



The academic building of Bangladesh College of Leather Engineering and Technology —OBSERVER

Mismanagement in Leather Tech Instt alleged

300 diploma holders in 36 years

By A Staff Correspondent

The Bangladesh College of Leather Engineering and Technology since its inception 36 years ago has so far produced 300 diploma holders about nine qualified boys in each year. The recently held annual examination of the First Year class of four-year course took a long period of three years.

The total number of students of the Leather Technology Institute is now 85 including two female students. The number of teachers in the Institute is 13 of whom five are part timers. The total number of employees of the college is nearly 100.

Since the setting up of the Leather Technology Institute at Rayer Bazar in the city the institution has changed its name thrice which appears to be the only significant development.

The idea of establishing an institution to impart education on various aspects of leather technology was conceived by the then Government in 1949 in line with the Leather Technology Institute at Calcutta. Mr Hamidul Huq Chowdhury the then Finance Minister of erstwhile East Pakistan laid the foundation stone of the East Bengal Tanning Institute on June 10 1949. The Institute was originally spread over nine acres of land which gradually expanded in area to the present size of over 17 acres of land.

During 1956-1957 the name of the Institute was changed to East Pakistan Institute of Leather Technology. The Institute's

present name was given after liberation.

Machinery remain idle

The Institute which suffers from serious crisis has adequate fund at its disposal but lacking in managerial ability. Last year the Government allocated 60 lakh taka for the college, Taka 18 lakh for recurring expenditure and Taka 42 lakh for development. Valuable imported machinery worth lakhs of taka are now lying idle at the workshop, decaying. On the other hand a new project has been undertaken at a cost of over taka five crore to build a new workshop.

The Leather Technology Institute started functioning with one year course named artisan course in 1950 on tanning, footwear, and leather goods. Only 11 students were admitted in the course and staff strength was 56. During 1954-1955 the authority introduced two separate

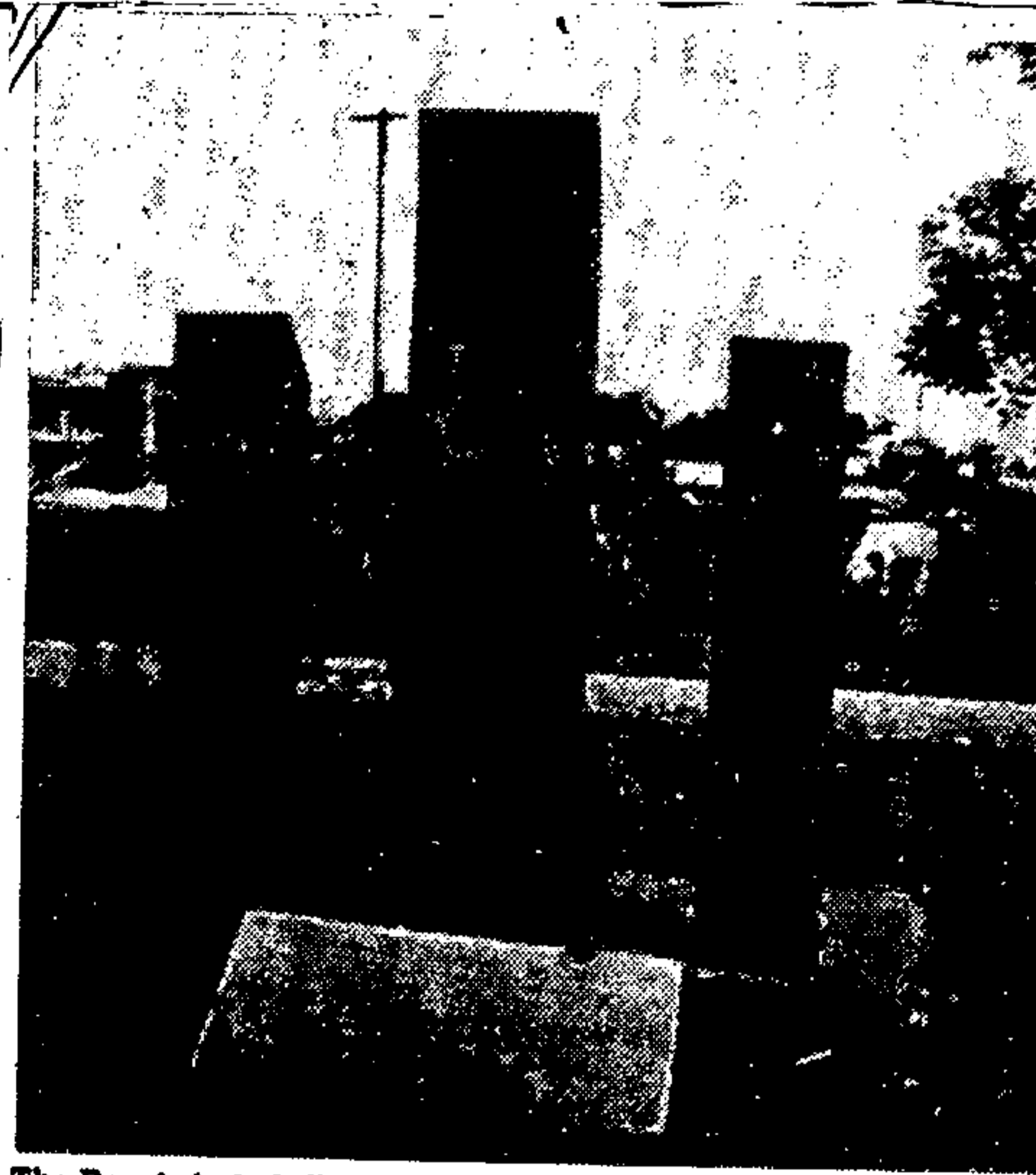
courses three-year course leading to diploma in leather technology and a two-year certificate course on the same subject. After liberation a two-year degree course was introduced for the diploma holders. In 1979 both the diploma and certificate courses were abolished and the four-year degree course was introduced with 15 students. The College authority acquired over eight acres of land for playground hostel and staff quarters in addition to the Institute's original nine acres of land.

There was another development of the Institute after 1972. The students of the Institute was imparted education free of cost. But the authority started realising monthly tuition fees after 1972. No student was admitted for three years from 1971.

The Leather Technology Institute complex has at present a two-storied academic building, two huge buildings housing a workshop and a auditorium. Most often the auditorium is kept under lock and key. A students hostel at a cost of Taka 35 lakh is under construction at the college premises.

Unhygienic condition in hostel

The existing one-storied hostel can hardly accommodate 35 students where about 60 students are now staying. An acute unhygienic condition prevails on the campus College and hostel rooms toilets, (See page 8, Col. 3)



The Bangladesh College of Leather Engineering and Technology the foundation stone of which was laid by the then Finance Minister of erstwhile East Pakistan Mr Hamidul Huq Chowdhury in 1949. —OBSERVER

Leather tech

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workshop and laboratory are not properly cleaned and always present a dirty look. Water supply to the Institute is also not were the students alleged.

The vast college premises turns into a vast grazing field as many cattle from nearby areas find it an ideal ground for the luxuriant growth of grass.

Several students complained to this correspondent that the shortage of teachers has resulted in suspension of classes for long time. The workshop is frequently used for job work from outside but now the huge earnings made in this way is used for development is not known, they alleged. Repeated appeals to the college authority for better facilities to the students have gone unheeded they added. The students also urged the authority to create job opportunities for the leather technology students in BSB, BSRS BCIC Customs and other agencies connected with leather and investment in leather trade.

Mr. Karan Ali Ahmed who is the Principal of Bangladesh College of Leather Engineering and Technology for the last 11 years (from 1974) told this correspondent that this institution could not create due impact on the nation due to improper handling.

He reasoned that the students who qualified from this institution are trying to develop and expand the leather industry in the country.

When his attention was drawn to the allegation of mismanagement and misuse of fund by the students, the Principal said "when the whole nation is suffering from mismanagement my organisation cannot be an exception". "Students are like my sons, so they can allege many things", he added.

It may be pointed here that there are about 150 tanneries around the college. Out of 150 tanneries only 95 are recognised and rest are unrecognised. Municipal Corporation is thinking to shift all the tanneries from Rayer Bazar and Hazairbagh area to Nayar Hat. A high-powered standing committee has been formed in this connection. A meeting of the Committee was also held recently and the D.G. Industries presided over the meeting.