



December 2017

52 percent of the house rent fixed by the landlords in the beginning and generally did not undergo revisions from time to time. 67 percent tenants experienced revision of initial rent compared to 33 percent of households that experienced 'no change'. Meanwhile, 50 percent of households said that their rent increased annually followed by approximately 25 percent of households reporting that their rents were the same for the first two years and then increased annually. Excessive house rent is one of the foremost reasons for increased living costs in the capital as most of the dwellers have to pay the largest part of their monthly income for housing, a recent study has found. As a result, they are left with no other alternative but to reduce expenditure on essentials like food, clothing, education and entertainment in order to cope with the costs. These were some of the findings revealed at the press launching of a study on housing in Dhaka.

BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, BRAC University launched its annual flagship research report titled the State of Cities 2017: Housing in Dhaka, through media on December 31, 2017 at the city. The research was also conducted a survey on 401 households in four selected areas in the capital city including old Dhaka, Mirpur, Rampura and Badda in middle of this year.

The study showed that 82 percent of tenants surveyed spent more than 30 percent of their income in house rents. Among them 44 percent of the surveyed tenants spent as high as 45 percent of their income on renting a



Increased House Rent Forced to Lessen Expenditure on Regular Needs

Study on State of Cities 2017: Housing in Dhaka

house and buying utility services.

Meanwhile, paying high price for accommodation the tenants are unable to get well equipped residence to deal with disasters like breaking out of fire or earthquake. The study found that about 95 percent residential buildings have no fire escape and 99.3 percent tenants never attended a fire drill. It also showed that 70.8 percent tenants have no open space around their living area to take shelter during earth quake.

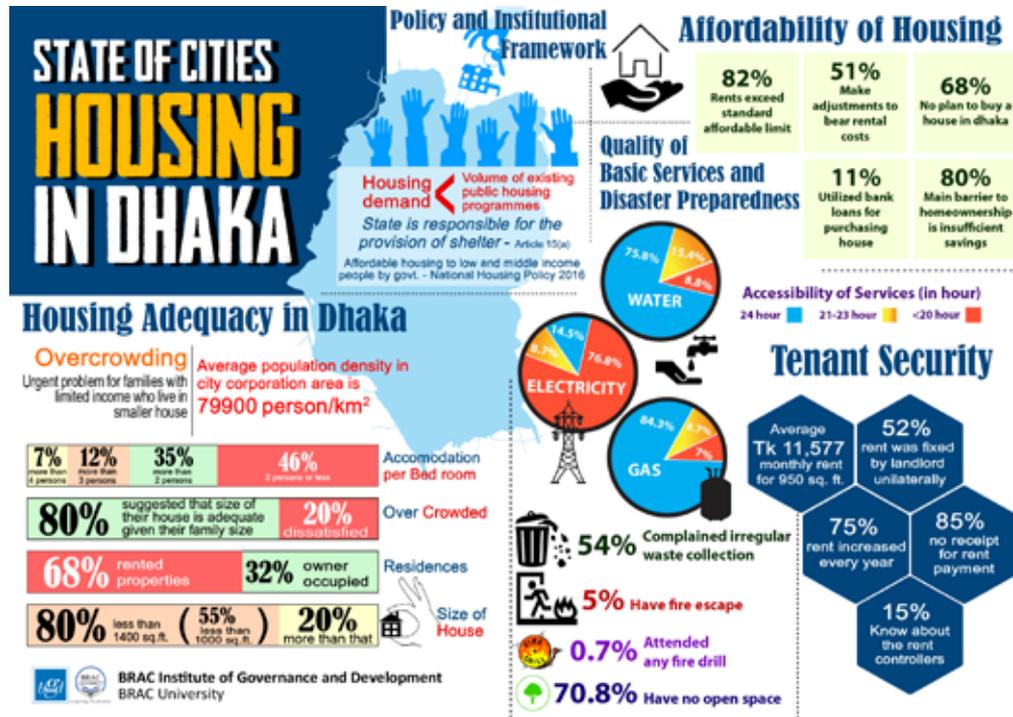
BIGD's Executive Director Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman said, the accommodation costs are squeezing middle and lower class people so hard that they plan to leave the city at every available opportunity. He added that Dhaka is becoming a polarized and it is becoming a city of two classes- rich and poor.

Senior Research Associate and Lead Researcher of the

study Syeda Salina Aziz said, 85 percent of the tenant did not receive any signed receipt for their rent payment and only 50 percent tenants know about the rent controllers. She added that the crisis was the result of a huge lack of supply of housing against the demand. She said that the supply meeting less than 20 percent of the demand. We see two types of development in Dhaka. One side is highly developed while the other is lagging behind. The government should work on reducing the discrimination, and provide the middle and low-income people with affordable housing facility, she said. If the dwellers can own a house, a sense of ownership will grow among them, she added.

To overcome the situation, the study recommended that the government increase monitoring on the housing sector, especially in terms of fixing and collecting rents, and setting up apartment price. It also recommended a separate department within RAJUK is necessary to monitor the

application of building codes. The study suggested paying rents through banks, renting through a formal agreement, creating ward level field controllers to handle tenancy-related issues, and easing home loan conditions and interest rates.



Students of MAGD Visited Vietnam and Malaysia

As part of the degree 'Masters in Governance and Development (MAGD)' 17 students along with a faculty member visited Vietnam and Malaysia from 26th November to 8th December. The participants comprise of civil servants from different ministers and agencies of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Nepal who are pursuing the residential Master Degree Course under BIGD. The program in Vietnam was facilitated by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), Vietnam and in Malaysia by the Institute of Professional Development (IPD) of Open University of Malaysia (OUM).

In the first part of the program from 26th November to 2nd December 2017, the team visited different Ministers and Agencies of the Government of Vietnam and also had number of class room sessions regarding development policies and strategies of Vietnam from

distinguished speakers and policy makers. The week long program include sessions on administrative structure and public administration reform, the role of Vietnamese Government in economic development in the context of regional and international integration, anti corruption, local governance and promoting tourism and attracting foreign direct investment. Participants also visited Ministry of Home Affairs and Government Inspectorate of Vietnam in Hanoi, National Park in Hai Phong Province and a daylong river cruise in Ha Long Bay. In the closing ceremony NAPA President Dr. Dang Xhuan Hoan handed over certificates among participants. Congratulating participants for successful completion of the course he hoped that learning's from the training will be helpful for participants to contribute to their personal, national and regional development. Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Faculty and Research Fellow of BIGD thanked the NAPA



officials and expressed that it will strengthen cooperative relationship between the two institutes. Among others Ms Pham Hoa, General Director of NAPA, Prof. Dr. Nguyen Thi Hong Hai, Head of Faculty of Organization and Personnel Management of NAPA, Ms. Le Thi Tuyet Head of the Planning and General Affairs Division Dr. Le Dong Doanh, Senior Advisor of Economic Development for the Vietnamese Government addressed in different sessions.

Later from 3rd -8th December the team moved to Malaysia and participated in a training program titled, 'Sustainable Policy Planning and Governance' organized by the IPD, Open University Malaysia (OUM). Participants visited and participated in number of lectures organized by different Ministries and Agencies of the Government of Malaysia. Addressing in the closing ceremony, Professor Dr. Ahmed Bin Hasem, Vice President of

Business Development and Technology, OUM emphasized on the importance sharing knowledge and experiences to promote sustainable economic growth and development in the Asia- Pacific region. Professor Dr. Richard Ng, Director of the Institute of Professional Development also highlighted the importance of sharing innovative technological knowledge for sustainable urban development in particular. BIGD Faculty Dr. Hossain thanked the OUM for hosting the visit and hoped to have more collaboration between BIGD and OUM in future.



BIGD research Fellow attended the Urban Thinkers Conference 2017 as discussant

Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow and Head-Urban, Climate Change and Environment Cluster of BIGD attended the Urban Thinkers Conference 2017 (UTC 2017) titled, Road Map for Implementation of New Urban Agenda: Involvement of Multi-Stakeholders in Development Process, organized by the Department of Urban and Regional Planning on November 24-25, 2017 at the city. The conference particularly focused on issues, policies,

priorities, challenges and mechanisms required for the implementation of New Urban Agenda in Bangladesh.

As a distinguished discussant on the Sub-Theme "Urban Governance", Dr. Hossain emphasized for coordination, cooperation and collaboration among different stakeholders involved in urban governance. Providing example of the urban transportation sector of Dhaka in particular, he urged for strong measures



from government side as the main public good provider. He also pointed out the duplication of rules and regulations of multiplicity in one hand, as well as paucity of rules and regulations in another hand which creates problems and pressure in sustainable delivery of urban services. Dr. Sarwar Jahan, Director, Policy Research Institute and Dr. Khurshid Zabin Hossain Taufique, Director, Urban Development Directorate (UDD) presented the key note speech in the session. Ms. Syeda Rizwana Hasan Chief Executive, Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA); Mr. Motaher Hossain, Honorable Mayor, Sonaimuri Paurashava and Mr. Ashekur Rahman, Urban Program Specialist, UNDP Bangladesh, was also participated as discussant.

BIGD Students Took part at BRACU Convocation

The 12th Convocation of BRAC University took place on the 13 December, 2017 at the university's residential campus at Savar in Dhaka. Education Minister Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid attended the convocation as chief guest and presided over the ceremony on behalf of the president of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and university chancellor Md. Abdul Hamid. The convocation speaker, Managing Director of Drik Picture Library Ltd., Mr. Shahidul Alam, spoke of his life in photography and of leaving behind a life of comforts in the UK to challenge the Western perception that Bengalis were poor. BRAC University board of trustee's Chairperson Sir Fazle Hasan Abed and University Grants Commission Chairman Professor Abdul Mannan also addressed at the convocation ceremony. Around 1600 students from various academic disciplines joined the ranks of BRAC University graduates where 90 students were from BIGD. 47 students from Master of Development Studies (MDS), 32 students from Masters in Procurement and Supply Management (MPSM), 09 students

from Master in Development Management and Practice and 02 students from Masters in Governance and Development (MAGD) participated in the program and received the degree certificate. Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, ED; Dr. Shanawez Hossain, Research Fellow; Mohammad Sirajul Islam, and Syeda Salina Aziz, Sr. Research Associate of BIGD also attended the convocation, where Dr. Rahman attended a discussion session with the students of MAGD at the end of the event.



BIGD's ED and Gender cluster Head attended BIDS Research Almanac 2017

BIDS organized a two day event where a total of 22 researches based papers spread over six sessions. The presentations were on a wide variety of issues including Agriculture, External Price Shocks and Rural Well-being, Labour Market Issues, Financial Markets and Financial Inclusion, Climate Change, Natural Disaster and Environment, Entitlement, Welfare and Violence and Exports, Firm Performance and Productivity Growth. The conference was inaugurated by the Chief Guest Dr. Mashiur Rahman, Hon'ble Advisor to the Prime Minister on Economic Development and was chaired by Dr. K.A.S. Murshid, DG, BIDS. Ms. Simeen Mahmud, Head, Gender Studies Cluster and Coordinator, CGST, BIGD was a Discussant in the Technical Session 2 titled Labour Market Issues. The closing session was chaired by Prof. Rehman, Sobhan, Chairman, CPD, where the Chief Guest was Mr. A.H.M. Mustafa Kamal, FCA, MP, Honourable Minister,

Ministry of Planning, GoB. In the concluding session, AK Khan, president of the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry, called for budget for carrying out quality research on different sectors. The research should be market-driven and the private sector should be engaged so that they can contribute to national policy formulation, he said.

In the session, Zahid Hossain, lead economist of the World Bank Dhaka office, said "In the absence of credible data, we are stereotyped to the policymakers and the vice versa".

Attending as a distinguished panelists Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman, Executive Director of the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development, said Bangladesh needs large amount of data for quality research.

In-house seminar on CGST research held

Ms. Sayema Haque Bidisha, Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Dhaka University delivered a presentation at BIGD on December 17, 2017. The paper has been prepared based on findings from a CGST research entitled 'Gender Norms, Labour Supply

and Poverty Reduction in Comparative Context: Evidence from Rural Bangladesh and India'. The research was funded by ESRC. Researchers from different clusters of BIGD attended the event.

Researcher's other activities

- Ms. Maheen Sultan, Visiting Fellow, Gender Studies Cluster and Deputy Coordinator, CGST, BIGD was a panelist at a dialogue on Workplace Harassment Against Women organized by CARE Bangladesh in collaboration with UN Women
- Ms. Simeen Mahmud attended as a Panel Discussant at the Launch of Policy Review Report on Women Economic Empowerment and Unpaid Care Work in South Asia, organized by Action Aid Bangladesh, held on December 23, 2017
- Lopita Huq, Mahabubur Rahman and Ziauddin Mohammed Nasrullah attended the Public Lecture on 'Why Economics?' organized by BRAC University on December 6, 2017. The lecture was given by Professor Wahiduddin Mahmud, former Adviser, Ministry of Finance and Planning to the Caretaker Government of Bangladesh
- Maheen Sultan, Kabita Chowdhury, Sahida Khondaker, Sanjida Parvin and Sufia Khatun attended a 10 day training on the tools and field testing of tools for the GAGE Urban Study at JPG School of Public Health from Dec 3-13, 2017
- Dr. Mirza M Hassan, Adjunct Fellow and Sumaiya Kabir Talukdar, Research Associate attended a discussion meeting on Beyond Neo-Liberalism: Visions for Post-Capitalist Social Order in Bangladesh. Dr. Hassan delivered the opening remarks at the event.

Executive Director's Activities

BIGD's ED Dr. Sultan Hafeez Rahman had several meetings in November 2017 with a number of distinguished personalities such as prominent academics, policy makers and researchers regarding the research collaborations and other relevant issues of BIGD.

Dr. Rahman had meetings with Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, Chairperson, BRAC; Mr. Shameran Abed, Director, Microfinance, BRAC; Mr. Hasanuzzaman Zaman, Outreach Manager, Copenhagen Consensus Center regarding PRAC Project; Professor Mushtaq Khan,

SOAS University; Sylvia Borren, Member of Board of Trustee, BRAC and Professor Frans Geraedts regarding further training courses in the future. Dr. Rahman attended the meeting of National Governance Assessment Framework (NGAF) with the senior government officials of different ministries and the launching meeting of SDC - LG Project SHARIQUE (Phase IV).

He also attended the 12th convocation of BRAC University and the 50th Anniversary of Asian Development Bank.



BRAC Institute of Governance and Development
BRAC University

SK Centre (3rd - 7th Floor), GP, Ja-4, TB Gate
Mohakhali, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Tel +88 02 58810306, 58810320, 58810326, Fax: +88 02 8832542
Website: <http://bigd.bracu.ac.bd>



Inspiring Excellence