

তাৰিখ .. 23-DF-1990

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THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER

Cadet College Directorate

Sir,

This refers to the letter under the above heading written by Mrs SA Begum and published in these columns of your esteemed daily on December 6, 1998. Her assumption about the cadet colleges as a civilian arm of the Ministry of Defence is not correct. The cadet colleges impart primary military training to the cadets, along with academic teachings. The cadets are given field training, taught military etiquette and table manner. A sense of military discipline and physical fitness through games, sports and athletics is inculcated in cadets' mind from childhood. College Adjutants and other training staff are all from regular Armed Forces. Principals are selected both from amongst the Armed Forces and civilian teachers. During the college tenure representatives from all the three services visit the colleges and address the cadets explaining the prospects in their respective services. Accordingly the cadets select one of the three services for competing subsequently once they qualify for that. While selecting the cadets their health standard is assessed exactly as per the military requirement set by the Army Headquarters. All cadets after passing the HSC are compulsorily required to face the ISSB for entry into any of the three services. The products of the cadet colleges when commissioned in the Armed Forces on successful completion of training in the Military Academies are found exceptionally sound officers. This has been possible only because they were selected and groomed under the control of defence forces from their childhood.

When the whole exercise is to groom suitable boys for selection in the Armed Forces, what will be the effectiveness of the proposed Directorate consisting only of civil officers or mixture of civil and military officers needs to be examined. After all a goldsmith cannot do the work of a blacksmith. Each has a separate role to play.

Presently cadet colleges are governed under a two-tier system, viz Cadet College Council and Governing Bodies of the Cadet Colleges. The two tiers are enumerated as under : Cadet College Council : This is the highest body mainly doing the official works for administering the colleges. Its functions are : (a) To appoint Principals and Vice-Principals, (b) to approve annual budgets, (c) to formulate admission policy and (d) to fix the rates of fees realisable from the students. The council is constituted with the following :

- a) Defence Secretary — Ex-officio Chairman,
- b) Jt/Addl Secretary Ministry of Finance — Member
- c) Jt/Addl Secretary Ministry of Education — Member
- d) Director General Secondary and Higher Secondary Education — Member
- e) Adjutant General Bangladesh Army — Member
- f) Jt Secretary Ministry of Defence — Member Secretary
- g) Representatives from the Army/Navy/Airforce (from Directorate of Education)

h) Principals of all cadet colleges. Cadet College Governing Bodies : This body looks after the administration and functioning of the cadet college. But in practice Adjutant General assisted by his two staff officers of the ranks of Lt Col and Major looks after the administration.

Like other civilian educational institutions each cadet college has a separate Governing Body consisting of the following :

- a) Adjutant General Bangladesh Army — Chairman
- b) Local Station Commander — Member
- c) Local Deputy Commissioner — Member

- d) Deputy Director of Public Instructions — Member
- e) Principal of the respective college — Member Secretary.

What the writer desires are all available in the above mentioned two tiers. However, if the writer still wants, there can be a separate Directorate in the Army Headquarters headed by a Brigadier under the same Adjutant General, since all military personnel including the cadets come under the latter for administration and discipline. For further information the cadets like other defence personnel get ration from the military source.

To look after the interest of the college teachers and civilian staff provision for a senior level civilian post may be made in the aforesaid proposed Directorate in the Army Headquarters and the same be filled from amongst the senior and experienced teachers of the cadet colleges.

Civilian arm of the Ministry of Defence is Cantonment Boards, Directorate of Military Lands and Cantonments, Military Survey Department etc. But the cadet colleges which feed Military Academies for producing commissioned officers for the Armed Forces are in no way a civil arm of the Ministry of Defence. In fact, they are also a military arm.

Everybody knows what a chaotic condition is prevailing in the five education boards of Bangladesh. Let us not make another board of that type under the Ministry of Defence for ultimate ruination of the existing excellent environment of the cadet colleges.

Capt MA Hakim, Retd, Motiheel, Dhaka.

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