

# BIMRAD 1ST ANNIVERSARY ONE STEP FORWARD TO KINDLE OUR MARITIME HERITAGE



Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury,  
NBP, OSP, BCGM, PCGM, BCGMS, ndc, psc



Admiral Karambir Singh  
PVSM, AVSM, ADC



Admiral Nizamuddin Ahmed,  
NBP, OSP, BCGM, ndc, psc (retd)



Rear Admiral A S M A Awal,  
NBP, OSP, ndc, psc, MBA (retd)



Prof. Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman  
Chairman, University of Dhaka

Bangladesh Institute of Maritime Research and Development (BIMRAD) had a grand celebration of its 1st anniversary on 21 Sep 2019 at Sagorika Hall, Naval Headquarters Complex, Banani, Dhaka. Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury, NBP, OSP, BCGM, PCGM, BCGMS, ndc, psc, Chief of the Naval Staff Bangladesh Navy & Chief Patron, BIMRAD and Admiral Karambir Singh, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy were present in the ceremony as chief guest and special guest respectively. During the occasion two prominent speakers Professor Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, Chairman, Dept. of International Relations, University of Dhaka and Rear Admiral A S M A Awal, NBP, OSP, ndc, psc, MDS, MBA (retd) presented their keynote speeches on “How BIMRAD can contribute to the Maritime Affairs and Security of Bangladesh” respectively. Admiral Nizamuddin Ahmed, NBP, OSP, BCGM, ndc, psc (retd), Chairman,

BIMRAD presented the welcome speech.

Chairman, BIMRAD welcomed all distinguished guests and foreign diplomats stating his belief that this exclusive gathering would ‘open avenues of opportunities among the entire maritime scholars and government officials to work together and support blue economy initiatives of the government for sustainable development of the country’. He highlighted the importance of researches being carried out worldwide to uncover the mysteries of the sea and its untapped resources and linked the potentials of BIMRAD to give a deep dive into research work as the nation’s first dedicated maritime think tank. The research areas might focus on maritime affairs, security, exploration and conservation of sea resources, maritime science & technology, marine tourism, marine pollution, biodiversity, marine ecology, coastal disaster, marine renewable

energy and climate change impact, food security, adaptation and so on. During last one year time BIMAD had remarkable achievements like two international seminars with speakers from different countries, NMF-BIMRAD dialogue on “Transitioning to a Regional Blue Economy within the Bay of Bengal” in New Delhi, signing of MoUs with prominent organizations home and abroad. The quarterly publishing magazine ‘PAAL’ is fostering the maritime concerned research work, creating the maritime awareness. The maiden issue of BIMRAD Journal planned to launch on the occasion of 1st anniversary will open a pragmatic platform for research work for all concerned. Chairman, BIMRAD expressed his aspirations of a grand future of this institution that will become a ‘Centre of Excellence’ for the maritime community of the world. Finally he concluded with his gratitude for the eminent guests being present there.

Dr. Rashed Uz Zaman, Professor and Chairman, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka as one of the keynote speakers had his presentation on “Think Tanks and Influence on Policy: What can BIMRAD do?” He defined think tanks as centers of research and learning but unlike colleges or universities, they have no students (but do have student research interns), do not offer courses (but do hold a lot of seminars and forums), and do not try to offer a smattering of expertise on all subjects but concentrate preeminently on key public policy issues. Think tanks play an especially important role in linking research to policy. He highlighted the fourth generation think tank that is legacy based producing a wide range

of publications, holding seminars and workshops, and conducting research in a number of policy areas. He also focused on the constructed consciousness of maritime destiny: the case of “Brains Trust” which is still relevant. The speaker also suggested a number of ways how BIMRAD can influence as a think tank for policy makers by public appearances, use of media, advisory panels, seminars, publications etc. Finally the speaker expects that BIMRAD will set a new course for all of us.

The second keynote speaker Rear Admiral ASMA Awal, OSP, ndc, psc (retd) had a presentation of Maritime Security where he covered Military & Law Enforcement Measures, Domestic & International Law, Sociology and History & Geopolitics. To highlight the strategic importance of Indian Ocean the speaker linked Mahan’s strategic philosophy, discovery of vast oil reservoirs in Persian Gulf-Arabian Peninsula regions, applying the Mahan paradigm and how IO has catapulted to centre-stage. The speaker pointed out: ‘According to Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, in 2011, 142 political conflicts recorded in IOR — more than a third of conflicts world- wide, including 12 of the world’s 20 wars and additional 8 limited wars’. Political trouble vs. growing economic linkages have become a serious issue. Important powers like China, Japan, UK France, EU States, India, Egypt, Australia, Iran, Indonesia, Singapore wish to demonstrate their meaningful presence in IO. Bangladesh has growing economic interest after resolution of its maritime boundaries with littoral neighbours India and Myanmar in 2014; She is also to check its waters from being abused as

conduit for illicit trafficking. Where strategic national interests of great and rising powers intersect are number 1 USA, number 2 China, number 3 India, number 4 Japan, number 5 France. Conventional and non-traditional security concerns like high volume trafficking of illicit drugs and arms and human trafficking, ecological and environmental concerns like rising rates of pollution e.g. plastic debris, infesting waters, habitat destruction and biodiversity loss (threaten 35000 marine species, 40,000 square kilometres of mangrove forests), increasing impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and global climate change etc. are threats to our maritime security.

towards the “Centre of Excellence” in the field of maritime affairs. He said “I wish this very fine institute (BIMRAD) will have glorious and successful innings in future”. He mentioned that warmth and cordiality of relationship between India and Bangladesh is getting deeper. He also mentioned: ‘We have common civilization, cultural linkages and common history and we jointly sacrificed during the independence of Bangladesh. Besides that we have sustained people to people contacts, commitment to ideas and ideology of democracy from the formulation of our very deeper friendship. We hope to take our bilateral cooperation and naval exchange in a new height.’ He also



Admiral Karambir Singh, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy congratulated and felicitated BIMRAD on her first anniversary celebration and appreciated her diversified and significant activities concerning the maritime research and awareness. Admiral Karambir Singh expressed his best wishes for the journey of BIMRAD

added: “Bangladesh ranks 38th largest economy in the world in terms of GDP based PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) which is visible indicator of sustained growth story.” He added that in terms of maritime growth the institutional focus of Bangladesh on harnessing the blue economy is also yielding positive results. Almost 90% of Bangladesh's trade happens by sea route and

approximately 70 million people are employed in fishing and agricultural sector. The realization of full potential of blue economy would definitely have positive impact on development. Blue economy is also apart of 2030 agendas of the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by all UN member states. "I feel that for effective cooperation to ensure maritime security, firstly Navies need to work together, it is important to ensure and enhance maritime security in this region. Secondly, assimilation and analysis of information and third area is resource sharing."— said Admiral Singh. He said that we must come together making the water around us safe and secure for sustained growth and development in this region. Admiral Karambir Singh urged that we must uphold common rule-based orders that are predicted on the consent of all and not of the part of few and with all nations big or small can thrive as equal. The blue economy then will benefit from shared vision and shared resources and also create a stable maritime environment.

Chief of Naval Staff Bangladesh Navy, and Chief Patron, BIMRAD Admiral Aurangzeb Chowdhury in his concluding speech shows his enthusiasm for the august gathering with oceans of opportunity. He looks back with pride that this country had a glorious history in the shipbuilding' and he finds this heritage as a comeback. He says that BIMRAD is a time worthy initiative by Bangladesh Navy. This institute as a think tank can largely contribute to three sectors, namely securing our strategic security, economic prosperity and ending 'sea blindness' and develop maritime domain awareness. The Blue Economy

initiative of the Government aims towards sustainable development by harnessing the economic potential of the sea, Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 contemplates higher and sustainable growth trajectories by incorporating sound policy measures for climate change and various delta-related issues. The Indian Ocean region is increasingly characterized by a multipolar strategic environment. The Bay of Bengal, termed as strategic space' by David Brewster is certainly influenced by this complex and multipolar maritime order. CNS and Chief Patron of BIMRAD said: 'We have long neglected the sea. Now, the entire nation needs to realize that the Bay of Bengal is our future. BIMRAD needs to strive to bring realistic and attractive research findings highlighting the significance of the sea for Bangladesh that would convince the political leaders, scholars, institutions and businessmen. He also added: BIMRAD as a think tank will play the role of a connector between specialized knowledge and the policy makers. In increasingly complex environments at national, regional and global levels, today the think tanks need to be more diverse and innovative to remain relevant. The future course of BIMRAD needs to be charted carefully. Research methodologies are to be well-crafted so that it rightly responds to the policy needs of today's complex maritime issues. The Chief Patron of BIMRAD showed his heartfelt thanks to all the guests, speakers and the former Chief of Naval Staffs for their generous presence and wished BIMRAD to become a 'Maritime Centre for Excellence' in its true sense.