

## *President's Communication – February 2009*

**My dear fellow members,**

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim.

My respectful greetings to you once again. I would like to thank our members, both at home and abroad for the overwhelming and very encouraging response, to my earlier communication of January 2009 and for your very valuable suggestions, which we will try to implement in the months ahead.

February is a very historical month for Bengalis, as we recall the contributions and ultimate sacrifices of the martyrs who fought for our language and culture and had to pay the ultimate price. In this month, we remember and salute them. It was also unfortunate that in this month of mourning, many of our armed officers and their families lost their lives in an unfortunate and unexpected series of events at Pilkhana. We mourn the loss of the families affected by this great tragedy and pray for the salvation of the departed souls.

I would now like to touch on some of the major activities carried out during the month of February 2009 and also provide a brief snapshot of future activities planned for the next month.

### **CPD Seminars:**

There were two CPD seminars during February 2009. The Council is very much conscious about the members' requirements to attend mandatory CPD Programmes and sharing in the post qualification education process besides earning credit hours. Hence, we have been trying to hold adequate number of CPD Seminars. Following two seminars were held in February in which a large number of members actively participated.

1<sup>st</sup> CPD Seminar was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> February, where our Council Member, Dr Jamaluddin Ahmed, FCA presented the keynote paper on a very important subject **Economics of Migrant Remittance – What shapes and What shakes**. Eminent Economist, Professor Dr Qazi Kholiquzzaman was the Chief Guest and Dr Stephen Conington, Principal, United World College of Hong Kong was the Special Guest. The seminar was conducted by our Past President, Mr K Z Islam, FCA.

2<sup>nd</sup> CPD Seminar was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> February, where our Member, Mr Sabbir Ahmed FCA, now resident in Australia, presented the keynote paper on **Managing Sustainability of Environment in Business**. Eminent Economist & Environmentalist, Professor Dr Mozaffar Ahmed was the Chief Guest whilst Mr Matiur Rahman, Editor of The Daily Prothom Alo was the Special Guest. The seminar was conducted by our very senior member and former Finance Secretary, Mr Matiur Islam, FCA. At the very outset, one-minute silence was observed for the Army officers killed in the tragic incident at Pilkhana BDR Head Quarter. This was followed by Munajat offered by all members attending the seminar, for the salvation of the departed souls of BDR tragedy.

### **Evening Coaching Classes:**

Pre-exam Coaching class for PE-I has already started in full swing and PE-II & PE -III classes will be started from 01<sup>st</sup> March. All arrangements have been made for successful holding of students' coaching classes. We are fully focused on student facilities including library facilities to increase pass rate in all professional examinations.

### **Meeting with Minister for Commerce**

We called on the Minister for Commerce, Mr. Muhammad Faruk Khan MP, on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2009, at his office to congratulate him on his assumption of office. We had taken this opportunity to discuss various issues relating to our profession. We specifically discussed important issues like inclusion of Chartered Accountants in the Board of Directors of various corporate bodies under his jurisdiction, consideration of more jobs and audit opportunities for our practicing and non practicing members and arrangement of a piece of land for ICAB Academic Complex. We also requested him to reorganize/ restructure Office of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies & Firms for the interest of foreign and local investors and offered our assistance in helping the Government to attract and encourage Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). We submitted a written memorandum signed by the President, where all these issues were included. The Honourable Minister gave us a patient hearing and assured us of his own and the Ministry's assistance in achieving these goals. However, the Honourable Minister also advised us to ensure fair and quality works by Chartered Accountants in their areas of practice.

We invited him to pay a visit to ICAB office at a mutually convenient time. He gladly accepted our invitation. We are expecting some benefits coming out from this interaction with the honourable minister. ICAB team was led by the President, and other team members were Mr Md Syful Islam, FCA, Vice President, Mr Md Shahadat Hossain, FCA, Vice President, Mr Sohel Kasem, FCA Past President, Mr M Farhad Hossain, FCA, Past President and Mr N I Chowdhury, FCA Secretary.

### **Meeting with Minister for Industries**

We called on the Minister for Commerce, Mr Dilip Barua, on 24<sup>th</sup> February at his office to congratulate him on his assumption of office. We took this opportunity to discuss various issues relating to our profession. We specifically discussed important issues like enhancement of our professional fees by State Owned Enterprises (SOE) under his ministry, appointment of Chartered Accountants in key positions of government owned Corporations e.g. BCIC, BSEC, BSFIC etc and inclusion of Chartered Accountants in the Board of Directors of various corporate bodies under his jurisdiction. We also submitted a written appeal signed by the President, where all these issues were included. Minister gave us a patient hearing and assured us of doing his best, as far as practicable.

We invited him to pay a visit to ICAB at a mutually convenient time. ICAB team was led by the President, and other members included in the team were Mr Shawkat Hossain, FCA Vice President, Mr Md Syful Islam, FCA, Vice President, Mr Md Shahdat Hossain, FCA, Vice President, Mr Md Humayun Kabir, FCA Immediate Past President and Mr N I Chowdhury, FCA, Secretary.

### **ICAB & ICAEW Twinning Project**

The Council had a meeting on single agenda to review the progress of ICAB & ICAEW Twinning Project as the Council is focusing on successful implementation of this project. This is one of the key tasks that is getting much importance from the highest body of the ICAB. The progress of the project is being monitored regularly. There will be two more meetings of the Council in March to review the status again. One of these two meetings is expected to be attended by Mr Vernon Soare, ACA, Executive Director of ICAEW, UK, Dr Zubaidur Rahman & Ms Suraiya Zannath Khan, FCA from World Bank and Mr Showkat Ali Waresi, Project Coordinator from the Ministry of Commerce. We are expecting an encouraging outcome from this joint meeting of all stakeholders.

Mr Heward Simpson, FCA, Innovation & Technical Development Manager of ICAEW would be coming during second week of March to have discussion on new ICAB Syllabus and Curriculum. He will also discuss on examination related issues with the relevant sub committee.

### **IFAC (PAIB Committee) guidelines on Evaluating and Improving Governance in Organisation.**

We, as professional accountants should remain updated on recent developments and pronouncements in the areas of our profession. I strongly feel that attending few CPD seminars alone cannot help us much in the area of our professional development. In view of this, I decided to download various new professional guidelines/ alerts/ pronouncements etc issued by IFAC, IAASB and other related organizations and forward the same to our honourable members for their reading & updating of knowledge. I sincerely hope that my this tiny effort would benefit our members in their professional advancement. I sent IAASB guidelines to assess impact of credit crisis on "Going Concern Assumption" to members in January.

Recently (**February 10, 2009**) – As part of IFAC's ongoing commitment to support professional accountants in business and their organizations in enhancing governance and in improving organizational performance, the Professional Accountants in Business (PAIB) Committee of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) has released a new International Good Practice Guidance document entitled *Evaluating and Improving Governance in Organizations*. The new guidance to professional accountants in business includes a framework, a series of fundamental principles, supporting guidance, and references on how they can contribute to evaluate and improve governance in organizations.

"This International Good Practice Guidance brings together globally recognized and applicable good practice principles on effective governance into an international benchmark for the accountancy profession.," says Mr Ian Ball, IFAC Chief Executive. This guidance is designed to complement existing governance codes, such as the *OECD Principles of Corporate Governance*

(2004), issued by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), by encouraging organizations to achieve a balance between conformance with rules and regulations and driving organizational performance. It also focuses on how to create sustainable stakeholder value in the form of good products or services, economic profitability, job security, safety, or other social or economical responsibilities. These guideline were also downloaded and circulated to all members of ICAB to their respective email address.

Please note that both *Evaluating and Improving Governance in Organizations* and the *Preface to IFAC's International Good Practice Guidance* can be downloaded free-of-charge from the PAIB section of the IFAC online bookstore at <http://www.ifac.org/store>.

### **ICAB – DRC Picnic 2009**

Annual ICAB – DRC Picnic 2009 was held on Friday the 06<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at a nice place of natural beauty near Ashulia, Savar, Dhaka. More than 400 ICAB members and their family members as well as ICAB Officers, Staff and their families participated in the Picnic, traditionally organized by DRC every year. This is a unique opportunity to mingle with families of ICAB members. There were many events starting from Cricket to raffle draw, which kept all the participants busy for full day. All the participants received various gifts at this picnic. A great time was had by all. DRC deserves our appreciation for their untiring efforts to make this picnic a truly enjoyable one.

### **Observance of “Ekushey February”**

ICAB & DRC jointly observed “*Mohan Ekushey February*” with due solemnity and homage to the martyrs of the Language movement. Mr Md. Shahdat Hossain, FCA, Vice President from ICAB side and Mr Md Joynal Abedin, FCA Secretary DRC led the “*Provat Ferry*” procession. This “*Provat Ferry*” started from C A Bhaban and ended at Shaheed Minar by placing flower bouquet at the Shaheed Minar.

### **Participation in Television Programme**

Mr Md Syful Islam, FCA, Vice President (Education & Training) and Mr N I Chowdhury, FCA Secretary, attended a talk show on Channel i, a private TV channel on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2009. They talked on various aspects of studying Chartered Accountancy in Bangladesh. ICAB is attending such programmes on TV, news media and other forums to attract brilliant students in studying Chartered Accountancy course.

### **Other key activities of the month**

- One Council meeting was held in February, which was a single agenda meeting to review the ICAB-ICAEW twining project progress.

- Two Executive Committee meetings were held in February 2009.
- Information Communication Technology (ICT) Committee meeting was held on the 04<sup>th</sup> February to discuss action plan for 2009. A sub committee has been formed for automation of examination system and other areas of the operation of ICAB.
- Meeting of the Committee for Professional Development of Women was held on the 05<sup>th</sup> February 2009 to chalk out programme for 2009.
- Professional Development Committee held its first meeting of the year 2009 on the 10<sup>th</sup> February. Meeting discussed various issues relating to professional development including UP Audit and NGO Audit. Meeting decided to hold meeting with NGO Bureau officials at a convenient date in March.
- Quality Assurance Board (QAB) held a meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> February and formed a sub committee to take actions on some areas relating to quality issues. The sub committee, comprising some of our very eminent members, has already held 2 meetings so far and plans to hold another meeting very soon.
- CPD Committee also held its 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the year to decide various actions to ensure regular CPD programmes for our members.
- PDIC held its meeting to review the progress of the Twining project before the visit of the World Bank and ICAEW Teams. PDIC also briefed on the project at Council level.
- ICAB participated at the Budget meeting with Finance Division of the Ministry of Finance where Mr Shahdat Hossain, FCA Vice President (Finance & Accounts) attended. Government Grants to ICAB for the financial year was agreed and approved at this meeting. You will be happy to know that we could manage to increase government grants amount for this current fiscal year.
- President attended as the member of the Interview Board of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) to select Chief Finance Officer for BCB, from Chartered Accountants, who were short-listed for interview.
- President had contacted Bangladesh Steel Re-rolling Mills (BSRM) management in Chittagong and arranged circulation of the vacant position of the Head of Internal Audit of BSRM amongst ICAB members.
- President, Secretary and leaders of the Bangladesh Chartered Accountancy Chhatra Parishad (BCACP) met with President, Vice President and Secretary on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2009 at C A Bhaban. We discussed various issues relating to education & training and further improvements in those areas.
- In addition to above meetings of the various committees, ICT, CPD and QAB Sub Committees held several meetings in this month.

## Activities Planned for March 2009

We have already planned the following activities for the month of March:

- Making courtesy calls on the Honourable Minister of Finance and Minister for Education to project the Institute's activities and have their support & assistance whenever needed
- Holding two Council meetings
- Holding meetings of the following Standing and Other Committees –
  - Executive Committee
  - Quality Assurance Board
  - Professional Development Committee
  - Investigation & Disciplinary Committee
  - Articled Students Committee
  - Committee for Amendment of C A Order & By-Laws
  - Project Development & Implementation Committee
  - Member Services & Welfare Committee
  - Continuous Professional Development Committee
  - Technical & Research Committee
  - Review Committee for Published Accounts & Report
  - Board of Studies
  - Editorial Board
- Holding at least 2 CPD Seminars on topical issues.
- Two ICAEW officials are scheduled to visit ICAB to review progress of Twining project. We have plan to hold series of meetings with these two ICAEW officials.
- World Bank mission from Washington DC is scheduled to visit Bangladesh, coinciding with the visit of two ICAEW officials from the UK, to discuss progress on Twining Project. We are planning to hold Council meeting to discuss twining project, where all parties e.g. ICAEW officials, World Bank Officials, Ministry of Commerce official would be invited.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, may I briefly touch upon the unprecedented recession affecting many countries of North America, Europe, the Middle East and Asia and their detrimental effects on our own economy. Already we are seeing the effects on our migrant workers who are being returned back to Bangladesh. An already fragile export market situation is likely to be affected even further by

**The Institute of  
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the possibility of reductions in foreign remittances by our migrant workers. All this is likely to affect our next Budget projections of revenue earnings. Whether as service providers of clients or employees or employers or business owners, our professional members may also be adversely affected. At this critical time, we should remain cautious and do our best to ensure that our economy does not suffer too much as a result.

Wish you all the best and look forward to further communication next month and the year ahead.

**Nasir U Ahmed, FCA**  
Dated: 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009