



Campus Times

Home Economics College plans leap backwards

Our Educational Reporter

The course syllabuses of the College of Home Economics are threatened with a radical change which students say will spell doom for their future education and career.

It has been learnt that the college authorities are planning to revert to the pre-1985 syllabus which was a generalised course with no scope for specialisation.

In the old syllabus, Home Economics was considered a single subject and the degree was awarded based on this premise. The old syllabus did not allow a student to go deep into any subject and they came out with a superficial knowledge.

The syllabus which was introduced in the 1985-86 academic year enabled a student to acquire a thorough knowledge of the subject she had chosen as her honours course. Under this syllabus, a student could take up honours in any of the five subjects. These are: Food and Nutrition, Home Management,

Child Development, Applied Arts and Textiles.

After the introduction of honours courses in the five subjects many students had shown interest in studying at the College of Home Economics and the enrolment was the highest in the institution's 18-year history.

But because of lopsided thinking of a section of teachers at the college, the authorities are planning to revert to the back-dated old syllabus without thinking about the future of the students who had got themselves admitted in the Honours courses and are in the middle of their studies.

It is admitted on all hands that Home Economics has now branched into diverse fields with the expansion of the scope of the subject. The College of Home Economics is therefore a constituent college under the University of Dhaka. It has the character of a faculty of a university and not a single subject college.

A section of teachers are say-

ing that the Honours courses in the five subjects are to be stopped because of lack of academic staff.

The students believe that if five Professors and five Associate Professors are appointed then the shortage of qualified teachers will no longer be there. Also the College of Home Economics can be saved if it can be transformed into an institute under Dhaka University.

The College of Home Economics is a special kind of institution. It was set up in 1961 with a handful of students. The College has about 2000 students now. The courses offered by the College are different from other colleges in the country.

Up to 1985 there was no change in the syllabus. It was in 1985 that changes were made for the better and the Honours courses in the five subjects were introduced.

Since the 1985-86 academic year, four batches of students were admitted to the Honours

courses. The first of these batches has passed the Subsidiary examination this year. The Degree (Pass) Course students who were admitted along with this batch had got themselves admitted in the M.Sc (Preliminary) course. The pass percentage in the Degree course was 96 per cent.

The great majority of the students and their guardians are strongly in favour of continuing with the Honours courses in the five subjects for the sake of specialisation.

They think that those who are planning to go back to the old system are being indifferent to the welfare and the future prospects of the students.

The students have urged the Vice-Chancellor of the Dhaka University and the Education Secretary to intervene and save the country's only Home Economics College from being destroyed or turned into a sterile educational institution.