

Opinion

Cadet Colleges: The Nation's Future In Education

Prof. Abul Ashraf Noor

AFTER my retirement from Bangladesh cadet college service in 1996 I strongly believe that the Cadet Colleges in Bangla-desh are the mainstay of the country's academics and discipline. The people now realise that they are nurseries of potential leaders by turning out educated young men of strong moral fibre, pledged body and soul to national ideals and objectives. They are viable educationally, superior intellectually and productive economically for the nation's future under the protective umbrella of the Council of Cadet Colleges and their Governing Bodies headed by the Adjutant General as their Chairman for the smooth functioning of these institutions which are run on the lines of the British Public School System. By now the Cadet colleges have been recognized not only as the good places of learning but also an excellent academic industry in this part of the world.

The pioneering role of Faujdarhat Cadet College under the dynamic leadership of Sir William Maurice Brown since the days of 28 April, 1958 deserves all the support and admiration for its bold, unprecedented and historical initiative. The Faujdarhat Cadet College has achieved the goals and aspirations of the people. Nationally and internationally the Faujdarhat Cadet College is known as the "Eton of the East." The spirit emanating from it did convince the authorities of the necessity for the establishment of three more Cadet Colleges in Pakistan and after the War of Liberation in 1971, six more Cadet Colleges

including one for the girls on the sacred soil of Bangladesh. The Cadet Colleges bear the responsibility of preserving profound respect for old norms of life and Bangladesh tradition and culture. Without regard to class distinction or social background they give education a new vitality and positive meaning for tangible results in the challenging situation of inter-relations of educational system in Bangladesh.

Beneath the academic excitement and joys in competitions that fill the green minds of the Cadets during their stay in colleges, we are very serious in the character building activities for the good of their future life. We never lose sight of the fact that on each day all of us confront a tough challenging world which is not a world of luxury, but a world of necessity.

In the depths of disorder, the institution has never valued the individual over the society. The society has always been more important than the individual. I think that is what has saved the Cadet College from being destroyed in our times. Now, efforts of the Cadet Colleges are as perfect as possible to overcome ideological and destructive animus against the negative notion on life and living and to cover every loophole for a quality education, most vital for national progress and prosperity.

The world of education is becoming more and more complicated by the growing rise of student activism and indiscipline at the national and international levels, but fortunately for the country, the Cadet Colleges have

found out a way to survive. Our strength comes from the grit of human experience which is the result of educational patriotism now prevailing in the Cadet Colleges. And the Cadets' accomplishments, faith, courage and determination can be seen in their day-to-day activities. Our principles are good for all seasons, good for the Cadets and good for those who wish to play a vital role in making the Cadet Colleges a better place to live in. We want all of you to share what we call the vision of the poet, the memory of the historian and the discipline of the scholar. We, as teachers, urge upon all people to launch a revolution of renewal to develop and train the present Cadets to deal with and to succeed in the 21st Century. As part of that movement, we want our Cadets to acquire four key skills:—

- a. an in-depth knowledge of calculus.
- b. fluency in a second language, i.e. English
- c. the ability to write clearly and precisely and
- d. a good set of ethics and moral values

We may lay claim to a future as bright and as exciting as our past if we are sincere in demonstrating the truth that the Cadets are trusted in the College by their teachers in all creative activities. Once a Cadet believes that his opinion has value and then he starts to shape up his own individuality to motivate others for self discovery, self-progress and self-development. At his own initiative, he explores the possibilities of broadening horizons to end his passivity and develop

his own feelings about independent enterprise and initiative that plant the seeds which will bring his success after the end of six years' schooling in a Cadet College.

Therefore, the team approach is always good to serve strong, steady and effective leadership for the total progress of the institution. In this respect, the institutional needs and the policy goals of the Principal are more vital for making a full-proof mechanism to secure solid achievements and decision for the promotion of the integration of policy matters in every detail. If it does, the Principalship of the Cadet College will be well-served.

Finally I wish to conclude my write-up by saying that the function of educational leadership is to listen to what we value. It is also true with the Cadet Colleges. But we know hostile forces against us. Despite the threats, everyone really knows that the glorious traditions of the Cadet Colleges in Bangladesh will continue to live on in a most distinguished fashion as a powerfully constructive force in a nation-wide quality education forever. Sir William Maurice Brown used to say, "if you can't stay here and tell instantly who's for you and who's against you. You, dear boy, belong to an active environment here." Sir William Maurice Brown taught us the fact of real life during his stay at the then East Pakistan Cadet College (now Faujdarhat College). I still remember it even after my retirement from the Cadet college service.