

### **3 Sep 1973: Inauguration of Bangladesh Marine Academy**

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After libation, the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, upon his return to Free Bangladesh on 10 January 1972, as a part of his relentless effort of reconstruction and regeneration of the new country, managed to commence the Academy as “Bangladesh Marine Academy” in early 1972. Bangabandhu, at the recommendation of General M A G Osmani (Chief Military Commander of the Bangladesh Armed Forces i.e. Mukti Bahini), had appointed Merchant Marine Captain M L Rahman (the-then Principal Officer of Mercantile Marine Department – POMMD) as the Commandant (Additional Charge) of the new Academy. Later the new Academy had been formally commissioned by the Bangladesh Government with the British Technical Cooperation (BTCO) in 1973 under a project titled “Development of Marine Academy: July 1973 to June 1980”.

Earlier, the Academy had been established as ‘Mercantile Marine Academy (MMA)’ by the-then Pakistan Government in 1962 here in Juldia, Chittagong. During the Liberation War since 26th March 1971, the academy activities could continue up to June 1971. The Passing-out Parade of the Senior Cadets i.e. 8th Batch (22N & 21E) took place in mid-June 1971 and they left the Academy. The Junior Cadets i.e. 9th Batch went out for their 3 months’ summer vacation following the Academy programme.

Cadet Liaquat Ali of 9th Batch was staying in his home at Karalia village, Companigonj, Noakhali. He was actively participating with his cousin Abu Saleh Mohammed Golam Mohiuddin, the Muktijoddha Comandar of Companigonj Thana. At one point, he got killed by the Pakistani Army collaborators (Rajakars & Al-Badar led by Yusuf – a student of Chittagong University) on 28th July 1971. The Cadet Block of Academy has been named as the “Shaheed Liaquat Ali Cadet Block” in 2010.

The 9th Batch Cadets couldn’t join back by end-September 1971. The vacation continued to be extended with 15 days each time. All Pakistani staffs including the Commandant (Commodore S M. Anwar SK PN) left the Academy for Pakistan on 13 November 1971. The Pakistan Defence Ministry had shifted this Academy to Pakistan; temporarily started it as the “Pakistan Marine Academy” at Karachi Hajj Camp, Pakistan.

Although established in early-1972, the formal Cadets’ Training in Bangladesh Marine Academy couldn’t be commenced in 1972. Captain (later Rear Admiral) M A Khan PSN BN had been appointed as the new Commandant on 18 Dec 1972 (served till 20 May 1974). The 9th batch Cadets (8N & 8E) were called back to the Academy in May and had passed-out on 21 May 1973.

Finally, the newly admitted Cadets (17N & 18E) of 10<sup>th</sup> Batch joined the Academy on 3 September 1973 and the formal Cadets’ Education & Training had commenced on the day. May Allah bless our Maritime Motherland.

#### *Reference:*

IMCO Report, 19 May 1980

Project Book: Development of Marine Academy: July 1973 to June 1980

Few ex-Cadets of 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Batch.