

Revamping Biman: Will it work?

IMRAN ASIF
At long last, the beloved (no pun intended) state-owned airline, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, has a new Board of Directors. At long last (and this was seriously long), someone new at the helm of the board that is meant to guide the ways for the running (or 'ruining' as some in the past had done) of the airline.
I am not sure if other curious stakeholders in the local airline industry would share the same view as I do – in saying that the only good thing that I have seen happening at Biman over the last seven years was the delivery of the new aircraft from Boeing, which were ordered back in

Maldives during the last Hajj season were probably the biggest concerns from cost versus benefit point-of-view, considering that the four brand-new Boeing 777-300ER aircraft were already inducted into the fleet whose utilisation could possibly have been further optimised, and certain routes and frequencies consolidated during the Hajj season, resulting in negating the need to lease additional aircraft.
The new incumbent chairman of the board at Biman, Air Marshal (ret'd) Muhammad Enamul Bari, is no stranger to Biman. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the airlines back in 2008, while he was serving the Bangladesh Air Force as the

der their International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) Programme, and with antiquated DC-10 aircraft in its fleet, the airline had little choice but to draw the curtains over their New York operations. Ten years on, Biman now has the champion aircraft for long-haul flights – the Boeing 777-300ERs, four of them in the fleet, but the CAAB has struggled to find a way to face the FAA for Category 1 assessment, which would allow Biman to resume flights to the US.
In November 2014, the CAAB, in its bid to overcome this challenge by the FAA, appointed a US-based consulting company, JDA Aviation Technology Solutions, at a cost of

Biman could well do without because of the unnecessary maintenance burden they levy on the airlines because of their age, and even more so because they are equipped with Pratt & Whitney engines while Biman's own 777-300ERs are powered by General Electric engines. In fact, all of Biman's own aircraft (777-300ERs, 737-800s, and 787-8s) would have GE-manufactured engines, and it makes all the sense in the world to stick to a single engine manufacturer to benefit from lowered inventory and maintenance costs.
Biman also has two leased Bombardier Dash-8-Q400 aircraft which were leased last year to bring

the airlines back into the domestic market. While the turboprops did enable the airline to operate in most of the country's airports, and thereby, increase air connectivity, it is doing so at a colossal loss because the aircraft was just not designed for such short domestic flights as we have in Bangladesh. This is evident when one compares the Dash-8-Q400 with its closest competitor type – the French-made ATR72-500/-600, which has outsold its Canadian competitor by a factor of no less than 5:1, simply because of its superior operating economics while carrying similar capacity on similar flight distances.
For decades, Biman has seen it top

executives come and go, and its board reconstituted every few years. With each change, intrepid statements were issued as to how this time the airline is set to turn around for good. Sadly (and funnily) enough, each time we were reminded of the old phrase – old wine in a new bottle. Can the latest change at the board of the airline, and seemingly soon in its chief executive position, be the much-awaited new wine in a classic bottle that is Biman? Let us not lose hope!
The writer, currently the CEO of Epic Air, has previously worked with Regent Airways, The Boeing Company. He is also a Doctor of Philosophy in Aviation from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU).




early 2008, and well before the immediate past board and its chairman took the chair. The new aircraft, and the inherent efficiencies thereof, had largely offset the obvious inefficiencies of the nearly-Jurassic fleet of McDonnell Douglas DC-10 aircraft before they were finally retired, which is again something that the post-2008 management of the airline could claim little credit for.
After the profits it had posted in the 2007-2008 fiscal year, it apparently saw some profits again in the 2014-2015 fiscal year with red figures all the way in between. Meanwhile, two expatriate chief executives served for three years under the then Board of Directors. As with almost its entire lifespan of 45 years, no one was made accountable for the stretch of losses amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars. Inexplicable decisions taken in the meantime mostly remained the same way. The lease of two nearly-outworn Boeing 777-200ER aircraft from Egypt, and the wet-lease of a B767-300ER from

Assistant Chief of Staff (Operations & Training) and had also led the committee which dealt with the final negotiations with Boeing prior to placing the order for 10 aircraft valued at over US\$ 2 billion. I had the opportunity to meet him once back in 2008 at his BAF office for about an hour, and he did seem to be a man of conviction – standing firm for the beliefs he then had for the betterment of Biman. How would he fend for Biman's interests again, and this time from the position of the chairman having immense authority over the Board of Directors and hence over the airline's policymaking decisions, would be worth watching out for.
One of Biman's long-overdue agenda, albeit of more political/geopolitical importance rather than commercial, has been the re-launch of flights to New York which has remained suspended since 2006. Owing to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) assessment of Bangladesh as a Category 2 state un-

der BDT 25 crores (over USD 3 million). The US company, as well as local and international media, published the statements of promises and expectations from the deal that would apparently get the FAA IASA assessment of CAAB pushed up to Category 1. Anyone looking up on the internet would find those to be the last statements about this issue. Since then, there has been no updates published or written about it, and no one seems to know if and when the supposed expectations from the deal would materialise.
With four brand-new Boeing 777-300ER and two Boeing 737-800 aircraft already delivered, with four Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner aircraft scheduled to be delivered by 2020, and with the two Airbus A310 aircraft set to be retired in less than a year from now, Biman will have a fleet it owns that would be among the youngest in the world in terms of average fleet age. There are two leased Boeing 777-200ER aircraft, two of the oldest ones in the world, that I honestly feel

CAREER OPPORTUNITY



NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY

Center of Excellence in Higher Education

North South University (NSU), the first private university in Bangladesh which follows North American standards, seeks applications for the following positions:

Sr. IT Officer (RFID System): 01 position

Qualification and Experience: 4 years Graduate/Masters degree from Computer Science or Computer Science & Engineering from a reputed university. Minimum 3 years working experience in PHP programming, have strong knowledge on MySQL or SQL Server and Java (J2SE). Concept of Web Service, AJAX, Java Script, JQuery and experience in RFID System integration or RFID application will be an added advantage.

Age limit: Not exceeding 35 years

Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor: 01 position

Qualification and Experience: Master's degree preferably in Business Administration / English / Social Sciences with a minimum 5 years of experience in university administration. **Candidates with a 4-year Bachelor degree from NSU will be preferred.** Candidates should have a good command over the English language. They should also possess good IT and word processing skills.

Age limit: Not exceeding 40 years

Assistant Library Officer: 01 position

Qualification and Experience: MA with honors in Information Science and Library Management / Library and Information Science. Good communication skills in English. Well conversant with IT.

Age limit: Preferably below 30 (thirty) years

Monthly Salary (for all positions): An attractive salary package will be offered to deserving candidates.

Other Benefits (for all positions): Provident Fund, Gratuity, Festival Bonuses, Group Insurance, in-house free Medical Consultation etc.

Only short-listed candidates will be called for interview

Candidates may apply with a complete CV, two photographs, experience certificates, copies of transcripts by **25 April, 2016** through e-mail or in hard copy:

The Director (Administration)
NORTH SOUTH UNIVERSITY
Bashundhara, Dhaka – 1229
E-mail: nsuhr@northsouth.edu
Send a email copy to: muntasir.iqbal@northsouth.edu for the position of Secretary to the Vice-Chancellor

www.northsouth.edu

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker

CAMP SWAMPY'S PROGRESS CHART

2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
10	10	10	10	10	10



I DUNNO, WE JUST DON'T SEEM TO BE MAKING ANY PROGRESS

BUT YOU ALWAYS SAID 2011 WAS YOUR BANNER YEAR

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 1 Showy parrots
 - 7 Plot unit
 - 11 Tooth layer
 - 12 Seasonal song
 - 13 Mickey's company
 - 14 Brazen-ness
 - 15 Invited
 - 16 Contradict
 - 17 Not so much
 - 18 Aide
 - 19 Hepcat's "Got it"
 - 21 College climber
 - 22 Spiced drink
 - 25 Scottish river
 - 26 Sicilian peak
 - 27 Nuisance
 - 29 Conforms
 - 33 Gold-loving
 - 34 Fall quaff
 - 35 Heidi's home
 - 36 Blues-based music
 - 37 Thin out
 - 38 Mysterious
 - 39 Welles role
- DOWN**
- 1 Military award
 - 2 Biscotti flavor
 - 3 Winery storage
 - 4 Memory loss
 - 5 Hoe target
 - 6 Crafty
 - 7 Brat's opposite
 - 8 Anthracite source
 - 9 Take over for
 - 10 Queen of mystery
 - 16 Kicked off
 - 18 Dagger parts
 - 20 Losing plans
 - 22 Francois has one
 - 23 # 1 on a lane
 - 24 Pudding choice
 - 25 Rich fabric
 - 28 Cut's counterpart
 - 30 Painter Degas
 - 31 Paris sight
 - 32 Compered
 - 34 Heart
 - 36 Criminalize

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11									12
13									14
15									16
17									18
19									20
21									22
23									24
25									26
27									28
29									30
31									32
33									34
35									36
37									38
39									40

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

A	L	P	H	A	T	A	R	T	S
N	O	L	A	N	A	V	A	I	L
S	C	A	L	D	W	A	S	T	E
W	A	I	N	N	P	I	E		
E	T	E	R	O	Y	B	A	T	
R	E	D	H	O	T	D	E	N	S
T	E	N	F	O	U	R			
A	S	H	Y	A	V	E	R	S	E
T	E	E	L	I	E	Y	A	M	
R	E	F	E	R	R	F	L	O	
E	N	O	L	A	A	D	O	U	T
S	T	O	O	D	C	N	O	T	E
T	O	L	L	S	T	A	L	E	S

INDEPENDENT UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH



Undergraduate Degree Programs Offered

School of Business (BBA, B.Sc.)

- Accounting • Finance
- Marketing • Management
- Management Information Systems (MIS)
- International Business (IB)
- Human Resources Management (HRM)
- Investment Management
- B.Sc. in Economics

School of Engineering & Computer Science (B.Sc.)

- Computer Science & Engineering
- Computer Science
- Computer Engineering
- Electrical & Electronic Engineering
- Electronic & Telecommunication Engineering
- B.Sc. (Hons.) in Mathematics
- B.Sc. (Hons.) in Physics

School of Environmental Science & Management (B.Sc.)

- Environmental Management
- Environmental Science
- Population Environment

School of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences (BSS, BA, LLB)

- Media & Communication
- Anthropology
- Sociology • English Literature
- English Language Teaching (ELT)
- Bachelor of Laws (LLB Hons.)

School of Life Sciences (B.Sc.)

- Microbiology • Biochemistry

Undergraduate Admission

New major offered : B.Sc. (Hons.) in Physics

Summer 2016

Application Eligibility

- ♦ Combined GPA of 8.0 in S.S.C and H.S.C with minimum 3.5 in each
- ♦ Minimum GPA 2.5 in five subjects in O-levels and GPA 2.0 in two subjects in A-levels
- ♦ For further information please visit website: www.iub.edu.bd

Scholarship and Financial Aid

- ♦ IUB offers scholarships over Tk. 8 crores per year for meritorious & needy students.
- ♦ Upto 100% Financial aid based on performance in IUB and financial need.

Apply Online : www.iub.edu.bd/admission

♦ Help desk available at IUB

Top 5% scorers in admission test will get 100% scholarship

Admission Test

Tuesday, 19 April 2016 at 10:30 am

LAST DATE FOR APPLICATIONS

Monday, 18 April 2016 till 2:00 pm

CLASSES COMMENCE

Sunday, 8 May 2016

Admissions & Financial Aid Office (Ground Floor), Plot-16, Block-B, Bashundhara R/A, Dhaka-1212.
Tel: 8431645-53, 8432065-76 Ext-1354, 1355 Fax: 8431991 Cell: 01780 185006 e-mail: admission@iub.edu.bd