Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering Department of Gono Bishwabidyalay

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I had the opportunity to read the article on Biomedical Engineering by Manar Din Samad, Lecturer, EEE, United International University; published in the Star Campus on January 6, 2008. It was interesting to me because I was a student of the Department of Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering, Gono Bishwabidyalay (University), Savar, Dhaka. At present I am a lecturer in this department.

After reading this article, I realized that perhaps for two reasons Gono University's contributions in this regard has gone unnoticed. Firstly, it is a private university and secondly, it is away from the city. That is why it may not be possible for everyone to know about this newly emerging specialized subject. So I would like to give some information about our Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering Department.



At the very beginning I should mention the efforts of Professor Dr. Golam Abu Zakaria, who is currently a Professor of Medical Physics in Gummarsbach University, Colognae, Germany. As initiator of Medical Physics in Bangladesh, he arranged several one-week seminars/workshops in Dhaka on Medical Physics with the physics department of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) during the years 1996-1999. His activities in public universities like BUET provided the first impetus to start a Department of Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering in Bangladesh. Eventually in 2000, Gono University came forward to accept his proposal of starting a Master's program in both Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering. The department was established after a series of discussions between the experts of public and private universities and the authorities of the University Grants Commission. This was the first attempt to establish full-fledged Master courses of international standard in Medical Physics and in Biomedical Engineering. The University Grant Commission of Bangladesh officially recognized this program. However, it is worth mentioning that the physics department of the BUET did introduce some courses on Medical Physics at the post-graduate level in Bangladesh as early as 1994.

It is a very flexible interdisciplinary program where graduate students come from different background like physics or related fields in physical sciences, biosciences, medicine, or engineering disciplines. We have developed a syllabus based on German Society for Medical Physics (DGMP) for the postgraduate course in Medical Physics; but with due modifications to suit the Bangladeshi need and context. The course structure is designed to prepare the students to work in hospitals, health institutes and to do research in Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering. The duration of the course is 4 semesters in 2 years.

Later in June 2002, a collaboration program materialized between Heidelberg University, Germany and Gono University, Bangladesh. Education and the training of fellows was the primary objective of this collaboration. 4 teachers and 15 students have been exchanged between the Gono University and Heidelberg University under this collaboration. The practical part of the thesis is done in the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) in collaboration with the Heidelberg University. Our department is also receiving equipment, educational materials such as books, reports, journals and research materials from Germany and the human health division of IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency).

Professors from Germany started to visit Gono University twice a year and to deliver lectures, as well as to give guidance to the students and teachers. Till now many specialists in different disciplines of Medical Physics including Prof. Hartmann, Prof. Uwe Oelfke, Prof. Markus Seewald, Prof. Guenter Wolf, Prof. Wolfgang Eschner accompanied Prof. Zakaria to deliver lectures to this department. They also helped in the preparation of the thesis proposal and assessing the thesis work.

Professor Mannan Mridha, Royal Institute of Technology, KTH, Stockholm and a specialist in Biomedical Engineering, has also been connected with the Gono University program since its very inception. Several teachers and students also came here from Sweden for the purposes of teaching and studying.

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