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**Report on my visit to Dhaka (Bangladesh)
for the
18th International Mathematics Conference [1]
March 20 – 22, 2014
IUB campus, Bashundhara, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

quote from

<http://www.iub.edu.bd/index.php/component/content/article/1-latest-news/605-18th-international-mathematics-conference-held-at-iub.html>

The 18th International Mathematics Conference of the Bangladesh Mathematical Society (BMS) [2] was held at Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) [3] from 20-22 March 2014. The inaugural ceremony of the conference was held on 20 March, 2014. Professor A.K. Azad Chowdhury, Chairman ((State Minister), University Grants Commission of Bangladesh (UGC) graced the occasion as Chief Guest and addressed the audience. Mr. Rashed Chowdhury, Chairman, Board of Trustees, IUB, and Mr. Nurul Alam, Trustee, A. F. Mujibur Rahman Foundation spoke on the occasion as Special Guests. Professor M Omar Rahman, Vice Chancellor, IUB spoke on the occasion as Chief Patron. The inaugural ceremony was chaired by Professor M. Anwar Hosain [4], President, Bangladesh Mathematical Society. The top 10 prizes of the Final Event of the 5th National Undergraduate Mathematics Olympiad [5] were distributed during the inaugural ceremony. The inaugural ceremony was followed by a plenary session in which a Keynote address on Mathematics as a Key to Development was given by Professor Jamilur Reza Chowdhury, Vice-Chancellor, University of Asia Pacific.

More than 150 mathematicians from 6 countries presented their research at the conference. There were papers presented in many different areas of Pure and Applied Mathematics. As part of the conference, a session was held in remembrance of Late Professor Jamal Nazrul Islam. The Conference Dinner was

hosted by Professor A. A. M. S Arefin Siddique [6], Vice Chancellor, University of Dhaka at his residence on 22 March, 2014. The Conference was organized by the Department of Physical Sciences, IUB. The Conference was sponsored by several academic and non-academic institutions and by some individual donors.

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<http://www.iub.edu.bd/index.php/component/content/article/1-latest-news/605-18th-international-mathematics-conference-held-at-iub.html>

I was fortunate to have the opportunity to participate to this conference, thanks to the following events. On August 25, 2013, in Islamabad (Pakistan), for the closing ceremony of the 14th International Pure Mathematics Conference 2013 (14 IPMC 2013), the two participants from Bangladesh, Abdul Latif from Rajshahi University and Md Anwar Hossain [4], announced that the 18th International Mathematics Conference would take place on December 20–22, 2013 in Dhaka. I was not free to visit Bangladesh in December, but I informed some colleagues, including Francesco Pappalardi, who decided to participate. Early December, the organizers decided to reschedule the conference, due to lack of security in Dhaka. Since he already had his air ticket, Pappalardi decided to go to Bangladesh for a shorter visit and just meet some mathematicians there, which he did . After his visit, he wrote an informative report [7] which provides an interesting description of the situation of mathematics in Bangladesh. I will not repeat this information here.

The conference in Dhaka was rescheduled in March 2014, I could participate (but unfortunately Pappalardi could not). It was organized by the Independent University of Bangladesh (IUB) [3] and the Bangladesh Mathematical Society [2], the president of which is Md Anwar Hossain [4]. The fact that it was the 18th International Mathematics Conference shows that there is already a long tradition. The secretary of the conference, Habib Bin Muzaffar, has been extremely efficient and devoted, the organization of the conference was very well done: he has a good experience already.

I gave an invited lecture on *Diophantine approximation with applications to dynamical systems* [8]. When I started to talk, we were only 10 people in the room, at the end of my lecture, more than 40 people were there. The chairperson was Munibur Rahman Chowdhury, University of Dhaka, whose PhD supervisors were Martin Kneser and Max Deuring.

Some talks during the opening and closing ceremony, and during the Symposium on Mathematical Education chaired by AFM Khodadad Khan, as well

as some lectures, were given in Bengali, but most of the conference was in English.

During the closing ceremony, Md Anwar Hossain [4] announced that he will prepare a project of a SEAMS School [9] for 2015 and of a CIMPA Research School [10] for 2016. This idea was initiated by F. Pappalardi last December [7].

After the conference dinner, the Vice-Chancellor of Dhaka University, AAMS Arefin Siddique [6], invited me to come back as an invited Professor of his University, and I wish I will be able to accept this invitation.

The proceedings of the conference, a document of 253 pages, has been given to each participant, both in hard and soft copy. Unfortunately, not all conferences and talks are included. Besides, due to the change of dates, many participants could not come and a large percentage of scheduled lectures did not take place.

A series of lectures was organized for the young mathematicians, with a jury selecting the best ones, who received a prize of 20 000 Bangladeshi Taka (185 Euros) each. This was an excellent initiative. For some talks, the speaker was just reading a document on the screen in A4 format in small characters and sometimes prepared with microsoft word. For some other talks, the powerpoint presentation included a too large number of fancy decorations. Fortunately, some speakers had a better idea of the way of giving a lecture, with the right quantity of material on each page, and with comments which do not consist only in reading the screen.

Anwar Hossain introduced me to Saifullah Khandker, Chairman of the German University Bangladesh Trust (GUBT), with whom I had interesting discussions concerning this new University [11]. I am considering coming back to Bangladesh in 2015 for teaching a course of linear algebra in GUB.

Before visiting Bangladesh, I wrote to Emilie Chassagnard, Attachée de coopération et d'action culturelle at the French Embassy, and suggested that I could meet her and discuss the cooperation in Mathematics between France and Bangladesh. She replied by inviting me to a reception in the residence of the Ambassador for the journée de la francophonie, on Thursday, March 20. This gave me the opportunity to meet her as well as a number of other guests.

When I came back to the hotel the same evening, I found that I had lost my passport, probably in a CNG scooter (autorickshaw). I reported to Habib Bin Muzaffar the next morning, and he has been extremely kind to take care of me, driving me to the Police Station and to the French Embassy several times. The consulate has also been extremely efficient by providing me a laissez-passer consulaire which enabled me to come back to France as scheduled.

I wish to express my deep thanks to Habib Bin Muzaffar, Anwar Hossain as well as to the French Embassy.

References

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- [3] Independent University Bangladesh :
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[9] SEAMS School (South East Asian Mathematical Society) :

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[10] CIMPA :

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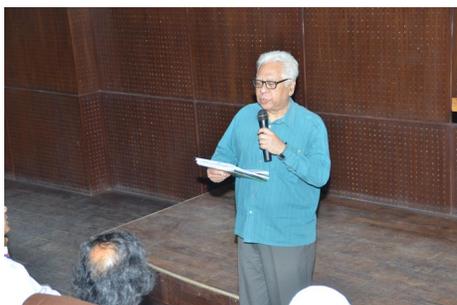
[11] German University Bangladesh :

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[12] Bangladesh Academy of Science :

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Khodadad Khan



Munibur Rahman Chowdhury, Habib Muzaffar and Md Anwar Hossain.



Md Anwar Hossain,
Ali Shihab Sabbir,
Habib Muzaffar,
Arefin Siddique



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