Presenter: Dr. Samia Huq, BRAC University, Bangladesh

Topic: Shahbagh, Trance and the Magic of the Nation

Presenter: Dr. Seuty Sabur, BRAC University, Bangladesh

Topic: Prisoners of Shothik Itihash (correct history)

Presenter: Mr. Naeem Mohaiemen, Columbia University, USA

Topic: Periodization and the Twentieth Century: Grappling with the Pre-Histories of Bangladesh

Presenter: Dr. Neilesh Bose, University of North Texas, USA

Topic: A War Within a War: Mizos in East Pakistan and Bangladesh

Presenter: Dr. Willem van Schendel, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Topic: ‘Where Do They All Come From? Social Transformation in Bangladesh

Presenter: Dr. Meghna Guhathakurta, Research Initiatives Bangladesh

Topic: Bangladesh Studies: A Backwater in Burmese Academia

Presenter: Dr. Tharaphi Than, Northern Illinois University, USA

Topic: Locating Islam in Contemporary Bangladesh

Presenter: Dr. Ali Riaz, Illinois State University, Normal, USA

Topic: Disintegration: the Politics of Islamism in Bangladesh and Pakistan

Presenter: Dr. Sayeed Iftekhar Ahmed, School of Security and Global Studies, American Public University System

Topic: Culture and Problems of Development and Governance in Bangladesh

Presenter: Dr. Taj Hashmi, Austin Peay State University, Tennessee, USA

Topic: Development-induced Displacement in CHT: From IDPs to Refugees where History May Revisit

Presenter: Mr. Mohd. Amirul Islam, American Institute of Bangladesh Studies, Dhaka

Discussion Panel:

Dr. Michael Bowler from Winona State University chaired a four-member panel on “**Economic Opportunities and Challenges**”. The panelists were:

Dr. Munir Quddus, Prairie View A&M University, Texas, USA

Dr. Rahim Quazi, Prairie View A&M University, Texas, USA

Dr. Saad Andaleeb, Pennsylvania State University, Erie, USA

Dr. Farida Khan, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, USA



AIBS Dhaka Center Activities

AIBS Patronizes NRB Commercial Bank

In June 2014, AIBS opened an account for the Dhaka Center transactions with the new NRB Commercial Bank, Bangladesh. AIBS previously had an account with CITI NA Bank, which was closed in May 2014 due to changes in their banking policy.

AIBS President and Vice President's Visit Bangladesh

The President of AIBS, Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, and Dr. Michael Bowler, Vice President of AIBS, recently visited Bangladesh in order to appoint a new Director for the Dhaka Center. This trip was very successful and included the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with several public and private universities and institutions. During their visit, Dr. Mathbor and Dr. Bowler gave research presentations and lectures at various institutions.



AIBS Director Announcement

On August 18, 2014, AIBS hired Dr. Rumana Tasmin to be the Director of the AIBS Dhaka Center. Dr. Tasmin completed a Ph.D. in Environmental Science at Kyushu University, Japan, where she specialized in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Dr. Tasmin earned her B.Sc. with honors and M.Sc. in Zoology from the University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. She has worked with the world-renowned International Center for Diarrheal Disease Research in Bangladesh (ICDDR,B). She has organized panels and presented at national and international conferences on environmental risk assessment, disaster management, climate change, and animal and marine bioresources. She is the recipient of the Japanese Government Scholarship, Universe Aid Scholarship and Dhaka University Merit Scholarship. She worked as Country Representative to host and conduct a number of Japanese and Bangladeshi cultural programs both in Japan and Bangladesh. Dr. Tasmin taught different environment-related courses at Junshin University, Ohashi, Fukuoka, Japan, from 2012 to 2013 and taught at Milestone College in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 2006 to 2007. She was also a visiting researcher at the Graduate School of Bioresources and Bioenvironmental Science in Kyushu University, Japan, from 2010 to 2011. Her teaching and research specialties include Environmental Impact Assessment, research methodology, skill development, environmental pollution and climate change.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Signing

1. Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST)

Date: August 12, 2014

Background: AIBS and SUST signed an MOU in January 2013 during the AIBS 3rd Outreach Lecture, which was presented by Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, President of AIBS and Professor and Chair of Interdisciplinary Studies at Monmouth University, USA.



Objectives:

- A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to SUST to present their research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of SUST
- B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with SUST at either the AIBS center or at SUST
- C) To undertake joint research projects to attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines.



Dr. Mathbor contributed books to the library of the Department of Social Work of SUST

Signing Ceremony: The MOU signing ceremony took place at Shahjalal University. Dr. Md. Aminul Haque Bhuyan, Vice Chancellor, SUST, and Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, President of AIBS, signed the MOU. Dr. Md. Elias Uddin Biswas, the Treasurer of SUST; Dr. Neaz Ahmed, the Chair of the Department of Social Work; Dr. Faisal Ahmed; Dr. Ismail Hossain and other distinguished personnel were present. Dr. Michael Bowler, Vice President of AIBS, and Syeda Nur-E-Royhan, Acting Resident Coordinator of AIBS, accompanied Dr. Mathbor to the ceremony. The program was covered by local and national news media.

2. North East University Bangladesh (NEUB)

Date: August 12, 2014

Background: AIBS recently signed an MOU with North East University Bangladesh, which is an upcoming private university in Sylhet.

Objectives:

- A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to NEUB to present their research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of NEUB
- B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with NEUB at either the AIBS center or at NEUB
- C) To undertake joint research projects to attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines.



Signing Ceremony: The signing ceremony was conducted in the auditorium of NEUB. Invited guests included Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, President of AIBS, and Dr. Michael Bowler, Vice



President of AIBS. Advocate Iqbal Ahmed Chowdhury, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of NEUB, signed the MOU on behalf of NEUB along with Dr. Mathbor. Dr. Mathbor and Dr. Bowler jointly inaugurated the Program of Applied Sociology and Social Work at NEUB.

3. Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB)

Date: August 14, 2014

Background: AIBS and Center for Social Science Research (CSSR), Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) recently signed an MOU. AIBS and IUB established a partnership in May of 2013 when AIBS arranged its 1st Outreach Skill Development Workshop, which was conducted by Dr. Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman, Professor, Department of Public Administration, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Objectives:

- A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to CSSR, IUB to present their research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of IUB
- B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with CSSR, IUB at either the AIBS center or at IUB
- C) To undertake joint research projects to attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines.



Signing Ceremony: A small ceremony including members of the CSSR and AIBS was followed by the signing ceremony at the Vice Chancellor's office. Dr. Omar R. Rahman, Vice Chancellor, IUB, and Dr. Golam M. Mathbor, President, AIBS signed the MOU.

4. Institute of Bangladesh Studies (IBS), University of Rajshahi

Date: August 18, 2014

Background: AIBS recently signed an MOU with the Institute of Bangladesh Studies, University of Rajshahi. AIBS and IBS began partnering in September 2012 when AIBS had arranged its first Outreach Lecture at the University of Rajshahi, which was presented by Dr. Amena Mohsin, Professor of International Relations at the University of Dhaka. Another successful event was organized as a joint venture by AIBS and IBS on December 2012 where Ms. Thérèse Blanchet lectured.

Objectives:

- A) To invite Research Fellows from AIBS or IBS and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to present their research and introduce them to faculty members and students of IBS
- B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with IBS at either the AIBS center or at IBS
- C) To undertake joint research projects to attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines.





Signing Ceremony: The ceremony was conducted at the office of the Vice Chancellor, University of Rajshahi, with the support of the VC, Dr. Muhammad Mizanuddin. The Director of IBS, Dr. Md. Shahidullah and the President of AIBS, Dr. Golam M. Mathbor signed the MOU. Dr. Jakir Hossain, professor at the IBS and also a member of the advisory board of AIBS, initiated the collaborative bridge between the two institutions.

5. Social Sciences Research Institute, University of Chittagong (SSRI-CU)

Date: August 20, 2014

Background: AIBS recently signed an MOU with the University of Chittagong. AIBS and CU first partnered in January 2013 when AIBS arranged its first Outreach Skill Development Workshop at CU, which was conducted by Dr. Salahuddin M. Aminuzzaman, a professor in the Department of Public Administration at the University of Dhaka.

Objectives:

A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to CU to present research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of CU

B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with CU at either the AIBS center or at CU

C) To undertake joint research projects that attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest

D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines

E) To work on establishing a Department of Social Work in CU, during which AIBS will provide technical and curricular support to reinforce the process.



Signing Ceremony: A small but distinguished signing ceremony was held at the conference room of the Vice Chancellor's office. After the welcome speeches Dr. Mathbor introduced the new AIBS Director, Dr. Rumana Tasmin, to attendees. Dr. Mohammad Abul Hossain signed the agreement representing SSRI-CU and Dr. Mathbor signed on behalf of AIBS.

6. University of Dhaka (DU)

Date: August 21, 2014

Background: AIBS and DU have maintained a strong relationship despite not having any official affiliation. AIBS has always extended its support to the faculty members and students of DU by inviting them to lectures, workshops, and debates held at the AIBS center. The JSTOR facility at AIBS has also been available for DU students and faculty. DU has shown constant support of AIBS programs held at the center through consistent attendance of DU faculty members and students. Both parties intend to continue this support on future programs by signing an official MOU.



Objectives:

A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the US to present their research and introduce them to faculty members and students of DU

B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with DU at either the AIBS center or at DU

C) To undertake joint research projects that attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest

D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines

E) To jointly organize a national conference on “Strategic Management and Effective Leadership in Higher Education” in January 2015.



Signing Ceremony: The MOU signing ceremony was conducted at the Vice Chancellor’s office in the presence of distinguished personnel including: Dr. Nurul Islam, Director of Social Welfare Institute and Dr. ASM Atiqur Rahman, Advisor, AIBS. Dr. Md. Kamal Uddin, Treasurer of DU, signed the agreement on behalf of the University of Dhaka.

7. Jessore University of Science and Technology (JUST)

Date: August 23, 2014

Background: JUST is one of the most recent public universities, and has already made a good impression on the development of education sector in Bangladesh. Recent AIBS activities and the potential for future collaborations were noticed by the leaders of JUST. The President of AIBS was cordially invited to the JUST premise to give a lecture and to sign an MOU between the organizations.

Objectives:

A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to JUST to present their research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of JUST

B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly with JUST at either the AIBS center or at JUST

C) To undertake joint research projects that attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest

D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines.



Signing Ceremony: The ceremony for signing the MOU was arranged in the auditorium of JUST, with both faculty members and students represented. The signing was held after a lecture by Dr. Golam Mathbor, President of AIBS. Md. Ahsan Habib, Registrar, and Dr. Md. Abdus Sattar, Vice Chancellor, signed the agreement on behalf of JUST. Dr. Golam Mathbor signed on behalf of AIBS. The Director of Dhaka Center, Dr. Rumana Tasmin, was present during the ceremony.

8. Jagannath University (JNU)



Date: September 3, 2014

Background: Jagannath University is one of the oldest educational institutions in Bangladesh. The official AIBS and JNU meeting ushered the opportunity for mutual collaboration on a larger spectrum. The Social Work Department of the university was particularly interested to collaborate with AIBS. The signing of a MOU was decided to formalize the relationship between the two institutions.

Objectives:

- A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows and other intellectuals from Bangladesh or the U.S. to JNU to present their research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of JNU
- B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly at either the AIBS center or at JNU
- C) To undertake joint research projects that attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest
- D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines.

Signing Ceremony: The signing ceremony was held at JNU in the presence of faculty members of JNU from different departments and institutes. The AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, commenced with a short program followed by the signing of the agreement. The Registrar of JNU, Engr. Md. Ohiduzzaman, signed on behalf of JNU and Dr. Mathbor signed on behalf of AIBS. Dhaka Center Director, Dr. Rumana Tasmin, and the Chair of Social Work, Dr. Md. Rezaul Karim witnessed the MOU.

9. Jahangirnagar University (JU)

Date: September 4, 2014

Background: AIBS and Jahangirnagar University began a partnership in 2012 when AIBS arranged an Outreach Lecture at JU, which was presented by Dr. Mary Cameron, AIBS Fellow and Professor of Anthropology at Florida Atlantic University. Both parties intend to mutually support each other on future programs by signing an official MOU.

Objectives:

- A) To invite AIBS Research Fellows from Bangladesh or the U.S. to JU to present research and introduce them to the faculty members and students of JU
- B) To sponsor seminars/workshops/conferences jointly at either the AIBS center or at JU
- C) To undertake joint research projects that attract combined funding from various organizations in order to carry out research programs of mutual interest



D) To pursue joint publications in refereed national and international journals, periodicals, and magazines

E) To work on establishing a Department of Social Work in JU for further collaboration, during which AIBS will provide technical and curricular support to reinforce the process.



Signing Ceremony: The formalization of the mutual cooperation between the organizations was held at the conference room of JU in the presence of a few distinguished personnel from both the institutions. Dr. Abul Khair, the Treasurer of JU, and Dr. Golam Mathbor, the President of AIBS, signed the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations.

AIBS Delegation Meetings in Bangladesh

AIBS Meets with the Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University

Date: August 10, 2014

A three-member AIBS delegation called on the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, Dr. Aams Arefin Siddique, on August 10, 2014. Dr Golam Mathbor, President of AIBS and Professor of Social Work of Monmouth University, led the team. Other members of the team were Dr. Michael Bowler, Vice President of AIBS, and Syeda Nur-E-Royhan, Associate Coordinator of AIBS. During this meeting they discussed matters of mutual interest, such as strengthening the relationship between Dhaka University, AIBS and Monmouth University, increasing the exchange of scholars, and enhancing academic and research activities. AIBS expressed keen interest in signing an MOU with DU with a view to hold joint programs, such as seminars, symposia and workshops to improve strategic management for higher education.



AIBS meets with MOFA Secretary

Date: August 10, 2014

The AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, met with the Secretary of Foreign Ministry, Md. Shahidul Haque, of the Government of Bangladesh on August 10, 2014. The Vice President of AIBS, Dr. Michael Bowler, and other dignified members of the AIBS advisory board were present at the meeting. The President discussed the release of allotted AIBS funding from the Government of Bangladesh in the near future. The honorable secretary ensured the President that his ministry will try to support AIBS in allocating this funding. The ministry is currently reviewing the proposal from AIBS and considering the request in their next fiscal year. If successful, AIBS will be included in future Government of Bangladesh budgets.



AIBS Meets with the Deputy Chief of Mission of the Embassy of the United States

Date: August 13, 2014

The AIBS President Dr. Golam Mathbor and Vice President Dr. Michael Bowler recently met with Mr. Jon Danilowicz, the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) at the U.S. Embassy, at an informal gathering at the American Club in Dhaka. The honorable DCM gave the AIBS delegation valuable suggestions on how to expand the reputation of AIBS within Bangladesh.



AIBS President Meets with JNU Faculty Members

Date: August 21, 2014



Jagannath University faculty member, Dr. Abul Hossain, and the Chair of the Social Work Department, Dr. Md. Rezaul Karim, recently met AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, at JNU to discuss the prospects and potential of a partnership between the two institutions. This short meeting yielded success in achieving a formal collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding between the organizations.

AIBS President Meets with Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University

Date: August 24, 2014

The Vice Chancellor of Jahangirnagar University, Dr. Farzana Islam, met with the AIBS delegation to sign an MOU. AIBS showed interest in supporting the university's establishment of a department for Social Work and assisting with curricula and other expertise. The AIBS President invited the Vice Chancellor to address the keynote speech at the AIBS Preconference on "Extreme Weather, Disasters and Indigenous Practices in South Asia". Unfortunately the VC was unable to attend the conference.



AIBS President Meets with the Vice Chancellor of Asian University for Women

Date: September 1, 2014



Asian University for Women in Chittagong, Bangladesh, is one of a distinguished institutions of higher learning in South Asia. The AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, met with the Vice Chancellor of AUW, Dr. Fahima Aziz, to discuss the possibilities of collaborating in educational and intellectual support. Dr. Fahima Aziz and her colleagues showed keen interest in further cooperation by agreeing to sign an MOU at a future date.



AIBS Meets with the US Ambassador

Date: September 3, 2014

The U.S. Ambassador to Bangladesh, H.E. Dan W. Mozena, and colleagues met with the AIBS President, Dr. Golam Mathbor, to discuss the development of AIBS activities in Bangladesh and the U.S. The Ambassador suggested AIBS forward a budget proposal to the embassy for a funds allocation for the proposed AIBS conference in Dhaka on "Strategic Management and Effective Leadership in Higher Education".



AIBS Programs



1. Dr. Mathbor and Dr. Bowler delivered a lecture, "The Future of Applied Social Sciences in a Globalized World," at the Social Welfare Institute of Dhaka University on August 10, 2014.

2. Dr. Mathbor and Dr. Bowler led a seminar on "Global Poverty and Sustainable Development: Leading Social Work into 21st Century" at the Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), Bangladesh, on August 12, 2014.



3. Dr. Mathbor and Dr. Bowler were invited to inaugurate the launching of a new department, "Applied Sociology and Social Work," at the North East University Bangladesh, Sylhet, on August 12, 2014.

4. Dr. Mathbor delivered an impromptu lecture on "Contemporary Issues in Social Work in Global Perspective" to the students and colleagues at the University of Rajshahi, Bangladesh, on August 18, 2014.



5. Dr. Mathbor lectured on "Dynamics and Prospects of Applied Social Sciences in Global Context" to the students and faculty of Chittagong University, Bangladesh on August 20, 2014.



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