

BIMRAD A Pinnacle of Hope in the Maritime Horizon

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Like every other nations, Bangladesh has a dream of economic emancipation and fostering well-being of the people through comprehensive development. In recent parlance of short-term goal of the country, it may be coined as the ascendancy to a 'middle-income country'. Bangladesh Navy being a disciplined force and a vital instrument of the country must also have dream to prosper and contribute in this pursuit of the nation. In other word, being the instrumental organ of the country, navy should also possess a planned and thoughtful desire in fulfilling the national dream of prosperity and development.

Bangladesh is a "white list" nation declared by IMO and potentially hosts Bay-of-Bengal at the south. Nonetheless, Bangladesh is yet to show its meaningful success as a maritime nation. Nurturing with right spirit, Bangladesh has all the possibility to thrive as maritime nation. It can be considered that Bangladesh Navy being its bequest advantages has the onus to steer Bangladesh as a maritime nation.

Highly qualified and professional naval officers with vast experiences are often retiring from active service at the pinnacle of their career, where they still have the necessary cognitive and physical potentials to contribute in the maritime arena and in boarder sense towards the development of the nation. Potential capacity in absence of appropriate platform or opportunity, at one stage cannot flourish; it dies down. The same also implies for other prospective maritime thinkers and professionals of different institutions as well.

It was long felt that Bangladesh Navy should patronize a maritime research oriented institution with an aim to contribute towards national economy at the same time create a platform for the maritime thinkers to thrive and flourish. Time elapsed but navy could not form such platform for various commitments. Over the past decade, Bangladesh Navy tremendously expanded both in terms of size and shape. Navy's horizon broadened to a far greater extend especially after the conclusive verdict on maritime

boundary disputes. The formation of a research centre remained still elusive and a future desired goal. Research platforms would in fact contribute in maritime capacity development in beyond recognition. Research is always, if not sometimes, a neglected sector in third world countries. It needs courage to start with and support to sustain initial setback. However, rising above the challenges & ostensible procrastinations, the present Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) showed the ingenuity and fortitude to inaugurate the navy's long desired goal of setting a premier maritime research & development institute - 'Bangladesh Institute of Maritime Research and Development (BIMRAD)'.

The thinkers on maritime field may not necessarily just ponder on the set of objectives of BIMRAD, rather they may look into the root causes of creating BIMRAD. In simple word, BIMRAD is a platform for maritime thinkers of all level. It is a platform for naval officers who retire with the vast experience of maritime knowledge and still have the potentiality to contribute, side by side, it is also for other maritime thinkers of different institutions of our nations who wants to contribute.

Over the past years, a handful number of maritime institutions both in private and government level has been established in Bangladesh. Although someone may raise questions on their effectiveness as maritime institution towards fulfilling the national commitment but the positivity is that there are people who desire to contribute in maritime sector. BIMRAD will try to match their hopes and aspirations.

Despite much initiatives, Bangladesh is yet to develop as a full bloomed maritime nation. Bangladesh was once thriving as a seafaring nation but made a nosedive at later stage putting the whole sector in jeopardy.

Shipbuilding industry was also prosperous but in present days, it somehow continues without much success and only just fulfilling national demand with a few exceptions of shipbuilding orders from abroad. Fishing industry is another sector which could not contribute significantly for national economic development as expected. Lack of adequately equipped fishing fleet and appropriate research on fishing areas in Bay-of-Bengal, we still fall far behind than other maritime nations. Another important field is maritime tourism which did not prosper much. Although, Bangladesh has all the possibility to flourish in this field as a huge source of earning foreign currency. Bay of Bengal contains huge untapped natural resources but that demands careful planning for exploration and exploitation, and also entails extensive research work for extracting as well as preserving those resources.

Despite huge potentiality, Bangladesh is yet to prosper as a full-fledged maritime nation. With the burden of huge population and scarce of land resources, today or tomorrow we have to look for the alternative resources at sea and, most importantly, the resources must be preserved for the future generation for which we need to develop appropriate research platforms in maritime sector. I hope, BIMRAD would endeavour to fulfil this commitment at the best.