



# BRAC University

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Convocation

30<sup>th</sup> December, 2007

President's Message



President  
People's Republic of Bangladesh

I am pleased to learn that BRAC University is going to hold its third Convocation on December 2007.

Convocation is the solemn occasion through which the students achieve their rewards for successful completion of their study. I believe that the graduating students are prepared to face the challenges of today's dynamic and fast changing world. I hope the students will contribute and add value to the nation in their future endeavour.

I congratulate the graduating students, faculty and the authority of BRAC University on this grand occasion.

Allah Hafez, Bangladesh Zindabad.

Professor Dr. Iajuddin Ahmed

### Profile of Graduates

BRAC University's first convocation took place only two years ago. Armed with the knowledge and skills gained here, our first two batches graduates are working in media, advertising, non-government organizations, telecommunications, software companies, multinational companies, banks and financial institutions, educational institutions, etc. We are justifiably proud of them and we expect that our third batch of graduates will follow and build on their success.

At our third convocation, a total of 321 students are graduating, 240 students from the undergraduate programs, and 81 students from the graduate programs, in the following disciplines:

**Bachelor's degrees in** Architecture, Business Administration, Computer Science, Computer Science & Engineering, Economics, Electronics & Communication Engineering, English

**Master's degrees in** Business Administration, Development Studies, Governance and Development, Public Health

### Distinctions

**Chancellor's Gold Medal**  
Farzana Ashraf (BBA)  
Abebul Zerihun Demilew (MPH)

**Vice Chancellor's Medal**  
Imran Ahmed (CSE)  
Jamir Rahman (CS)  
Farzana Ashraf (BBA)  
Humaira Malik (ECO)  
Samia Zerin (ENH)

Mohammad Jabir Mowla (ECE)  
Shumona Sharmin Salam (MDS)  
Ziaur Rahman (MBA)  
Abebul Zerihun Demilew (MPH)

### Student Activities

Students at BRAC University participate in a thriving extracurricular arena with 28 active clubs and forums which operate under the auspices of the Student Affairs Office. Each semester kicks off with a Club Fair where all the clubs and forums set up booths to showcase their activities and attract new members. The clubs and forums organize seminars, workshops, study tours, debates, film shows, cultural programs, community service, sporting events, etc. They also represent the university at various inter-university and national level competitions. Faculty members play an important role in guiding club/forum activities, and the university encourages participation in extra-curricular activities in order to promote leadership, life skills, and personal development.

### BRACU in the World

At BRAC University, learning extends beyond the classroom. Whether it is exploring Asian architecture in China, participating in a case competition in Seattle, discovering Tagore's humanistic vision at Shantiniketan, or presenting papers at international conferences, our students have been actively and inquisitively exploring the world beyond the university and leaving their mark on it. Study tours and field trips frequently complement classroom learning, and our students hone their skills by participating in programming contests, case competitions, design competitions, debates, etc. They have published papers in international journals and travelled as far as Canada and the Netherlands to present their research. Our students have also been selected to attend the US State Department funded South Asian Undergraduate Student Leaders Institute. BRAC University encourages intellectual curiosity and involvement with the larger world which will prepare them to be enlightened global citizens.

Chief Adviser's Message



Chief Adviser  
People's Republic of Bangladesh

I am happy to learn that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Convocation of BRAC University will be held in Dhaka on 30 December 2007.

On this auspicious occasion, I extend my felicitations and congratulations to the graduating students, their parents, and the faculty.

I hope the new graduates will contribute towards the socio-economic development of our country.

I wish the convocation all success.

Dr. Fakhruddin Ahmed

### Mission

To foster the national development process through the creation of a centre of excellence in higher education that is responsive to society's needs, is able to develop creative leaders and actively contributes to learning and creation of knowledge.

fostering development

Steeped in the values inherited from its parent institution, BRAC University aims to educate young people who will be creative and independent thinkers with a deep engagement with the culture and traditions of Bangladesh, a keen awareness of its problems, and the inspiration to work for its development. In their very first year, students are sensitized to these issues through two specially designed courses taken during the Residential Semester in Savar. "Bangladesh Studies" focuses directly on development issues in Bangladesh, and includes field visits to BRAC schools, micro-credit projects, and national heritage sites, so that students acquire more than merely a textbook appreciation of the topics covered. "Ethics and Culture" is another specially designed course that teaches moral and ethical values through an understanding of its philosophical background.

Even outside the classroom, BRAC University tries to inculcate concern for others, and encourages development-related activities and outreach. Earlier this year, the 'Shohayota Fund' was established using faculty and staff contributions, with matching funds from BRAC, in order to assist students who might be facing an unexpected crisis. Student clubs and forums often get involved in community service. After the floods and the recent cyclone, all student clubs and forums worked together to collect money and relief materials. Their initiative and enthusiasm in responding to the needs of the larger community we are a part of illustrates the kind of active citizenship and willingness to give back to one's community that we try to encourage and inculcate.

Finally, our graduate programs are also geared towards providing the education and skills necessary for development work. The goal of graduate programs like Development Studies, Governance and Development, Public Health, and Applied Economics is to train young professionals who will lead Bangladesh in its quest for development.

The challenges of the twenty-first century are complex and formidable, not only in Bangladesh, but in the ever-expanding global village in which we are inextricably bound. To meet those challenges, the leaders of tomorrow must be creative and dynamic, able to deal with any situation that comes their way. BRAC University provides a 'broad-based education' where students are required to take at least a quarter of their courses outside their major field of study, so that they acquire both depth in their chosen field, as well as breadth in terms of general knowledge. This broad-based education makes students well-rounded and versatile, so that they are able to adapt to any environment.

BRAC University emphasizes leadership skills in other ways as well. Most of the academic courses require presentations or group work. Later, in their final year, students are required to write a dissertation or do an internship, which gives them hands-on real world experience. In addition to their academic work, students are also required to participate in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, which help them to develop their communication and leadership skills.

Finally, the Residential Semester gives students a unique opportunity to develop as individuals away from their home environment. Removed from the familiar bearings of home and family, students learn how to function independently, as well as how to communicate and cooperate with others. They also take part in various activities, exercises, and excursions designed to promote holistic development. Students come away from the experience more confident, independent and articulate, qualities that will hold them in good stead after they graduate and begin their professional lives.

### creative leadership

### Institutional Partnerships

#### James P. Grant School of Public Health

- Harvard School of Public Health (USA)
- Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University (USA)
- George Washington University (USA)
- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (UK)
- Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University (USA)
- Uppsala University (Sweden)
- Karolin Institute (Sweden)
- University of Amsterdam (Netherlands)
- ICDDR,B (Bangladesh)

#### Institute of Educational Development

- Columbia University (USA)
- George Washington University (USA)
- University of Sussex (UK)
- National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (India)

#### Institute of Governance Studies

- Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (USA)
- George Mason University (USA)
- Key Centre, University of Griffith (Australia)
- University of Monash (Australia)
- Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore (Singapore)
- Korea Development Institute School of Public Policy and Management (Korea)

#### BRAC Business School

- Asian Institute of Technology (Thailand)
- Asian Institute of Management (Philippines)
- University of South Australia (Australia)

#### Faculty Development and Capacity Building

- Harvard University (USA)
- George Washington University (USA)
- Colorado University (USA)

Governing Board President's Message



President, Governing Board  
BRAC University

My heartfelt congratulations to the third graduating class of BRAC University. This convocation is the culmination of their hard work and achievement. It is a proud moment for not only the graduates and their parents, but also the dedicated team of teachers and staff who have supported them throughout their university career.

I am pleased to note that BRAC University has, over the short course of its existence, emerged as an institution of excellence which strives to maintain relevance in the changing context of our times. Through the liberal arts education the university offers, we have endeavored to teach the students to think critically and value perspective. The university has also been successful in identifying the critical needs of our society and addressing them by offering specialized degrees in disciplines such as Disaster Management, Public Health and Governance.

As they go forward, I urge the students to reflect on and take pride in the knowledge and experiences they have gathered in this institution. With the conferring of your degrees, you are also bestowed with the responsibility to use your learning dutifully to the betterment of your society, especially those who have not had the privilege that you have received.

I wish you all the success for the future.

Fazole Hasan Abed



Vice Chancellor's Message



Vice Chancellor  
BRAC University

I feel very privileged to congratulate yet another graduating class as we celebrate the third convocation of BRAC University.

Let me remind you that the accomplishments we celebrate today would not have been possible without your own endeavours over the last few years and without the support of the members of our faculty and staff. Perhaps more than anything else parents and guardians likewise deserve this honour, as some have made great sacrifices in their commitment they have made towards their children's education.

Recognizing that you are our nation's future, our major task during the years you have been with us has been to ensure the best possible education for you. Many students who have graduated from this prestigious institution before you are already leaders in their own areas, and are making valuable contributions to different sectors of the society. I have no doubt that you will also follow that very path, armed with the qualifications that you have obtained.

I wish that each of you will go on to become very successful in your respective fields and that you will continuously find ways to meet the challenge ahead of you and widen your capabilities. Never measure your success by your material goals, but by the knowledge and wisdom that you will continue to gain.

My sincere congratulations and warmest best wishes to you all. Savour this moment as we honour you today.

Professor Jamilur Reza Choudhury

### a centre of excellence

To be a centre for excellence in higher education, a university must offer academic programs that are contemporary and relevant, a top-notch faculty that can deliver high quality education, and modern facilities in line with the latest technology. The academic programs at BRAC University are highly relevant to today's world, and particularly relevant to Bangladesh. Our graduate programs have been developed in partnership with the foremost institutions in those fields. The Institute of Governance Studies has received support from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and Monash University, and the School of Public Health was set up in partnership with the public health programs at Harvard, Johns Hopkins, and Columbia, among others. The upcoming certificate and graduate programs of the Institute of Educational Development will receive support from Columbia, George Washington, and the Open Society Institute (UK).

Along with cutting-edge academic programs, the university strives to recruit faculty who will be able to keep pace with the latest trends in their fields. Faculty development programs are in place to help the junior faculty achieve their full potential. Last but not least, a high quality educational experience needs the support of up-to-date technology and campus facilities. BRAC University is housed in its own buildings, and our classrooms are equipped with networked computers and multimedia. We have a growing library of more than 17,000 books, and access to thousands of e-journals from any computer on campus. We have fourteen computer labs, nine design studios, two digital labs, an electronics lab, a CISCO lab, a language lab, a physics lab, and video-conferencing facilities. Beyond that, our faculty and students also have access to the extended resources and facilities of BRAC throughout the country. Students in our biotechnology program also have access to the laboratory facilities of the ICDDR,B.

In the not too distant future, you might turn on your computer and be greeted by a Bangla version of Microsoft Windows. What you may not know is that the foundations of Bangla computing are being laid right here in the Centre for Research on Bangla Language Processing at BRAC University. Similar ground-breaking research is being done by our Institute for Educational Development, which will soon be launching a graduate program in Early Childhood Development, the first of its kind in Bangladesh, and the James P. Grant School of Public Health which recently organized a major international conference on gender and sexuality. The Development Studies Program is taking part in a global research consortium called "Pathways of Women's Empowerment," and the Institute of Governance Studies, which publishes the annual State of Governance in Bangladesh report, offers a unique Master's program that trains mid-career civil servants so that they can more effectively face the complex challenges of governance in the context of Bangladesh. The university recently became an affiliate of the World Bank sponsored Global Development Learning Network which enables individuals and organizations around the world to communicate and share knowledge on development issues through video-conferencing.

Our faculty members publish regularly in national and international journals, and actively contribute to scholarship in their fields. Many of our senior faculty members are recognized authorities in their respective fields. Many of our junior faculty members have won prestigious awards like the Fulbright and the Erasmus Mundus scholarships, and have left for higher studies at renowned universities abroad. Our students also get involved in faculty research projects, even co-authoring papers with faculty members, presenting their work at conferences, and publishing in academic journals, both in Bangladesh and abroad.

Convocation Speaker's Message



Chairman  
Centre for Policy Dialogue

BRAC University deserves to be felicitated on the occasion of its Third Convocation. The University has made appreciable advances as a Centre of higher learning in its short life. Given the university's links with BRAC, which has attained global recognition for its extraordinary achievements in improving the lives of the deprived members of society, in the days ahead BRAC University must give some thought to its own distinctive role as an institution of higher learning. Whilst BRAC University must not deviate from its commitment to academic excellence it must give more attention to bridging the fast escalating knowledge gap between a better educated elite and the poorly educated majority of our population. Command over information and knowledge is emerging as a source of accentuating social and economic disparity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. BRAC University must aspire to use its pedagogic resources to bridge this gap and create specific opportunities for the deprived to enhance their life opportunities through access to higher learning. Bangladesh, BRAC and BRAC University's goal must be to create opportunities for the sons and daughters of landless peasants and workers to aspire to become scholars, professionals, administrators and parliamentarians. It is when such opportunities become a visible part of our social reality that we can claim that a process of social transformation is underway in Bangladesh. Our goal must be to move beyond the alleviation of poverty to build a more just society where the deprived majority may look to the world of education and other forms of opportunity to equip them to claim their rightful share in the fruits of development and modernisation.

Professor Rehman Sobhan

### BRACU in brief

**Undergraduate programs in** Economics, Law, English, Architecture, Business Administration, Physics, Computer Science, Computer Science & Engineering, Electronics & Communication Engineering

**Graduate programs in** Development Studies, Public Health, Governance & Development, Business Administration, Bank Management, Disaster Management, Biotechnology, English, Applied Economics

Undergraduate students: 3157  
Graduate students: 735  
Faculty members: 238  
Financial aid disbursed in 2007: Tk 3.32 crore

### New Programs

BRAC University has been growing steadily and expanding its academic programs. In the past year, new master's programs were launched in English, Biotechnology, and Applied Economics. A postgraduate certificate in Early Childhood Development will be launched next year.

### Residential Semester

A unique feature of BRAC University is its Residential Semester (RS), during which students live in the fully residential Savar campus, take a specially designed set of courses, and participate in a range of activities that promote holistic development. Being placed in a microcosm away from their families and the familiarity of Dhaka city, they must learn to be disciplined, responsible, and independent. The RS courses take full advantage of the residential setting by emphasizing group-work, presentations and co-curricular activities. The Bangladesh Studies course organizes excursions to development projects and national heritage sites, the Ethics course runs workshops and practical exercises related to ethics and leadership, and the EL-Pro course organizes weekly co-curricular activities to improve communicative fluency in English. Extracurricular activities are another major component of the Residential Semester. From sports and physical education to cultural programs and debates, everyone is required to participate. There are inter-dorm competitions on everything from volleyball to wall magazines to debating, emphasizing the importance of leadership as well as teamwork. Students return from RS with improved confidence, interpersonal skills, and a better sense of themselves.

### EL-Pro

The English Language Program, or EL-Pro, is a rigorous program designed to improve English proficiency. Every student is assessed and placed in one of 8 modules, which means that classes can address the specific needs of students at each level. The program is enriched by visiting faculty from abroad who teach courses and conduct workshops for faculty. A hallmark of EL-Pro courses is creating an enjoyable and student-centered learning environment through co-curricular activities like watching movies, designing wall magazines, etc. so that students remain motivated while they learn.

### Career Services

The Career Services Office provides career counseling to students as they near the completion of their studies. In their final year, students go through a nine-week long Professional Skills Development Program which provides training that prepares them to enter the job market. The program focuses on professional conduct, report writing, presentation skills, CV/resume writing, and facing interviews. The Career Services Office also organizes networking sessions which allows senior students to mingle and network with prospective employers in a formal setting.

creation of knowledge

