

Crisis In BUET

Zilhurain Jaigirdar

INTRODUCTION : We all know at present BUET (BANGLADESH UNIVERSITY OF Engineering And Technology) is in great crisis. Even though it may sound peculiar, the fact is there are people who become delighted to see BUET in crisis. I have endeavored to find them out in (01) Who are Delighted To See BUET In Crisis? I have narrated the nature of the crisis in (02) What Was The Crisis. Various experts have endeavored to find out the root-cause of this crisis. I have mentioned those in (03) ROOT Causes Of The Crisis. Also I have endeavored to find out the root-cause by myself. You may see it in (04) Root Causes Of The Crisis. In this endeavor I have discovered a peculiar game. I have named it the (05) "Hollow-Cup Football". I have tried to find out the (06) Details Of The Game. I have also endeavored to see (07) Who Are Benefited By This Game. Finally, I have tried my best to find (08) How BUET Can Solve The Problem. In this venture I could come up with two proposals :

(i) BUET needs a non-political Vice Chancellor and

(ii) BUET students must promise not to be used as football under others dirty feet. Those who are not tired to read the preamble are requested to go through the following :

(01) WHO ARE DELIGHTED TO SEE BUET IN CRISIS? BUET is the prestigious University, where the most intelligent students of Bangladesh come to read. The best portion of these students later become BUET teachers. Most, if not all, of the other intelligent students who get admitted in Agricultural, Medical or other Universities probably bear the "memory of BUET-rejection" for the rest of their lives. Naturally, it is not improbable for them to feel jealous. When such persons are placed in high positions in politics, bureaucracy, newspaper etc. they may feel ample delight to see BUET in crisis.

(02) WHAT WAS THE CRISIS : The crisis the common students witnessed was like : (01) The BUET authority honored the student's wish to enjoy World cup football game. (02) For that reason the date of examination was shifted from 3rd June, 2006 to 1st August, 2006, i.e. about two months. (03) Immediately before this date the students appealed for deferring the date by one week. (04) The teachers agreed to consider, but finally did not. (05) At this juncture some known face students, with the help of students from the nearby university ransacked Cafeteria and teachers' quarters. Probably the students of the nearby university, who were aggrieved for not getting admission in BUET, appeased their anger by smashing BUET properties and throwing stones at the quarters of teachers, who did not admit them.

(03) ROOT CAUSES OF THE CRISIS : We have seen analysis of the above crisis given by various

Students fraction of the ruling party was responsible for the incident. (02) Mr. Anisul Haque (Prothom Alo) : The fear for examination among the students was the main reason. (03) Group of young teachers from BUET (Prothom Alo) : Sorry, they accused the students and endeavored to refute some of the students' allegations. But being BUET teachers they failed to analyze the situation and pin point the root cause, not to say anything of giving concrete suggestions.

(04) ROOT CAUSES OF THE CRISIS : The 'examination-scare syndrome' that Mr. Anisul Haque has mentioned in his article could have been true during their time. Even though the courses taught in BUET are quite voluminous and hard and hence the examination also is hard, for most of the students it is no more a 'matter of great fear'. There are provisions for re-take and backlog (all these are the provisions of the course-credit system) that has made examination considerably 'tension-free'. Recently the authorities have imposed heavier fees (500 Taka per course) for retake courses. Most of the students care a straw for this amount. It is interesting to note that many poor students of BUET (especially of Architecture) earn more than the allowance given by the wealthy parents. So, our impression is, the root-cause was exactly what Mr. Zakaria Swapan explained.

(05) "HOLLOW-CUP FOOTBALL" : In the Mama-Bhagne sponsored football game, the 'Bhagnes' of BUET and their fellow brothers from the nearby university kicked the interests of the common students and that of BUET. No one should wonder at that mentality of these students. They are the brethren of the same students who did not hesitate to murder a brilliant BUET student few years back. The citizens of Bangladesh and the worried parents of the BUET students may be assured that the crisis in BUET will not be over until and unless the Mama-Bhagne game sponsored by the ruling party is over. It is a pity that the BUET students, the most brilliant students and BUET, the best university of this country is being used by the Bhagnes as their "Foot Ball".

(06) DETAILS OF THE GAME : The Mama-Bhagne game is played in two ways : (01) The Mama's supply money, arrange events (concert, live-show etc.) and other alluring items from outside in order to create new 'Bhagnes' in BUET. (02) The Bhagnes create new issues and assure the common students about their "Mama strength" to get the demand fulfilled. Needless to mention that such venture create scope for the Bhagnes to show their activities and to create ground for bringing more money from the Mamas. We have seen in newspapers that some people have raised the question "Why the BUET students are so fond of games?" What is true is, the gen-

eral acceptance of such popular issues, the Bhagnes themselves raise the demand, (collect fund from the Mamas) and then assure the general students about the success of their struggle. This time also they did the same thing. And when failure came they invited fellow-Bhagnes from other universities, who were naturally hostile to BUET and the worst thing happened.

(07) WHO ARE BENEFITED BY THE GAME? University is the highest seat of learning in any country. It is a proven fact that student's caliber is not proportional to their parent's wealth. As a consequence, many of the persons belonging to the "BUET-rejected group" now holding important positions in the government fail to get their children admitted here. They go to the private universities where admission of student of LESS caliber is a question of MORE money. Naturally they have vested interest to see the private universities in better status and to see, BUET doomed.

(08) HOW CAN BUET SOLVE THE PROBLEM : In spite of their better intelligence and caliber, those who rule the country are not the BUET-qualified men, but others. And most, if not all, of them retain in the depth of their hearts the severe pains of "rejection by BUET". In such a situation it is less likely that BUET can expect sincere help from them in solving their crisis. On the other hand, those people may cause deeper crisis for this university. The problem of BUET can be solved only by the BUET students and teachers. And we are hopeful, since they are by far the best they can do it. We place some suggestions here : (a) BUET NEEDS A NON-POLITICAL VICE CHANCELLOR : Student-politics is in practice in the country, and so also in BUET. The BUET students need this training such that they can establish their due positions amidst their frustrated rivals. However, on top of all, BUET needs a non-political Vice Chancellor. In the present system the panel of Vice Chancellors are selected from among the senior BUET teachers and the Chancellor makes the final selection. In our proposal, the University Grants Commission shall finalize the panel of Vice Chancellor (3 to 5 names) and send to BUET. The students, teachers and staff of BUET would then vote for them on the basis of the quality, "Most non-political". The chancellor would approve the person getting maximum vote. One may argue that this system is not in practice in other universities. Our reply is : so what? The BUET people can formulate the best that suit their needs. It is obvious that others (i.e. the non-BUET's) would be able to understand or solve their problem. If this system is followed, then there will be a trend among the teachers to remain 'non-political' for obvious reason. (b) BUET STUDENTS MUST NOT BE USED AS FOOT-

zero attention of the non-BUET bureaucrats to their problems and interests. I have mentioned the obvious and genuine reason behind such attitude. The students must realize that taking this scope they want to play games in which their Bhagnes use them as football. In this game a number of their fellow students take active part. The general students must create strong resistance such that those elements cannot use them as football under their dirty feet.

CONCLUSION : I have only a small topic to add in conclusion. I know some of the senior BUET students have proposed for fragmentation of central examination system and to assign its responsibility in the hands of the independent departments. I would request them to go through the examination procedure of the "Course-credit system" as followed in USA. The course credit system has many advantages that they now enjoy. But the principal reason for which the US degrees are now considered "under-valued" in the international market happened because of disintegration of central examination system. In the US universities the responsibility of examination has been placed on independent departments, where the departments have further fragmented the same and have assigned to individual teachers. They did it in order to make university administration more efficient. As a consequence the standard of examination and evaluation has gone to dogs. In absence of central checking and monitoring, (01) The individual teacher prepare questions "as may be helpful" for his students, (02) The independent departments take examination "as per their convenience", and (03) The teachers evaluate the answer scripts "as per his will". The university feel satisfied to get rid of all the complexities, of course with the degraded standard. So, I believe, even though the acceptance of the above proposal by the Final year students may serve their interest, it will be fatal for BUET (In the above text, generally the US teachers cannot be purchased to prepare questions helpful" for the students, or to evaluate answer scripts "as per will". In that country the job of a teacher is considered quite prestigious. Also the salary is quite sufficient to maintain "the wife and children". On the other hand, in our country a university teacher has to bear the expenses of wife or wives, children, old parents, relatives, younger brothers, sisters and so on as per the tradition of our country. And their salary is not that fat. One may guess what may happen if they are allowed to "prepare question helpful" for the students, or to evaluation answer script "as per will". We know BUET is the abode of the best students and the best teachers of the country. Let us see how