

DESTINY

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I'm a man of contradictions, people say. I'm rough and tough outside yet soft inside. I may be admired for some of my qualities but I can't be loved. I'm very modern in outlook though I also believe in traditions. I respect and follow rules which doesn't mean that I don't break them taking full responsibility for the same. I'm mediocre which doesn't prevent me from swearing by excellence. I'm not religious although I accept the notion of destiny ...

Circa 2003. CMS had been established and it had advertised for a post of Lecturer (Systems) in October / November. (I don't remember the date exactly). The recruitment was to be through a walk-in-interview on November 17, 2003. I was to be jobless in November as my contract at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Khanapara had been terminated and was to end on October 31, 2003. I decided to appear in the interview. May be more than appearing for the interview, it was an urge to meet my cousin at Dibrugarh University. He was in his final year B Pharm and I had a pending invitation. But as fate would have been, I failed to come for the interview. My father was contesting the Guwahati Municipality elections and I was busy looking after his campaign. My father lost the elections by a mere 13 votes.

Around the later half of November, I again saw the same advertisement – the interview this time was scheduled for December 5, 2003. I could come this time. On reaching Dibrugarh, I came to know that the interview on November 17 had been cancelled due to a bandh. In the registration desk, I came up with a new problem. I was not allowed to register for the interview as I didn't match up with the qualification that was specified in the advertisement. They had asked for MBA (Systems) / MCA and I had M Tech (IT)! I tried to reason with them that M Tech (IT) is a higher qualification than MCA but without success. Finally, they asked me to talk with a person who I came to know later was Prof. Pranjal Bezborah, the Director-in-charge of CMS. I said to him the same thing but he also referred to the advertisement.

As a last ditch attempt, I told him, "Sir, iman durar opera aahisu, interview tut bohiole diok aaru, tat reject kori dibo." (Sir, I have come from so far, at least allow me to appear in the interview, reject me out there."). He smilingly asked, "Padhaba pariba nai?" (Will you be able to teach?). I said, "Paarim Sir!" (I can, Sir!). I was allowed to sit in the interview and was in fact the first one to be called among six candidates. Inside, I failed miserably to impress my subject expert, Prof. Gopal Hazarika, the Director-in-charge of Centre for Computer Studies, Dibrugarh University. Visibly suffocated by his aggression, I at one point of time shot back, "Sir, I have not said that what you have said is incorrect but it also does not mean that what I'm saying is incorrect!" He didn't ask me anything thereafter. The VC asked me the final question regarding Internet connectivity. I thought I had impressed him enough with my answer. The interview was over. Period.

A few days later, Bezborah Sir called up at my home, "Moi Prof. Bezboarh ai koisu. Tumi join koribo lagibo 26th December ot. Paariba nai?" (I'm Prof. Bezborah speaking, you need to join us on 26th December, can you?). I said yes. I had got the job although for only six months on contract. I had come to Dibrugarh only for six months to taste teaching at a University. From six months, it has been a long eight years now. Looking back, I think I was destined to come to CMS and be a part of it. I don't know till when I'm here, but I've tried to give everything of mine to the building up of this institution