

PATRIOT-TRAITOR QUESTION: BANGLADESH SYNDROME

M. T. Hussain

Patriot-Traitor Question: Bangladesh Syndrome

A Collection of some published & unpublished essays of the
author produced between 1988-2005

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DEDICATION

The Patriot-Traitor Question: Bangladesh Syndrome is honestly dedicated to the memories of all those humanist Muslim Nationalist leaders and workers just as the Quid E Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948) had been, who fought for and made supreme sacrifices for the noble cause of liberty and freedom of human being so far in history, and, in particular, to recall the memory of my very dear friend for the great common cause in our close association during 1974 to 1982, and the scholar, researcher, teacher, political activist Dr Matiur Rahman (1932-1982) to mark in 2006 his 24th death anniversary on the 21st February, who being though a native of Ahmadpur, Nabinagar, Brahmanbaria/Comilla kept up with very deep passion and uncompromisingly through his pen, published books (six) and other useful works of international standard, in addition to his noble *Jehad* for Muslim nationalist persuasion, especially during eleven years period from 1971 to 1982 to uphold the lofty cause, and so after his expiry in London, as he wished, was buried in Islamabad National Graveyard in the soil of Pakistan (remnant) (Grave No. 31, Section - IV).

AUTHOR

The author, a native of the greater Rangpur District (NITAI, KISHORIGANJ, NILPHAMARY), having first had a Licentiate in Mechanical Engineering in 1957 under the Dhaka University from the erstwhile Ahsanullah Engineering College, is a life-long working teacher now extending for little over 48 years beginning teaching career in January 1958 at the only and first Polytechnic then known as the East Pakistan Polytechnic Institute (now Dhaka Polytechnic Institute). Out of 25 years, he taught for about five years in some other newly established Polytechnics, as well, except for about three years in between at certain intervals he spent for higher education and training in Karachi Polytechnic (1961) and in foreign countries, USA (1966-67) and UK (1974-75). Having had postgraduate studies in the Institute of Education University of London (1982-84 and 1986-89) in the Department of Policy Planning Studies in Education-specializing in Comparative and Economics of Education, the author back home started to teach students of teacher training programs, first, at the Technical Teachers' Training College (1990-1993), Dhaka, then on to ICTVTR (now IIUT)(1993-1996), Gazipur, and lastly at the Darul Ihsan University (1996-2001), Dhaka. On formal retirement due to old age, the author has still been doing some teaching work at the DIU Education Department as an Honorary Faculty member since July 2003.

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PATRIOT-TRAITOR QUESTION: BANGLADESH SYNDROME

INTRODUCTION:

My original article under the caption 'Patriot- Traitor Question: Bangladesh Syndrome' was written in December 1988 during my staying on in London and published in *The Concept* (A Monthly edited by veteran politician of former East Pakistan Mr. Mahmud Ali who stayed back for ideological reason in Islamabad since 1971) in February 1989. The Bengali version was simultaneously produced and published in *The Daily Meillat* in Dhaka. Fortunately for me, some serious readers liked the article in both versions and hence conveyed their appreciation to me.

On similar topics, I wrote some other articles afterwards both in Bengali and in English versions; some were published and some others not yet. However, I continue to do writing not for any of my personal material benefit but for my own belief and inner urge for the noble cause, no matter whether any print media would publish any one them or not.

As I have grown old and embarking on soon to 70 years old, I felt it seriously to print and publish, at least, some items in book form in both language versions, before I take leave off from this mundane living.

Apart from my work of editing quite a few technological books relevant to my early teaching career and profession (Automobile and Refrigeration), I have had two other books dealing with mainly political and socio-economic issues of Bangladesh, one, *INDIA'S FARAKKA BARRAGE: COLD BLOODED MURDER OF BANGLADESH*, and two, *BANGLADESH: VICTIM OF BLACK PROPAGANDA, INTRIGUE AND INDIAN HEGEMONY* published in 1996. In 2004 December, I had compiled and published a book *62 LETTERS OF PROFESSOR DR SYED SAJJAD HUSAIN* as they were addressed to me in 1980s mainly during my stay in London. Apart from these small works, I have nothing substantial to my own credit in

published book form except that I keep on writing items of topical interest covering politics in Bangladesh and subject matters relevant to educational problems. I write on educational issues, because, Education is the specialized area of my postgraduate studies in the University of London. Nationalist politics remained, however, a matter very close to my heart, not because I belong seriously to any formal political party, but because, I believe that short of clean nationalist ideological politics nothing could keep real and effective education for the continuing generation go on smoothly. That is why I keep on writing around the two main subject areas for my ideological, mental and psychological interests.

As we all know, Bangladesh politics is unfortunately divided between two basic parameters. I do not see an immediate end to the unfortunate but distinct division. The division has time and again brought the divide around two crucial issues, PATRIOTISM and TRAITOROUS acts.

We hear some well known responsible persons very often-hurling abuses against one another around the two subject matters. But tragically, neither abuser is found to have firmly substantiated their contentions. Even the so-called nationalists have ever not been seen to effectively put their points against their apparent enemies. One must wonder- why?

In the first article presented in this book written in 1988 nearly 17 years ago, I have tried to point out to the nationalist politicians if they could ponder to accept the arguments I have advanced for status determination of both the patriots and traitors, and not to pelt stones aimlessly in the open sky having little effective substance.

The second topic, 'Bangladeshis Suffer from the Mirzafarian Legacy of the Illiterate Graduate (*The Concept*, June, 1989)', would appear to readers somewhat as an extension of the arguments I have put forward for the first article presented just before it.

The third item, 'The "Soldier Speaks" as another Puppet of Delhi' was published in the same monthly, *The Concept*, in October 1989 that I thought it equally relevant to the title of the book.

The fourth essay, 'My Six Days in Painful Police Custody and Remand' is just a recall of some incidents I have had jotted down immediately after my release from imprisonment without any prosecution, much less of any formal trial, detained under the Special Powers Act of 1974, from the Dhaka Central Prison for nearly three months, and some narration of my painful practical experience of undergoing police annihilation for six days from the 1st October to the 6th for, I am certain, my patriotism that was taken as traitorous act to my beloved country by the government machinery of 1989 and their intelligence and police operatives. This was not given for publication anywhere.

The fifth item, 'To Legitimize the Issue of Illegitimacy of Bangladesh' was written by me in Dhaka in late 1990 just at the fag end of the dictatorial rule of President Ershad when he himself raised the issue of legitimacy of Bangladesh in 1971 in his public speech bringing in the obvious question of patriotism of one late leader vis a vis the issue of his treasonable offence. This item was not published anywhere. On the same subject matter, I include herewith another small item, 'Bangladesh: The Question of Legitimacy' published both in *The Impact* (January 1988), London, followed by its picking up by *The Concept*, Islamabad.

The sixth article, 'Violation of Human Rights: Politics of Vengeance' was written in late September 1996 soon after Col. Farook was arrested and put to various forms of annihilation by the then government and was published immediately and simultaneously in *The New Nation*, Dhaka, *The Impact*, London and *The Concept* (November issue), Islamabad.

The seventh essay, 'The *Najat Dibash*: Recalling Some Facts' was produced by me in late July 2001 soon after the immediate past government of Bangladesh had resigned, and was given to quite a few print media but none, to my knowledge, published it as yet.

The eighth article 'Let Us Say a Big No to the Anti-Liberation Cliché' was written in January 2004 and was published immediately afterwards in *The Concept*.

The ninth was an item, 'Awami League's Secular Democracy Turned to Fascism and Machiavelism', produced in August 2004 and not known to me published anywhere.

The tenth or the last article 'Changing Facets of the Fifth Columnists' was something of my recent and one of the latest English articles published immediately in a Dhaka daily, The New Nation, on the 28 October 2005.

19 February 2006

M. T. Hussain

Patriot - Traitor question: Bangladesh Syndrome

M.T. Hussain (London)

Was Shaikh Mujib of Bangladesh a 'patriot' or a 'traitor'? Before attempting to find out a proper reply to the question let us look into what each of the two terms, patriot and traitor, literally means.

Webster's English Dictionary describes patriot as 'one who loves his country and zealously supports its authority and interests'. The definition has some vagueness, because the term patriot is dependant on the term 'country' which may not absolutely be a fixed entity. This may as well be vague due to certain reality that 'national'/country's geographical boundary may change with changing political situation from time to time. I think it is not essentially needed to make a detailed historical analysis of the point because one can see clearly that geographical boundaries of many nation states are still being redrawn in this late twentieth century. One can, as such, see the flaws in the definition of the term patriot/ patriotism in so far as the limit of a fixed geographical boundary for a country is concerned.

The same source has defined the term traitor as 'one who betrays another's trust or is false to an obligation or duty'. This definition looks straightforward and hardly needs further explanation.

Keeping the above definitions of the two terms in view, I wish to make here a brief screening of Shaikh Mujibur Rahman of Pakistan (1947-71) and that of Bangladesh (1972-75). This I intend to do, because, in the recent times, a well-known lobby, which is overtly incapable of comprehending the real independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh except in terms of perpetual Indian hegemony over it, has been propounding that Shaikh Mujib, to them the 'father' of Bangladesh, was a 'great patriot'. Not that they are only saying so but they are also going further in telling that those who had brought about the fall of Mujib from power through a military coup in 1975 are not only

'killers' but also 'traitors' to Bangladesh. The lobby has gone still further in demanding trial of the killers of Mujib terming their action as 'treasonable offence', I shall neither go into the legal niceties of treasonable offence nor in the matter that the Government of Bangladesh immediately after the coup had passed lawful orders in favour of the coup leaders, thus putting an end to the question of trial of the killers of Mujib. Here I shall only examine, in particular, if Shaikh Mujib himself was a patriot at all.

What did Mujib's rule for three and a half years mean to the people of Bangladesh- anything but betrayal of the trust of the people?

Evidence is abundant to suggest that Mujib was a powerful opposition leader of pre- 1971 united Pakistan. Not only this, one can hardly belittle his role as an opposition leader in exerting his might for democratic political order in the united Pakistan between 1950 and 1971. That was because he had his contribution as a young student worker in the Pakistan movement and its establishment in 1947. In the process of the establishment of Pakistan, he had been a long time associate of late Abul Hashem, Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, Hussain Shahid Suhrawardy and other patriotic Muslim leaders of the country. It is, therefore, quite likely that he was a patriot, because that was his own country. His professed political beliefs of that time and statements he made during the period of united Pakistan vouchsafe for it between 14th August 1947 to 10th January 1972, the day he arrived back to Dhaka being freed from his imprisonment in West Pakistan just two days earlier. He, however, undeniably turned a traitor to Pakistan when he led the secessionist movement. His statements made after his release from detention in West Pakistan provided ample proof to his treachery. This shows clearly how a patriot can turn a traitor for selfish ends.

Soon after East Pakistan was forced to secede from Pakistan and Bangladesh established in the same land, Mujib's misrule, unmistakably marked by tyranny, oppression and economic disaster for the people of Bangladesh, is thus well

recorded in history. Although he had been at the height of 'popularity' at the beginning of his rule in January 1972, he turned so unpopular just at the end of his three and a half years rule that the people had overwhelmingly welcomed his downfall on the 15th August 1975. A few junior army officers through a coup d' etat brought about the overthrow. Since then, quite a number of attempts have been made to put back Shaikh Mujib's 'fatherly' image among the people of the country, but no such attempts have been successful so far. It is well known that a lobby has been constantly investing their resources, on the average, at about 250-300 million Bangladesh Taka (8-10 million pound sterling) each year for re-establishing Shaikh Mujib in that place of honour. But so far in the last thirteen- year period such attempts have failed repeatedly. If the people remained alert and vigilant about their identity, freedom and sovereignty, he would never be restored to his pseudo claim to honour, which he enjoyed for a short period between 1972 and the 15th August 1975. Why do I say so, I explain as follows.

Shaikh Mujib's rise to power in Bangladesh was not only deeply marked by misrule and oppression but also by his betrayal of the people of the country. What he had promised to the people before the 1970 General Election in the then East Pakistan and what did he do to the people after being elected were diametrically opposed to each other. He had promised fairness to all people, but he had been absolutely partisan in treatment to them. During his rule, only his own party men, the Awami Leaguers, had all the fortune acquiring opportunities, Mujib himself being the fountainhead of distribution of all kind of favours. Thus he created what the neutral foreign observers called a 'Corruption Bonanza' for himself and his own political party, the Awami League. Application of law was rigorous for non- Awami Leaguers, and the Awami Leaguers were above law. The Awamis turned rich almost overnight by taking forcible possession of wealth/ properties worth billions of dollars, from the non- Awami Leaguers who happened to be Muslim nationalists. The Awami hoodlums and bullies thus turned

these lawful and loyal citizens of the country helpless against all forms of fascist attacks. Torture and indiscriminate extra-judicial killings of about 30,000 patriotic people was mercilessly carried out for their only 'fault' of standing firmly in opposition to Mujib's absolutism aimed to appease India and to satisfy his own foolish ego. These killings, apart from the killings and inhuman torture of the Muslim nationalists, mainly of Bengali speaking variety, were conducted by Mujib's own private army and special forces exclusively loyal to him, such as, the Rakkhi Bahini, White Bahini, Red Bahini, Kamal (named after his eldest son Kamal) Bahini, etc. during his rule in Bangladesh. While the Awamis turned overnight rich, the masses had the worst economic sufferings of tens of millions, and hundreds of thousands died of hunger alone. His absolute rule in contrast to his promise for ensuring democratic order enchained the people in slavery. Contrary to his promise for independence of the country, he made the country completely subservient to India through making unequal treaties with them who 'helped' Mujib to come to power through a mockery of war in 1971 constituting blatant aggression of Brahminical India in East Pakistan. The price for the Indian 'help' was indeed very high-perpetual enchainment of Bangladesh by Delhi. Shaikh Mujib has thus kept in mortgage the independence and sovereignty of the country to India.

One may recall that Mujib said absolutely nothing in his 1970 election rhetoric about the possible enchainment of East Pakistan by the Brahminical India; he himself as a young student leader in the 1940s had fought against the Hindu Chauvinism in the British Indian sub- continent. What he was rather vocal all about in the 1970 election pledges was putting an end for ever to 'exploitation' of East Pakistan by West Pakistan; he himself would seek all redresses should he be voted to power in the country. It is as clear as clean water that the people did never vote for Mujib to find them enchained by the Indians. But this is what Mujib actually did much against the popular will. The people have thus only been subjected to rather worst ever-economic exploitation contrary to his fake

promise of emancipation from economic exploitation. Shaikh Mujib is thus clearly seen to have betrayed the trust the people had put in him. And so he remains forever an absolute betrayer and traitor to the people of Bangladesh.

Let us now see if he was at all a patriot. It is well known that any Indian nationalist never considers Mir Jafar a patriot. His name is mentioned in history books as a much-despised traitor to his own people, never as a patriot. Why does he remain so despised in history? It was for his act of betrayal at the Battle of Plassey, which made him so despised. He betrayed his master, the independent Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, subsequently to pave the way for the British to colonize the whole Indian sub- continent through their rather decisive victory in the battle. Through a mockery of battle both Nawab's fate and that of Bengalis were sealed ultimately leading to surrender of the independence and sovereignty of the whole subcontinent to the foreigners against the wishes of the people.

The surrender of independence and sovereignty in 1757, however, did not come about all by its own like that. It indeed came about in fulfilment of terms of a treaty Mir Jafar (Mir Jaffier Ali Khan) had solemnly vowed earlier on to abide by with the British East India Company being then engaged in commerce in the country just as any other foreign company operating their business there. By all senses, the treaty was nothing but an evil collusion Mir Jafar himself had made with the British East India Company in early 1757 just a few weeks before the actual Battle of Plassey between Nawab Seraj- Ud-Daula and the forces of the Company on the 23rd June, 1757 A.D. The battle was a decisive one so far as the British ultimate takeover of India was concerned. And through the process had set in oppression, colonization and exploitation of the people, and continued to be so for a long period of 190 years, particularly for Bengal terminating in the year 1947 but only after having gone through a long drawn struggle when the people could force the British to quit the land.

It may seem curious to many that between the two treaties there is exactness in many respects including

interestingly the same number of original Articles, twelve (12) in both of them. The original Article 2 and subsequently added one 13 of the treaty Mir Jafar had undertaken with the English Company are essentially the same except some minor changes due mainly to twentieth century diplomatic linguistic niceties compared to rather straight-forwardness of the eighteenth century terms, which Shaikh Mujib had made with Indira Gandhi in 1972 implying Mujib's position of subservience to India as it was of Mir Jafar's in relation to the Company. Mir Jafar's solemn undertaking as stated in clause 2 and further reinforced in Article 13 of the treaty underwritten on the 15th Ramadan 1170 A.H. in exact words are, 'The enemies of the English are my enemies, whether they be Indians or Europeans' (see Charles Stewart's History of Bengali, London, 1813, p. 546 and also Henry Vansittart, London, 1766, reprint Calcutta, 1976, p.6). The Article 13 of the treaty, to realize the depth of Meer Jaffier's absolute subservience, is also interesting to note which states: 'On condition that Jaffier Khan Bahadur shall solemnly ratify, confirm by oath, and execute all the above (12) articles, with the underwritten Gospels and before God, that we will assist Meer Jaffier Khan Bahadur with all our force to obtain the Soubahship of the Province of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, and further, that we will assist him to the utmost against all his enemies whatever, as soon as he calls upon us for that end; provided that he, on his coming to be Nabob, shall fulfil the aforesaid Articles (of the treaty) (Vansittart, op, cit., p. 547). These statements made in Articles two and thirteen of the treaty have close exactness with Articles 8, 9 and 10 provided in the Indira-Mujib Treaty signed between them in Dhaka on the 19th March 1972. For instance, Articles 8 of the so-called 'friendship' treaty for 25 years reads, '*In accordance with the ties of friendship existing between the two countries, each of the high contracting parties solemnly declares that it shall not enter into or participate in any military alliance directed against the other party*'. Article 9 states, '*Each of the high contracting parties shall refrain from any aggression against the other party and shall not allow the use of its territory for committing any act that may cause military damage to or constitute a threat to the*

security of the high contracting party'. Article 10 says, '*Each of the high contracting parties shall refrain from giving any assistance to any third party taking part in an armed conflict against the other party. In a case either party is attacked or threatened with attack, the high contracting parties shall immediately enter into mutual consultation in order to take appropriate effective measures to eliminate the threat and thus ensure the peace and security of their countries. Each of the high contracting parties solemnly declares that it shall not undertake any commitment, secret or open, towards one or more states which may be incompatible with this treaty*'. (See S.S. Bindra, New Delhi, 1982, p. 136).

The term in clause two of the treaty made between Mir Jafar and Clive as mentioned above need hardly be clarified because the words are very clear and unambiguous so much so that without any qualification whatsoever the enemies of the English whoever they might have been were taken for granted as the enemies of Mir Jafar. It is well known that the English had been at enmity just at the same period with the seating Nawab of Bengal Seraj-ud-Daula, whose army chief Mir Jafar himself was. The treaty, it is very clear, thus made him 'duty bound' not to fight for the Nawab against the British Company, if there would be any such need. In fact he did so in the actual battle, which soon broke out on the 23rd June 1757, at Plassey between the armies of the Nawab and the English Company. Thus the betrayal of Mir Jafar is very rightly termed by all Indian nationalists, not only by the Muslims of the sub-continent, as the worst treachery in the history of the people of the sub-continent. He is, therefore, for this act very rightly despised by the people of the sub-continent since then. The name of Mir Jafar thus remains in history of the people as the most despised one in living memory. This is rightly so, because he had betrayed the cause of independence of the people. He is, therefore, the worst sort of traitor and not a patriot in any measure, although for sometime during his titular short rule of Bengal following the defeat and fall of Seraj at Plassey, Mir Jafar was being termed by some of his sycophants and the

Company men as 'patriot' as opposed to Seraj whom they termed as the 'debauch and worthless'. The period Mir Jafar being termed a 'patriot' was very much of a short duration in history. As for Mujib it was almost for the same period in terms of years – a puppet of Delhi in place of the Company as Mir Jafar was.

How can anyone term Shaikh Mujib a patriot? The evidence that Mujib was not a patriot could be substantiated from the document he had made and committed himself to as I have just quoted above. I shall not, however, go here into the various documents which beyond any doubt can prove him as traitor to his own country, Pakistan, the country of which he was a lawful citizen, at least, until he was released from imprisonment by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the President of Pakistan, on the 8th January 1972. Until that date he is not known to have openly or even vaguely renounced his Pakistani citizenship; he had rather confirmed time and again his Pakistani status. Despite being a lawful Pakistani he had incited war against the country very clearly on and from the 7th March 1971 through his open public declaration that day, even though he was the elected party leader of the majority party in united Pakistan. He told the people in the public meeting in Dacca, directing all concerned, to stop supplies and life sustaining provisions for the Army of his own country, Pakistan. I need not dwell on that point here in any detail because those are well known facts in history.

I have already mentioned above the exact contents of Articles 8, 9 and 10 of the 25-year treaty. Let us see for a while what the contents imply in terms of the relations between India and Bangladesh. Article 8 states very clearly that neither of the two contracting parties, Bangladesh and India, could participate in any military pact directed against the other. Apparently, the terms are not harmful. Ideally, there should be no military pact between any two or more countries directed against any other country. The realities, however, that exist are contrary to the ideal as one may very earnestly wish to attain. Rivalries between countries or group of countries are practical

realities of the world situation. There can be nothing-called permanent friendship or permanent enmity between any two or group of countries in the dynamics of world politics and in ever changing situation. A friend today may turn into a foe tomorrow and could also be the vice-versa.

The world is divided not only between nation states but also between ideologies opposed to each other. Ideological battle or cold war is another reality in rivalries between nations. Neither are the rivalries limited to ideological parameters alone; they extend to economic and cultural frontiers as well. Although war is a bad thing for any country to go into, but it is also a reality that war breaks out between nations not only to uphold the ideology of a nation concerned but also for preservation of one's national economic and other interests. Raising and maintenance of a national army to protect one's national frontiers and sovereignty have thus been considered a norm and an absolutely necessary item of national public expenditure even if that would mean sacrificing many other priorities in national importance and for socio-economic development.

Compared to India, Bangladesh is a very small neighbouring country. In terms of population Bangladesh is one tenth of India's size and in land area it is even a smaller entity. The international boundary between the two countries is such that India compresses Bangladesh from all four sides. Indeed, India does so from all three sides in land frontiers and also by keeping the fourth side, the Bay of Bengal in the south, under her virtual mighty naval control. Due to the very geographical position, no country other than India and India alone can invade Bangladesh directly from any of its frontiers. India, on the contrary, because of her huge and common geographical border is open to frontal invasion from many countries. Bangladesh with her tiny strength including that of the army, hardly one-fifteenth in just head count but not in terms of possession of superior technology India has mastered, can never dare to invade India. India just on her own, on the contrary, can successfully invade Bangladesh at any time if she

would so wish. Why then is the very article there in the treaty for dragging in Bangladesh into fighting India's enemy? Whose disadvantage the article has created? India being the largest power in South Asia can well protect and preserve her independence and sovereignty without having any military pact with any other country, much less with Bangladesh. Can Bangladesh protect her frontier in the given condition and in terms of the treaty but at the sole mercy of India? Why should have India dragged Bangladesh into rivalry, through the underwritten condition made in the treaty, with other countries unfriendly to India? Why should not have India left Bangladesh alone to decide her own future relations with any other country independent of Indian hegemony? Why should have Bangladesh been tied unusually to seek friends and foes on terms dictated by Delhi? Would not such conditions imply only one position of Bangladesh— completely subservient to Delhi? The state of the subservient position of Bangladesh is reminiscent of what the East India Company Governor of Bengal (1760-1764) Henry Vansittart once remarked about the position of Meer Jaffiar in the words, '*We had now a Nabab of our own making and absolutely dependent upon us for his establishment and future security*' (Vansittart, *op.cit*, p.6).

The position of Shaikh Mujib was exactly the same in relation to India. Articles 8, 9 and 10 of Mujib-Indira treaty have made Bangladesh helplessly a client State completely subservient to India and Mujib the puppet of Delhi. The treaty, as such, left Bangladesh with either of the two choices open to her on this account. She has either to remain content with her subservient political position in relation to the much bigger neighbour India or else, if she has, at all to live with dignity of sovereign status and independence, she has to look for help elsewhere. India through the shackles of the terms of the treaty, formally to expire on the 18th March 1997, keeps Bangladesh subservient to Delhi to seek friend nowhere except with due approval of the mighty Delhi administration. In other words, the independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh have been kept under lease to India in terms of the treaty Mujib made with

India in 1972. Articles 9 and 10 are extension of the same Article of the Indian dictated terms of the treaty as Article 2 of Meer Jaffier's was the primary. In this context, one need seriously consider another additional but vital point.

Bangladesh is populated with Muslim people to the tune of about 90% of its total population. Historically, this was the main basis on which she had joined voluntarily and democratically to constitute herself as East Bengal, a province of the Muslim majority State of Pakistan established in 1947. This shows clearly her intellectual and spiritual affinity with the Muslim people of the world. It would only be natural that she would be inclined to join the Muslim States at different forums and activities of common persuasions. The breakaway with Pakistan in 1971, whatever had been the reasons, did in no way turn her into a non- Muslim nation aspiring for anti-Islamic way of life, living and polity. The post- 1971 trends in cultural aspirations and persuasions of the people have shown beyond any shadow of doubt that the people would live as Muslim and Muslims alone. How then would it sound if the Indian rulers through the mechanism of 25- year treaty would restrain Bangladesh to seek friends among Muslim States? Does not this sound un-natural if Bangladesh would be tied to the condition to seek friend only after having approval from Delhi? Could this condition be at all compatible with the independence and sovereignty of Bangladesh? Never. And that is how enchainment of Bangladesh by India was made through the so-called 'friendship' treaty for 25 years signed between Mujib and Indira just as Mir Jafar did in 1757 with the British East India Company.

Mujib's three and a half year's misrule of Bangladesh had created worst ever misery and tyrannical internal oppression of the people almost entirely at the instance of and for appeasement by him of the Delhi administration. His removal from power through a popular and spontaneously supported successful coup was, therefore, a patriotic act engineered on the 15th August 1975. The coup leaders who all happened to be the 'freedom fighters' for Bangladesh in the

1971 war now being organized in the country after having themselves gone through numerous forms of oppressions for themselves for about a decade from 1975, obviously at the instance and pressure of Delhi on Dhaka, termed Mujib as the worst traitor of the people of Bangladesh. Indeed, as long as the 25 years treaty remains in force, which may well, be renewed through bringing into power by India in Dhaka a new puppet as Shaikh Mujib, Bangladesh's independence and sovereignty would continue to remain leased out to Delhi. Thus accounted on this score alone, not to speak of many more like surrender of Berubari to India, permitting India unilateral withdrawal of water of the international river, the Ganges, at the Farakka point, to mention only a few, all done by Mujib against the interests of the common people of the country, Mujib cannot but be rightly termed as the Meer Jaffier of the late 20th century. It is just another repetition of history of betrayal of 1757 in the same land. And thus Mujib can in no way be termed as a patriot but only as traitor of the freedom loving people of the land. These 100 million freedom loving people of the country have, since the very day of the 16th December 1971, and more particularly, from the 19th March 1972, been keeping on their straggle to throw off and drive out the shackles of slavery of the Indian Brahmanism Mujib himself had enchained them with. It is useless to argue here if Mujib had left the people of Bangladesh enchained through any of his covert design or by foolish and egoistic default.

One can see very clearly from a number of developments taking place inside the country soon after Mujib had come to power that the struggle of the people against Indian hegemony had been going on. People seriously wanted Mujib's downfall. The people spontaneously and overwhelmingly welcomed those who have brought about his much-wanted downfall. The people very sincerely and honestly thought that was the only way to get rid of the Indian hegemony. What these patriots did was, as such, nothing but what the people were craving for in the heart of their hearts. They remain in the minds and hearts of the people as the most loveable persons and thus are the true and

tested patriots of the country. Let us not forget that they had led a successful coup, which automatically makes the coup leaders immune to the killings involved in the coup as per law. Terming them, therefore, as the 'killers' in ordinary sense and demanding for their 'trial' is nothing but an absolute political nonsense.

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(*The concept*, February 1989)

BANGLADESHIS SUFFER FROM THE MIRZAFARIAN LEGACY OF THE ILLITERATE GRADUATE

M. T. Hussain (London)

A London fortnightly has carried an article by columnist Nasim Haider, which provoked me to jot down these lines. Nasim Haider was clear that in their latest bargain with Delhi Awami League leaders in Dhaka have proposed to surrender formally to Delhi two crucial matters of the country, the Defence and the Foreign Affairs. I tend to believe the story, why, I may explain here.

Shaikh Mujib's 25 Years connection with the RAW

First during 1960s onwards, soon after the death of Hussain Shahid Suhrawardy, Awami League's absolute Party leader Shaikh Mujibur Rahman, had been maintaining an evil but very active connection with the RAW (Research and Analysis Wing), the Indian Central Intelligence. That Shaikh Mujib, in fact, even from before, beginning as early as 1950s was himself inducted into the RAW network was made quite clear by the RAW operatives themselves (see Jyoti Sen Gupta's *Freedom Movement of Bangladesh*¹, 1943-73, 'Ashok Raina's *Inside RAW*², etc.³). Both these Indian writers, Jyoti himself being Bengali speaking one, worked for the RAW and did reveal later on some facts in this matter. They did reveal them after the facts lost their importance as secret ones, particularly, after having had the 'Special operation: Bangladesh' materialized by Indian armed aggression against East Pakistan in 1971. They did reveal them, certainly with due approval from Delhi, to show and bully the smaller neighbours, the effectiveness of the power and penetration of the Indian Intelligence into the enemy camp. The Raw thus did use Mujib not only to the best advantage for the Indian intelligence's penetration into East Pakistan, but being proved as a trusted one, they, in turn, did all their best to protect and perpetuate him in power at Dhaka. Ashok Raina, for instance, has recorded one story in their best efforts to prevent his downfall from power. One RAW operative,

well known from long time to Mujib, visited Dhaka in disguise of a Pan (Betel Leave) trader, 'Kao', some time before August 1975 just only to warn him through an exclusive meeting between the two for hours that a coup was being engineered to topple him down from power. Later on when Mujib's fall from power with disgrace could not be averted, the RAW despaired for Mujib's idiocy for not being smart enough to protect himself despite their forewarnings.

That Mujib worked in close liaison with RAW for the secession of East Pakistan from the Federation of one and united Pakistan are by now very clear substantiated by host of many other authentic facts, as well. Sometime in 1962, during a visit to London Mujib met Barrister A. M. Azhar (now, convenor, Movement for Re-Unification of East and West Pakistan), both being workers and closely known to each other in their close association as Awami Leaguers in Dacca in 1950s. In that informal and rather a family meeting Mujib started to discuss with Barrister Azhar on possible secession of East Pakistan. Unfortunately for Mujib, however, he could hardly proceed far enough beyond just raising the point. Because Barrister Azhar exposed Mujib's naivety in the matter of defence, economic viability and vulnerability of East Pakistan outside the framework of united Pakistan. Mujib then did not pursue the matter further in the meeting but did by no means give up his intention to do so. At another occasion in 1965, when India made the military aggression against Pakistan, Mujib did refuse not only to condemn India against Pakistan, but also was desperately running from one political leader to another, his friends and foes alike, including even the Governor of East Pakistan, Shaheed Abdul Monem Khan, Mujib's number one political foe at that time, and suggested to him to declare right then the independence of East Pakistan from West Pakistan. Because, it was then West Pakistan that was attacked by India with all their military might sparing East Pakistan. Still yet clear proof of his being a secessionist may be had in many of his speeches, etc. made, particularly, after 1971. After Bangladesh came into being and Mujib became the absolute

ruler at Dhaka, he frankly and forcefully admitted a number of times with journalists like David Frost, Orianna Fallacy, etc. how deeply he was working for the secession of East Pakistan and create Bangladesh instead. His public meeting speech delivered on the 7th June 1972 at the then Ramna Race Course, now Suhrawardy Uddyan, at Dhaka and published the next day in some Dacca dailies ran thus *Ami Jantam Tomra Bharate Chale Jabe, Bharat Tomader Sahajya Karbe, Esab ki Emnitei Hoechoilo, Na. Ami Age Thekei Bandobasto Kare Rekhechilam.* (I knew you would flee to India, India would help you. Did all the help from India come about without any previous arrangement? No. I had arranged it with India quite long before) (See daily Sangbad, Dhaka, 8th June 1972). I wonder if one would need any further proof of Mujib's being out and out a secessionist and his being so without reasonable ground except by imaginary and unreal facts in 'exploitation of East Pakistanis by West Pakistanis' all of which by now stands exposed in the real and worst ever economic condition Bangladesh perennially faces and in 'extreme poverty' of the common people.

Mujib's gratefulness to RAW and appeasement of India

Secondly, in the seceded East Pakistan then onwards termed Bangladesh through practical help of RAW and Delhi's armed aggression, Mujib being at the receiving end had to undertake humiliating terms as in clauses 8, 9 and 10 of the Indira-Mujib treaty of 1972. That they are humiliating and amounted only to subservience of Dhaka to Delhi may well be seen through an intelligent comparison of these terms with those of the clauses 2 and 13 of the Mirzafar-Clive Treaty of 1757 (see 'Patriot Traitor Question; Bangladesh Syndrome', *The Concept*, February 1989). This 25 year treaty looks also like formalization of Mujib's remaining subservient to Delhi as a token of his gratitude for their all possible help extending over a period of about 25 years long for him to grab power in seceded East Pakistan. This, in turn, tells about his below average capability, meanness and personal greed for power without being a capable one for State power, just befitting what Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy rightly termed him as the 'Illiterate

Graduate'. He had thus to turn helplessly a puppet of Delhi and his some other idiotic acts included his suicidal surrender of Berubari to India, permitting India for unilateral withdrawal of the Ganges water at the Farakka Barrage point etc. in betrayal of the people and only to perpetuate himself to absolute power in Bangladesh through appeasement of India and seeking in turn his personal safety and security under the protection of Delhi.

The real patriots, not the fake ones like Mujib proved himself to be, however, have in no way resigned themselves to India's forcible occupation of East Pakistan. They continued to fight back. The successful observance of the first anniversary on the 16th December 1972 of the tragic fall of Dhaka as the Black Day marked by 6 hour complete hartal from 6 a.m. to 12 noon was only an instance in resistance to 'Indianization' of Bangladesh by the real patriots of East Pakistan. While the Mujib Government in Dhaka observed the day as the 'Victory Day' and Delhi observed the day as the East Pakistan Conquest Day, the real patriots all over the country observed the unfortunate day as the 'Black Day'. Mujib at Dhaka and Indira in Delhi got irritated at the successful observance of 16th December as the Black Day. The challenge was posed to both Delhi and their puppet Mujib who declared publicity to kill at sight any 'Nakshal' labelling virtually all anti-Mujib patriots as the Nakshalites (a term given to one left revolutionary group based at Nakshalbari in West Bengal and Mujib went ahead to kill the imaginary Nakshals to appease Indian Premier Indira Gandhi). Maolana Bhashani still then alive seriously protested against Mujib's order to kill the imaginary Nakshal in Bangladesh. As intolerant, irrationally egoistic and undemocratic Mujib himself was clearly befitting his ill-education, started to use a number of unlawful punitive measures against the aging Maulana including putting him to house arrest, forcible closure of his weekly Hawk Katha (The truth), then Satya Katha (the truth, again), etc. Not only this, the ungrateful Mujib, himself being brought up almost as his own son by the same Moulana from Mujib's early youth, used

almost all kinds of reprisals at his disposal against Bhashani. His only fault was that he did not toe India's line and was opposed to India's hegemonic and unprecedented degree of exploitation of the people of Bangladesh. Mujib tried to silence the Maulana saying that he would use his 'Lal Ghora' or 'Red Army'. But the Maolana was not one to be easily bullied. He continued to carry on along with the people his *Jehad* against the worst ever oppressor, Mujib and his party thugs.

Mujib's failure to do anything good to the people and his lofty promise for giving them 'Sonar Bengal' appeared far removed as days went by and people's anger mounted up and up. Obviously to cover up his failures Mujib started to resort to repression of the people. His private armies were led by his kith and kins including one such by his eldest son Kamal and the unlawful Rakkhi Bahini was raised at the expense of the regular armed forces of the country, the keeper of national sovereignty; the sovereignty was already leased out to Delhi through the 1972 treaty. The Rakkhi Bahini was absolutely in Mujib's own control just only to annihilate any and all of his alleged opponents. Extra-judicial killings by these private armies became an order of the day. The known among these killings were significantly none but only the Muslims. I personally knew of quite a many of such extra-judicial killings whose dead bodies were not returned to their relatives for Islamic burial despite all possible efforts. The only known exception was the body of Seraj Sikdar, which was returned to their relatives mainly due to Seraj's sister Shamima's personal closeness with Mujib by making a sculpture of Mujib by herself.

Brutal physical torture and then killing by these network of private armies was so widespread that except Maolana Bhashani all the patriots had to go underground. Mujib's eldest son Kamal, then a Dacca University student became a terror in the Dhaka University campus. It was then well known in the Dacca University that beautiful girls who wished to protect their sexual chastity as normally Muslim girls would do by all means, must leave the campus for good for fear of being sexually assaulted by Kamal. One of my close friend's very

beautiful sister, the youngest in the family, who had just started her first year in the Philosophy Honours Course had to abandon the university campus within a few days of her admission into the Dhaka University for fear of Shaikh Kamal. Kamal also led and maintained political torture camp in a big house in Dhaka. Inhuman physical torture and killing of political opponents were a routine matter there. Kamal's goonda squad used to operate mainly at night. On one such night between December 15 and 16 in 1973 when the patriots were fixing up some posters on walls at the Motijheel area of the Dhaka city itself in their attempt to make their call widely known to public for the 16th December (1973) to be observed as the 2nd Black day (the 1st one being in 1972), Kamal in a desperate bid after having seen the 1972 Black Day a big success, to punish the Black Day Observance workers, started to shoot at some people. Counter shots came in against Kamal and that he was injured so seriously that he had to be admitted in the PG Hospital and had to stay there for a number of days. In fact, he was not shot at by the Black Day workers but only by the night patrol police themselves. The killing while in police custody of Seraj Sikdar, the great patriot but a brilliant engineer revolutionary, a college teacher in late 1960 and founder president of the East Bengal Proletariat Party (Purbo Bangla Sarbohara Party), between 1-2 January 1975 was only an act of intolerance of Mujib himself. It was an utter disgraceful act that he had been speaking boastfully in the Dhaka Parliament on the 2nd January 1975, 'Kothaey Aj Seraj Sikdar...' (Where is Seraj Sikdar today... he is now killed) following the capture and killing of Seraj Sikdar. There is another fact well known to many that Mujib was so desperate to kill Seraj Sikdar that he used many heinous means to get him killed including using one of Seraj's one time student and later on a worker in the party bribing him through a lucrative foreign scholarship in return for his correct information about Seraj's whereabouts just before his arrest. This further shows how indecent, ill-educated, sentimentally intolerant and uncultured Mujib himself was. Needless to elaborate is that this is the kind of below average calibre leaders who are normally picked up by

the enemies of any nation/country. The 'illiterate graduate' Mujib suited well to the RAW and Indian hegemony need in South Asia.

Mujib knew he was himself an uneducated being

Thirdly, Mujib was never known to have objected to Suhrawardy for calling him the 'Illiterate Graduate'. I may mention here another remark made by Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy in early 1950s. He said 'If this illiterate graduate by chance at any time becomes the leader of the country, he will first destroy the country and then destroy himself as well'. Mujib's rise and humiliating end of his life and political career are the brightest example of this prophecies Suhrawardy made about him. An idiot can beget idiocy and thus he idiotically gave himself up to total subservience to Delhi.

Mujib's legacy binds the people of Bangladesh in endless chain of slavery

Fourthly, Mujib's legacy in folly and Mirzafarian⁴ role perpetuates with the Awami League as ever. One would hardly find any patriot in the party. Because just as the Indian Congressites do, the Awami Leaguers reject the two-nation theory without which one cannot conceive of 'Independent Bangladesh'. In other words, Bangladesh can have no other ideological basis whatsoever for her independent entity except in the one-India political philosophy essentially based on Vedic origin and thus her ultimate merger with the Indian Union, at best, as a small province of the big country. In post-Bangladesh period one can see the lone Awami Leaguer who remained devoted throughout his life to the theory and also remained a firm devotee of the Quaid-e-Azam, Marhum Abdul Mansur Ahmad⁵. Until his death in mid 1970, he continued to hammer on the psyche of the post-1972 Awami Leaguers that without having basis of Bangladesh firmly rooted in the two-nation theory there can be no future for the people of the country. But unfortunately he attained no success with the hard-core Awami Leaguers but certainly the success survives at the popular level. Besides, the Awami lobbies in league with anti-Muslim lobbies all over the world⁶ working on many fronts inside the country

and outside have after 1972 been propagating the theory that Bangladesh because of her resource constraint and population pressure cannot survive as an independent country outside the framework of Indian Union. They further propagate the view that their better survival lies in merging with the big India. Seen in the backdrop, if the Awami Leaguers' 'inner circle' has by this time pledged themselves to Delhi for surrender of the Defence and the Foreign Policy to Rajiv Gandhi in some bargain to help them to come to power, I see no point to wonder. It would be nothing else but only a practical implementation of the clauses 8, 9 and 10 of the Indira-Mujib treaty signed on the 19th March in 1972 at Dhaka. They perceive that the bargain with India can keep the army away from power and saddle them there instead in perpetuity. What else the blind followers of the illiterate graduate could perceive to do except only at perpetuating the ill-fate of the 100 million people further being enchained by the neo-colonialist exploitation of the Barahminist Delhi just like what Mirzafar did for the East India Company through the 1757 treaty with Clive paving the way for colonization of first Bengal and then whole of India.

The patriots continue to fight back against Mujib's legacy and 'Indianization' of Bangladesh

The real patriots, however, in contrast to the lackeys of Delhi who are rightly termed by some patriots as the fifth columnist, will resist at any cost the Awamis' bid to India to formally surrender the Defence and the Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. They would rather stand up and remain firm on their own feet as the self respecting Muslim Nation completely independent of Indian political hegemony as our wise forefathers had foreseen, at least, in the 1940's historic Lahore Resolution. The enchainment of the people by the follies of the illiterate graduate are by now well realised by the people and they have put on struggle to ensure their freedom and dignity.

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*The author expresses gratitudes for providing him with some direct information and fact for the article to Mr. Azizul Haq (Barisal, East Pakistan) and Barriester A. M. Azhar (Pabna, East Pakistan and now one of the convenors of the Movement for Re-unification of East and West Pakistan).

'THE SOLDIER SPEAKS' AS YET ANOTHER PUPPET OF DELHI FROM DHAKA

M. T. Hussain (London) 20th July, 1989

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The Concept (Islamabad) has carried an article, 'The Soldier Speaks' in the July (1989) issue, which looked like the brief of the soldier President Ershad's (Bangladesh) autobiography. Having read and taken the item as true word for word I wish to put on record, if I may, some sense of my feeling and honest observation not on everything he said there but just on a point I consider very important.

The article has nothing else but his self praise and 'rationale' for taking over by him the power at the President House (Banga Bhaban), as he himself put it, 'reluctantly' on the 24th March, 1982. I would not take any serious offence at his pleading himself 'not-guilty' for the act. Because, this is how many others in history have had pleaded one's innocence in taking over political power for accomplishing lofty goals like Ershad himself did say, again in his own words, 'to wage a holy war (*Jihad*) against corruption'. What hurts and seriously offends me is a different mater.

President Ershad has painted the historic imperative of political power change over in Dhaka on the 15th August of 1975 as an isolated act of some 'disgruntled army officer'. In other words, Shaikh Mujib, according to Ershad, was toppled from power at Dhaka merely for revenge of personal discontent of few army officers of the country on that day. This silly remark made by Ershad has not only belittled the historic imperative of the great event engineered by the supreme patriotic sons of the soil but also cuts at his (Ershad's) own root to rise to Presidency at the 'Banga Bhabhan' and obviously to the legitimacy of his succession. Why did he use the term? Was it just an improper use of the term 'disgruntled' through

carelessness alone? It could not be a careless improper coin of the term, 'disgruntled' because he is neither an ill educated nor an ill informed nor can be a careless person being the President of a country of 110 million people having manned by skilled bureaucrats. It can safely be presumed, therefore, that the term was used very much knowingly and having a clear motive behind. The main motive, one can also see clearly, is to 'kill two birds with only one stone', in this case, with the single word, 'disgruntled'.

How could Ershad, the longest surviving President of the country, otherwise vulnerable to all kinds of economic and social ills compounded by Indian hegemony against his country, be so foolish to make the silly comment in the use of the word about the coup of the 15th August 1975 which was spontaneously welcomed by the common people as a very kind act of Allah. It is well on record that no Muslim is known to have recited consciously the well known verse of the Quran which they do without exception on hearing such death news of a fellow Muslim, *Inna Lillahe Wa Inna Ilaihe Rajeun*, that is, in English, 'From Him (Allah) we all come from and to Him we all return to', the verse that stays on the lips of every Muslim men and women wherever one might live in terms of geography.

Mujib's downfall from power at Dhaka in 1975 was, in fact, not only a matter of joy for the 70 million Muslim people then living in the land, but also it was so all over the Muslim world and among the members of the Muslim Ummah. Blessings were showered on the leaders of the *coup d' etat* led by Farook. The only exceptions were some Indian leaders like the Congressite Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, who despised the act. Not only she disliked the act but also, in fact, threatened Khondoker Moustaque Ahmad then made President of Bangladesh by the coup leaders, with dire consequences if he would not reverse the new pace and trend of Islamic revival set on immediately after the coup. And the helpless President of Bangladesh had to succumb to the military threat by withdrawing the declaration of the 'Islamic State' made earlier on the 15th August morning by the coup leaders of Bangladesh.

Because, the reason is simple; Indian Congressite rulers would not tolerate anything of the Dhaka Government, which would not fully conform to the ideological basis of Bangladesh Statehood in right tune with the 'Indian' nationalism obviously and deeply rooted in their religious scriptures, the Vedas. History is a witness that was the main ideological reason opposed to the theory of Muslim Nationalism in the sub-continent why they took some 'pains' to engineer secession of East Pakistan and create Bangladesh in its place. Does not 'Islamist' Ershad's silly opinion against the coup and its leaders look just the same as the Awami Leaguers and their mentors across the international border in India held?

Shall I go a little further to ask Hussain Mohammad Ershad if there was any alternative way left for attempting to secure freedom from the Indian slavery Shaikh Mujibur Rahman and Zulfiquer Ali Bhutto had enchained the people with in 1971? Can one not see clearly that the 1971 tragedy has not only weakened the solidarity of the Muslims but also seriously unbalanced the south Asia as a whole? As for Bangladesh itself she remains formally enchained by the instrument of surrender of the 16th December, 1971, when East Pakistan was formally surrendered by Pakistani Eastern Command Chief Niazi to the invading Indian forces led by Lt. Gen. Jagjit Singh Arora of the Indian Eastern Command; General Usmani, the so called Commander in Chief of the Bangladesh Forces was not only not permitted to sign in the document but also was kept in detention in India away from the surrender ceremony held at Dhaka on the day. Three months later on the 19th March in 1972, during Indian P.M. Indira's visit to Dhaka, Mujib executed the 25 years treaty of subservience to Delhi just as Mirzafar did with Robert Clive and the British East India Co. in 1757 (Clauses 2 and 13 of this treaty look and imply the same sort of subservience as Clauses 8,9 and 10 of 1972 Mujib- Indira treaty). In 1972 Mujib opened border trade with India paving the way for ruination of the rather the sound economy of the country inherited from the Pakistan days. This obviously resulted in sharp fall of currency

value even in relation to Indian Rupee, rapid rise of price of essential goods, erosion of people's purchasing power leading to famine and unnatural deaths of lakhs of helpless poor people. It was Mujib who did surrender Berubari to India despite people's protests but unfortunately for us the exchange provision of the Teen Bigha Corridor has not yet been realised from India's control in the last 16 years. It was Mujib who surrendered Ganges water's natural all season normal flow to India by permitting then from April 1975 to unilaterally withdraw water at the Farakka Barrage point, just 11 miles upstream of the international border between the two countries. Other barrages about three dozens India have erected by now led only to extreme draught and floods in Bangladesh as recurring feature every year during lean and monsoon seasons respectively. It was Mujib who, against the general will of the people set on to Indianise national ideology, education, culture, politics and above all the critical nature of the economy which could flourish being only competitive with India and not as a complementary one. Mujib's appalling foolishness propped up by the veteran Indian economists and bureaucrats like D.P. Dhar, etc. had made Mujib to swallow the suicidal pill for 'complementary' economy with India. It was also Mujib who once being the votary of the Western Parliamentary Democracy, and after rising to the top political power through the same process killed the very basis of peaceful transition to power through promulgating one party dictatorial rule in the country under India-Russia's tutelage and their guaranty for perpetuating him and his family clans in succession to power at Dhaka. To do this he abolished through his decree all political parties in the country and introduced one party rule of the BAKSAL and turned himself as the absolute dictator, which was and is always deeply despised by and unknown to the democracy loving people of the land. It is a well considered opinion that Indira Gandhi, started the experiment of the one party rule through, first, making an experiment by Mujib, and then herself to follow in the next experiment in her own India, which she did but survived in the experiment not much longer than Mujib did.

Mujib's guarantor for keeping him in power was not only Delhi but also their brainchild the notorious Rakkhi Bahini that was being grown up to big and bigger size in neglect of the regular armed forces. Because, Mujib was in a bid to get rid of the national army, an essential element well recognized for preservation of national sovereignty and frontier and to replace them by a private para-military armed force. This private army called the Rakkhi Bahini was so maintained to be completely under his personal control for his personal protection and they were also above any law of the land. One would see, however, that after undertaking the 1972 subservient treaty with Delhi the 'sovereignty' of the country, if there was any bit of it, was kept in complete lease with his mentor-protector-master Delhi and thus he saw no reason to keep a regular force for Bangladesh. Besides, Mujib had developed a sort of despise and negative attitudes for the armed forces, possibly, due to his experience, naively though, with the Pakistan Army rule from 1958 to 1971.

Having thus been under the worst form of subjugation and private rule by Mujib and his close kith and kins and having a foreseeable future in complete assimilation of the country in the Brahminist Indian Union the people had been looking for some way out from the new form of slavery and Indian neo-colonialism. But unfortunately, the people had no option for any constitutional means left for them to resort to for a peaceful change of power for the kind of liberty and freedom people would cherish for themselves. Among the unconstitutional means, the people could resort to long drawn armed struggle which some of the small groups had been pursuing for. But they were being sized up by Mujib's network of private *Goonda* (Hoodlums-Mujib used to maintain many of them and were associated with his eldest son Kamal) Bahinis (armed private forces) in addition to the *Rakkhi Bahini*. Despite the presence of all forms of repressive instruments, there existed among quite a few the most organised and powerful of the underground parties the East Bengal Proletariat party led by brilliant Engineer Seraj Sikdar. This Sikdar was captured

from his hiding in Chittagong area (South East) on the 1st January 1975. For his arrest Mujib engaged all by himself a private spy network and within hours of his capture he was brutally killed while still in detention by Mujib's special police squad (Mujib had few special police squads for operation, for example, one most powerful one was led by S.P. Mahbub, he would himself keep deep interest in). India's RAW (Research and Analysis Wing, that is, the Indian Central Intelligence Agency) would also closely work, help and advise Mujib with necessary operation, particularly, against the underground parties. Having considered all the possible pros and cons to get rid Mujib of from his autocratic, absolute and undemocratic power peacefully was only a dream not be realised in the immediate future. The 15th August coup of 1975 in Dhaka led by Farook against Mujib was therefore a historical imperative to save the people from the slavery of oppressive rule and of total Indian domination. Because, the people in the country seriously despised the slavery of those whom they considered not superior at any rate but inferior on many counts. There is not an iota of doubt that had the people of East Pakistan in 1970 would smell even in the slightest bit that voting for Mujib and his party would enchain them with Indian slavery they would not certainly support them, much less Mujib, despite his apparent 'popularity'. It was only, as the common people understood, a question of securing due share and rights of the people, which Mujib promised to the people and that is why the people had voted for him in East Pakistan. Viewed in this right perspective and also in terms of legality of succession to power, Mujib had no legitimacy in power. The 15th August had come, therefore, not only as a historic imperative but also with a just promise for rightful and legitimate preservation of national Muslim identity in the land what once the Muslim people very much constitutionally named East Pakistan to maintain their own proud identity intact in posterity as Muslims distinct from the 'Bengalees' originated in the Bangas of the Vedas. It is as such proved beyond the slightest doubt that the toppling of Mujib was not just an insignificant act of the 'disgruntled' but was in response to the great historic call of the suffocating

helpless people of the land. It was a great act of patriotism and selfless devotion for the noble cause of freedom as opposed to slavery. Whether the spirit of the 15th August change over could be nurtured rightly in the desired direction is a different matter.

But as experience shows that the much-cherished goal has not been achieved and was almost lost in political confusion created by the new class of vested interests tied also to lackeys of foreign masters. There is no reason to believe that Ershad is not one of these beneficiaries. It may well be that to keep his personal profit intact and benefit of being in power through Indian tutelage, he has just been keeping in tune with 'his master's voice' and thus attempting to belittle the spirit of the 15th August.

One can further see Ershad's motive in belittling the supreme patriotic act of the heroes of the 15th August. He has, on one side, to please the Awami Leaguers and their common master Delhi's Rajiv, on the other. I may, although looks needless, point out to the fact of currently ongoing naked hegemony Delhi has been harbouring against the sovereignties of Nepal and Sri Lanka. The hegemony against Bangladesh is a well-known fact as I have also briefly narrated above. Maldives sovereignty has also been recently violated by India, whatever might have been the pretext. Pakistan remains under constant threat by India for obvious reason in that whatever contest may be done with India, it is still the remnant of Pakistan (West) and none else in the South Asia, much less in the sub-continent. It is now fairly known that Benazir is under serious pressure by India to agree to make the present Line of Control of the Jammu and Kashmir State the permanent border between India and Pakistan; and if she agrees to do so, it will be the most unfortunate thing and a serious betrayal on her part of Pakistan's noble and lofty ideology. India's 'super power' ambition has turned the SAARC and the forum into only an instrument of operation of Indian hegemony. One can see, however, that to stay in power at Dhaka, Hussain Mohammad Ershad would only try to please Delhi and commit in the way to remain a very faithful puppet of Delhi, but, as one can see, he

may have in the race for puppetry, at best, the second position in Delhi's estimation, and I am afraid, it would be only his vain attempt to win the first position. Because, that is reserved for Shaikh Hasina Wazed, the eldest surviving daughter of Shaikh Mujibur Rahman. Through her ancestry she stands a better chance in Delhi's trust than Ershad because, Delhi was 'disgruntled' with Ershad's Muslim League ancestors who were known to have been driven away from their ancestral home in India (North Bengal) in hours notice immediately after the partition of India in 1947.

The Concept, October 1989 (Islamabad)

MY SIX PAINFUL DAYS IN POLICE CUSTODY AND REMAND

First October 1989: An Experience In Uncertainty And Humiliation At The Hands Of The Dhaka Airport Immigration Police

The first October of 1989 was a historic and painfully memorable day for me. It was rather the beginning of an extremely painful but rewarding new experience I have ever had in my lifetime extending over five decades since I came of age of recall in boyhood at home and abroad.

The experience of my humiliating uncertainty started immediately after I had touched down at nine in the morning at the Dhaka Zia International Airport after having a tiresome and an elongated night long eastward flight from London Heathrow Airport by Bangladesh Biman DC10 starting about two hours late in the evening of the 30th September in London. The special VIP treatment I have had on board the plane due to one of my old friend's (Captain Muzaffar Hossain) piloting the flight from London to Dhaka via Paris turned, unfortunately after touch down into a sore experience. I started to realize the game the immigration police had played on me soon at the immigration control barrier when the officer in uniform on duty took off my Bangladeshi passport, casually asked for my identity and handed in that to another officer. He then passed the same on to another officer, possibly their immediate boss. I asked them what was the problem? "Some problem in your passport", they said to me. Mr. Aziz, as I could read his name on the nametag rather politely asked me to follow him. I did and he led me on to an office room not far away from the immigration control barrier. Both of us seated in the room, among some other men in police uniform, Mr. Aziz started somewhat casually to enquire about my identity, mission for stay in London, profession in Bangladesh, etc. I replied to them in plain and simple terms hiding nothing because I had nothing to hide for

any reason I could think of. It was at first about a ten minutes' session he had with me. He then left me there not alone but in company and under guard of quite a few police officials who started to put me questions whatever came to their mind. Anyway, I replied to them whatever I felt necessary putting to them, at times, counter questions, from me. A little later, Mr. Aziz, the police Inspector, came back and did ask some more questions nothing at all seriously. Again he went away asking me to wait in the same way in the company of quite a few police officials including some new ones. They did not let me seat in silence but kept on asking questions as if I was a criminal caught by them. One of them asked me, do you in addition to the Bangladeshi one, hold a British and a Pakistani Passport? I wondered and replied that I hold no passport other than the Bangladeshi one. I looked on to him and realized that as is very usual for any police officer not to believe me at all. Later on I knew that I would be sent back to London had I had a British passport. Time passed on but Mr. Aziz did neither keep his promise to "return soon after" nor send any message for me. I kept on hanging but kept on talking with the policemen asking them my own points of interest in regard to changes that have taken place during the three year period I had been absent from the country. Two hours later I asked for some help to use toilet. They led me on to a toilet nearby but guarding me there and took me back again to the office room.

Weary of the night flight and then detained for two hours like that at the airport immigration, I was feeling for a snack and a cup of tea. I had with me the only one hundred Taka note my landlady, Jaheda, had handed on to me, possibly the only note she had in her possession from her last trip to Bangladesh, just before my departure from my shared residence off Cartwright Garden at 6A Burton Street in central London, the previous day. One attendant for the police officials fetched for me two small size cake slices and a cup of tea from the airport restaurant. I asked the company to share the cake but nobody did, possibly, because as I felt they would not take anything from an arrested accused. I was still then not told by

anybody though that the police had arrested me. I was only told that I had to wait there for sometime for some important inquiry. But one officer had told me that I would be sent back to London in the immediately available suitable flight. I asked them why; nobody gave me any reply except hinting at that the Government of Bangladesh would not permit me to enter the country. I wondered what harm had I done to the country that I would not be allowed to enter my own country of birth. I had told them, however, that I don't hold any other passport much less a British one, and so they would not permit me to enter in Britain either. I realized later that the reply had some effect on the police and following the information they received from me; they started to look for alternative decision in my case. I kept on waiting and waiting and at about one in the afternoon, being a bit impatient, I requested quite a few times to one attending policeman for a favour. At last one of them responded. He went out, possibly, upstairs to ask Mr. Aziz if there was any news for me. What he told me after a while that the immigration police officials have all been busy to sort out my case. They have been contacting ups and downs to get a decision in my case whether to detain me or to release me from the detention. I realized that so much important a person I had turned to be. The whole Government machinery had turned busy for me, this humble self.

I was, however, getting impatient and irritated. At about this time a new face entered the room. He asked me rather rudely (in British standard, of course) that he had been asked by one of my younger brothers, Dr. Mozammel, to look into the problem. I did not like his approach; he seemed to me not only rude but also discourteous too. He conveyed to me the serious concern my brothers and family members had been having due to my detention at the airport. I said to him rather angrily "Let them not get concerned about me, tell them that I shall either go home and meet them, or go back to London or go to the Jail". He did not pursue his mission any farther with me and left the room almost immediately. Later on, I knew that he was one army intelligence officer. Someone in the room told me that

the man was a top official of the intelligence and I should have told him the case to get his sympathy. I cared little, because, by the time I got not only impatient but also somewhat irritated too.

Then continued the long wait. I knew that Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir was scheduled to arrive at the airport at 4 in the afternoon. Everyone at the airport was busy not only to receive her but also to keep her security in tight control. They also said that nothing would be decided in my case until in the evening only after Benazir would be received and would have left the airport VIP security checks, etc. It was at about 5.30 p.m. when Benazir's reception was over and possibly she had left the airport area that I was told to meet one immigration police officer at the upstairs who has replaced Mr. Aziz.

Immediately afterwards, I met the new police officer in charge with some expectation that I would be allowed to leave the airport to meet my family and friends waiting outside. But I was surprised to know beyond all my imagination and expectation that they had charged me for "Treason" (*Rastrodrohita*) and would soon hand me over to the Cantonment Police Station. I reacted instantaneously and asked him if he could define "Treason". I also asked him in anger if he could distinguish between "Treason" and "Anti-Government activities". *'Mujib Ki Deshpremik Silo Naki Rasrodrohi Silo?* I further questioned him. He replied nothing to me and kept silent. I then said to him if I could get a favour. "I have no objection to go to the Police Station but would like to clear my accompanied luggage and send them to my family". He replied, "No". I kept on repeating the request, but he did not yield at all. He kept on insisting that the luggage would be sent along with me to the police station. At one stage, I requested him if I could see any superior officer if there was any? He replied in negative as before. On my own initiative, I went out of his room and looked for one superior officer. Luckily I got one, the Superintendent of the immigration police. He looked sympathetic, but his junior was still un-agreeable. The Superintendent, Mr. Khaleque, as I knew later on, looked kindly

to me. He not only brought some snacks and a cup of tea for me but also agreed to my proposal to deliver my luggage to some of my relations. He further agreed to allow me to make a phone call to one of my brother to tell him to take the delivery of my luggage from the custody of the Superintendent. I thanked him for the favour, snacks and tea. Later on I knew that Mr. Khaleque was requested to look after me well by someone still higher police officer who had made the request to him as being one of my friend's close relations. The Cantonment Police Station Officer who was already present there to take me on to their custody repeatedly asking me to rush up. As soon as I could pass on the information to Tajul, one of my younger brothers, who has been moving ups and downs to get my release along with some of my other well wishers, I tendered myself to the Cantonment Police Officer Mr. Anwar Hossain. Mr. Khaleque while handing me over to him reminded him that he was handing in a very highly educated person in their custody; they should take care and treat the person well accordingly. Thus all airport formalities over, I was taken on a tempo guarded by a contingent of police including the officer in charge at about 7. 00 p.m. The sun had already set and thus ended my ordeal for the day extending over a period of about ten hours at the Dhaka Airport.

The tempo took about half an hour to reach the Cantonment Police Station. To my surprise, many friends and relations were present there. Soon came many to see me one after another at the police station. The rush continued quite until midnight. The unusual rush at the station was being cleared time and again by the Station Officer in charge (one lady). She was very much rude at times with some visitors; one of them was a very dear one and a 65 years old friend of mine (Syed Mujibullah). He could only embrace me and went out of the office room. Visitors had been waiting at the bharanda and the nearby lawn of the police station. I waved my hands to many of them as I could not go near to them because I was asked by the officer in charge to seat tight just on the high bench in front of her desk. I kept on realising that I was not a

free man but an arrested accused and that for the highest sort of crime, "Treason", the maximum punishment for which could even be death sentence. Except for some time at the airport my morale remained high and the rush of visitors raised my spirit still higher. My entire accompanied luggage I left at the airport for my brother to collect and take them home, I was left with my 10 years old much used and twice repaired black briefcase. It contained some handy materials and useful personal documents. At the police station the officer checked the contents of the briefcase and kept that under her custody. I kept on worrying about the briefcase when the shift changed and a man officer replaced the lady officer at about midnight.

The whole day passed without any main meal. Tajul and Anisur Rahman, a very old student of mine and an officer in Bangladesh, brought some food for me. Some food taken I bade good-bye to all, some stayed there even long after I bade them good-bye. The oldest friend told me that I might be taken for interrogation at late hours in the night. He also instructed me to do some dos and don'ts. I waited for the intelligence people to come by but none came. I am not sure if the station people had any such information or instruction. Nearly at 2 a.m. the officer asked me to sleep on a table used by another officer who was not on duty at that late hour. I did not feel to lie down on the bare table having neither any pillow nor a mosquito curtain; even so I did lie down for some time; but hardly I could sleep except having little knap in midst of the innumerable mosquito bites.

2nd OCTOBER 1989: From Cantonment Police Station to The Dhaka Metropolitan Magistrate's Court and Back to the Station.

I was told last night by someone, I don't remember exactly now after about four months, that I would be taken to the Dhaka Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court the next day. Although I was told by the airport police officials that I was

indicted for treason but in reality they charged me under section 54 of the Bangladesh Cr. P.C., no way relevant to any serious crime, much less to do with treason. As is well known the 54 Cr. P.C. is not at all a serious charge so far as its prescription of punishment is concerned. None would be punished under the section before Bangladesh came into being. Recently, however, huge number of people is being punished and detained under the section. I knew later at the Dhaka central jail that a boy stealing a chicken was known to have been punished under the 54 Cr. P.C.

For the 2nd October morning, I had my breakfast ready that was left with me last night. I took some from there, used the toilet, unsanitary and very unhygienic one located in a small jungle about 150 yards/ 125 Metres from the office room of the police station. For me the toilet was an unbearable one to use, because, I was not used to such an unhygienic one, at least, for the last long continuous three years of my best sanitary living in the London English standards. I had to bear with the pains as I have been doing for the last 24 hours; at the point though I did not realise that worse still remains in store for me. That new pains started with the boarding on the prisoners van that came into the station at about 10 in the morning. We were about ten accused arrested in various charges boarding the van. We had a police escort keeping us under him; it was his responsibility to produce us to the court before the Magistrate. On its way, the van picked up some other arrested accused from Gulshan, Tajgaon and Ranma Police Stations and also from the DIB office of Malibag. At the Cantonment the van was not crowded, but gradually as it went through its way to other police stations, turned into a crowded one having no place even to stand on the floor of the van, much less having seats to sit down, although there were two benches kept fixed on two sides of the van along the two windowless covers having ventilation peep holes at the top. The van took about two hours to reach the court premises in old Dhaka at a distance of about 15 kilometres from the Cantonment police station.

Having reached at the court, the van was unloaded; we were all delivered to an entrance leading on to a first floor room. The room was not only overcrowded just as the van was but the ward very dirty too. There was a very unclean urinal cum toilet giving intense pungent smell I could hardly bear of even I tried to keep away at the farthest corner of the nearly 20ft x 20ft room. There were other arrivals as well; some came before us and some afterwards. We kept there not very long but for about half an hour where they did the count, made registration, identification, and took photographs of some of us including that of mine. This as I realised, is a common place for incoming accused to the court for distribution to many other ground floor rooms called GARAT.

The Garat rooms are still smaller in size having as usual urinals and toilet combined in a corner of each room. The Garat I was transferred to from the second floor room was to accommodate only 12 persons, but there were not less than 40 people in that room of about 14ft x 14ft. It was a terrible experience to bear. I kept on standing for as long as I could bear; later on I sat down on the floor having spreaded a newspaper to keep my bottom of trouser getting dirty, as the floor was not only dirty but damp and wet too. As usual the room is locked from outside by the police in attendance. There came at about 1:30, I recall, my younger brother Tajul to get an Ukalatnama signed by me; that was needed to move my bail petition in the court. I stayed there in that dirty overcrowded Garat on and on for hours expecting some good news and grant of bail; but only to hear at the end at about 6 in the evening to learn from Tajul that the bail had not been granted and I have been put on in further police remand, the bail will again be moved the day after, he told me from across the iron bars of the door of the Garat.

In the return trip to the Cantonment Police Station at about seven at night, I realised that some of the co-accused had left either on bail or on to the central jail; it was only me and two others given further police remand, were being taken back to the Cantonment Police Station. I recognised the road

the tempo we were on board taking us back to the station. The tempo passed through the road, which is just about 100 yards away from one of my very dear sister in law's Dhaka official residence located in the Dhaka Cantonment area. On arrival at the station, the officer in-charge locked me inside the Garat despite my protest I made pleading that so long I enjoyed the privilege (undue though) to stay out of the Police Station Garat. Within about ten minutes, however, I realised that I was brought out of the lock-up; I went in to use the urinal and came back just to get a surprise.

That sister in law and her only daughter gave the surprise. They were there with one of my brother in law who himself is a police officer in the Dhaka Metropolitan Police. Later on, I knew that it was due to his influence that made the difference. I was taken out of the lock-up. The moment followed, however, with some emotional scene, which I had so far resisted with everybody whoever came to meet me either at the Police Station or at the court. I saw and realised that Choton has grown up quite big in the last three years period I did not see her; she reached me, fell upon me and started to weep. I could not resist and did some sobbing. Her mother was watching us standing somewhat nearby at a distance. Soon I started to console her in my highest of spirits. Then started to come visitors for me one after another; came my other younger brother Dr. Mozammel, my wife, our daughter (Tuli-Dr. Taufiqua Hussain) and her only little son (Atti-Sharif Taufiq Atiq) whom I did not see any time before. He was born in September 1986 soon after I had left for London in July. That was my first meeting with him at the police station; he could hardly be free with me there in the midst of the crowd. Nevertheless, it was a pleasant moment; they came down from their home at Narail to receive me at the Dhaka airport on the 1st October morning. They had to bear pains in failing to see me there and had to wait to be able to see me at the police station after about 37 hours of my arrival at the airport and that too in a crowded and arrested conditions. He still recalls his hatred for the police. I am not sure when and if at all he would forget

the hatred he developed for police at this age of about three years. As the hours went on, visitors continued to pour in ranging from my very old students to relations that continued until dead at night. At late night, when all visitors had left, the station officials sat down for quite a long time to listen to me some of my experience of London life and education. The listeners seemed to me just like a little classroom; the group and myself enjoyed being talking together and knowing things. Earlier I had a good meal prepared and brought in for me by Meena, one of my very dear sister in law, and mother of Choton. Just as the night before, I went for a sleep lying this night on the same table I used for the purpose last night.

3rd October 1989: 7 Hours Blindfolded & Interrogated By SB Police

The usual morning ended and at nearly half past nine in the morning I was told by the Police Officer in charge that I would soon be handed over to the Special Branch Police for interrogation by them. I was casually introduced to one person in his mid forties who had come to take me in from there. I changed my lungi despite the SB official's insistence not to change at all, and got myself ready to follow the officer.

He took me on to a microbus kept in waiting guarded by two armed police guards. As soon as I boarded the bus, I discovered that one of the guards covered my eyes with a rather dirty Gamcha (Towel) and tied that up at the back just above my neck. Not only that, I was then asked to keep my head not high but to lean down behind the front seat, one row straight behind the driver. The officer boarded at the front seat left of the driver. The two-armed guards sat beside me. Then went on the bus on to the road and travelled its way for about half an hour to where I would not know. The bus stopped somewhere and I was taken off the bus to the ground floor of a Bungalow type house into a bedroom. The room had a single cot and mattress but not any bed linen on. I was made to seat on the

side of the cot. Soon a table and two chairs were brought into for the two officers to seat on, use the table as a desk.

On started their session to ask me questions after question, although they refused either to open my blind- folding or to give their identity to me. The two officers started to ask me questions one after another. They began asking questions in regard to my personal identity, educational backgrounds, service career, education and stay abroad, including taking down notes about my family free, matrimonial relations, etc.

As the charge against me was "Treason", I thought that they would ask me questions around the main issue. They had at their disposal some materials I did produce and published earlier in London, I realised, as they started to ask questions from those articles. They collected them from their own source, I presume; but they had also intercepted some from my personal mails I addressed earlier to some of my friends in Dhaka. I realised their mischief when I was pointed out about a friend of mine whose mail they have intercepted and materials collected from such mischiefs. The articles they had intercepted were very old ones published in early 1988. One was my protest to an editorial of THE TIMES (London Daily). The protest was against a point whereby The Times stated, "To the Bangladeshis Calcutta is as important as Mecca". The interrogator asked if I did write the article; I replied, certainly I did. I made counter question to him, what element or part of the article was anti-state amounting to treason? He kept silent and replied nothing. The gist of what I had said in the article was that the people of Bangladesh, 90% of whom are Muslims highly esteem Mecca (Makkah) for spiritual reasons; compared to that deep esteem people hold dear, Calcutta stands nowhere in love and respect. Although Calcutta draws some linguistic cultural affinity of the people of Bangladesh, it is simultaneously being hated by the Bangladeshis because they were being continually exploited by the elites mostly non-Muslims based at Calcutta since the fall of independent Nawab of Bangla-Bihar & Orissa in 1757 at the Battle of Pallassey. I asked them what point in treason was there in the article. They were not supposed to reply, it was

only my duty to reply to their questions and queries howsoever irrelevant they might have been.

Other questions they asked me were from another article of mine they had with them. That was in Bangla entitled, "Haripurer Tel Ershader Ashuk" (Haripur's oil and Erahad's Illness). The article was in essence almost nothing against President Ershad of Bangladesh although the title touched him little bit. The article contained a sort of caution given to the Bangladesh Government and the people against possible foreign hegemony against our newfound oil resources. What I had hunched about Ershad in the article was his helplessness in the face of pressures he had been having from multinationals and various national powers. I did ask them to read from pages of the articles and show me, which items or sentences/words amounted to treason. The interrogators replied nothing to me and remained silent as before.

I remember them asking me about whom I would send my articles to. I mentioned quite a few names including as I said, "Your President, Vice-President, etc." Why do you say "Your President", "Your Vice-President, are they not your President or Vice President"? The officer in charge asked me? "You people threatened me at the airport to force me out of this country, as if this is not my country and I have no right to enter and live in my own country of birth, should I not in such a condition of humiliation presume that this country is yours only and not mine, and that is why I said your President and your Vice-President"? I heard nothing from them in reply to the charge I made against them on the point.

The officer asked me questions on the Re-Unification Movement based in London. I knew that there is a movement like that aimed to bring in Re-unification of East and West Pakistan. The movement is headed by eminent persons from both (West) Pakistan and Bangladesh (East Pakistan). They asked me about their addresses. I told about some of them I knew and happened to meet in London during my stay there. They further asked me about my association with them. I said the association was just enough as far as I would attend some

of their public meetings and at times made speeches. I had however, readily added that I would attend so many other meetings, processions, rallies, etc. organised by various other Islamic organizations in appropriate occasions in London and elsewhere in Britain. They wanted to know names of such associations/forum and I mentioned to them quite many. I did never hold any office in the movement, I said to them very clearly.

I would publish an irregular monthly form London during 1984 to 1987. They had some copies of the publication. They asked me why would I publish the monthly. They asked further if I could tell them in a nutshell the objectives of the monthly, Al Helal. I narrated to them the main objectives. That was an expression of one of my humble feeling and political belief. I said to them, "To me the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 did no substantial good to either to the people of East or West Pakistan. Both countries have not only become weaker but as well turned easy prey for the big Indians in all fronts, be they political, economic, cultural, military, whatever. Both have been under constant threats of Indian hegemony. Through the very humble Al Helal, I intended to awaken the people of both the countries about the dangers that loom large against their sovereign existence and honourable survival.

"Didn't you consider the activities you mentioned that would go against the country"? They asked at one stage? "Certainly not", I replied. On the contrary I thought they would be for the greater good of the people.

My twice going to the toilet and taking some bread and a banana for lunch intercepted the interrogation. In both cases they refused to remove the blindfolding. In the case for using toilet, however, they removed my blindfolding only after I was led on to inside the bathroom and re-bounded once again as soon as I intended to leave the toilet out. For taking the lunch, as well, the blindfolding was not removed at all despite my requests to do so; I was rather fed the lunch by the armed guard attendant.

The ordeal over at nearly five in the afternoon, I was asked to board the bus led by them and then drove rather at a shorter period than they had taken in the morning to the cantonment police station once again at about quarter to six in the evening. On arriving the station compound the blindfolding was removed and I was taken off the bus and handed on to the officer in charge. Thus ended one part of the ordeal and I was hoping that as they obtained nothing against me and could hardly substantiate anything in my involvement in any activity amounting to treason, I was hoping to be released next day by the court, at least, through bail against the case under 54 Cr. P.C. Many came to meet me and wanted to know about the interrogation; I told about some of my experience to them. It was a hell of a rush. Some of them told me to have connections with intelligence high ups, assured me as they were assured by some relevant official that I would be granted bail tomorrow by the court and would not in any case put me under detention under the Special Powers Act. My family members and sympathetic friends still then were hiding the news of my arrest and remand from the press. I asked them not to keep that secret and to give the news to the press and make it public. They reluctantly agreed to do so; I sensed their reluctance in their hope that they would be able to get me released, at least, through bail. It was neither for them nor for me either that the Government has taken the case very seriously; because I could conceive of any offence I had committed in writing and getting published some articles in the interest of the country. To me whatever I did was in the interest of the country to zealously safeguard the greater good for the country at least, as far as I could see through. Nevertheless most of my articles published in various weeklies, etc. were directed against hegemony of India against Bangladesh, in Particular. They would hit the Indian interests in the sub-continent so far as their Brahmanistic evil ambitions are concerned. They would not go, I am certain, against the interests of the common poor people of India either

Things have revealed gradually that it was the Indians and their powerful lobby outside and inside Bangladesh who had been dominantly instrumental to put me under arrest, police remand and detention without trial and making no formal serious charge for prosecution against me. Because they could not even in the slightest degree put up any reasonable evidence for the charge they intended to make so far. But that did not bar the Government to keep me in detention at the Central Jail for 82 days, although they had intended it for 120 days in the first instance. The seven hour long interrogation by two SB officials proved for them just only an exercise in futility. For me, however, it was a rich experience although I had obtained it through enormous pains to be treasured in future life for me, for my family and all who are interested about me, my belief and the ordeals I have had in the hands of these unenlightened Government and their century old crude bureaucratic and seriously depreciated institutions and machinery.

4th October: 2nd Time in Court: Waited for Bail and put on Remand Once Again:

The night passed as usual without sound sleep. The morning came. No bath I could take for the last three days. But a surprise came about. Seraj, a young man, came and introduced him to me. I recognised him almost readily. He stayed with us in 1971-72 as a household servant. Later on he left and we did not see each other for a long time. But I knew that he met my family some time in between when I was out of the country from October 1982 to April 1985 and again from July 1986 to September 1989. He knew of my arrest and remand at the Cantonment Police Station just accidentally when he went for a visit to one of my sister in laws who lives at the Dhaka Cantonment. On getting the news of my misfortune, he readily came to meet me there and told me that he lives and works very nearby just at a distance of about 150 yards away. Not only that he came to visit me but also brought so many

things for my breakfast from his own grocery shop. I had to oblige him and could not refuse everything he had brought. He was very insistent; because he used to call me Abba (father) and the same way he addressed me that day as well. He offered me to bring for me some water for bath; but I refused, because, I could not take it easy to take bath in the open by the open water reservoir. However, I gave him some of my used dirty cloths to wash and clean.

Soon came the Prisoner's van at its usual time, I reached at the court nearly the fixed time. This day I experienced at the campus many of my devoted ex- students who knew by that time that I was put under arrest and would be produced in the court for the second time. Their lobbying with the court officials, particularly with the Garat in charge police I was allowed to stay at the veranda of the second floor Garat thus to provide view to them from there. Later on when I was put to the ground floor Garat, their lobbying and possibly through bribing they managed to put me in a separate room meant for on duty police officials. Some visitors came also to see me there while I have been waiting to know about the result of the bail petition being moved in the court. Al Hamdu-lillah, whoever came to visit me even there at the court campus I kept my spirit high and told them that I am innocent so far as the interest of the country is concerned; I was being harassed for nothing or for ulterior motives of certain vested interests. At last the day passed and I was told that no bail had been granted and I would be put under remand for one more day for further police interrogation. The two lawyers themselves gave the news. The visitors went away and I waited for the transport to arrive. In the meantime I was told that I had to pay some Bakshish (reward) to the police official who had taken me out from the prisoner's van in the morning to the court. I did not know anything of this "decorum". Luckily Tajul came to say a good bye; I asked from him a ten Taka note for the police official; as soon as Tajul left and I was to be taken back to the Cantonment, I offered the official the ten Taka note for his Bakshish, but he refused; I insisted but he refused again; some

one told me that he would not take that little sum for his Baksheesh. But I was undone; I had no money with me except that ten Taka note. Whatever I had already on the 1st October handed over all to Tajul, everything being in the pocket of my jacket, soon after my arrival at the Cantonment Police Station. I had my travel and other documents in pockets of the jacket along with little money in Bangladeshi currency and in British pounds. I was, therefore, undone to offer him any further money except the ten Taka note I received from Tajul. He was annoyed as I saw him in the face. Hence he took a reprisal. So far none of the police tied me with rope at my waist, but today he took the reprisal despite he was requested not to do so by another police official on duty at the court room I was put to. I realised later that many of the court officials received Baksheesh on account of me today, because, many came to meet me there in exchange for money in bribe or Baksheesh; and that very one was the unlucky being possibly not offered any baksheesh by any of my visitors that day. Anyway, came down a tempo to take me back to the Cantonment. Luckily or unfortunately the tempo passed on through the Tejgaon Industrial Area, and on its way I could recognise the place of my official residence where my family still resides in. I passed by only about two hundred yards away from the quarter through the main road Maghbazar-Mohakhali. What a sad but thrilling feelings I had in passing through the road in the police tempo escorted by armed guards. I am sure the policemen did not know that there was my official residence I had been staying on with my family for the long 24 years since 1966. Back to the station I had to follow the same routine. Tajul said that I would be put to detention, but some other said that I would be granted bail after having interrogated by the SB officials the next day.

5 October 1989: Waited All Day At The Police Station Only To Be Interrogated By one S.B. Police Official In The Evening For About Half An Hour

The 5th day in police remand was nothing of new experience except that I stayed at the station doing some

reading and writing letters to some worrying friends in London. In the evening at about 4 pm a person who introduced himself to me as the SB official and also confirmed by the station police officer in charge did some interrogation this time not making me blindfolded as they did on the 3rd October. The questions he asked me were nothing of any serious nature. The only new point he was trying to obtain from me was about my third brother Tajul who happened to be associated with student politics in late 1960s and early 1970s, and suffered heavily, including our whole family, at the brutal hands of Shaikh Mujibar Rahman.

The night was as usual a rush of visitors. Many of the well wishers came and assured me that I would get bail tomorrow; but Tajul had sensed something different. He knew in advance that I would be given detention under the 1974 Special Powers Act.

6th October: To The Court And To The Central Jail.

In the morning when I was at the toilet, there came a telephone call to the police station from the SB Police. Meena was there at the station having taken my breakfast, which I already had. As soon as I came back from the toilet she told me that I had been put under detention. It was depressing news, but soon I got mentally settled to enter the Central Jail. The van came and I was asked to board the van to go to the court. I argued with the Duty officer why should I unnecessarily have to attend the court; because I had already been put to detention, I could be directly send to the jail; he did not agree and I had to board the prisoners van once again to go to the court. I had to wait all day at the Court custody only to board once again another prisoners van at dusk only to be taken to the Dhaka Central Jail. My two younger brothers and our eldest son (Titu-Farrukh Hossain) (25) saw me off boarded at the departing van from the Dhaka Court compound. From the 6th October night onwards, I started my term of detention under the 1974 Special

Powers Act being formally until then though charged under the 54 Cr. P.C. of Bangladesh.

6th October To 26th December 1989: Pains And Pleasure At The Dhaka Central Jail (82 days).

The first day at the Amdani

It was a horrible day. I started to realise the horrifying bits and pieces soon after I had entered the main jail gate.

TO LEGITIMISE THE ILLEGITIMACY QUESTION OF BANGLADESH (I)

M.T. HUSSAIN

The President of the country itself has once again called the legitimacy of the Government of Bangladesh into question. His remark on the issue made on the 17th November in a public meeting has, although, been criticised but curiously by only three of the nearly one hundred political parties, the Awami League, a faction of the National Awami Party and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party. It is significant to note that none of the other parties has so far criticised the first portion of the remark made by the President Hussain M. Ershad. The non-response of most of the political parties to the President's otherwise serious indictment against Shaikh Mujib and his Government in post 1971 Bangladesh only suggests that the Mujib Government had not been fully cleared of the stigma of illegitimacy in power in Bangladesh.

What was the exact portion of the remark, which has been taken by few parties as undesirable? "The Government that was formed by the Awami League and their party leader Shaikh Mujibur Rahman after the fall of Dhaka to the invading Indian forces in December 1971 was not a legitimate one", Ershad has said. To substantiate his argument the President has further reasoned that the basis of formation of the Government of independent Bangladesh could not have been legitimate and constitutional because the elected representatives who formed the Government and framed the Constitution had not been elected themselves by the people for the purpose; they had rather been elected by the people of erstwhile East Pakistan with the purpose to frame a federal Constitution for the "United Nation of the State of Pakistan". The reason and logic advanced by him can hardly be fully nullified by counter argument. Because, whatever has had happened between March to December 1971, has had come as nothing but extra-constitutional means, violating the basis of

the Legal Framework Order (LFO) promulgated by the seating President of Pakistan in early 1970, that was aimed to create conditions to hold a general election in the country (Pakistan) for the only objective to frame an acceptable Constitution for the whole and united Pakistan. There was none and there could have been neither any provision made by the President Yahya Khan in dismemberment of the country having no clear mandate of the people for the dismemberment that took place in December 1971.

It is very much true that there had been a war fought between the two main contending parties, Pakistan and India in December 1971, for the creation of Bangladesh in the soil and geography of East Pakistan. Another party to the war was the Bangladesh Mukti Bahini whose interest it was to secure independence of East Pakistan from Federal Pakistan. The war, however, had concluded through an instrument of surrender by the Pakistan Army Eastern Command and simultaneous victory in the war of the Indian Armed forces. Both the commanders of the Pakistan Army General Niazi and that of the Indian Army General Arora signed the instrument jointly; there was no presence in the surrender ceremony of the Chief of the Mukti Bahini, euphemistically called the Bangladesh Army Chief General Osmani, much less to be a party authorised to put his signature in the document.

What turned to be the legal position of Bangladesh as on the 16th December evening soon after Niazi had surrendered East Pakistan to Arora? Was that anything different from the status of East Pakistan forcibly occupied by India? Was there any Government in Dhaka, much less to speak of a lawful Government, The Government of Tajuddin was flown to Dhaka just after a week from Calcutta in India who did provide all protections to the men forming the Government. Then came to join with them Shaikh Mujibur Rahman, the majority party leader of the Pakistan National Assembly, who had been imprisoned without trial in West Pakistan since 25th March 1971, on the 10th January 1972, 25 days after the fall of Dhaka. First, Shaikh Mujub took over as the President of

Bangladesh (East Pakistan) and then after a few days as the Prime Minister of the country. How could his assumption of power at Dhaka have been legitimate? The Government was installed at Dhaka by the victorious power India. Had the Government formed by Shaikh Mujib been all-party one negating the basis of formation on the 1970 election under the LFO as had been pressed and demanded by the political parties other than the Awami League who actively took part in its freedom movement in 1971, one could accept his Government as somewhat a revolutionary and thus a legitimate one. But that was not done. What he did in forming the Government was only the Awami Leaguers who had been elected to the Pakistan Assemblies (National and Provincial) under the LFO in November-December 1970 election. Mujib and his counsels including Dr. Kamal Hossain, the renowned lawyer, knew very clearly that they lacked legitimacy in succession. That is why they had adopted two validating resolutions first, through adopting a resolution in the (half) National Assembly of Bangladesh on the 4th November, 1972, the day they adopted the Indian dictated Constitution for the new Republic, and then once again taking another resolution to the same effect soon after the 1973 election was won by the Awami League in the notoriously rigged election held under the provisions of the 1972 Constitution. Could these two exercises make his Government legitimate? Well, de facto yes, but de jure, not. The position remained the same as long as Pakistan did not recognise Bangladesh in early 1974. Pakistan's recognition, however, did not unburden Bangladesh from her breach of moral contract made with the Muslim Ummah of the Undivided Indian sub-continent of pre-1947 independence. Because, the united Pakistan, East and West, was the creation not alone of the Muslim people of East Bengal but of all the Muslim population of the British Indian sub-continent who had sacrificed enormously in terms of material wealth and millions of lives for the creation of Pakistan. At least from moral and ethical stand points none in the united Pakistan, much less the Bangladesh alone, could have any right to dismember Pakistan that tragically took place in December 1971. The

"independence", if one would not term the drama as an act of dismemberment of a sovereign country by alien power, had however, in reality no clear sanction of the people of even East Pakistan, later on called Bangladesh. Whether the people has accepted the drama as a *fait accompli* still remains to be proved, because there has nothing been done so far to have a clear mandate of the people on this vital issue. Historically it cannot be denied that the preservation of the State, integrity and ideology of Pakistan was the sacred trust of the Muslim Ummah of the whole Indian sub-continent. The physical dismemberment of Pakistan, a sacred trust of the Muslim Ummah, has not all been duly reconciled by the members of the Indian Muslim; it would neither be accepted as a good work done by any Muslim not only in the sub-continent but in the whole Muslim world.

Legitimacy of succession in political and state power is a very sensitive and crucial matter in the belief and values of the Muslims since the very days of the early Khilafat. The tragic instance of the great martyrdom of Imam Hussain and the blood spilling at the Karbala in the 7th century is an important lesson for the Muslims, both among the Shia and the Sunni sects. The yardstick for legitimacy of Bangladesh, not just alone of the Government as a sovereign and independent country, some may argue, had been settled in accordance with the UN charter of self-determination. Had it been so, why the same UN charter has not so long been implemented in the same way in the case of the Kashmiris in the last 43 years gone by primarily due to Indian unreasonable intransigence, whereas, the same had been wonderfully secured in nine months period in 1971 in case of the East Pakistanis through the use of Indian armed power and at their own cost of millions of dollars and thousands of valuable lives. The Muslims of Bangladesh could not take lightly the question of legitimacy of accession to power of the state, and that is why there came about the August 15, 1975 coup. That the illegitimate Government of the Shaikh overthrown by a successful coup led by Col. Farook and Col. Rashid was not only directed to restore legitimacy but also to

revive the confidence of the Muslim people in their own historic values. One can see, therefore, that the only Government that could be termed legitimate was the Government that took office after the 15th August (1975) coup. This chain of legitimacy had continued until the 23rd March 1982, but broken off once again on the 24th March through usurpation in power by Hussain M. Ershad, then the Army Chief of Bangladesh. He continues in power, as such, not as a legitimate one but as an illegitimate usurper.

In the united Pakistan, the East Pakistanis constituted the majority of the population being 56%. The East Pakistani Muslims had sacrificed enormously to create Pakistan in 1947. Well, there would have been no harm to secede from the rest of West Pakistan consisting of four provinces, provided the secession had the clear sanction of the people which, as I have shown already, certainly lacked in the country's 1970 election. Our majority status had conferred us lawful right to call it Pakistan, even after seceding or being independent; in any case, there was no logic to call this wing as Bangladesh if one had seriously taken into consideration the history of the past struggle of the people of this part of the world and her real aspirations to preserve her distinct Muslim identity. The West wing in such a case should have been named as the Federation of West Pakistan. Thus it could have rightfully been possible to preserve the sacred trust of the ideology of Pakistan in the body and soul of the Muslim Ummah in perpetuity.

The legitimacy has to be restored both for legal and moral reasons. This can only be done through Ershad's overthrow from power the way he usurped in. Soon after he would be overthrown from the power, it must be needed for legitimacy's sake that referendums have to be called in the country on each and every issue to bury forever the legitimacy-illegitimacy dilemma. The constitution of the country, the name of the country, the national anthem, national flag etc. have all to be decided through referendum, because none of these vital issues have ever been decided by necessary clear verdict of the people. They were all imposed on against necessary clear

verdict of the people from alien power through the lackeys or in plain words, by threats of India's big muscle power and hegemony that exists not only against Bangladesh but also against her smaller neighbours in the region.

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BANGLADESH-THE QUESTION OF LEGITIMACY (II)

H. B. Khair (The Pseudonym used in London)

Maulana A. K. M. Yusuf, Secretary General of Jama' at-e- Islami Bangladesh argues in his interview with Impact (17:3, 14-24 December 1987) that since the Ershad regime is 'illegitimate' ab initio, his party had joined the political movement for the removal of this regime.

I have no wish to go into arguments about the legitimacy or otherwise of the present regime in Dhaka, but I think this question to legitimacy is central to the very being of the country itself, I should not be surprised, therefore, if illegitimacy begets illegitimacy.

I am a Bengali Muslim who has been conferred the 'citizenship' of a country few of us had ever wished or asked for and please forgive me if we are a little sensitive about the very legitimacy of the entity conceived and given birth to in total illegitimacy.

The 1970 general election were not fought by any party, including the Pakistan Awami League, on the issue of secession from United Pakistan. The main plank of the Pakistan Awami League led by Shaikh Mujibur- Rahman was its Six Point dealing with greater autonomy for the 'province' of East Pakistan. The Awami league had also accepted Gen Yahya Khan's LFO (Legal Framework Order), which had underscored the integrity and ideology of Pakistan.

No one had dared ask the 'Bangladesh question' and no one had ever voted for the creation of this entity. The creation of Bangladesh was not even an act of revolution. It was a case of pure aggression and treason. Treason on the part of some politicians and military Generals in both West and East Pakistan and naked aggression on the part of neighboring India.

The Indians occupied Dhaka and an all too generous Zulfikar Ali Bhutto released Shaikh Mujibur- Rahman (SMR) from prison and flew him out to Dhaka via London and New Delhi.

Having been put into power by a foreign invading army and having had no mandate either for himself or the 'republic' he was now supposed to lead, SMR tried to seek a post ipso facto legitimacy through adopting a resolution converting the East Pakistan rump of the National Assembly into a Bangladesh National assembly. Not convinced himself of the legality of his act, he had a similar resolution adopted by a new assembly. This second assembly was itself the creation of an illegal and demised assembly and moreover in electing this 'new' assembly under the dispensation of an illegitimate authority, the people were only dealing with a de facto situation; they were not given the choice to vote 'yes' or 'no' for Bangladesh. This fact itself reflected on the climate of public opinion in the province. The illegitimate rulers of Bangladesh were so sure of the thumping 'No- vote' against their so- called 'sovereign and independent republic' that they dared not put this direct question to the people.

All that can be said about the 1973 and subsequent elections in Bangladesh are to liken them to election held in the Indian- occupied territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The 'legitimacy' of Bangladesh equals the 'illegitimacy' of India's occupation of Jammu and Kashmir.

An attempt was made to rectify the situation in August 1975. A group of patriotic army officers tried to punish Shaikh Mujibur- Rahman for his treason and usurpation. He was overthrown and killed and when the Indians mounted a counter coup through Brig Khalid Musharraf, popular uprising defeated it. The Indians have since adopted a less visible profile, but they control and manipulate Bangladesh through their proxies and through their stifling economic and military power.

Few in Bangladesh make any bones about the country's sham independence, some say it openly and some in private. In net terms, Bangladesh to day enjoys much less autonomy under Indian hegemony than it used to complain about (rightly) when it was the Eastern wing of United Pakistan. It is, therefore, little surprising that the people of Bangladesh today feel so angry and yet equally helpless.

But there is no way in which a continuing illegitimacy can be reversed into legitimacy except to go back to the founding covenant of Pakistan as the covering and independent Islamic homeland. Pakistan was made possible through the indomitable will and sacrificing struggle of the (then) 100 million Muslims of the entire Subcontinent and it was not the result of linguistic or provincialism demands by Bengalis, Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans or Baluchis to be given a separate state. Pakistan was a State of Trust and no Bhutto, Mujib or Yahya Khan has the legal or moral right to scrap or alter the trust deed.

If some people in West Pakistan as I gather, imagine that they had been clever to get rid of East Pakistan, then that was being very naive. The 'Bangladesh logic' will get them sooner or later producing a number of other 'Deshes' out of West Pakistan. There is no future for either Bangladesh or (West) Pakistan without the other.

(Impact International, 8-21 January 1988, London).

ABUSE OF POWER: VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHT: POLITICS OF VENGEANCE

The addition of yet another fraudulent dimension on the 22nd September into the case of Col (R) Sayeed Farook Reehman has further unveiled Shaikh Hasina's attitude of deep vengeance against the retired Colonel who had been the number one man in toppling her father Shaikh Mujibur Rahman from the seat of political power of Bangladesh in August 1975. The new item added on the 22nd September (96) was that Shaikh Hasina's special police squad has 'found' a few bottles of wines and cans of beer in the residence of the colonel long after he was taken to custody 41 days ago and where now his old mother and three young children live in the old DOHS, Dhaka.

Farook's mother Mrs. Mahmuda Rahman, as was reported in a Dhaka daily, has already protested against this yet another fraudulent addition of item of criminal charge against Farook. She has further said in her statement that the house was raided and searches made in minute details on five other occasions; on earlier searches they found nothing of illegal wine and beer and it took them long 41 days before they could miraculously find these 29 bottles full of wine and 21 cans filled with beer. In the statement she has said very clearly that it was a ploy only to discredit her very pious son in the eye of overwhelmingly Muslim people who abhor consumption of liquor. Mian Abdur Rashid, a veteran politician in his 70's and the vice-president of the Freedom Party in yet another protest note released to the press on the 23rd September, which was published the following day in a few Dhaka dailies, condemned the concocted wine-beer episode.

As is well known, Farook never disowned his involvement in the successful August 1975 coup, because, according to his clear admission as reported widely here and there, that was a task of deep patriotism and of piety on his part, and hence he took up the great and noble task in removing the self-proclaimed absolute dictator for upholding bigger interest of his

own country, Bangladesh, for which he had, as well, taken on to arms once before as a freedom fighter in 1971.

The 1975 coup being a successful one had thus by itself attained its legitimacy following the maxim of *factum valet*, that is, under the presumption that such army uprising was held by the willing consent of the people. The willing consent of the people was clearly manifested in the overwhelmingly spontaneous support the people have had shown to the coup d'etat and its leaders, particularly to Col (R) Farook, Major Dalim, etc. There are many decisions as precedence, as well, just like the one then upheld as legitimate and lawful by Pakistan's the then Chief Justice Muneer in the case of Ayub Khan's taking over power of the Government of Pakistan in 1958 through a successful army coup. That the coup leaders of 1975 were further provided with legal protection in the Constitution of the country through the Indemnity Act of 1975 had just followed the overwhelming support of the people. The support was well reported in press at home and abroad and is well known to all. Anthony Mascarenhas, a well-known journalist of international repute, in his famous book, *Bangladesh: A Legacy of Blood*, has commented that just before the 1975 coup Shaikh Mujibur Rahman had turned as the "MOST HATED MAN" in Bangladesh. The international community, as well, almost spontaneously recognized the Government of Awami League following the coup including the big power China and Saudi Arabia who, until the fall of Shaikh Mujib did not recognize even the State of Bangladesh as an independent country. The relevant facts, information and provisions are neither unknown to Hasina nor to her government. The government, as such, has no ground to put Farook under trial for the so-called killings of 1975 coup. Having had no legal ground to put them under trial for the coup, Hasina's government has embarked on to means of forgery, fraudulence and trickery in the case against Farook and other coup leaders by instituting concocted cases.

But as revengeful as the Government of Hasina clearly appear to be in the case, people with minimum common sense cannot but take her attitude to Farook but a revengeful one. This goes without saying now that her promise given to people

before the June 12 polls for not resorting to politics of reprisal stands fully exposed as a false pretension for getting votes of simple folks just as she has taken on the Hijab for obtaining support through befooling the overwhelming religious minded Muslim people of Bangladesh.

The case initially framed against Farook was for his possession of 'illegal arms' and of Rs. one thousand only in Pakistan currency notes. None of these cases should at all require continuous remand for over thirty days now except for other ulterior motives of the government. It is, therefore, only a matter of commonsense that he is being put to remand for such long time for extracting from him information as they would like to have about the 15th August and 3rd November happenings. This is what the CID has been doing violating Farook's basic human rights as were reported widely in the Dhaka press and elsewhere. Farook has been placed on police remand for 5th term so far extending over 30 days whereas law permits duration of remand period not exceeding 15 days; and he is being tortured by police in custody not for those two cases but for securing information of their own liking from him into the 15th August 1975 coup and about the 3rd (1975) November Dhaka Central Jail killings. This goes without saying that abuse of power and violation human right is being perused in the case having little regard to the Constitution of the country.

As the report goes on in various media, it becomes clear that Farook has had just admitted about his involvement in the coup as he did many times since 1975 and said nothing beyond his initial admission of fact. He has appreciably shown his guards and stamina for truth, patriotism and commitment to the cause of the people. That has naturally made the Hasina government nervous. They have thus resorted to conspiratorial tactics to lower down Farook's image so long held high in the estimation of the common people of the country. The people being religious, the wine and beer episode has not only been concocted but is given Goebblesian publicity stunt. But the people have neither been sympathetic to the Government in the case nor they are likely to believe the government of Shaikh Hasina in the latest frame-up of the case. On the contrary, as is

seen in and around and from the senses of whispering campaign, sympathy for Farook and other coup leaders are being multiplied each day passing.

Farook has a place in the minds of the people. He has made this place since the 1975 coup. His latest book *ALORON*, a Bengali monograph, published in January 1995, has further elevated his position in the view of the people. That is a brilliant exposure of his ideas about improving the fate of the people. He has in the book not only given outline of his political programme but also put up an elaboration of economic development action plans for betterment of the lot of the poverty-stricken people of this country. In the book, he has further exposed the facets of the foreign exploiters and their local agents who are responsible for the ills of the people. He has outlined his self-reliant development plan in the book through which he looks confident to weed out the foreign lackeys and the reactionaries.

There are, therefore, reasons for Hasina to feel nervous about Farook's bigness and capability just as her father Shaikh Mujib would feel inferior to and nervous with more intelligent and capable persons. It is not difficult to appreciate that she has been responding to her inner psychological nervousness by resorting to torture of Farook in detention. She has thus clearly been making abuse of her power and violating, at the same time, norms of rule of law and degrading basic human rights which as one can clearly foresee, may soon boomerang against Prime Minister Shaikh Hasina herself.

The world humanity has a duty to stand by Farook against Hasina's abuse of power and violating the constitution of the country. The international bodies committed to uphold human rights like the Amnesty International, etc. should immediately make strong protest to the present Bangladesh Government against violation of human right as is reportedly being done to Col (R) Sayeed Farook Reehman and others. The world conscience should see that nothing unconstitutional is done to them.

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THE NAJAT DIBASH: RECALLING SOME FACTS

M.T. Hussain

This year the exit of the Awami League's Sheikh Hasina Government from the seat of political power on the 15th July was marked as the *Najat Dibash* or the Day of Deliverance by the people all over the country. In historical term it is the third Day of Deliverance in the historical struggle of the Muslims during the period of last 62 years, the first one being observed on the 22nd December 1939 and the second one on the 15th August 1975. It is noteworthy to mention here that although the overwhelming majority of the people actively participated and jubilantly enjoyed the observances of the days as they were, a section of it had detested it. One example of detest seen in an item was recently found published in a local Bengali Dhaka daily column being a dispatch from a London-based senior 'Bangalee' columnist.

He condemned all of the three observances giving his argument that they were motivated by 'communalism' of Muslim League variety.

One must ponder how were they Muslim communal. The first Day of Deliverance of the 22nd December 1939 was called and observed by the All India Muslim League under the direction and guidance of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the then League President. The token observance was called to mark the protests the Muslims of India had been making during the provincial rule of the Congress Party for about three years following the election of 1936 under the autonomy plan as was provided in the 1935 Government of India Act. The grievances of the Muslims against six provincial Congress governments included discrimination, oppression and isolation of the Muslim masses in business, jobs, employments etc. Not only this, school educational curricula was changed to suit Congress ideology or in fact, Hindu practices and symbols that went against the beliefs and culture of the Muslims. Muslim school students were compulsorily required and directed as such against their free will to bow down their heads to the portrait of

Gandhi every morning before entering school or taking seat in class room. Further the pupils would require to sing the chorus of "*Bande Mataram*" every morning during school assembly, the song being by then was well known as the party chorus of the Congress and was in no way the agreed national anthem. The guardians and parents of the Muslim students were against these compulsory practices as they considered them against their Islamic monotheist belief. There were protests by the Muslims against all these practices and action programmes during the provincial Congress rule, but was hardly heeded to by the Congress governments; neither their central congress leaders like Nehru, Gandhi, Patel or Hindu Mahashava Chief and a famous Bengali Dr. Shyma Prasad Mukerjee did anything to redress these genuine grievances of the Muslims. The Muslim League took to these resentments of the Muslims, protested time and again. Even Sheer-e- Bangla A.K. Fazlul Haq who was much more known to be very much secular a person had to come in open to protest these evil actions of the Congress governments. But all was in vain. In midst of the resentments and despair of the Muslims against the six Provincial Congress ministries, when the ministries had to quit for whatever reasons in the height of the World War II, the Muslim League led by Jinnah had secured a political organizational expediency by calling and observing the Day of Deliverance. How could this program be termed a communal act by the Muslim League or its leaders? If this would be Muslim communalism, what 'ism' would one call all those action programs engineered by the six provincial Congress governments against the beliefs and culture of the Muslims?

One may recall that there was some insignificant opposition from some Muslim members for the 22nd December calls for the Day of Deliverance which in democratic politics is nothing unusual. But one may recall with some sense that the call by Jinnah for the 22nd December had been supported even by many-scheduled caste Hindus including their leader at that time, the well-known Barrister Dr. Ambedkar. The reason was obvious; the oppression and discrimination perpetrated against these disadvantaged people by particularly the six provincial

Congress governments had been of similar nature just as had been against the Muslims.

The second Day of Deliverance was the one marked by the fall of the government of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Dhaka on August 15, 1975. It was not a simple exit of Mujib from power, but came about through a successful *Coup D' Etat* led by a section of the young army officers but instantaneously supported by the whole Bangladesh army- the Armed Force, the Air Force and the Navy. The fall had psychological stunts but was followed by jubilations and celebrations everywhere, even in far away foreign lands wherever Bangladeshis happened to live in. I personally was involved in some jubilation and celebration in London, the hot bed of free world politics and political movements of all varieties.

There were jubilations and celebrations among the Bangladeshis, processions held in East London area and Oxford Street, protest demonstrations in front of the India House at Aldwich and in front of the 10 Downing Street including submitting memorandums to the British Prime Minister, holding public meetings at the Speakers Corner of the Hyde Park, publication of leaflets, special supplements of Bengali weeklies and periodicals like *Nissan*, *Janamat*, *Bunglar Katha* etc., particularly in London and around. There were *Shukrana* (gratitude to Allah) prayers in mosques supporting the fall of Sheikh Mujib, on one hand, and offering prayers for well being for those who engineered the *Coup*, on the other. I had an opportunity to share such a prayer following Friday *Salat* at the south London mosque of Balham locality where the *Coup* makers well-being were sought and their declaration of the 'Islamic Republic' was profusely praised. During the BBC TV news of 1 P.M. on the 15th August, there was shown portrait of Sheikh Mujib pulled down from the Bangladesh High Commission office wall of 28 Queens' Gate, kicked down and broken to pieces. We watched on the BBCTV quite a few of his own men being officials in the High Commission fleeing the area but none was seen saving the portrait's dignity. Why? Why were the supporters of Mujib lost everything of moral stand in support of the fallen dictator? We knew in London from here

that the people inside Bangladesh, as well, had similar jubilations, celebrations and prayers. One might recall how Mujib during the brief rule of about three and a half years between January 1972 and mid August 1975 had turned himself into the most hated person compared to his high tide of popularity in late 1960s and early 1970s. None at home or abroad- even living in the free soil of England who supported Mujib during the period of late 1960s and early 1970s in huge money, materials and arms for the freedom fighters-had even the slightest moral courage to stand up for Mujib. One of his long time close associate Abdul Malek Ukill soon after the 15th August termed his fall as the obvious tragic end of the "Pharaoh".

That many western intellectuals and renowned journalists summarized why Mujib had lost all his credibility fell into three main items. One, he had failed to keep his words for economic welfare of the masses but instead provided fortunes for his own party men and close kith and kin's; secondly, he had betrayed the people of his given promise for democratic rule and social order and instead ended up in the one party dictatorial rule of the BAKSAL having given instead the people worst type of tyranny, oppression and mass murder of thousands of patriotic people by directly engaging for state terrorism and tyrannical oppression against the people the unconstitutional paramilitary force called the *RAKKHI Bahini*, whoever had stood to oppose his undemocratic rule. Thirdly, he had miserably failed for his "secular" policy to appreciate the deep attachment and affinity of the Muslim people who constituted eighty five percent of the whole of 75 million people of the country in their Islamic belief, life system and spiritual aspirations. There were many weighty observations about his fall; one such was that Mujib had really killed himself when he had drifted from the parliamentary democratic path of governance in January 1975, turning himself into a dictator by imposing ban on all lawful political parties and establishing the lone party of his own in the style of BAKSAL. His overthrow on the 15th August (75) was just a formality to restore once again the multi- party democracy in the country. And that is why the

attempts to engineer the *counter-coup* in the first week of November had failed which led to the popular uprising of the *Sepahi-Janata* on the 7th November (75) and thus it was a re-confirmation of the imperatives of the 15th August *Coup*. The successful coup of 15 August 1975, was a turning point in the history of struggle of the Muslims of this land for preserving their distinct identity and value system in its right perspective which Mujib had tried to destroy and in turn, ruined himself for his adventurism against the real aspirations of the people of this land. That is why 15th August is being observed every year as the second *Najat Dibash* and may rightly be named the first one for the Bangladeshis.

The third one recently held on the 15th July 2001 would not have come about should Sheikh Mujib's daughter Sheikh Hasina would not have had come to power in 1996 and did not do for the last five years all mischief, miss-governance, oppression, killings, lootings of public properties turning the country into the shameful status of the "most corrupt ridden country" in the world. People heaved a great sigh of relief just as our forefathers had had felt deeply relieved, first, in the program on the 22nd December 1939 and then once again for the second time on the 15th August that obviously led to the 7th November (75) uprising.

The third *Najat Dibash* is yet to achieve its full fruition. It needs possibly another 7th November. Because, Sheikh Hasina has not as yet vacated the very costly and prestigious public property of Ganobhaban, the official seat of the Prime Minister of Bangladesh. It is not only the question of her being highly immoral, unethical and undemocratic in the occupation of the public property but it is also a matter of huge burden on the already exhausted Bangladesh treasury Hasina has herself made it so vulnerable by all of her self- aggrandizement. Her 'life security' is estimated to be worth of Tk. 28 crore for the public exchequer for the current financial year (see weekly Jai Jai Din 24 July and the daily Financial Express 22. July) that is likely to continue as recurring expenditure from one year after another. Bangladesh is not that rich country that can afford this illogical expenditure, because; if she is to be given

the million dollar state security, and then should not the State provide such costly securities to all other past Presidents and Prime Ministers? People know very well that she is not that a "have-not" guy who could not afford to buy a similar palatial mansion either at home or abroad just as Pakistan's former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto is well known to have secured one in a posh area in England (Surrey), and pay for her (Hasina) security by herself. We have to wait for some time more to have the third *Najat Dibash* to its full realization until the day comes when the dynastic usurpation and undemocratic perks, privileges and the personal rule of the Sheikhs come really to a logical and just end.

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LET US SAY BIG NO TO THE ANTI-LIBERATION CLICHÉ

Despite the historic fact that Bangladesh is an independent country dating back her journey for free entity in 1971, the so-called pro-liberation and anti-liberation cliché is still occasionally being used not though by all but by a section of our fellow citizens. One wonders what benefit the nation derives from such divisive issues when this poverty-stricken nation of 140 million people could better concentrate every bit of her energy for national well-being, economic development and raising standards of living of millions or the larger sections of the impoverished people. Why should any one and on what right one should annoy even a single citizen for anything 'wrong doing' in 1971? I paraphrase the words 'wrong doing', because; it meant not only difference in outlook based on historical realities but also for value -judgments of facts and experience. That differences in outlook and value judgments during 1971 lead to another valid question of legitimacy of the declaration of independence of Bangladesh which unfortunately persists even today after lapse of long period of three decades between contending major parties having further clear symptoms of still more unfortunate endless rivalry in the near future.

It is only historical truth that during the political crisis in the then East Pakistan in 1971, people of this land and geography were clearly divided on the confused issue of separation, secession and independence from Federal Pakistan. The confusion was not without valid reasons, one being the failure of the democratically elected leader of East Pakistan Sheikh Mujibur Rahman (Mujib) to provide clear-cut direction to the people but left everything only on one's guess as one would like to make. Because, he surrendered to the Federal Government control and army on the 25th March 1971 night when the army started operation against the anarchist lots mainly led by the Sheikh's party, the Awami League. Pak Army Major Ziaur Rahman's declaration of independence of Bangladesh in Chittagong, two hundred miles away from the

provincial capital city of Dhaka (Dacca), on the 26th/27th March following the Pak Army's crack down at Dhaka, though acted as a spark among the people, that was in reality nothing but a small army rebellion. Because, the declaration by Ziaur Rahman could in no way be taken lawfully as the Unilateral Declaration Independence (UDI) of Bangladesh which possibly only Mujib could do. The declaration of 'independence' in mid April 1971 by some of the Awami League members of the National Pakistan Parliament and of the provincial Parliament of East Pakistan based in exile in India (Calcutta/ Mujibnagar) could neither be taken legally as the genuine government of Independent Bangladesh; because, they had not been elected for doing such act but contrarily to frame the national Constitution of the State of Pakistan. Thus the people were left not only with confusion but to make wild guesses as to their future course of action either to fight for independence or for preserving the unity and integrity of Pakistan, the State and the country the people of East Pakistan pioneered to establish in 1947 having had freedom from the long British colonial rule of 190 years. Further on, the Pakistan army's foolish operation though alienated many people did not end the confusion but provided Pakistan's 'enemy number one', that is, bigger regional power India to pick up the issue of discontent and repressive army action to grind their own axe and 'teach Pakistan a good lesson'.

India had really taught Pakistan the lesson they wished to teach since 1947 in going through all way out to secure their "Second Liberation" as the renowned Indian journalist Pran Chopra has had documented in his famous book *India's Second Liberation* (1973). Mr. Chopra has had candidly shown in the work that his country attained first liberation in 1947 from the British rule and secured liberation for the second time by inflicting military defeat in 1971 thereby effecting dismemberment and doing 'cut to size' the State of Pakistan. Why in 1971 they had their 'Second Liberation' is not difficult to enumerate.

First, India did in no way reconcile with the establishment of Pakistan in 1947 as a separate independent

and sovereign country carved out from the British Indian territory which the Indian Congress leaders and the elite Hindus wished to secure for them as the 'undivided India' (*Akhand Bharat*). Second, despite initial years difficulties, the overwhelming people of Pakistan State had been economically developing faster than the people of independent India even though the people living in the area of Pakistan had been backward not only educationally but in economic activities as well before 1947, that is, before the establishment of Pakistan. Third, Pakistan had been turning into a competitor in economic activities with geographically much bigger India. Fourth, Pakistan had gradually been taking up the leadership of much larger Muslim world in almost all fields, and thus gaining prestige among nations. Fifth, Muslim culture started to receive accommodation and acceptance in the Western societies. On the contrary, independent India continued to lag behind in every field for her anti-humane caste-ridden social life and culture being denigrated almost everywhere in the world. That is why not everyone in East Pakistan could opt for Indian interference into the political crisis of 1971. Not even Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the popularly elected leader of 1971 could unconditionally side with India in 1971. And that is why he did not only decline to lead the war of 1971 against Pakistan but in reality surrendered to the Pakistan army just before the army crack down on the rebels on the night of 25th March, 1971. Whatever had happened in 1971 from late March 1971 to the 10th January 1972, his homecoming day, were all beyond his knowledge, much less having had his approval. Whether he had approved all activities of the Bangladesh Government in Exile in India during 1971 has still today remained in obscurity. That he, on the contrary, did not approve many things done by Tajuddin's exile government was proved later on by the fact that he had to face not only sack from the Cabinet post by the post 1972 Mujib government but also to detention by Mujib in the Dhaka Central Prison, as well. One should recall here that Tajuddin was a leftist and very much secessionist but Mujib was neither a leftist nor possibly a secessionist. According to political veterans like Oli Ahad who knew Mujib much more

than almost any one in this country Mujib was more a political 'power hungry' man than anything else. That is why he bargained and bargained with President Yahya for the Prime Minister ship of Pakistan under Yahya's Presidency until the very last moment of the 25th March midnight. Dr. Kamal Hossain remains a live witness to this fact. That is why Mujib did not agree to go underground before his voluntary surrender to the Pak army on the 25th March night despite persuasions by many including Tajuddin himself to go underground. Those who claim that he declared independence and passed on the message of declaration to an almost unknown person in Chittagong nearly two hundred miles away having had no communication system readily available which rather had already been disrupted just before his surrender can hardly be substantiated. This baseless claim further proved the fact that Mujib's 7th March public meeting rhetoric's in verbatim 'EBARER SANGRAM SHWADHINATAR SANGRAM' had no substantive meaning at all so far as unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) was concerned. So far as the question of independence of Bangladesh was concerned he stayed at safe distance from the real war field and thus was at best an opportunist waiting at the fence to rise on to the political and state power at the right moment. That while in detention for nine months during the war Mujib enjoyed the best hospitality of the Islamabad authority so much so that he had for his smoking pleasure pipe the elite and costly British **Erin more Tobacco** regularly bought and supplied to him in 'prison' by the captors! Thus in the state of utter confusion during the period following the 25th March (1971) army crack down until 16th December of the same year, the widespread killings and counter-killings inside the country have rightly been termed by international authorities and in documents as a period of 'civil war', because, there remained the unresolved question of legitimacy of Bangladesh as a sovereign state, at least until the 16th December, 1971, the day the Pakistan Army's Eastern Command led by Niazi formally surrendered to the invading Indian army's head in command Arora. The resolution of the full status of sovereignty had to wait further on to February

1974 when Pakistan had provided recognition of independence to Bangladesh in the soil and geographical territory of East Pakistan out of its federal control. One would recall that the world big power China and the powerful Muslim State of Saudi Arabia withhold their recognitions until much later in mid August 1975, only after the well known Indian puppet government of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was violently toppled in Dhaka through a successful army *Coup D'Etat*.

Following the conclusion of the war on the 16th December 1971 through Pakistan Army's Eastern Command surrender to the Indian Army at Dhaka followed Mujib's home-coming on the 10th January 1972 to become titular head of Bangladesh administration wherein the real power rested on to the Indian Army's Eastern Command Chief Jagjit Singh Arora and the two Indian top bureaucrat P.N Hasker and D.P. Dhar. Later on, due to popular public sentiment against continued presence of the Indian Army in Bangladesh and their fear for reprisal and resistance from within India decided to withdraw her army; but not without having had secured firm security for their interests in the territory of Bangladesh. That is why the victorious Indian P.M. Indira Gandhi while making her first ever visit to Bangladesh in March 1972 offered for withdrawal of the Indian Army but having secured first the so called 'friendship treaty' for 25 years which in essence was a treaty of subservience and sell -out of Bangladesh to Indian interests and perpetual hegemony. An in-depth and intelligent study of the articles of the document, particularly, the articles eight, nine and ten would clearly prove the point. In fact these clauses in the treaty were only modern twentieth century version of the treaty Mir Zafar Ali Khan had had with Robert Clive just before the actual occurrence of the Battle of Palassey on the 23rd June 1757. The patriotic forces of Bangladesh resisted successfully renewal of the treaty due in March 1997 despite Sheikh Hasina's wish to do so. One would recall that the 25 years treaty was a revised version of the 7 point treaty Tajuddin had undertaken with Delhi for obtaining assistance in the 1971 Bangladesh war which was nothing but a total sell-out of the country to Indian regional interests so much so that

made even the Exile Government Vice-President Syed Nazrul Islam known to have had fainted immediately on reading through the treaty document made in late 1971.

It could be reasonably thought that Sheikh Mujib should not be made liable for all of any Indian machination that India did between 25th March 1971 and 10th January 1972. But whatever followed after till his sad fall from State power in August 1975, it is he and he alone who was mainly responsible for all miseries of Bangladesh and India's hegemonic role that had multiplied the sufferings of the people for whom he, very much naively though, promised endless flow of 'milk and honey' following the end of 'exploitation' by West Pakistan.

One cannot forget the truth that withdrawal of Indian army did not mean anything for end of Indian control and hegemony in all matters- economy, politics, cultural subjugation, societal domination and interference in international matters. The first Constitution, the Planning document, the national education principles, value system mode and critical curricula prescriptions, business domination, defence matters, you name anything, were all under Brahminist Indian cultural domination, control and subject to Delhi's approval to fulfil 'United One India' (Akhanda Bharat) goal. Even the BAKSAL making in January 1975 meaning replacement of multi-party democracy to lone party autocracy, repression and resorting to extra-judicial killings of young patriotic elements in thousands by the unconstitutional **RAKKHI BAHINI** and genre of private killer armies had all been, one way or the other, Mujib's own gross wrong-doings. That his brutal repression and crimes against humanity were so deeply despised by the people that when he tragically fell in August 1975 in a successful army coup, none was amazingly found to repent for him despite the fact that he enjoyed wide popularity among the Bengali people of this country in late 1960s and early 1970s. Seen in terms of the above realities, one should ponder that the real liberation of Bangladesh did not come about in 1971 but three and a half years later on the 15th August 1975 when the Indian puppet Sheikh Mujib was successfully toppled that rightly paved the way for multi-

party democratic order for the nation. Thus those who opposed interference of India in the political crisis of 1971 were found very much right. Many renowned freedom fighters like Ziaur Rahman who were conscious about behind the scene India's nefarious role were well known to have opposed Indian interference in 1971 war not without valid reason but having had past historical bitter experience.

One may recall here that *De Facto* Bangladesh undoubtedly came into existence in December 1971, but its *De Jure* independent position was realized after two years only in February 1974 when Pakistan, let it be repeated, accorded formal recognition to it; in the absence of the recognition it had its position what Taiwan enjoys for over half a century now in relation to mainland China. One should not forget further that Bangladesh could not secure her full international independent and sovereign status but only after long three and a half years when Sheikh Mujib's Indian puppet rule was toppled in mid August 1975 that paved the way for the big power China and the powerful Muslim State Saudi Arabia according formal recognition to Bangladesh as an independent country outside Federal Pakistan framework. China had her own point of rivalry and interest in relation with India and Russia in matters of regional power game, but the Saudi's had understandably ideological regions for preserving the integrity of Muslim Pakistan.

Since August 1975 the continuity of multi-party democracy also proves that those who are identified as the anti-liberation forces based on the happenings of 1971 alone are really not the anti-liberation elements but are the real forces of national liberation. Should it be mentioned here that those who brought about the fall of Mujib and ushered beginning of the end of Indian hegemony were none but valiant freedom fighters of the 1971 war itself. There were not only the Islamists like the Jamat and Muslim nationalists like Muslim League, the vanguard of the Pakistan movement in 1940s but were many other left forces who fought not only against the Pakistan army but also against the Indian lackeys and their armed forces inside East Pakistan territory, for example, various patriotic

left-leaning groups like led by Abdul Haq, Matin, Toaha, Seraj Sikder etc. Could they all be termed 'anti-liberation' forces? Did not they fight for liberation of the people based on their own philosophy and mode? The truth and reality was that they did not fight for securing Indian domination and hegemony in the soil and territory of former East Pakistan now called Bangladesh. The spirit of the August coup and that of the 7th November 1975 revolution clearly merged in against Indian domination, control and hegemony, on one hand, and consequent subservience, on the other.

Bangladesh, in order to come out of the 'big poverty trap' needs united efforts for all citizens of various shades of political beliefs. The nation would not gain anything by any mode of divisions, particularly, by alienating some from mainstream of constructive activities by putting stigma of the so-called 'anti-liberation' genre. Because, that was not only a time of big confusion but also a danger period for real fear of bigger India's domination as the pre-1947 realities had been. The cliché, if it continues to be pursued, would only negatively divide the national spirit unnecessarily when the poor nation needs everyone's positive and constructive spirit united and integrated into solid one for our massive nation building activities that lie ahead.

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AWAMI LEAGUE'S 'SECULAR DEMOCRACY' TURNED TO FASCISM MACHIAVELISM AND DE- ISLAMISATION OF BANGLADESH

It is amazing to hear once again from the horse's mouth of the Awami League their renewed ideological assertion for re-establishment of "secular democracy" for Bangladesh just as the present topmost leader clearly stated in an interview on the 22nd August with BBC's English service Bangladesh correspondent Ronald Buerk. It is amazing not only for the leader's renewed assertion for trying clearly to take the left-oriented parties closer in a front against the alliance government who are unlikely to be convinced in the rhetoric, but also for their foreseeable difficulty to do the job having popular will against the issue in this land of the committed religious people. People would recall very earnestly and rightly that what the Awamis did in the past was neither secularism in its humanist sense nor having ill feelings against any religion, but many thing conspicuously done against a particular religion quite well known for themselves to remain in power for ever, on the one hand, and to appease some outside hegemonic power, on the other, for the same reason for securing support to their power base. The hectic de-Islamisation process of Bangladesh politics, educational curricula, cultural process, etc. had all roots in nothing but self-aggrandizement of the Awami Leader/s during 1972-75 so much so that the historic and proudly maintained Islamic/Muslim symbols, insignia, historic records, etc. pertaining to Muslim heritage in the land were either removed or effaced or destroyed, but interestingly symbols, records and insignias of all other similarly historic religions were kept intact and unchanged just as before. That's what was their so-called secularization democratic process people had had experienced.

The Awami League from the party's very inception five decades ago promised time and again for secular democracy but ended up in reality for fascism or terror tactics and Machiavelism, that is, banishment of right value system. This

was just as during 1972-75 for three and a half years of their rule and again after 21 years for five years during June 1996 to July 2001. They had 'secular democracy' well manifested in unprecedented terror tactics and ballot rigging in the first ever general election held in independent Bangladesh in early 1973 routing all existing opposition parties and their candidates from contesting, notwithstanding the fact that the pre-1971 historic Muslim Nationalist parties remained banned in the country, much less their own candidates competing for election in the Awami's 'secular democratic' State. The party and its democratic facade remained in paper only and in some rhetoric but in harsh reality the party head dictated everything from A to Z, from administrative minor decisions, law making, day to day law and order matters, judiciary, finance, business and to what not. In fact, there was no fair democracy in practice but one man rule in autocratic style using fascist tactics that resulted in thousands of extra-judicial killings during 1972-75 by not only the unconstitutional paramilitary armed force euphemistically called RAKKHI BAHINI but also by a host of private hoodlum forces, termed by the leader himself as the "LAL GHORA BAHINI". The nominal facade of parliamentary democracy, however, was soon killed and buried when in January 1975, all existing political parties were formally banned and the lone party in the style of BAKSAL or Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League was launched further reinforcing the power of the leader who had enjoyed sole power since 11 January 1972. Thus was the tragic end of the first chapter of the so-called secular democracy of the Awami League in Bangladesh.

The next chapter of their 'secular democracy' could not begin until after 21 years not for without any good reason but for people's deep wrath and genuine hatred for them to see them in power of Bangladesh. The Awami League and not exactly the BAKSAL but the fall out of the BAKSAL when managed to come to power through having support of some other smaller groups, started to show their real teeth of fascism and Machiavelism but fortunately for the people they had not many things for de-Islamisation for obvious reasons; the main

one being that in the 21 years gap the people and the government had on many counts halted the de-Islamisation process following the revolutionary Islamic changes of August and November 1975. The 1996-2001 Awami government did not dare to initiate any change of the Islamic principles. Because, first, they had no two-third required majority in the Parliament through which they could scrap the 5th Amendment of the Constitution for changing the Islamic principles to secularism, and secondly, they had no moral courage to initiate the change even in rhetoric due to people's sentiment against anti-Islamism. They are now out of power for nearly three years. One wonders how should the leader/s have been lately putting up fresh agenda for establishing secular democracy? Well, they could air the issue by all means. But how realistic would that be? Shall Bangladesh revert back constitutionally to pre-1975 BAKSAL or to the pre-January 1975 secular multi-party democracy keeping all other Islamic/ Muslim Nationalist parties banned from political existence?

Let us ponder a bit deeply that secularism is lately not only being seriously questioned in all Muslim countries but even in the advanced West, as well, particularly, in the overall syndrome of erosion of moral values, broken families, promiscuity, homosexuality, living together, same sex marriage, drug addictions, AIDS/ HIV positive etc. issues of grave nature in people's personal, private and social lives of loosening or absence of religious beliefs and values.

30 August 2004 (Not published any where)

CHANGING FACETS OF THE FIFTH COLUMNISTS

When in mid August 1977, some sons and a well known daughter of Bangladesh soil pioneered to start a movement named ***Bangabhumi*** based at Calcutta (now Kolkata) aiming at carving out a territory nearly one fifth out of our already overcrowded paltry landmass of 55,000 square miles, very few of us knew about it. Now twenty-seven years since then some other movements have joined hands with the pioneer one for attainment of the same objective. Their demand for the landmass is to make an all-Hindu state independent of Muslim majority Bangladesh. The *Bangabhumi* issue is led by one former (?) Awami Leaguer Chitta Ranjan Sutar, a native of Barisal district of Bangladesh and was an elected M.P. in 1970 but is known afterwards in some other nickname like Kalidas Baidya etc. During 1971 he happened to be a notable freedom fighter. He is further known reputed for his move soon after the 1971 war to have had met with and insisting on the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for immediate annexation of Bangladesh into the Indian Union permanently (see Humayun Rashid Chowdhury's interview published in Masudul Haq's *Bangladeher Swadhinata Judhey RAW O CIA Er Bhumika*). As she did disagree to do the annexation right then, Mr. Sutar stayed back in Calcutta since then, possibly, hoping that he would return to his birth place in Bangladesh only after the permanent annexation would be made by Delhi. Recently he is known to have joined by some other like Rajeshwar Proshun of the Liberation Tigers of Bangladesh (LTB) and Sukumar Guha Thakurta of Bir Bongo (BB) having the same known objective. The Notun Bangla (NB) movement looks like further extension to have 23 districts of 64, that is, one third of Bangladesh as their latest shape of the target (see weekly *Holiday*, Dhaka, 07 October and daily *Inqilab*, 10 October 2005). All these movements against the sovereignty of Bangladesh are based in India and in West Bengal, alleged to have been nourished by the Indian central Intelligence Agency RAW. The leaders and their workers are Bengalis. Whether all of them are sons of

Bangladeshi soil is not clear. What is very clear though that they are not happy with Bangladesh, they do not like to be citizens of Bangladesh even if they or their parents might have been born in the soil of Bangladesh. What is further clear is that they did not start any such movement when their loved party was in power and started the movements one after another when the party and leaders were out of state power in Bangladesh. The *Bangabhumi* and the closely related issues would not have been born had the renowned Sheikh/s and the Awami League/ BAKSAL would have remained alive and in power. None of the LTB, BB and NB would have surfaced at all. Isn't this a big puzzle?

If we look back in our history of the recent past we may find some clues of the puzzle. The *Bangabhanga* or the partition of Bengal of 1905 and the lessons from the annulment of the partition just six years latter in 1911 could give us some useful clue. Further clue/s may be had from the partition of Bengal once again in 1947. Yet other clues may be found out from the role of the many enthusiasts in the 1971 independence war of Bangladesh.

The part of greater geographical area that comprises Bangladesh at this point of time though had a long legacy of Muslim rule and dominance at the ruling class level, the overwhelming majority people living in the area were not Muslims by religious faith. Thus when the British took over in mid eighteenth century they concentrated on development of a newly educated and privileged class in landed gentry, businessmen, government service etc that went not only against the elite Muslims but also against less fortunate all people including the Muslims. Exploitation and annihilation of these less fortunate people continued to increase day by day. In addition, the Muslims felt betrayed of their belief, values and way of day-to-day lives. That aggrieved feeling gave rise to resistance against the rulers and their allies who happened to be mainly elite Hindu landlords, traders, businessmen and officials in the government service. The resistance though had a non-secular shape at the beginning ultimately took shape of religious divides. In Bengal, the divide took a very serious turn

in early twentieth century following the partition of Bengal Presidency in 1905. Because, that made Dhaka the capital of the new province of East Bengal and Assam after an interlude of nearly two centuries, somewhat independent of Calcutta that remained as before the capital both of the West Bengal or Bengal Presidency proper and the central capital of the British India. The Calcutta based elite mainly consisting of the richer and privileged Hindu class disliked the partition. Thus to undo the partition they united themselves not only locally but also having encouragement from the All India Congress party then mainly led by the elite and richer Hindus. In fact they rose in massive resistance against not only the partition but also against the existence of Dhaka as another Capital City in parallel to compete with Calcutta. The new province being Muslim majority and backward foresaw in the partition some light for advancement and development that meant development of the less fortunate people of the region and also of the Muslims in somewhat greater number. That is why the overwhelming Muslims were supporting the division and creation of the new province; but opposed by almost all Hindus. The issue thus unfortunately took a religious communal turn.

During this religious divide, the Indian Muslims had a call from Dhaka's Nawab Salimullah to support the cause of the new province that led to formation of the Muslim League in December 1906 in Dhaka. The new forum took a good stand to keep alive the new province in face of tough opposition of the Indian Congress and the Calcutta based elite. The Congress being better organized since it had then a life of nearly two decades giving support to the Calcutta based elite lot who had, in addition, organized underground networks and terrorist tactics almost all over the region. The so-called *Swadeshi* movement originally based in Calcutta further pressurized the British administration through boycott of British goods, schools etc. In opposition the Muslim League was not that organized to match the Congress. Thus in six years period the anti-partition lobby won. The partition though stated firmly by the then Governor General Curzon to be the 'settled' matter, the Crown George the Fifth annulled the partition in December 1911

himself through a Royal Decree while he came on a visit to India. Along with the annulment the central capital that stayed for over a century in Calcutta was shifted to Delhi. Forgetting the dishonour made to Calcutta, unfortunately, the Crown was highly praised by those Calcutta based elite for the Decree. The Bengali poet Rabindra Nath Tagore not only showed deep sense of gratitude to the Crown then in Delhi but also kissed the King's feet expressing joy by composing by himself and singing the song *Jano Gano Mano... He Bharat Bhagya Bidhata!* Curiously enough the poet was awarded with the Nobel Prize for literature within two years in 1913. It may be very interesting to note that the same King George Five happened to be one of the most influential members of the Nobel Prize Award Committee when the poet was awarded the prize!

The annulment very reasonably hurt the Muslims severely. That created a ground for continued rift for over three decades afterwards between the Muslims and Hindus so seriously that culminated ultimately to the partition of India into two independent states India and Pakistan in August 1947 led separately by the Congress and the Muslim League in midst of enmity, bitterness, loss of properties and even millions of lives in rival killings on both sides. The division did not bring any end though to enmity but took shapes in three major formal wars in matter of two decades from 1947 to 1971 between India and Pakistan. These wars did hardly do any good to any of the country except that the 1971 war cut Pakistan to size and gave birth to independent Bangladesh in what was for 23 years a province of Pakistan in the Eastern region.

The 1971 war was not only due to bitterness between India and Pakistan but also for ill feelings and bitterness between the western and the eastern regions of Pakistan having had grievances against one another.

Immediately after 1971 war the relations between India and Bangladesh went smoothly for some time. But it did not take long for the relations to turn sour, first, mainly for economic reasons for the people of Bangladesh. Because, the people soon realized that big Indian economy instead of bringing relief to people of Bangladesh, in reality, increased

economic hardships of the overwhelming majority people. Thus developed a sort of ill feeling in the psyche of the people of Bangladesh somewhat replicating the psychological division that followed the events of the early twentieth century centering around the partition and the subsequent annulment of the partition. History repeated by itself.

Facing up to the current events in the early 21st century involving the people of Bangladesh, despite having enormous pressures in various terrorist hues and shapes of clear political hegemony from across the border, have not given up but have heroically been continuing persistently the struggle for dignified survival not only for preserving sovereignty but also in economic and cultural fronts, obviously to counter the onslaught of those fifth columnists. The fifth columnists remained as ever of the same hues just as those stayed around here in the early twentieth century. No matter what these fifth columnists do taking shelter in the neighbouring localities and having some succour from within, the overwhelming majority patriotic people would certainly and decisively defeat them just as was done in the past.

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