



## **Operational Activities of Ground Service In Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.**

### **Prepared For :**

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and  
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**ID : 13364057**

**17 December, 2017**

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# ***Letter of Transmittal***

*13 December, 2017  
Md. Hasan Maksud Chowdhury  
BRAC Business School  
BRAC University  
66, Moakhali C/A  
Dhaka 1212.*

*Sub: Letter of Transmittal for the Internship Report on Biman Bngladesh Airlines Ltd.*

*Dear Sir*

*This is to inform you that, it brings me immense pleasure to prepare the Report on " **Operational Activities of Ground Service In Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd.**" which was assigned to me as a requirement for my internship program. I have found the experience quite interesting.*

*I have tried my level best to prepare a credible report with relevant information. I have collected information through various sources and studied the day to day operations in Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. and tried to explain my understanding and provide recommendations from the point of view of an inside in this report.*

*I would like to thank you for the opportunity . It will be my absolute pleasure to answer any query you may have about any part of the report I prepared.*

*Sincerely yours*

.....

*Nayeem Ibn Yousuf  
ID # 13364057  
Mobile # 01858 730 696*

## **Acknowledgment**

First I would Thank Almighty Allah for helping me and giving me the intellect and resources to learn and achieve my goal in completing my MBA in BRAC University. Many people has helped me a lot in understanding the core problems in Biman Bangladesh Airlines. Specially my senior colleague Mr.Ismail and Mr.Iftekhar. Also special thanks to my In-charge Mr. N. Alam sir for guiding and assigning me in different operational activities which has enriched my overall understanding of the operation of the company. All the shift controller specially Mr. Noman sir who help me a lot by granting leave for various exams during my study in BRAC University. Also my Duty Station Manger Mr. Aminul sir who also helped me from time to time in various ways.

Special thanks to all the faculties of BRAC university who has helped me lot in understanding different companies and their strategies. Special thanks to Mr. Md. Hasan Maksud Chowdhury Sir as my assigned faculty for the internship program has helped me in understanding the program and has guided me throughout the program in completion of this report.

## **Executive Summary**

As the national flag carrier of Bangladesh, Biman Bangladesh Airlines has a lot of responsibilities to represent the country in the commercial aviation industry. Despite having a large number of well trained employees Biman has not been successful in meeting the expected results. Many government bodies has tried to fix Biman from time to time. No one completely succeeded so far. Due to complicated governing policies and lengthy process Biman is failing to meet the growing market of today's aviation industry. Changes are taking place but it is again a very slow process. CBA has taken many initiatives to improve the quality of service in Biman and also protect the ground handling business of Biman. About 85 % of The total annual income of Biman comes from ground handling services provided to many well known airlines based in foreign countries who operates their flights to Bnagladesh. Without ground handling Biman will cease to exist. Many immoral business people are trying their best to take it away from Biman. They are using political influences and other ill methods to destroy Biman from within.

In spite of all the obstacles Biman has managed to survived the test of time among many other airlines in Bangladesh who closed their operations. The system within the company is very complicated in nature and it is unlike any other organizations in Bangladesh. Here I have tried to compile the information that I collected mostly form primary sources and observation. I have tried to explain the different scenarios and the weaknesses of Biman and then provided my recommendations for where it need to change and improve in order to ensure the quality it's services.

Employees who are well trained and do want to improve the quality of service are unable to so due the lack of necessary equipments, proper chain of command and the authority to make certain decisions. The complicates system and the tall hierarchy of people not experienced in the respective field on creates a chaos within the organizations. Also the lack of circulation of information also creates confusion among the employees , stakeholders and also the valued passengers as well.

## Table of Contents

<b>i</b>	<b>Profile Of the Organization :</b> Core businesses/ activities FFP (Frequent Flyer Program) Fleet of Biman Baggladesh Airlines Ltd Board of Directors Executive Directors	<b>1-5</b>
<b>ii.1</b>	<b>Introduction :</b> a) Rationale b) Background c) Objectives	<b>6-11</b>
<b>ii.2</b>	<b>Review of Related Literature</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>iii</b>	<b>Activities Undertaken</b> <b>Work Related :</b> Working in Ground Service Check-In Boarding Paging Ramp Supervising Transit Handling Special Passenger Handling Flight Coverage Passport Check Unit Load Control DCS Control Lost and Found Baggage Area Foreign Carrier Handling Working hours and Shifts in Ground Service Types of employees in Biman	<b>12-18</b>
<b>iv</b>	<b>a) Constraints/Challenges and Proposed Course of Action For Improvement :</b> Training Evaluation Decision Making Lack of Equipments Chain of Command Defined Authority Unrealistic Approach Political Influence Too many cooks Overtime: The Ice Berg Effect <b>b) Academic Preparation</b>	<b>19-22</b>
<b>v</b>	<b>Lessons Learned from the Internship Program :</b> a. Implications to Organization/Company b. Implications to University's Internship Program	<b>22-21</b>

<b>vi</b>	<b>Concluding Statements :</b> a. Recapitulation /Summary b. Recommendations for Future Strategic Actions	<b>23-24</b>
	<b>References</b>	<b>25</b>
	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>26</b>

### **i) Profile Of the Organization :**

Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. also known as Biman in short is the national flag carrier airline of Bangladesh. Although currently it is a public limited company but is completely owned by the government of the country.

Biman came into being on January 04, 1972 with a gift of DC-3 aircraft from Bangladesh Air force. Presently Biman has four 777-300ER, two 777-200ER, two 737-800, and two A310-300 in its fleet. Biman made its Reservation and Departure Control System and other communication systems fully computerized.

Biman is now capable of conducting many aircraft checks and maintenance in its Hangar complex located in HSIA.

In addition to its own aircraft, Biman's ground-handling unit also provides support to Singapore Airlines, Thai Airways, Malaysia Airlines, Qatar Airways, Emirates, Kuwait Airways, Saudia, Gulf Air, Air India , Dragon Air, Druk Air etc at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, Dhaka.

Biman Flight Catering Center (BFCC) has the capacity of producing 8500 meals a day and is providing cuisine not only to Biman but also to Saudia, Etihad, Malaysia Airlines, Thai Airways, Emirates, Dragon Air and China Southern Airlines.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines Training Center (BATC) has been training its ground, flight service and technical personnel to meet the growing needs of Biman's manpower,. The center has also been turned into a seat of training and technical seminars for local travel agents and some foreign airlines.

Biman Poultry Complex, a subsidiary of Biman was formed in 1976 and was put into operation in November 1980 to create a profit earning concern to augment the cash flow of Biman. The complex is situated 40 km north-west away from Dhaka City over 75 acres of land at Ganakbari, Savar, Dhaka.

Currently Biman has regular scheduled flights to 15 International and 8 Domestic destinations.

Subsidiaries of this organization are Biman Flight Catering Centre( BFCC), Biman Poultry Complex Biman Airlines Training Center (BATC)

### **Vision:**

To establish Biman Bangladesh Airlines ltd. in the aviation market as a world-class airline.

### **Mission:**

To provide safe, reliable, efficient, adequate Economical and properly co-ordinated air transport services and to satisfy customer's exceptions while earning sustainable profit and continuing to be a caring employer.



**Core businesses/ activities :**

- Air transportation of passengers.
- Air transportation of cargo
- Air transportation of mail

**FFP (Frequent Flyer Program):**

Biman has introduced a frequent flyer program with lots of special offers and mileage reward earned on every Biman flights to retain its existing customers and also attract new ones.

**Fleet of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd :**

Type	Regn. No.	Business Class Seating	Economy Class Seating
777-300ER	S2-AFO	35	384
777-300ER	S2-AFP	35	384
777-300ER	S2-AHM	35	384
777-300ER	S2-AHN	35	384
777-200ER	S2-AHK	12	307
737-800	S2-AFL	12	150
737-800	S2-AFM	12	150
737-800	S2-AHO	12	150
737-800	S2-AHV	12	150
DASH-8	S2-AGQ	N/A	74
DASH-8	S2-AGR	N/A	74

## **Board of Directors**

- Air Marshal Muhammad Enamul Bari, BBP, NDU, PSC

Former Chief of Air Staff

### **Chairman**

- Mrs. Suraiya Begum, NDC

Senior Secretary, Prime Minister's Office

### **Director**

- Mr. S.M. Ghulam Farooque

Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation & Tourism

### **Director**

- Mr. Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury

Secretary in charge, Finance Division,

Ministry of Finance

### **Director**

- Mr. Md. Nazrul Islam Khan

Former Secretary, Ministry of Education

### **Director**

- Air Vice Marshal Masihuzzaman Serniabat, BBP, OSP, NDU, PSC

Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Operation & Training)

### **Director**

- Air Vice Marshal M Naim Hassan, BBP, OSP, afwc, psc

Chairman, Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh

### **Director**

- Maj Gen Md. Siddiqur Rahman Sarker, SGP, hdmc, psc  
Engineer in Chief, Bangladesh Army.

**Director**

- Mr. Tapos Kumar Roy  
Former Additional Secretary, Power Division  
Ministry of Power, Energy & Mineral Resources

**Director**

- Barrister Tanjib-ul Alam  
Lawyer, Bangladesh Supreme Court

**Director**

- Mr. Md. Siddiqur Rahman  
President, BGMEA

**Director**

- Mr. N.K. A. Mobin, FCA, FCS  
Managing Director, Emerging Resources Ltd

**Director**

- Mr. A M Mosaddique Ahmed  
Ex-officio Director,  
Biman Bangladesh Airlines Limited

**Managing Director & CEO**

## Executive Directors

- Mr. A M Mosaddique Ahmed

**Managing Director & CEO**

- Capt. Farhat Hassan Jamil

**Director, Flight Operations**

- Mr. G. M. Iqbal

**Director, Engineering & Material Management (Acting)**

- Mr. Mohammad Mominul Islam

**Director, Procurement & Logistic Support**

- Mr. Mohd. Ali Ahsan

**Director, Marketing & Sales**

- Mr. Vineet Sood

**Chief Financial Officer**

- Mr. Mohammad Mominul Islam

**Director, Administration**

- Mr. Mohd. Ali Ahsan

**Director, Customer Services**

## **(II) Introduction :**

### **a) Rationale :**

I have been working in the department of Ground Service for last 6 + years in 3 different airlines. I have worked in United Airways for 2 years, in Novoair for 3 years and in Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd for last 1 + years and continuing. After working for more the 6 years in this department I have become familiar with all the operational activities of Ground Service which is required for a flights departure and arrival. When it comes to the Aviation industry of Bangladesh since it is a relatively small industry here, a very few people knows and understand the activities of the ground service department. Many of my friends including those of from BRAC University were very keen to know about the nature of my job. It inspired me prepare complete document which will answer their queries in detail. This study will help people who wants to peruse a career in this industry to understand the nature , timing and challenges of this profession.

Beside that Biman Bangladesh Airlines being the national flag carrier of Bangladesh has many controversial issues that needs to addressed. Through this study I will try to find practical solutions to those issues by analyzing them in detail and come up with my recommendations.

### **b) Background :**

Biman Bangladesh Airlines Started Its journey on 4th January 1972 through the Presidential Order (No-126) of 1972 which was latter published as " The Bangladesh Biman Order 1972 ". It is the national flag career of Bangladesh. Initially the airline was named Air Bangla International. Later the name was amended to Bangladesh Biman. No airline in the history of aviation had a beginning like the one Biman had. When it started It had no aircraft ,very little maintenance facilities and no arrangement for any kind of training facilities but it had about 2333 employes of former PIA. During the liberation war the maintenance facilities , Overhaul shops, runway and airport buildings were badly damaged due to bombing and shelling of the enemy aircrafts. Most of the equipments were damaged beyond repair. So Biman had to build its own facilities.

The journey of Biman began with a Douglas DC-3 aircraft acquired from India, which was an Air Force aircraft gifted to the new airline by the government. But the joy was short lived because before any service flights could began the aircraft crashed near Dhaka on 10th February, 1972 while on a training flight. Later on two Fokker F27 aircrafts belonging to the Indian Airlines were supplied by the Indian government as a replacement .Finally Biman went air borne on 7th March, 1972 with its first flights From DAC (Dhaka) to CGP (Chittagong) and ZYL (Sylhet). On 9th March,1972 started its flights to JSR (Jessore).

The International operation of Biman started on 4th March, 1972 three days before starting its first domestic flight but it wasn't from Dhaka but from London to Dhaka with 179 passenger on board. The aircraft used on the flight was a chartered aircraft from British Caledonian. Biman began its international operation with flights to London and Calcutta and its domestic operation with flights to Chittagong, Jessore and Ishwardi. Later on four F-27 joined the fleet. Two from India and two from Netherland. One DC-6 was also leased for two months. The services to London continued with the chartered aircraft. In 1973 Bangkok became Biman's third International destination and in the domestic sector Thakurgoan was included in the network. Four more F-27 joined the fleet by that time. Two of these was gifts from Austrlia and the other two were purchased from the Fokker Company. Then a leased Boeing 707-320C joined the flet to operate its Dhaka-London flight service. Then the airline purchased another Boeing 707-320C.

In 1974 Dubai and Kathmandu became the fourth and fifth international destination of Biman. Domestic services to Cox's Bazar was also introduced. Then in 1976 new international services were extended to Yangon, Abu Dhabi, Kharachi and Mumbai. The second Boeing 707-320C joined the fleet that year.

In 1977 the government through an ordinance (No-xix of 1972) made Bangladesh Biman a corporation. Later on in 23rd July 2007 Biman was converted to Public Limited Company under the registration No-C67807(358)07 and was named Blman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. with the corporate logo of white stork flying across the red sun and the slogan of " Your home in the sky". Singapore became another part of Biman's international network. Biman acquired its third Boeing 707-320C from Trans Air of Canada. 1978 Jeddah, Doha and Amstrerdam became Biman's new international sectors. Two more boeing 707-320C aircraft were acquired that year. One of those was from Japan. Then in 1979 the year turned out be the year of route expansion for Biman. In the international sector services were extended to Kuala Lumpur, Athens, Muscut and Tripoli. Syedpur became a part of the domestic network in the following year. Then flights to Tokyo and Dharan were introduced. An off-Line office in Jakarta was opened. In 1980 another Boeing 707-320C joined the fleet.

In 1981 the airline started flights to Rome and Kuwait but suspended its flights to Tokyo. That year Biman received one Boeing 707-320C as a gift from Kuwait and purchased two F-28 from the fokker Company. In 1983 Biman entered a new era with acquisition of three used wide bodied DC-10-30 from Singapore Airlines. Baghdad was made on-line. Biman extended its international services to Paris and to Rajshahi in the domestic sector in 1984.

In 1986 flights to Bahrain was introduced . One of the Boeing 707-320C was phased out that year. Then flights to Frankfurt were introduced in the following year.

In 1988 flights to Riyadh were introduced in place of Dahrhan. Services to Baghdad were then suspended. One more Boeing 707-320C was phased out.

In 1989 the airline entered the select club of one million passengers. Services to Sharjah was introduced and services to Baghdad was resumed, A new DC10-3 was purchased from McDonnell Douglas to join the fleet and the remaining Boeing 707-320C was phased out. Then the airline introduced modern echnology with the commissioning of a Computerized Reservation System. The Flight Catering Centre at Hazrat Shahjalal Interantional Airport was commissioned which enabled Biman not only to upgrade its own in-flight services with high quality food, but also to earn additional revenues by other airlines. The Ground Training School was merged with the Apprentice Training School and moved to modern complex at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

In 1990 Two ATP aircraft joined the fleet for domestic routes and the F-27s were phased out in the same year. In 1992 New Delhi and Nagoya were included in Biman's international network and operations to Sharjah were suspended. The \$ 30m Hangar Complex at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport was commissioned.

In 1993 For the first time Biman crossed the Atlantic with services to New York. Hong Kong was also included in the network but operations to Nagoya were suspended. Two DC-10-30s were taken on lease.

In 1994 a Computerized Departure Control was commissioned. Biman commenced services to Brussels and suspended its operation to Amsterdam in 1995.

In 1996 The two new Airbus A-310 were purchased from Airbus Industries. One DC-10-30 and one A 310-300 aircraft were taken on lease for three years in 1999.

In 2000 Another DC 10-30 and one A 310-300 aircraft were taken on lease for three years. Two B 737-300s aircraft were taken on lease for one year in 2003. The leased B 737-300 was released in April 2004. Further two F28 aircraft were purchased in May 2004.

In 2006 Biman commenced services to Manchester on 08 April 2006. Biman suspended its operation to New York, Brussels, Paris, Frankfurt, Mumbai, Narita and Yangon for operational reasons.

In 2007 Bangladesh Biman Corporation turned into a Public Limited Company. E-ticket and BSP were introduced.

In 2008 The airline went into an agreement with Boeing Aircraft Company for acquisition of 10 new generation aircraft of 4 Boeing 777-300ER, 2 Boeing 737-800 and 4 Boeing 787 the biggest ever deal in the history of Biman as well as the country. One Boeing 747-300 was taken on lease on ACMI basis for 12 months. Two more 737-800s joined the fleet in November.

In 2010 One lease-hold Boeing 777-200ER joined the fleet. Two Boeing 737-800s were taken on lease for 5 years. The aircraft will remain in the fleet till January 2015. The airline took delivery of one Airbus 310-300 on lease for 3 years.

In 2011 The first 02 of 04 Boeing 777-300ERs joined the fleet in October and November, 2011 and thus replacing the ageing DC10-30s, the long time backbone of Biman's fleet.

In 2014 The 3rd Boeing 777-300ER joined the fleet on 5th February and the 4th is joining in the second week of February. Now the airline has a new backbone comprising of Boeing 777-300ERs, the new work horses of Biman, named as the Palki, the Arun Aalo, the Aakash Pradeep and the Raanga Pravat.

During the four decades of Biman's existence, many types of commercial airliners have adorned the fleet- ranging from the early leader, the venerable DC 3 to the modern 'People's Preference', the Boeing 777. As stated earlier, the airline had placed a firm order for the fifth generation Boeing-787 Dreamliner to complement its fleet. Fuel efficient Dreamliner is a new wonder of the skies.

Biman can look back with pride to many occasions where it made memorable contributions to the nation and the travelling public. When the floods of 1988 engulfed the whole country Biman operated an air bridge providing the country's only link with the outside world. As the flood waters moved up, even on to the run way at HSIA, the skill and dedication of Biman's pilots kept the air bridge operational.

On February 20, 2014, Biman operated the historical final-flight of world's last passenger DC10-30 on Dhaka – Birmingham route and thus recording its name in the world aviation history.

In 2015 previous two Boeing 737-800 aircraft extended its lease for three more years. Two Dash-8 aircraft joined the fleet in April on lease basis. Two Boeing 737-800 aircraft joined the fleet in the month of November and December.

During the four decades of Biman's existence many types of commercial aircraft had been used ranging from the early leaders like the venerable DC-3 to the modern peoples preference the Boeing 777. As Biman has placed a firm order for the fifth generation Dreamliner to complement its fleet, which is due to arrive in 2018. These fuel efficient Dreamliners are known as the new wonder of the sky.

Biman can look back with pride to many occasion where it made memorable contribution to the nation and the travelling passengers. When the floods of 1988 engulfed the whole country Biman operated an air bridge providing the country's only link with the outside worlds. As the flood waters moved up, even on to the run way at HSIA, the skill and dedication of Biman Team kept the air bridge operational. On February 20, 2014 Biman operated the historical final flight of world's last passenger DC10-30 on Dhaka-Birmingham route and recorded its name the history of aviation.

The company is governed by a board of Directors comprising of members from different government agencies such as- ministries, IBA, FBCCI,CA and Supreme Court etc under a Chairman who is nominated by the government. The Managing Director is the chief Executive officer of the



company and also a member of the board. at present the company consists of 8 directorates. Such as-Directorates of Planing, Customer Service, Finance, Engineering and material management, Administration, Flight Operations, Marketing and Sales, Procurement and Logistic Support and MD & CEO Secretariat. Total number of permanent employees at present is about 2961 in all the departments of the company Which was 2333 in 1972 when the company first started.

Subsidiaries of this organization are Biman Flight Catering Centre( BFCC), Biman Poultry Complex Biman Airlines Training Center (BATC). Currently Biman has a fleet of four 777-300ER, two 777-200ER, four 737-800 and two Dash-8 aircrafts. Biman is successfully operating its flights regularly in different destinations in both domestic and international sectors. Many sectors has been closed and many sectors added throughout its lifetime.

#### **Current Destinations Operated by Biman :**

Currently Biman is operating regular flights to 15 different international destinations. Those are as follows -

##### International Sectors :

- London
- Kuwait
- Dammam
- Jeddah
- Riyadh
- Doha
- Abu Dhabi
- Dubai
- Muscat
- Kathmandu
- Kolkata
- Bangkok
- Kuala Lumpur
- Singapore
- Yangon

Biman is operating regular flights to 8 domestic destinations. Those are as follows -

Domestic Sectors :

- Dhaka
- Chittagong
- Jessore
- Sylhet
- Barisal
- Rajshahi
- Saidpur
- Cox's Bazar

**c) Objectives :**

My objectives are to study and understand the underlying operational activities and the challenges faced by Biman Bangladesh Airlines and its employees from the point of view of an insider and findings solutions and recommendations to improve the overall service of the state owned airline.

**II. 2. Review of Related Literature :**

After reviewing many news reports and articles from various online sources regarding Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. there is no explanation needed to say that most of the time these are exaggerated in various ways. Sometimes even completely false reports are published against Biman. I am not trying say that Biman is a wonderful organization with no issues at all. Some writers due to their ignorance, whenever they see an incident involving an aircraft or an airline they refer to it as Biman. But all airlines are not Biman and Biman doesn't own all the aircrafts in Bangladesh. There are many other airlines also operating beside Biman in Bangladesh. Some of these are based in the country, such as - Novoair , US-Bangla Airlines, Regent Airways etc and some are based in foreign countries such as Emirates, Qatar airways, Zet Airways etc. Sadly whenever an incident takes place regarding any airline or aircraft many writers out of their ignorance affiliate it with Biman. As though all the airlines and aircrafts are known as Biman. Because the name Biman often refers to the bangali meaning of an aircraft. So sometimes confusion arises for that as well.

Another issue that I came across is that there are approximately 16-18 different agencies work at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Agencies such as CAAB , NSI, DGFI, DB police, APBN, Immigration Police, Bangladesh Air force, Red Line, Ansar, Protocol, Welfare and Overseas Employment Agency, Freight Forwarding agencies, Foreign Carriers, various Private Airlines, state owned Biman

Bangladesh Airlines, Customs, Excise & VAT etc. Sometimes it is portrayed in the news articles specially those circulated online as any incident occurring in airport is some hoe related to Biman. As though Biman wones the whone airport and the airfield. Sometimes this type of view is also perceived by many passengers who think Biman is responsible for everything inside the airport. Biman does have its own issues as any other government organizations , but taking the blame for others misconduct can't be justified in any way.

The Ground Handling Manual approved by IATA and many other related documents related to the subject available at Library of BATC has provided a lot of information for this report.

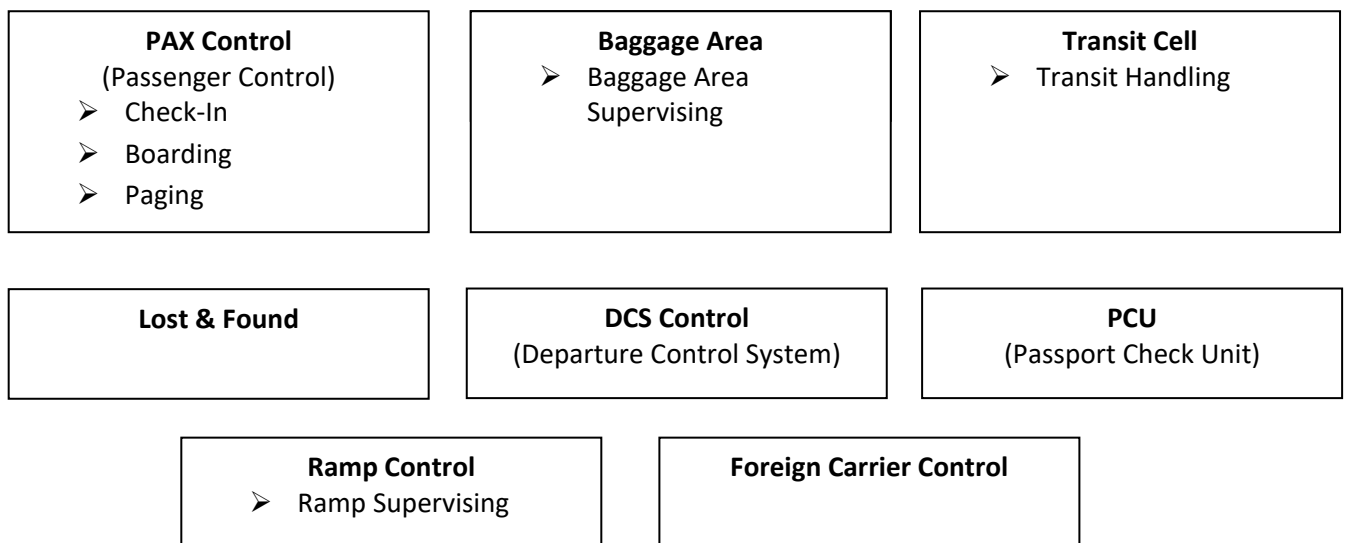
**iii) Activities Undertaken:**

**a) Work Related :**

I have worked in all the semi departments of ground service except Load control and PCU. Description of this duties undertaken are as follows :

**Working in Ground Service :**

The nature of ground of work in the department of ground service is highly operational. It is a department under the directorate of Customer Service. Ground Service personnel are responsible for everything that is required for a flights departure and arrival inside the airport. This department was previously also known as 'Traffic' . Which refers to the controlling the traffic of the passengers (not the aircraft). Ground service consists of 8 semi departments within the department.



Among many Ground Service activities some important parts are as follows.

- i. Check-In
- ii. Boarding
- iii. Paging
- iv. Ramp Supervising
- v. Transit Handling
- vi. Special Passenger Handling
- vii. Flight Coverage
- viii. PCU (Passport Check Unit)
- ix. Load Control
- x. DCS (Departure Control System) Control
- xi. Lost and Found
- xii. Baggage Area Supervising
- xiii. Foreign Carrier Handling

#### **Check-In :**

The work of ground service has various parts but it all starts from the Check-In counter. Check-in counters are usually opened 3-4 hours before the flight and will be closed 1 hour before the departure time. After which no passenger will be accepted by the check-in agent for travel. After a passenger report at the Check-In counter the passengers will present their Tickets or E-Ticket or PNR along with all the necessary documents to the Check-In agent of the airline. The Check-In agent will then check the documents for their validity and detect if there is fraudulence. In domestic flight there is no need for the such vigorous check. Only verifying the validity of the Ticket in the respective Check-In System is sufficient but in International flights it is mandatory to verify the Passport, Visa and any other required document if necessary depending on their purpose travelling. Other required documents such as Medical Certificate , Hotel reservation, Bank Endorsement etc could be required depending on the purpose of travel and the laws & regulation of the destination country. It is a mandatory procedure to follow before issuing a boarding pass and allowing the passenger to enter the immigration area. If any such required document is not presented to the check-in agent or if the check-in agent finds any fraudulence in the presented document then the Check-In agent has every right to deny such passenger from travelling even after having a valid ticket with him or her. If everything is in order then the check-in agent will accept the passenger and his baggage and issue a boarding pass along with baggage tags for them. The process is usually done through a computerized system called SDCS (SITA Departure Control System). A person must have prior knowledge or training to operate such a system as these are command based software the DOS. Some airlines also uses windows based software which are much more easier to use but Biman is currently using SITA as it a very reliable and secured option for them. For example To FIND AN passenger in the system to command would be - PSBG039,NACC,TKNE,NAMABDURRAHMAN and to accept a passenger the command would be - PA1,1/20,b,SNR25A. So without having any training it is impossible for someone to operate such a command based system.

**Boarding :**

After check-in the passenger has to go through the immigration process which is done by the immigration police. There is no involvement of airlines in this area. Airlines personnel are prohibited to enter or interfere in any of the activities of the departure immigration area in Bangladesh except for transit and crew immigration where the involvement of the airlines is required. Only passengers holding a valid boarding pass can enter the departure immigration area of the airport and face the immigration police to go through the immigration process. To depart from or enter into any country it is a mandatory process all around the world. After finishing the immigration process the passenger will receive a departure seal in their passport. Then the passenger will enter the waiting area and wait for the announcement to report to the designated boarding gate to go through the final security check and enter the boarding lounge before boarding the aircraft. These security checks are done by CAAB (Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh). Again here airline personnel will not interfere here in any way regarding the security check of passenger and their hand luggage. Gate boarding usually starts 1-2 hours before the departure time of the flight depending on the number of passenger and size of the fleet. Here before entering the gate for security check the passenger's passport, Visa , boarding pass and all other required documents along with the departure seal provided the immigration police will be checked by a special Unit of the airline called PCU (Passport check Unit). If the PCU personnel finds anything which is suspicious he may deny the passenger from boarding. If everything is in order the passenger will be welcomed to enter the boarding lounge and go through the security check done by CAAB. While entering the boarding pass a portion of the passengers' boarding pass is torn and kept by the boarding man for final counting. Then the passenger will enter the boarding lounge and wait for the announcement to board the aircraft. In the meantime the torn portion of the boarding pass is inputted in the DCS through a barcode scanner or manually by a specific sequence number BN (Boarding Number). The System will generate the total number of passenger boarded and also identify who is boarded and who is not boarded . This is also a mandatory process to generate the flight manifest by the system. Then another personnel will get the boarding clearance of the operating captain when the aircraft is ready for departure and make an announcement to the passenger to board the aircraft.

**Paging:**

Paging is the process of calling the passengers to report to the boarding gate. In HSIA, Dhaka airlines don't have an announcement system. So for announcement we have rely on CAAB. They will make the announcement on behalf of the airline whenever requested. CAAB will also put the flight number and boarding gate number on the designated departure board. Gate numbers are assigned by the control tower of CAAB when requested by the airline. Boarding gates are usually assigned 1-2 hours before the departure time depending on the size of the fleet. Event after the announcement some passengers fails to report to the boarding gate on time and often miss their flights. Such

passengers are known as Gate No-Show passenger. To avoid such inconvenience of the passengers some airline personnel will walk around the waiting area after immigration and call out loudly to the passenger to attract their attention and notify them the assigned gate number and request them report to the designated gate so that they won't miss the flight.

### **Ramp Supervising :**

Ramp is a defined area on land a aerodrome intended to accommodate aircraft for the purpose of Loading - Unloading of passengers, baggage, cargo and mail, Fueling, Parking and small maintenance. It is also known as the Airport Apron area in the terminology of ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) and FAA of USA. It is indeed a hazardous area to work in. All personnel working in this area must be well aware of the safety rules and dangerous good regulations to remain unharmed and out of danger. It is not recommended for personnel to work in this area without proper training. In Biman females are not required to work in this area due to safety hazards.

Ramp supervising is basically looking after all the activities that is happening in ramp area for a particular flight. The Supervisor is also known as Ramp man. It is his responsibility to make sure everything is in order. Ramp man will receive the loading instruction from Load Control and will make sure everything including baggage, mail and cargo etc are loaded according to the load plan of LIR (Loading instruction Report) . It is essential to make sure all material are loaded according to instruction of the Trim Man otherwise serious consequences may take place. The Captain of the aircraft will not be able to control the aircraft properly if loading is not done correctly.

Another responsibility of the Ramp Man is communication. He will maintain communication with Check-In counter, Baggage Area, Cargo Department , Load Control, Boarding Gate , Captain and Cabin Crew , Engineering, GSE (Ground Service Equipment) Department make sure all the GS Equipment such as - High-Loader, Belter, Tow Tractor, Water Cart, Push Cart, Start Cart, GPU (Ground Power Unit), Ambulift etc are available on time as per the requirement of the flight.

### **Transit Handling :**

If a passenger has a connecting or a transit flight then it is responsibility of the personnel of Transit Section to ensure smooth connection of such passenger and their baggage. There is a designated Transfer Desk of Biman inside the Waiting area after immigration So that the passenger upon arriving the station can easily find it and report there for their transfer flight. If any passenger of Biman has a Transit flight and if the interval of the flights (Transit Period) is more than 8 hours then Biman will provide hotel accommodation on Biman's Account . But if the transit period is less than 8 hours then the passenger will have stay in the transit area and Biman will provide food for them through coupons.

For Bangladeshi Nationals the process of sending them to hotel is that Transit Section will Prepare a GD (General Declaration) addressing the OC immigration and request permission to send transit passengers to hotel on Biman's account. Then OC will allow and issue a GD number under which passengers will be able to go to a hotel. They will have to go through a transit immigration known as ATR (Arrival Transit). A personnel from transit section will guide the through the whole process. When the passenger will come back for their flight they will enter under the same GD number issued previously by the immigration police. Passengers will again have go through a transit immigration known as DTR (Departure Transit).

For foreign nationals, the process is almost the same but they will have to pay for a transit VISA to exit the airport. Transit Visa will cost them 21 USD per person. Biman will provide for their hotel and transportation. But if the person want to a hotel of his or her own choice other than those nominated by Biman then they will have to get a VISA on arrival (if permitted by the immigration police). It will cost the 51 USD per person. ). A personnel from transit section will guide the through the whole process.

#### **Special Passenger Handling :**

Special passengers are the ones with special needs or requirements. Such as sick passengers, minors travelling alone ,deported back passengers etc. Some types and terminologies of special passenger used by airlines are :

MEDA : Medical Case ( Passenger requiring medical attention )

STCR: Stretcher Passenger

SIC :Sick or Disable Passenger

WCHR :Wheelchair Passenger

MEDIF : Medical Information

BLND: Blind Passenger

DEAF: Deaf passenger

UM : Unaccompanied Minors

VVIP, VIP and CIP

DEPO :Deportee Passenger

INAD : Inadmissible Passenger

Expectant Mother

Mentally ill Passengers etc.

Ground service personnel will make sure that their special needs are met accordingly. In some cases check-in agent may have to determine the eligibility of acceptance for certain passengers according to the company SOP (Standard Operating Procedure)

**Flight Coverage :**

A designated personnel will monitor the whole process of departure and make sure everything is in place and all the different sections of ground service are working in coordination accordingly. Usually a very senior and experienced personnel is designated for such a job. So basically it is a coordinating function .

**Passport Check Unit :**

It is a unit of Ground Service which specializes in detecting fraudulence in Passport and Visa. Personnel working in this unit are trained by various High Commissions and Embassies of different countries. These personnel must be well aware with different laws of immigrations of different countries. This unit performs the final Passport and Visa check before entering the boarding gate and embarking the aircraft. These checks are done in the boarding gates.

**Load Control:**

This is one of the most sensitive part of work in ground. Only the best of ground service personnel are selected to work in this section. Specially personnel who are really good in mathematics and capable of making fast decision are selected for this section. A specialized training is mandatory to work in this section. After successful completion of such training personnel will receive a license with a certain validity. This license gives the authority to prepare load sheet and trim sheet for a flight. The personnel who prepares such documents are known as Trim Man. Basically the trim man is responsible for planning how the Load of passenger , baggage, mail and cargo will be distributed in the aircraft. The plan has to be in such a way so that the CG (Center of gravity) of the aircraft balanced properly according to the instruction of the manufacturer of a certain aircraft. If the aircraft is not balanced the captain will not be able to control the aircraft properly which may result in severe accident.

**DCS Control :**

DCS stands for Departure Control System. This unit monitors the computerized system and fixes any technical issues that may arise. They also look for any irregularity in the system and any unauthorized activities taking place and keep track of them. They have the highest authority regarding the use of SITA DSC.



**Lost and Found :**

This department keeps track of any lost and mishandled or left behind baggage of passengers. A special computerized system called The World Tracer is used to maintain such records . Again this is also a command base DOS like system. So person must have prior training to operate such a system. This department also supervises the arrival baggage are to ensure proper delivery of passenger's baggage .

**Baggage Area :**

There are 2 types of baggage area. Arrival and Departure. Arrival baggage are is looked after by the Lost & Found unit as stated above but the departure baggage are is supervised by another unit of baggage area . In Biman baggage area is referred to departure baggage area. Passengers baggage are sorted according to the flights and destination. Then those are loaded in the designated ULD (Unit Load Device) and sent to aircraft. The baggage are unit will monitor and supervise the process make sure that no baggage is left behind and it reaches it correct destination. They will maintain constant communication with the check-in counter , ramp supervisor and GSE Department (Ground Service Equipment).

**Foreign Carrier Handling :**

Foreign Carrier refers to airlines which are based in a foreign country. For example Emirates ,Qatar Airways, Thai Airways etc are considered as foreign carriers. Beside handling Biman's won flights Biman is also the handling agent of all the foreign carrier operating flights in Bnagladesh. So Biman is responsible for providing all sorts of ground service assistance to them. Assistance such as Check-In, Boarding , Ramp Supervising and Preparing Load and Trim Sheet, Handling Special Passengers etc depending on agreement with Biman and a particular airline. This is relatively a new section of Ground Service. Before this section was formed these duties were under PAX control. Later on to improve the quality of service Biman made a separate department assist the foreign carriers.

**Working hours and Shifts in Ground Service :**

There are 4 shifts in the department of Ground Service. Namely- Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta or A, B, C and D in short. 3 Shifts remain active each day and 4th will be on weekly off. One week for each shift consists of 8 days in total. Morning duty for 2 days, evening duty shift for 2 days, night duty for 2 days and weekly off for 2 days. It keep rotating the same way all around the year. For example in a day A shift will be on morning duty, B shift will be on evening duty, C shift will be on night duty and D shift will enjoy their weekly off. It is designed in such a

way that airport the operations remain active 24/7 without any pause and the employees will also enjoy maximum buffering time between their shifting duty.

Morning shift starts from 0600 hr to 1400 hr , Evening shift starts from 1400 hr to 2200 hr and night shift starts from 2200 hr to 0600 hr (next day). In this way the airport operations remain smooth all day long.

### **Types of employees in Biman :**

There are eight types of employees in Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. Those are -

1. Employees on contract
2. Permanent employees
3. Probationer
4. Temporary employees
5. Substitute employees
6. Casual employees
7. Apprentice employees
8. Deputationists

Employees of Biman are governed by the "Bangladesh Biman Corporation employees service regulations.1979 " adopted by the Board of Directors of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. in 2007 and for workers it is governed by the Bangladesh Labor Act, 2006.

### **iv) Constraints/Challenges and Proposed Course of Action For Improvement :**

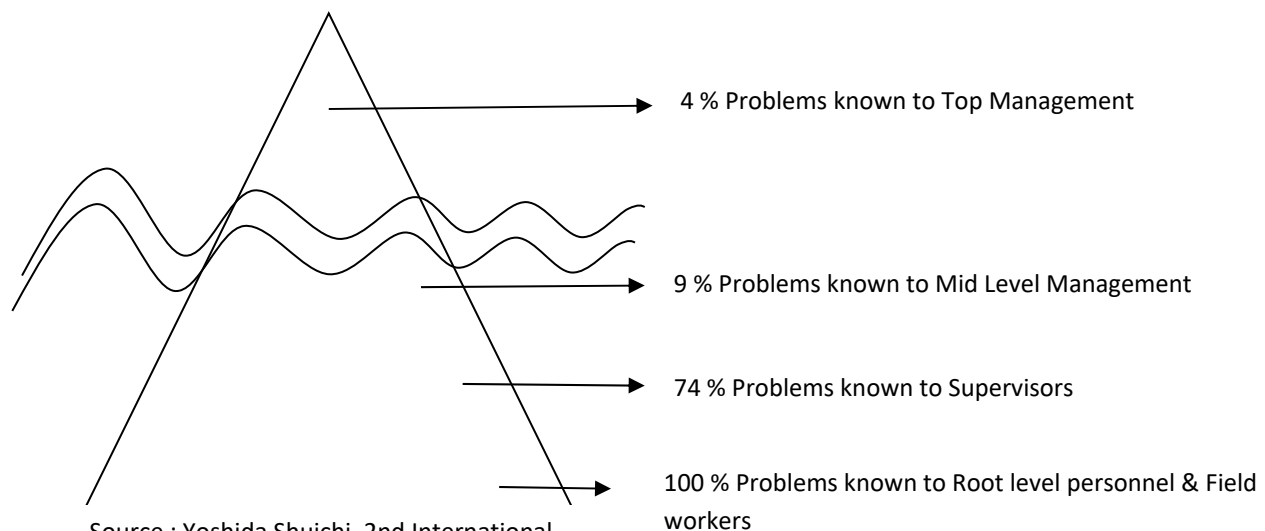
a) Observed in the Organization :

- **Training** : Biman has a large number of employees comparing to any other airlines in Bnagladesh. Frequent training sessions are conducted for the employees. But often times most of these are done as a pressure from the regulatory bodies such as CAAB, IATA, ICAO etc rather than with the motive to train and improve the workforce for providing better service. Things taught in the training center remains in the training center. In the real work environment there is a whole different scenario. Training sessions are more emphasize on quantity then quality. These training requires a lot of memorization and achieving a good grade rather than having a deep understanding of the subjects. Training conducted by other airlines are a lot different from the once in Biman. Because they emphasize more on learning and understanding the concepts then memorizing and achieving higher grades. They do require the employees to pass if there is a test.

- **Evaluation:** Evaluation of employees are not done by their performance but based on the result of the basic training. The basic training is conducted in the beginning , most of the time before the employees even joins the workforce in the real work environment. Based on the result of that training a serial number is given to the employees depending on their position achieved in the training. That serial number will remain with them for as long as the employees will serve the company. they will get promoted as per that serial number achieved in the basic training. Regardless of their performance.
- **Decision Making :** Biman is theoretically governed by a tall hierarchy. So it takes huge time to make even very small decisions. Most of the times it is a lot lengthier then a considerable amount of time. For example Biman need a new organogram to state how many employees they need to cope with new challenges and increasing flights. But it has already taken them more than 20 years but still didn't manage to make it. As a result they had to hire new employees on casual basis. Some of these casual employees are serving in Biman for more than 20 years with a very little wages without any of the benefits of a permanent employee.
- **Lack of Equipments :** Besides the number of employees there is also a lack of enough equipments. It also takes a huge period of time to get those sanctioned from the higher authorities. For example the essence of the work of ground service is communication and coordination. For it is a basic requirement to have enough RT (Radio telephone) also known as walkie talkies in each point of coordination. But again there is a very little number of those available in Ground service. so employees has to rely on their mobile phones. As a result many miscommunication occurs frequently. RT cannot be replaces with mobile phones because in RT we can here the information from all departments consistently and stay updated about situations. It is a multiway communication method which can never be achieved by a mobile phone effectively.
- **Chain of Command :** There is very little chain of command in Biman. As result it is very difficult to coordinate between different units and department. No one listens to no one. Junior to Midlevel employees finds it very difficult to run day to day operation.
- **Defined Authority :** Authority of deferent level of employees are no defined properly. So most of the employees don't know how far can they go to make decisions.
- **Unrealistic Approach :** Although Biman provides vigorous training in BATC but the real world scenario is completely different due to shortage of manpower and equipments ,

Lack of defined authority to make decisions and the pressure of work environment. For example It is noticeable when we look at the check-in counter of Biman. There would be usually be like 4 check-in staff to check-in 1600 passengers in 2 hours. It is humanly impossible to maintain the quality of service in such a situation. This type of unrealistic approach will never improve the quality of service.

- **Political Influence** : Although Biman is a public limited company on paper but still 100 % of its shareholder is the government. So there is bound to be political influence and interference. Often times many decisions are made on political basis rather than profitable. As a result Biman had to suffer continues losses.
- **Too many cooks** : Biman is not govern by a single body of management. Many influence from different parties is observable in Biman. As part of the management there are Board Members under a Chairman nominated by the government, there is the ministry of civil aviation and tourism, then there is union of CBA, there are also executive directors, influences and ruling of the Supreme Court and many other invisible influences. So it's like the saying "Too many cooks spoils the broth".
- **Overtime**: There is a provision for overtime in Biman. Overtime is extra hours of duty conducted by a employee after the completion his or her regular duty of 8 hours. Sometimes employees are more interested in performing the overtime and neglecting their regular duty for extra payments of overtime. Which creates problems in regular operations. But due to shortage of employees Biman had no choice but to take employees for overtime duties. As a result it affects the overall quality of work.
- **The Ice Berg Effect** : Biman is a classic example of the iceberg theory.



Source : Yoshida Shuichi, 2nd International Quality Symposium ,1989

Here we can see that the root level employees are aware of 100 % of the problems and Top management is aware of 4%. So there is a huge communication gap. The information doesn't reach the top management properly. Most the top management in Biman do not have any background in the aviation industry. Moreover they are hardly ever present in airport. They don't have any office in the airport. They do their work from Balaka Bhaban. So it is impossible for them know what is actually going on in the field and what challenges the employees are facing. Whatever information they may collect from their sources are often distorted and biased.

iv.b) Academic Preparation :

As described above the nature and the task associated with my job is highly operational. So there is very little relation with my major which is Marketing. But there are some part of customer service involved in the responsibilities assigned by the company which can relate to service marketing and consumer behavior. Since Biman is unlike any other organization in Bangladesh it was difficult to put my academic learning into practice due pressure from different organizational forces.

In future after obtaining a higher position I may be able to put some part of my academic learning into practice. But at the moment being one of the most junior employees there is very little improvisation I can practice considering the little undefined authority which I may have apart from following orders of the superior officers.

**v) Lessons Learned from the Internship Program:**

a. Implications to Organization/Company:

- Training should be focused on learning itself rather than obtaining a higher grade.
- Evaluation should be done on the actual work performance rather than on the basis of result obtained in training.
- Decision making should not be such a lengthy process. Certain defined authorities must be given to the mid level management.
- Necessary equipments required for operational activities must be supplied as top priority to achieve a smooth operation.
- There should be defined chain of command within different departments.
- Ground personnel should have certain authority defined by the company to cope with different situations and improve the quality of service.

- The management should have a realistic approach to get things done on time and consider every little detail with utmost attention.
- Negative political influences should be avoided. It should be treated a company to provide service to the people and make profit at the same time.
- It should be governed by a single and well qualified governing body with experience in the related fields of the aviation industry.
- Provision for overtime should be minimized and limited to needs of the organization in extreme situations. At the same time salary of employees should also be increased to an accepted and respectful amount so that they don't have to rely on overtime payments.
- There should be a flat hierarchy to make sure information is circulated effectively and decisions are made quickly and accordingly
- For internal communication Biman still uses Telex instead of more cost effective email. Not everyone knows how to send a telex. So some designate employees will be there for sending and printing the received telex then distribute it among different departments which again becomes a lengthy and ineffective process.

b. Implications to University's Internship Program :

The internship program inspired me look in depth of the problems that Biman is facing ant what is the reason behind those problem . It not possible for me to improve the situation in Biman from an entry level point which I belong to at the moment. But in future if I manage to obtain higher position I may be able to take some efforts to improve the overall service of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. Since I was already employed so didn't need much assistance from OSCAR. For completing this report my assigned faculty helped me a lot in understanding the nature and requirements of this report. There is nothing better that can suggest than what it already is.

**Vi ) Concluding Statements :**

a. Recapitulation /Summary :

Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. being the national Flag Carrier of the country has a lot of responsibilities to the people of Bangladesh. The company should ensure a world class service for their valued passengers but is unable to do so due to many complications in management and political influences. A company is build by its employees. If the employees are not well trained and dedicated toward the service they are providing it is not possible for any company to survive and make profit. Although some employees of Biman are highly trained but lack the opportunities and freedom to improve the overall quality of service. Without the financial backup by the government

Biman would not have survived this long. So political influences will always be there in Biman. But if those influences are positive toward the employees and the company, Biman will succeed in rising as a well known airline of Bangladesh.

b. Recommendations for Future Strategic Actions :

As far as I understood that the main problem in Biman is miscommunications. The top level management does not understand properly or do not get the correct information from the operational field. So sometimes they make unrealistic decisions which is bad for the employees and also the company itself. Here CBA comes in to bargain with the management in interest of the employees and the company itself. In the current situation CBA is also a mandatory body for ensuring the rights of the employees. There should be a healthy medium of communication to make sure both parties needs are met and the company is also on a prosperous track.

The lack of defined chain of command is also a mess. So there should be a defined chain of command within departments and also inter departments to make sure a smooth operation. Accountability should also be monitored and supervised through the channel.

The overall work environment should promote honesty and positivity. Desperate and negative minds of the employees will never be a good asset for the company. Employee satisfaction must also be achieved. They have to feel like they are well taken care of , otherwise they would never care for the company.

The top management should be assigned by their experience in the aviation industry and understanding of the overall business rather than their political background and position held in the government agencies.

With the new Boeing 787 Dreamliner coming shortly to join the fleet of Biman Bangladesh Airlines, If the employee motivation, proper communication and effective chain of command can be ensured then Biman can still rise to its lost glory and became a pride of the country.

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**(All of the above books and documents are available at BATC Library only.)**

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## Appendices

IATA : International Air Transport Association

CAAB: Civil Aviation Authority Bangladesh

ICAO :International Civil Aviation Organization

SITA : Société Internationale de Télécommunications Aéronautiques

Foreign Carriers : Airlines based in foreign countries that operates in Bangladesh or home country

Ground Handling Agent : Ground Service provider for foreign carriers.

FFP : Frequent Flyer Program

Deputationists : Employees who are deputed from other government organizations.

DCS : Departure Control System

DAC : IATA City Code for Dhaka.

CGP : IATA City Code for Chittagong

ZYL : IATA City Code for Sylhet

DXB : IATA City Code for Dubai

AUH: IATA City Code for Abu Dhabi .