

Fate of 750 IMS students uncertain

ATAUL GANI SUMON

The fate of 750 students of the Institute of Marine Science (IMS) of Chittagong University (CU) became uncertain as they could not appear in the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations under the fisheries cadre service over the past 20 years.

Despite their educational qualification, they were not allowed to appear in the BCS examinations under the said cadre, reportedly due to underestimation by the authorities concerned, the students said.

They are also not provided with government jobs even in the sectors related to their subjects such as jobs in Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute (BFR), the Coastal Shrimp Cultivation Sector or Marine Fisheries Sector and Coastal and Marine Pollution Sector, they said.

The students, all with brilliant academic background and ability they showed while getting themselves admitted into the institute by scoring top marks in the admission test, are put in a great frustration.

They blamed a section of officials of the ministry of fisheries and livestock for the deprivation and the trouble caused to them.

The institute started its journey in 1971 when it was known as 'Marine Biology Department' that aimed at conducting survey on marine and coastal fisheries, research works and creating the efficient manpower in the fields of management and development. In 1983 the department was renamed as the 'Institute of Marine Science' with some additional activities and a some other missions behind establishing

the institute. The department was introduced with a view to developing our marine resources, researches and collecting and creating the efficient manpower for Marine Fisheries Department, Coastal Aquaculture Organisation, Marine Food Production Companies, Shrimp Hatcheries, BFDC, Bay Fishing Corporation, Environment Department and other related organisations.

The aims and objectives of establishing the institution are also research works and collection of the resources on the mouth of the rivers and in the sea nautical boundary of our country, increase the production of fish and shrimps, research works on the bottom level of the Bay of Bengal and physical & chemical substance limited in the economic fisheries boundary, holding seminar, symposiums and conferences and publishing books, bulletin and journals.

According to the sources, since 1999 the institution conferred the Msc degree on 450 students of 24 batches. Of them, only 23 got the government jobs under the marine or coastal fisheries organisations.

And the IMS students of Chittagong University dream for a job in the marine fisheries department at Chittagong under the fisheries secretariat and marine fisheries and management unit.

The students of the institution did not get any job at the "Coastal fisheries management strengthening project".

At the press conferences at the National Press Club and Chittagong Press Club recently the IMS students criticised the government for

only allowing the students of fisheries department of BAU to appear in the BCS examinations under the fisheries cadre. They said a section of officials influenced the government to include the BAU fisheries department students in the BCS examinations through an ordinance.

Later, the ordinance was published in the Gazette of 1982. In 1987, the fisheries and livestock ministry took initiative to include the BSc. (Hons.) graduates of IMS of CU with the students of BAU (fisheries) to appear in the BCS examination under the fisheries cadre through an amendment to the ordinance. According to the ordinance, the Public Service Commission (PSC) only allows the BSc. (Hons.) students of Agriculture University to appear in the BCS examination under the fisheries cadre.

A meeting was held at the ministry of fisheries and livestock on July 28 in 1987 in this regard. It was decided at the meeting that the ordinance would be revised. But the decision was not implemented till now for reasons unknown.

On May 26, 1997, a committee was formed to end this discrimination with joint secretary (fisheries) of fisheries and livestock as convenor and university teachers, and officials of fisheries department as the members.

The committee held a meeting on July 4 the same year in this regard without any decision. Later, an expert committee was formed with representatives of University Grants Commission (UGC), PSC director and representative of fisheries department to review the

text of the different universities and department of the fisheries.

The expert committee recommended that the text of IMS of Chittagong University is eligible enough to get the jobs under the fisheries cadre.

According to the recommendations, a draft circular was also approved. The draft also said the students of IMS of CU could appear in the BCS examination under fisheries cadre.

But in the final circular published in the different dailies recently, the recommendation was excluded.

According to ordinance of 1982, the IMS students could not appear in the BCS examinations. Only the fisheries graduates from Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU), Mymensingh appeared in the examination.

"This is the fully discriminatory attitude towards us and other fisheries graduates of different universities of the country," IMS students said.

The marine science students have been continuing the movement for realising their demand for the last two decades.

"We are deprived. If the PSC would give us the opportunity we, obviously, will do better than any other university students of the country," a second year student of IMS said. Meanwhile, resentment sparked off again among the students after announcement of the PSC in which the IMS students were excluded from appearing in the upcoming Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examinations.

"The PSC assured us of including the marine students BCS examinations according to the draft circular of the expert committee and approval of the fisheries and livestock ministry," the students said.

The agitating students IMS of CU started boycott of their classes and examinations from September 16 demanding revision of the announcement.

They observed series of programmes including processions, rallies, token hunger strike and token blockade programme of Dhaka-Chittagong rail lines protesting the PSC announcement and demanding its revision immediately.

They brought out processions on the university campus and in the port city of Chittagong protesting the announcement.

The agitating students under the banner of Marine Science Students Sangram Parishad (MSSSP) also submitted memorandums to the PSC chairman through the CU vice chancellor, Deputy Commissioner (DC), Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of police (Chittagong) and the

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A three kilometre stretch of Fatikchhari-Haiyanko road remains in a dilapidated condition for long posing a great risk to vehicular movement.

PHOTO: ZOBAYER HOSSAIN SIKDER

Asian Highway to boost trade

SHAHIDUL ISLAM

The port city of Chittagong, which was called by many as 'Porto Grande' aeons ago, is going to be connected with major parts of Asia and partially with Europe through the newly proposed 'Asian Highway'.

Keeping present trend of globalisation and a free world in mind, some Asian countries including Bangladesh had long been contemplating seriously the need of such a highway. The countries believe that this would strengthen the relations with each other and eventually boost the overall economy of the countries.

The people of Chittagong, especially the business community here, virtually forced the inclusion of Chittagong as a vital part of the proposed Asian Highway recently, thanks to their timely lobbying and agitation, sources said.

A secretariat-level meeting of some neighbouring countries involving Bangladesh, Myanmar

and Thailand in June in Myanmar had decided primarily to link Chittagong in this regard.

The Prime Minister of Thailand Thaksin Sinawatra at a meeting with Prime Minister Khaleda Zia in Dhaka shared same views regarding the proposed highway and both the leaders agreed to include Chittagong.

Sources said China that had the world's largest population also showed keen interest to become a part of this 'broad-base' linkage. Recent developments have it that the aforesaid four countries including Bangladesh have finally been included as the 'implementing authority' for the Asian Highway.

The probable routes of the proposed 'highway' will be stretched from Dhaka-Chittagong-Teknaf upto Yangon-Bangkok-Beijing. This would open up a new vista of communication between the countries of Asia and Europe, and rest of the world in a broader sense.

The road and rail communications of Bangladesh with the whole of

Asia would also become wide open in near future at the advent of this super highway. When the Awami League was in power, neighbouring India came up with a different proposal in this regard. They had proposed for constructing a tri-nation 'Asian Highway' involving only Bangladesh, India and Myanmar in the process.

According to that proposal, India suggested a route stretching from West Bengal to Myanmar via Benapal-Dhaka-Brahmanbaria and Tripura. However, the proposal had failed to attract positive response from other countries excepting India for many reasons, sources said.

The route linking Chittagong and Teknaf was considered more convenient and economically viable instead of what India proposed for, sources said.

Besides, the business community of the port city had reportedly preferred the 'Chittagong-Teknaf-Yangon' route and they, in fact, opposed the Indian idea, sources added.

The business community here think that the overall trade and commerce of Chittagong as well as the country would get momentum and dynamism once the proposed Asian Highway was implemented. In addition to this, the export-import business centring the Chittagong Port would be increased remarkably, they added.

The idea of such a highway was first appeared back in 1959-1960. A decision of creating a newer road-and-rail communications between the countries of Asia and Pacific regions was initiated at that time.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was supposed to implement the project, which was called as 'Global Highway' (Bishwa Road) initially and later changed as 'Asian Highway'.

The incorporation of such an idea was aimed at introducing a global road network involving all the countries of the world in phases, sources said.



The Institute of Marine Science (IMS) of Chittagong University (CU).

PHOTO: STAR

ORBIS - a mission for saving sight worldwide

ABDULLAH AL MAHMUD

The first ever Ophthalmic Training Programme of ORBIS, the world's lone "flying eye hospital", in the port city of Chittagong ended successfully on October 3, with imparting training to ophthalmologists, nurses and technicians required for an improved eye-care service in the country.

ORBIS, an international humanitarian organisation aiming at Saving Sight Worldwide, on its seventh visit to Bangladesh, but first in Chittagong, had conducted the three-week programme at Shah Amanat International Airport.

An ORBIS team of doctors, nurses, anaesthetists and biomedical engineers from 13 countries in partnership with Ophthalmological Society of Bangladesh, Chittagong Branch and Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex (CEIT) conducted the programme that started on September 15.

During the programme 186 eye care professionals were given training on ophthalmic surgery and bio-medical surgical and bio-medical skills till September 30. A total of 255 ophthalmic consultations and 69 eye surgeries were also made, said Brooke Johnson, the communications Coordinator of ORBIS DC-10 while talking to a group of journalists on October 1.

The medical programme that took place on board the DC-10 flying eye hospital and at the Chittagong Eye Infirmary and Training Complex (locally known as Pahartoli eye hospital) focused primarily on training of eye-care professionals specially for the treatment of Children's eye disease and improving pediatric ophthalmic care, she added.

The local ophthalmologists, technicians and nurses took part in the training. They were given training in three groups one week for each. They participated in discussion on diagnostic techniques, observed surgeries, attended lectures and workshops as well as practising corneal transplants and

cataract extractions in the wet lab, Brooke Johnson added.

The teaching curriculum in the first week (September 15-19) included Cataract (manual), Cornea and Pediatric

Ophthalmology/Cataract. In the second week (September 22-26) there were Strabismus, Glaucoma and Retina (including Pediatric Retina) while the curriculum of the third week (September 29-October 3) had Strabismus, Oculoplastics and Cataract.

The Deputy Manager of Chittagong Eye Infirmary Md. Shahidur Rahman said that the programme aimed at training some 250 eye-care professionals during its visit to Chittagong this time and it had a splendid response.

Ophthalmologists, technicians and nurses from different corners of the country attended the programme, he said.

However, of the participants a core group of 20 eye-care professionals received intensive, and hands-on training during the programme, he added.

Prof Rabiul Husain, Director of Chittagong Eye Infirmary expressed his satisfaction over the programme saying that the main purpose of the ORBIS DC 10 Programme was to transfer critical patient care and surgical skills from the ORBIS medical team to the local eye-care professionals and the objectives was achieved.

"I'm happy to say that this programme met our objectives and surpassed our expectations," Prof Husain said.

While talking to The Daily Star, Bangladesh Country Director of ORBIS Dr. Sk. Md. Aminul Islam said, "intensive and on-hand training to a core group of eye-care professionals would provide us with a skilled team of professionals for the eye-care service here."

Regarding the response and achievement of the programme, Dr. Aminul said, "It is one of the most successful missions in ORBIS history."

ORBIS started its journey in 1982.

The word ORBIS means 'all around' in Latin and 'of the eyes' in

Greek. The organisation that travels different places for saving sight all over the world and is always on a mission of the eyes.

The flying eye hospital of ORBIS was first housed in a DC-8 Aircraft and it was shifted to the DC-10, the second of its type made so far, in 1996, sources said.

The flying eye hospital in DC-10 is arrayed with examination and laser treatment room, operation room, recovery room, audio-visual studio, a 48-seat classroom, scrub and sub-sterile Area, biomedical technician training area and library of videotapes, textbooks and journals.

During each programme on board ORBIS DC 10, patients whose vision impairment represents a worthwhile learning opportunity are selected for treatment. Local eye-care professionals work side by side with volunteer faculty to perform surgeries in the plane's operation room. Procedures are broadcast live to the trainees in the classroom when trainees are able to ask questions to operating surgeons via a two-way audio-visual system.

As I grew up in Kazir Dewry, I was one of the boys whose only passion was to be in and around Neaz Stadium, watching whatever sport was going on there, occasionally playing, and always talking about sports.

At that time, an international wrestling bout took place in Chittagong, venue Neaz Stadium, in which the great wrestlers from Pakistan, Goga, Bhulu, Aslam and Azam respectively also competed. Because of high pricing of tickets our guardians couldn't send us to watch the bouts, but as the wrestlers were lodging at the Stadium we went at daytime hoping that we might have a chance to see them. We were lucky and we saw them playing cards in one of the lower rooms, which was fitted with large windowpanes. Terror surely struck

MOHIT UL ALAM

They were like ancient Greek athletes when I first saw them.

Rashed, Shahed, Wahed and Morshed, these were the first names of the four brothers whose last names were common - 'Asgar Chowdhury', and they were the leading sportsmen from Chittagong in the early sixties, when I myself was a kid, 10 years old, and the All-Pakistan National Sports Competition was being held in Chittagong, at the Neaz Stadium, presently M.A. Aziz Stadium.

As my memory goes back, they were all very good-looking, very fair complexioned, and very well built. They threw discus, shot put, hurled the javelin, and upheld the image of Chittagong by grabbing medals. I don't remember seeing them as sprinters or jumpers. These were participated in by another athlete from Chittagong, Yusuf from Hathazari. Yusuf, who has recently died, was lean and tall, and dedicated himself completely to improvement of Chittagong sports. He later became an athletic coach on the national grid. In that national meet I'm referring to, Yusuf scaled great height in the high jump event, though I can't say if it got him any medal.

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us, as they looked larger than we imagined. And most of them were shaven-headed, a tradition, I believe, followed ritually in wrestling (example: today's kids' favorite wrestler, the Rock). On our way back home, in excited outbursts we made all sorts of speculations about the prowess of the wrestlers. And, it fell to Babul (Abdullah Farook, later to become a film director), the most imaginative amongst us, to give us his piece of wisdom that if Bhulu, the greatest of the pahlawans, just deigned to rest his forefinger on the shoulder of any of us, he would just be flattened to the ground. Masud (Masud Ul Alam, a painter, now living in New York), amongst us was the quickest to catch the terminology of any game. He impressed us by using the word 'flying-kick', which he heard only the other day.

Coming back to Asgar Chowdhury brothers, they all have now become legends. Their father Sagir Ahmed Chowdhury, the younger uncle of Labour Minister Noman Ahmed Chowdhury, who, as it is said, died in Calcutta slipping on a banana peel, was the owner of the now defunct cinema hall, Khurshid Mahal, and left much fortune to his children.

Part-1

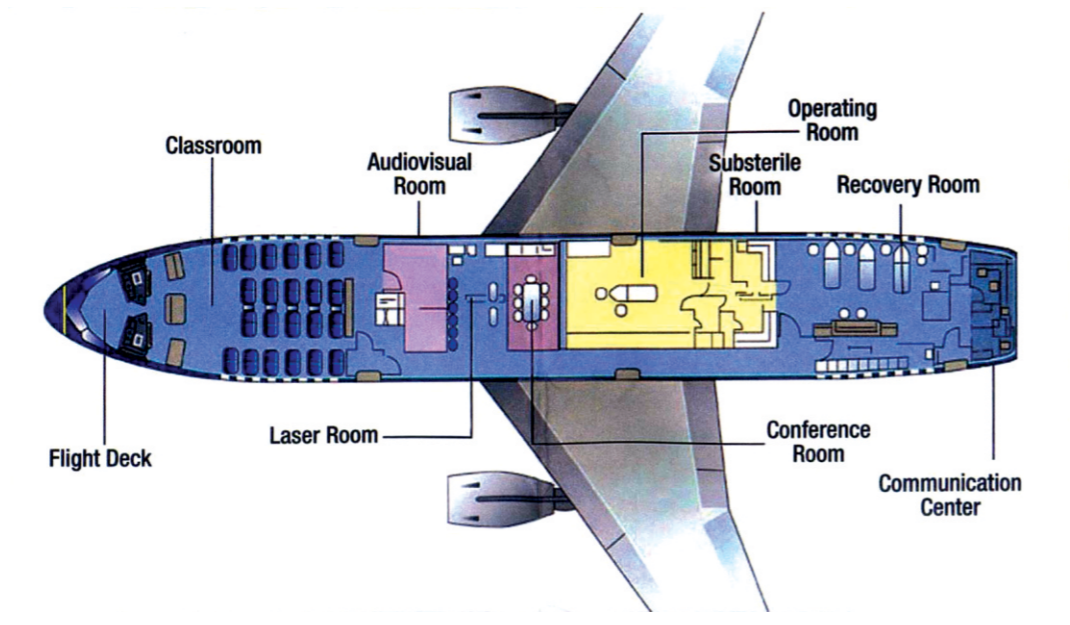
Hossain, a Professor of History of Chittagong University. Hayat

was profusely gifted in sports, but he did little justice to his talents by not attending to these, but yet then he fielded his own team under the banner of Chittagong University Teachers' Club (City). This team, consisting of teachers from, C.U., and C.U. College, did so well in its first entry to the tournament in 1978, that it even reached the third round before it got eliminated by K.K.R.C. (Kazir Dewry Khawaza Recreation Club). Who were the players of the C.U. team? Well, Professor Anupam Sen, who in fact had broken a front tooth in his young days playing cricket, and ex-C.U. V-C Professor Abdul Mannan, and Professor Hayat himself. As this writing is progressing (13/10/02), Hayat's younger brother and my friend, Zahed phones me from Bangkok and tells me that Hayat will undergo bypass surgery tomorrow 5 pm BST at a hospital. I take this opportunity to urge every reader of this column to pray for a successful surgery upon him. May God see him through.

K.K.R.C. was founded by Iqbal Khan, the eldest brother of Akram Khan, the ex-captain of Bangladesh Cricket team. Iqbal's father came from Bihar at the time of partition and settled in Kazir Dewry and ran a restaurant, namely Khawaza Hotel and Restaurant. The hotel still exists at the intersection of Kazir Dewry, but Iqbal met with an untimely death at the age of 52 of cancer.

This Iqbal was a great player, equally good in every sport. He was a Maradona of football, Viv Richards of cricket, and a Martin Frost of badminton. He was a sensational player, and it was pure delight to watch him play. But like Hayat before him Iqbal also failed to fulfill his potential, not because he was indifferent, but because indifference was shown to him. Just after liberation, Iqbal probably played some football and cricket in Dhaka first division leagues, but by that time his primetime was gone.

One of the key figures behind organising the Star Summer Cricket so successfully was Mr Hayat



A diagram depicting the interior view of the ORBIS converted DC-10 flying eye hospital.