

# Implementing the Copyright Law.

Courtesy: Star Campus, The Daily Star

## Story credit: Promiti Prova Chowdhury

University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh (ULAB) held a seminar titled "Copyright Law: Challenges and Opportunities in the Media Industry of Bangladesh" at its auditorium on April 7, 2011. Mohammad Manzurur Rahman, Registrar of Copyright and Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs highlighted the seminar as the Chief Guest. Mahboob Zaman, President, Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) spoke at the seminar as special guest. Pro-Vice Chancellor of ULAB, Professor Imran Rahman inaugurated the discussion as the Introductory Speaker. He underscored the fact that violation of copyright is like stealing, and we are committing it every time we buy books from Nilkhet. He also added that photocopying books is a violation of the Copyright Law.

Barrister A. B. M. Hamidul Misbah, Advocate, Supreme Court continued as the Keynote Speaker. In his speech, he stated that the main purpose of implementing Copyright Law is to protect expression of ideas. In Bangladesh the Copyright Law was passed in the year 2000, but due to inadequate advocacy programmes, it has not been properly implemented, yet. He mentioned that some of the stakeholders of this act are the poets, writers, film makers, musicians, photographers, scriptwriters etc. Furthermore, he stated that the "Copyright Law", "Trademark Law" and "Patent Law" are held by three different ministries and institutions in Bangladesh, that are responsible for creating vague ideas over the law. Mahboob Zaman said that BASIS is using Linux operating system to encourage people to avoid using pirated software.

Following him, the chief guest of the event, Mohammad Manzurur Rahman, came up with his presentation where he mentioned that copyright means the author's rights. In his book "Buddhibrittik Shompod" (Intellectual property): Bangladesh Copyright Law," he differentiated between 'property' and 'intellectual property'. Terms like 'patent', 'design', 'trademark', 'geographical indication', 'royalty', and 'levy' were also described in his book. He mentioned that if any work is 1. fixed in a material form, 2. created by a human author, 3. original, and 4. has expressions of idea, it deserves the protection of Copyright Law. Literary works, songs, dance, sculpture, photos, maps, sound recordings, computer programmes, broadcasting programmes, musical performances and phonogram recording, all these meeting the four requirements fall under this category. He also added that a copyright holder has two kinds of rights: 'Economic Right' and 'Moral Right'. "The creators themselves are unaware of their copyrights in our country. So our duty would be to spread awareness in every possible way, one of which could be by including them in the curriculum in educational institutions," he said.

At the end of the programme, Dr. Shahidul Alam, President, Bangladesh Photographic Society broadened the discussion by highlighting the fact that in newspapers and other media we encounter 'Source: Internet', which is also an absolute violation of copyright. The creator of any work loses his creativity due to such activities. Dr. Jude W. Genilo, Head, Department of Media Studies and Journalism (MSJ), ULAB was present at the seminar. The discussion was moderated by Hillol Sobhan, Associate Professor, MSJ, ULAB.