

Dhaka University, meritocracy ...

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seriously through its curriculum and research activities and create awareness at all levels of society on how to combat climate change. The worst outcome of an immediate action would be that we dealt with the climate earlier than when it was an impending necessity.

Talking about meritocracy—let me now focus on the quality of teachers at Dhaka University. There is no doubt that the most meritorious graduates of the university apply for the teaching positions in the departments and institutes of the university. But whether the authorities in the selection process always proved their adherence to a clear penchant for merit stirred our mind now and again. And there is no doubt that merit has been ignored more than once or twice. Yet Dhaka University has always been centred on by a bevy of good quality teachers. To get from them the best of teaching and research is indeed important. Since the world of learning, teaching and research have been international in scope, and no academic system can exist by itself in the 21st century world, much emphasis should be given so that the university teachers are provided with the benefits and resources keeping in mind the regional and international standards. Today international bodies, everywhere in the world, are relentlessly talking about more funds for education and more benefits to the teachers, for a society to flourish and a country to prosper. This has relevance to Bangladesh despite her limitations and priorities in many more areas. Instead of uplifting the status, downplaying the benefits and privileges will, indeed, impede the instincts of looking forward. We need to look at things with clear eyes and think more positively than what we are doing now.

Maybe I mention about the univer-

sity teachers giving time for money (as is often said so) in private sector universities located in Dhaka city. But, while Dhaka University has 80 departments and 11 institutes, the private universities have only 10 or so (mostly common subjects). This will make sense that only a small percentage of Dhaka University teachers have such scope. The need of quality education in the private sector universities cannot be overlooked,

ability that made them the best experts in the country and saved us from depending on foreign consultants involving huge outflow of the hard earned foreign currency.

While focusing on meritocracy, it also behoves me to tell about university leadership attributes. In "Leadership for 21st Century Learning: Global Perspectives from Educational Innovators" edited by Colin Latchem

also goes with her/ his scholarship attributes and a clear penchant for merit in all processes, including selection of teachers for the University.

There are discussions about Dhaka University rankings conducted by different agencies and accreditation bodies. But we need to keep a few things in mind. One important criterion for good ranking is the source of fund i.e. how much a particular university is self

Looks astounding, albeit.

Another very important area is research and publication. I have already mentioned about the constraints here. These and some other preponderances had long restrained us from applying for a rating. And we did not feel the need, either. But those who had done the ratings for Dhaka University, did so on the basis of sketchy information here and there. However it would not be overstating if I mention that Dhaka University is held in high esteem by all great universities in the world. The example of UN Secretary General's Colloquium's views on Dhaka University, which I have mentioned before, is worth remembering. The evidences of good reputation of our graduates studying or working in some of the most reputed universities in the world lend support to what I have said above.

Since its inception, Dhaka University has always been seen as a part of the society, and functioned in tandem with the needs of the society. And holding people's expectations in high esteem, the University of Dhaka contributed immensely throughout our national history. It played the leading role in the Language Movement of 1952 that resulted in the recognition of Bangla as the State Language of the country we belonged to. Dhaka University also played a vital role in our great struggle for an Independent Bangladesh. A great many students, teachers, officers and employees of this university laid down their lives for the independence of the country. There is no other University in the world which had sacrificed so much, and played such great roles. These and many more attributes have given Dhaka University a unique place in history.

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either. However, the respective departments of Dhaka University must make sure that their teachers are obtaining permission for this extra part time teaching only after fulfilling their commitments to the university.

It is not a bad news that some Dhaka University teachers are giving consultancy services designed for social and national development processes. It is

and Donald E.Hanna, July 2001, it has been said that, "Leaders are people who have the capacity to motivate and inspire others to think beyond their current framework to what is desirable, necessary and possible".

A university leader, besides being pragmatic, must have a clear mind free from obtrusive political motives. Indeed the high esteem of a Vice-Chancellor

sustaining. The "public good" character of Dhaka University has made it mostly dependent on government fund. And because of the nominal fee that the students pay, Dhaka University's own income is negligible. While we look at this as a "service to the society", it contradicts with the "self sustaining" character of a university. Telling the students to pay more is somehow not realistic.

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