



Architectural Education in Bangladesh

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**INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS BANGLADESH**

## **Country Report on Architectural Education in Bangladesh By Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB)**

### **1.0 Brief History of Architectural Education in Bangladesh**

- Architectural Education, like Architecture itself, has gone under numerous stages of development and eventually has evolved to its present form. During the time of Vitruvius the term 'theory' precisely meant the principles of proportion and 'practice' denoted the manual works done in the studio. The Renaissance contributor Brunelleschi limited the scope of Architectural Education to just understanding of practical geometry. But, his counterpart Alberti, for the first time, claimed Architecture to be a developed philosophy and opened the window towards more intellectual and academic endeavor. This very Idea then again came to the surface through Ecole Royale des Beaux Arts and then reformed into BAUHAUS of Arts and craft with socio-cultural context. Later, we have seen the academies stressing on history and construction after Le Corbusier's great ideas of modernity.
- The first school to adopt a formal five-year professional program of study in Architecture was Cornell University which did so in 1922. By 1940 almost all the Architecture schools in US and all over the world had a standard course of five year leading to a Bachelor degree of Architecture. A "four-plus-two" program became a model for expanding the professional curriculum in the 1960's at the university of California and Washington. This program usually took the form of a four-year course of study in environmental design followed by two years with a strong concentration in Architecture. Many school stayed with the five-year Bachelor of Architecture program. Institutions that offer a degree in Architecture in Bangladesh all have 5 years programs leading to the degree of Bachelor of Architecture (B. Arch.) using this as role model.
- **BANGLADESH:** The process of industrialization and urbanization in Bangladesh (then East Pakistan) in the 1950s led to hectic development, which suffered from the lack of technological support. In view of the challenging situation, the Department of Architecture was established along side the existing engineering education. In 1961 the Department of Architecture in Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Dhaka was founded with the support of the Texas A & M University (USA). The Curriculum carried the spirit of then American standard of Architectural Education. In 1966 first batch of students graduated from the 5-years B. Arch. program. With time this curriculum undergoes numerous additions and subtractions with the changing circumstances of the society. After the Independence of Bangladesh in 1971 the number of students intending to study architecture and both the quality and quantity of local experienced teaching staff increased continually. Thus ensuring the introduction and development of a more contextual and need oriented academic curriculum in this pursuit.

- To cope with the growing demand of architects, especially outside the capital city a second public School of Architecture was established in the country and first outside the capital city i.e. southeastern region (Khulna) of the country in 1991. The Discipline of Architecture, Khulna University (KU) started with a group of architects delivering a 5-year B.Arch. program. Being aware of the locational disadvantage for being away from the capital city, KU has tried to tap these new IT opportunities. KU has also successfully tried to convert its locational disadvantage into advantage by emphasizing on contextuality.
- The national parliament passed the Private Universities act in 1992 which allowed private universities to operate. The demand for an undergraduate education in Architecture lead to the establishment of a Department of Architecture at the Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (AUST) in 1996 followed by the University of Asia Pacific (UAP) in 1997, BRAC University in 2002, State University in 2004, North South University in 2004 and Stamford University and American International University of Bangladesh in 2005. The academic curriculum of these universities does not show any drastic change from that of BUET and KU; although the methods of delivery vary. The opportunity provided by the private universities has released the pressure on the public universities. Furthermore the private universities are able to graduate their students in due time, something the public universities are yet unable to do for various reasons. They are, however, in the process of development in terms of physical and other resources, in which areas the public Universities are ahead.

## 2.0 **Role of the Member Institute in relation to the Architectural Education in Bangladesh**

Architecture is a product of simultaneous experiences. In this respect IAB is playing the role of a facilitator (not necessarily a mentor) to provide the Architectural Institutions with inputs of local conditions and contextual requirements so that these curriculums can grow on the soil from which it came into existence, not an imported one.

IAB Jointly organized a workshop on 'Architectural Education in Bangladesh - the future direction', organised by the Settlement Environment Architecture Research Collaboration Help (SEARCH) within the Department of Architecture at North South University and the New Age.

The workshop brought together the organisations associated with the education and practice of architecture in Bangladesh, administrators and the media. The deliberations focussed on the educational philosophy, teaching methods and the social obligations.

The outcome of the workshop stressed on the importance of technical expertise, the development of aesthetic and scientific skills to protect the environment and the society, from indigenous to global scenario. In this endeavor, Educational programs in each Schools must come under a central philosophy with definite goals and objectives courses broadly based on teaching technical, communicative and intellectual skills to generate variety and work with both high and low finances. The workshop also highlighted the urgency of the teachers to be 'aware of the contemporary teaching method' through continuous training programs provided by externals and in this line of action IAB has already started to draw the outline of such programs.

## 2.1 The Institute (a voluntary learned society or it have statutory power)

The Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB), registered as a society, does not have statutory powers. The Institute however should observe closely with all the architectural degree-awarding schools and evaluated their academic standards when their graduates apply for its membership. This is done presently through a review process by a sub-committee specifically formed for this purpose.

## 2.2 Any separate body for accreditation

No. But, for establishing equivalency in the degrees and requirements of the increasing number of architects qualifying from foreign schools and resolving their issue of membership; IAB instituted a study to form an Architectural Education Board, which is presently under formation process.

## 2.3 Student's body or chapters

Student's bodies are present at different universities and schools of Architecture but they are still working separately as isolated organizations at different localities. IAB has taken a resolution in the Executive committee to bring them under a common platform to increase inter-school communication and exchange programs.

## 2.4 Liaison with Architectural Schools

There are following 8 Schools of Architecture accommodating about 1200 students for a population of about 120 million in the country.

Sl No	Name of Institution	Year of Estab.	Name of the Head	Contact Address
1	Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology, Dhaka (BUET)	1962	Ar. Shaheda Rahman	T: 9665634, 9665650 x 75 M: 01715013150 <a href="mailto:shaheda@arch-buet.ac.bd">shaheda@arch-buet.ac.bd</a>
2	Khulna University, Khulna (KU)	1991	Ar. Bejon Bihari Sharma	T: 041-720171-3x 223 M: 01712256771 <a href="mailto:rangada@gmail.com">rangada@gmail.com</a>
3	Ahsanullah University of Science & Technology, Dhaka (AUST)	1996	Ar. M Abdul Muktedir	T: 9130613/9115461 M: 01913509139
4	The University of Asia Pacific, Dhaka (UAP)	1997	Dr. Abu Sayed M Ahmed	T: 9664953 M: 01711114084 <a href="mailto:sayeed@uap-bd.edu">sayeed@uap-bd.edu</a>
5	BRAC University, Dhaka.(BU)	2002	Ar. Fuad Hassan Mallick	T: 9881265 M: 01713018447 <a href="mailto:fuad@bracu.ac.bd">fuad@bracu.ac.bd</a>
6	State University, Dhaka.(SUB)	2004	Ar. Mejbahuddin Ahmed	T: 8151784-5 M: 01711401875 <a href="mailto:mejbah@hubd.net">mejbah@hubd.net</a>
7	North South University, Dhaka.(NSU)	2004	Ar. Haroon Ur Rashid	T: 9885611-20 x 171 <a href="mailto:h rashid@northsouth.edu">hrashid@northsouth.edu</a>
8	Shahjalal University of Science & Technology, Sylhet	2004	Dr. Mushtaq Ahmed	T: 0821-714479 M: 01711161075 <a href="mailto:arc@sust.edu">arc@sust.edu</a> <a href="mailto:sobhan-arc@sust.edu">sobhan-arc@sust.edu</a>

9	Stamford University, Dhaka. (SU)	2005	Ar. Mohammad Ali Naqi	T: 8153168-69 PABX M: 01713063787 <a href="mailto:anagi_252@yahoo.com">anagi_252@yahoo.com</a>
10	American International University of Bangladesh, Dhaka (AIUB)	2005	Dr. Salah Uddin	T: 9885907/8811749 M: 01715035772 arefeen@aiub.edu

**Table 01: Enrollment and Faculty Strength of Different Schools of Architecture**

Name of Institution	Students intake capacity/yr.	Total number of students	Full time Faculty	Part time Faculty	Student :Full time faculty ratio
BUET	55	385	30	4	11:3
KU	30	150	23	5	05:4
AUST	70	375	15	13	13:4
UAP	50	200	14	17	06:5
BRAC U	50	190	14	14	06:8
SUB	60	130	7	8	08:7
NSU	75	160	7	9	10:0
SU	30	120	7	0	17:1
STU	60	140	9	2	12:7
AIUB	35	165	7	6	12:7
Total	515	2015	133	78	10.46

Although the number of Architects produced each year in Bangladesh has increased in a huge quantity, especially after the introduction of Architectural Education in the private Universities, it hardly can meet the actual demand of the contemporary society.

### 3.0 Current office bearers (for term 2007-2008)

An eleven member Executive Committee elected by its members for two years tenure runs the institute. It has the mandate of its members to represent itself as the supreme authority to deal with all matters pertaining to the profession of Architecture in Bangladesh including Architectural Education. Member (Education) Prof. Dr. Abu Sayeed M. Ahmed is assigned to look after all matters regarding to the Architectural Education. The following New Executive Committee was elected recently in the Institute election held in January 2007.

Office	Name	Reg. Number
President	Ar. Mubasshar Hussain	H-013
Vice-President	Ar. Nahas Ahmed Khalil	K-022
General Secretary	Ar. Kazi Golam Nasir	N-006
Joint Secretary	Ar. Jalal Ahmad	A-036
Treasurer	Ar. Dewan Shamsul Arif	A-079
Member (Education)	Ar. Abu Sayeed M Ahmed	A-035
Member (Publication)	Ar. Albab Ahmed	A-068
Member (Seminar)	Ar. Md. Ishtiaque Zahir	Z-011
Member (Culture)	Ar. Nishat Ara Khondker	K-016
Member (Membership)	Ar. Taher Azad	A-085
Member (Profession)	Ar. Mamnoon Murshed Chowdhury	C-031

#### 4.0 Funding for Institutes Architectural Education

IAB mainly depends of the fees, subscriptions and donations from its members for events and activities. It also receives a lump sum fund annually from the Government. IAB has got its own land over which it plans to construct its own office building. With this end in view institute is at present raising funds from various sources and contributors. Once the building is complete, it will have a regular source of funds from the rents.

#### 5.0 Major Programs related to Architectural Education

- a. Lecture series: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program, is regularly organized by IAB at Dhaka.

Six courses are offered under this program for Educating the professionals.

They are: -

1. Electrical Services
2. Electrical codes and regulations
3. Fire protection and detection
4. Air conditioning systems
5. Law, Company law and income tax
6. Plumbing design

#### 6.0 Students' Programs

Underway

#### 7.0 Regular liaison programs for local Schools or teaching faculties

Underway

#### 8.0 Publications

Besides the quarterly IAB News Letter, IAB is working on a Book titled "IAB Awards" that will be published on March 2008.

## 9.0 **Key issues in Architectural Education**

There are ten schools of Architecture prevailing in the country. The sudden increase in the number of schools has brought forward certain issues in the field of Architectural Education. Many of these schools are very recently established and the curriculums adopted in such schools are yet to be developed to meet the needs of the society. 126 architects are involved in these schools as full time academicians, which is, around one sixth of the number of the presently available architects in the country. Moreover, most of them are young and there is a scarcity of experienced, qualified and trained teachers in those schools.

Internship is needed in the process of Architectural Education, providing specialized training and knowledge about architectural practice that can not be covered in the academic setting. They can attain practical training through a close working relationship with a practitioner and also gain first hand experience from construction field. Duration of internship in Bangladesh varies from 6 weeks to 12 weeks. The schools in Khulna University and Ahsanullah University provide no scope of internship within their academic program.

Studio management is one of the major issues that the Architectural institutions are spending most of their energies from the time of establishment of BAUHAUS. Due to the existing social norms and values of our time the 24 hour studio-work gives birth to different critical complexities even to the University Administrations. That is why in most of the schools, 24 hour studio-work is being discouraged at deferent levels. Moreover, the isolation caused by extensive use of Personal Computer Technology driving the students towards a state of alienation both from each other and perhaps from their society.

With a few exceptions, Architectural academics are reluctant to produce any research paper: neither they nor the profession finds it relevant. Indeed, there is often a positive hostility to the very idea of this most intellectual and academic of activities, for designing buildings-not publishing papers. A philosophical understanding is not impossible between these apparent conflicting interest scenario. Taking Professional Practice as a research ground two bipolar outputs can be encouraged, one in paper and other in practical fieldwork. Thus drawing the attention of the professionals and as well as academics towards a common point of interest: that is, the advancement of Architecture as a whole. With this in view institutions imparting Architectural Education must encourage faculty members to be involved in professional practice which would enrich the practical experience and technical knowledge of the members and, in turn, upgrade the quality of teaching.

## 10.0 **Future Plans**

The Institute of Architects Bangladesh (IAB) registered as a society without statutory powers yet, but enjoys de facto recognition and accreditation by many government agencies and most nongovernment bodies. A recent Government gazette circular makes IAB's membership as sufficient and essential credential for practice within the Dhaka Metropolitan Area. This

provision is likely to be extended to all urban area in Bangladesh.

IAB's membership is awarded after a minimum 2-year work experience under a Member Architect after graduation from a recognized University, followed by another professional examination conducted by IAB. IAB is planning to launch inter-school communication and exchange platforms and continuing teachers training program, involving the renowned academicians and the professionals, to ensure the development of Educational Environment, specially, in the increasing number of recently established Architectural Schools of the country.

IAB is also planning to encourage the Academic Institutions to give more stress on the practice of the profession and to organize the design studios under certain Central Idea Program (CIP) for each school developed according to the context. This Central Idea Program must be evaluated each year involving all the studio teachers, experts, professionals and student representatives. The issues should be clearly depicted and elaborated to the faculties and as well as to the students before commencing each academic term. This will eventually ensure certain characteristic identity to every School of Architecture in this country. This will not only ensure the quality education in the schools but also will generate gamut of specializations among the schools according to the need of the contemporary society.