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Rehabilitation / Reconstruction / Building of Infrastructure:

During the liberation war the economic infrastructure and production process were destroyed. The defeated Pakistan army left the country's two seaports, Chittagong and Mongla, totally inoperative. There were mines planted along the ports' channels and ships capsized. A total of 291 rail bridges, including the Hardinge Bridge, were affected because of the war. In addition, 174 highway bridges were damaged. The new government found 10 per cent of rail-lines uprooted throughout the country. At least, 66 ferries, 5,000 trucks and 2,500 buses were destroyed. The Pakistan army also destroyed tens of thousands of houses across the country. Not a single seagoing vessel was left. There was no reserve of any foreign exchange and no gold. The food godowns were empty. But Bangabandhu tackled the situation with courage and great statesmanship and earned respect of the international community.

Education: During the war, Pakistani soldiers and their collaborators—the Razakars and Al-Badr—turned nearly all schools of the country into military camps. The defeated and departing army either destroyed the schools or set them afire. Education received top priority with Bangabandhu. So, he nationalised the primary education. The primary school teachers, who have so long been neglected, received the status of government employees.

Fundamentalists who are committed to nationalism based on religion could not accept the reality of independent Bangladesh, because they are pro-Pakistanis. They took a stand against the spirit and values of liberation war. A group of misguided leftists during Pakistani days branded Bangabandhu as an agent of US imperialism and believed that the 6-point demand was an outcome of US conspiracy. But in reality during the war of liberation US and China sided with Pakistan, took firm stand against Bangladesh and Bangabandhu. After liberation they termed Bangabandhu as an Indo-Soviet agent. This wrong theory and chaotic actions created ground for killing of Mujib.

If considered from a neutral position, it will appear surprising how Bangabandhu could survive from 25 March 71 to 14 August 75 from the bullets of killers. The conspirators were always active. They conspired to kill him in a planned way. What was the target of this conspiracy? Just to kill Bangabandhu or to destroy sovereignty of Bangladesh and endanger Bangladeshi Nationalism. The Pakistani military bureaucracy wanted to stop the progress of Bangladesh by bringing an abrupt end to the glorious life of Bangabandhu through their local agents. Bangabandhu could contribute immensely towards well-being of Bangladesh if he could live longer.

Some hired killers at the instance of their foreign masters killed Bangabandhu along with other members of his family and tarnished the country's history at a time when Bangabandhu launched his second revolution to build a self-reliant Bangladesh. Since then, for one and a half decade people were misguided during the autocratic rule by various misleading propaganda. The Bangabandhu who fought against autocracy throughout his whole life was depicted as an enemy of democracy. They did not stop after killing Bangabandhu and 18 members of his family but also brutally killed in jail Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, Capt. M. Mansur Ali and AHM Quamaruzzaman who inspired by the ideals of Bangabandhu led the liberation-war to victory. Their conspiracy was deep rooted for making the country leaderless. They established autocracy by blocking the path of free thinking. The

employees. The government opened 11,000 new primary schools and about 100,000 new teachers were employed. Primary education was made compulsory. Other measures included tiffin for students, free education for girls upto class VIII and free supply of educational materials such as books, writing paper and pencils. The government started implementing the recommendations of Dr. Quadrat-e-Khuda Commission, which sought to make education universal, modern and scientific with emphasis on vocational and technical training. Text Book Board was set up. Madrasa education was modernised and an Islamic Foundation was created. The government arranged massive student scholarships and training facilities. All 'black laws' regarding universities were repealed and the universities received autonomy. Bangla Academy was reorganised and it was decided that Bangla will be introduced in all spheres of the state. Shilpakala Academy was created. Democratic reforms were introduced in the cultural field, censorship system for theatre was done away with. A set of principles was drawn to run the mass media in the public interest. Food was subsidised by the government at the college and university hostels. Free distribution of shirts, trousers, paper, books, pens and pencils covered students from university down to primary schools.

Health: The government started work on construction of health centres at each thana and union of the country. In each of the 365 thanas a 31-bed hospital was set up with modern facilities. Medical colleges were

A Period of Reconstruction

established in different parts of the country. Hospitals were set up and the jobs of many temporary health workers were made permanent. Family planning was given a priority and projects were taken up to achieve this goal. Registration schemes were introduced for fertile couples. Pilot projects in this field were given free nutritious food and 45 per cent of the population was brought under rationing network. Tube-wells were sunk in each village to supply pure drinking water. Women Rehabilitation Board was formed and measures were taken for women's employment.

Agriculture:

Bangladesh is an agrarian country, agriculture being the main source of national income. After the independence, the government rehabilitated more than 2.2 million peasant families. In addition to building a modern agricultural infrastructure for them, the government had to supply agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides either at subsidised prices of free of cost. The government installed 40,000 powered low-lift pumps, 2,900 deep and 3,000 shallow tubewells within 1973. In 1972, the government distributed 16,125 tons of high-yielding rice seeds and 1,037 tons of wheat seeds. Besides, certificate cases against one million farmers were lifted and all their arrear loans were written off. Land tax upto 25 bighas of land was waived for ever. Arrangement was made for price support to crops like paddy, jute, tobacco and sugarcane mean-

ing that minimum price for purchase of these agricultural products by the government was introduced. Rationing system was introduced for poor farmers. Their children were given free education supported by the government.

Until 15 August, 1975 the share of landless peasants accounted for 35 per cent of the population. The government arranged distribution of Khas land among these landless peasants. Ceiling was introduced upto 100 bighas of land. Food deficit was 3 million tons a year until the independence. One-third of the cultivable land was fallow. The Government of Bangladesh launched a series of measures to reduce the food deficit and encourage the farmers in various ways. The government took some speedy measures to solve the problems of farmers and agriculture and adopted village-based programmes. Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation introduced three types of irrigation: (a) Power pumps, (b) Deep tubewells and (c) Shallow irrigation pumps. The power pumps project was strengthened and promoted. In 1968-69, the number of power pumps was 11,000 while in 1974-75 this increased to 36,000. As a result, the acreage of irrigated land rose from 2.6 million acres in 1970 to 3.6 million acres in 1975. Naturally, the food production increased.

The use of chemical fertiliser increased by 74 per cent, pesticide by 40 per cent, high-yielding seed by 25 per cent in 1973-74, compared

to 1969-70. Special emphasis was put on agricultural research. Even though the price of chemical fertilisers increased manifold in international market, no price-hike took place in Bangladesh. In 1972, the price of urea, potash and TSP were respectively Tk. 20, Tk. 15 and Tk. 10 per maund.

Industry:

In the face of imminent defeat in the war, the Pakistani army, non-Bengalee industrialists and administrative staff transferred capital money and valuable equipment and spares to Pakistan. At the same time, they left their property in Bangladesh destroyed, including machinery and factories. Moreover, the non-Bengalee workers were more in number in these factories. So, there was heavy dislocation and crisis erupted rendering factories out of production. But the government took speedy measures and production in these factories resumed under the government's supervision. The trend of substantial rise in the production of sugar, yarn and engineering products noticed in 1973 continued during 1974-75 and production rose by 12 per cent. The production of manufactured yarn and clothes increased by 11 per cent and 3 per cent respectively in the first nine months of that year. Production of certain commodities increased encouragingly, including foodgrains, newsprint, tea, cycles, electronic cables and bronze wares etc.

resign. Later, the caretaker government came to power. The people of Bangladesh are fond of democracy, but they were deceived repeatedly by the civilian-military autocratic rulers. Whenever a chance was created for establishment of democracy, it was hindered by tricks and the vested quarters captured power through politics of killing and destruction and thereby perpetuated suppression and oppression. The people started movement against autocracy again and proceed in the path of restoration of democracy. As a result of the end of cold war a positive atmosphere has been created throughout the world in favour of democracy and rule of law. Opportunity has come to heal the wounds created by autocracy, and march towards democratic and progress. On the other hand, the anti-democratic forces are continuing their conspiracy, and evil design. These forces with international support and banking on the religious sentiment of the simple minded people started a notorious game after the process of trial of the killers of Bangabandhu started. Their audacity has crossed all limits. This move has to be foiled. Each and every patriotic citizen has to take Oath that they will not allow darkness to cover the life of the Bangalee nation. With this Oath and commitment the Bangalee nation would be able to emancipate the country from the politics of killing, coup and conspiracy.

Translated by : Rehman Sadiq

Price situation:

Inflation was running critically high in global economic system in 1974. The impact was felt all over the world and as a result prices started rising in developed as well as developing countries. Compared with 1970, the prices of all consumer goods increased by 11 per cent in Argentina, 26 per cent in Chile, three fold in Korea and it doubled in Britain in 1975. Food prices increased 10 times in Argentina, 30 times in Chile, three-fold in Korea and double in Britain. The price of wheat in international market increased by 400 times in 1974 than in 1972. For example, in 1971 Thailand used to sell rice at \$ 130 per ton and this hiked to \$ 600 by March, 1974. It was very natural for price to rise also in Bangladesh, whose economy was already shattered by the war. But prices of consumer goods increased only from June, 1974 until January, 1975. Then the prices started falling.

Bangabandhu was leading the country boldly and with great determination despite floods, shortage, treachery, bank robberies, chaos, disruption, sabotage and all kinds of odds. It was amazing how neatly he rebuilt the economy out of ashes. He created a history of reconstruction of war-crippled economy, which did not occur in many Western countries. The governments in these countries told their peoples that they will not entertain any new demands in five years. America did not raise the salary of government employees for five years after the war. Millions of people died of famine after revolution in Russia and China. But Bangabandhu moved forward overcoming all obstacles. In just three years he built and edifice of development worth 130,000 million taka on the ruins of 110,000 million taka. Because of his dynamic

leadership, Bangladesh got the membership of U.N., Commonwealth, OIC and 14 other international organisations and recognition from most of the countries by August, 1975. He restored balance in industrial and agricultural production, introduced new education policy. The world was amazed to see how quickly Bangladesh achieved development in power, energy and communications under Bangabandhu's leadership. During 1974-75 Boro season, 2,249 million tons of rice was produced, which is 29 thousand tons up from production the previous year. Bangladesh was virtually flooded with food production. Bangabandhu decided that he would announce by December that Bangladesh achieved self-sufficiency in food. The conspirators launched their final blow at this stage with great calculation.

The following achievements speak for themselves:

Five hundred sixty seven bridges, including Hardinge and Bhairab bridges, were built or repaired; seven new ferries were pressed into service, 1,851 rail-wagons and passenger-bogies were put into operation; 460 buses, 605 motor river-vessels were introduced and three old airports put back in operation in restoration of domestic communications network. In addition, mines were swept from the ports of Chittagong and Mongla and they were made operative. The government nationalised 580 banks, insurance and industrial units abandoned by the Pakistanis and thus millions of workers got jobs.

Writing a progressive Constitution, ban on liquor, gambling, house, horseracing and such other anti-Islamic activities, founding of Islamic Foundation, Madrasa Board, Hajj Pilgrimage Board and Bangladesh's membership of OIC were among some

important achievements of Bangabandhu.

Rehabilitation of 10 million people, who returned from India and another 30 million who were displaced within the country, provision of food to them, pulling out of Indian troops within three months of independence, surrender of arms by freedom-fighters, financial support to the families of 3 million martyrs of independence, taking up the responsibility of 200 thousand oppressed women, setting up of Freedom Fighters' Welfare Trust, Women Rehabilitation Board, government employee status to teachers, introduction of democratic ordinance for universities, formation of Dr. Quadrat-e-Khuda Education Commission, introduction of Bengali in all official work and at all national levels, establishment of 11,000 new primary schools, setting up of madrasas, mosques and Islamic Foundation, establishment of health centres in each thana and union of the country, absorption of medical workers, opening of medical college and hospital, reorganisation of defence forces with national honours including the national Army, Air Force and navy, establishment of country's first military academy in Comilla, creation of infrastructure for police, BDR, Ansar and civil administration, repatriation of 400,000 Bengalees from Pakistan, return of several hundred thousand Pakistanis to their country, enhancement of honour of the Bengali nation and its language, Bangabandhu's first U.N. speech in Bengali, recognition of Bangladesh by nearly 200 states, signing of border agreement with India and ensuring 44,000 cusec of water for Bangladesh under agreement with India—these were among the achievements of the Government headed by Bangabandhu.

A People's Leader

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the adjective of 'people's leader' in front of Sheikh Mujib's name without any hesitation? Although some people may debate, hesitate or raise questions about other adjectives due to their partisan narrowness, nobody would object to his being called 'people's leader', 'leader of the masses' or 'leader of the Bengalees'. That was because, Sheikh Mujib was truly the leader of all Bengalees. Even his arch enemies—the then leaders of the Muslim League and the Generals who ruled Pakistan—conceded without hesitation that he was unquestionably a leader of the Bengalees and represented them faithfully while raising their demands. Many other leaders could compromise on the just demands of the Bengalees, could surrender to greedy impulses, could even be pocketed by the ruling coterie in exchange for benefits, but that was not possible in case of Sheikh Mujib. The Pakistani rulers were successful while dealing with many Bengalee leaders in implementing their designs. But when they extended their hands to Sheikh Mujib, he could not be dislodged on the question of just demands of the Bengalees. Just as the Pakistani rulers could never

forget this ultimate reality, history also did not fail to record it due recognition. Above all, the country's Bengalees knew this principled stand and ideal of their leader. Even those people who opposed his politics knew how far Sheikh Mujib could go on the questions of independence, honor and just demands of the Bengalees. In real terms, Sheikh Mujib went the whole distance to establish the prestige of the Bengalees in the global arena till the end of his life. But he could not realize all his dreams, tastes, plans and programs.

Bangabandhu's excessive love for the peasants, laborers and ordinary people of Bangladesh was noticeable immediately after he had crossed his youth and stepped into his middle age. He was not ready to look into anybody's faults. Even more emotion and affection were added to this love after independence was achieved in 1971. The only objective of the leader then was to ensure food, health, education, shelter and clothing for the poor Bengalees. That seemed to be his sacred responsibility. 'My poor people of Bangladesh do not seek much, they are the people of this soil, all my movements and struggles would be in vain if I fail to do something for them'.

The leadership of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib had in its arsenal some extraordinary, miraculous and even mesmeric qualities. Under any circumstances, he could take any party—his own, those in the opposition or any disgruntled group—to a position that was just and mutually satisfying. But although possessing these amazing mesmeric qualities, he was a simple and soft-hearted individual in front of the peasants, laborers and the masses. That Sheikh Mujib—who was fearless and agile like a tiger and firm like a mountain on the question of principles, ideals and demands—was simple and soft like a child while standing before the deprivations, pains and hardships of the peasants, laborers and poor people of Bangla. All Bengalees who were his contemporaries and came close to him would concede without hesitation that

Bangabandhu could never be harsh with ordinary Bengalees. He only wanted to pour out his infinite love for them. An all-pervasive expression of this natural love could be observed when he declared general amnesty after independence of the country pardoning all criminals (with a few exceptions) who opposed the liberation war. In fact, this general amnesty demonstrated the enormity of his love for the people—irrespective of party or opinion—as a leader of the masses.

His relationship of love with the ordinary people of Bangladesh was so deep that the 51 year leader could address them without any hesitation as 'tumi' (address in Bangla signifying closeness or intimacy) while speaking at the historic rally at Suhrawardy Uddyan on 7 March 1971 (for example, 'even if I can not give you the order, you will confront the enemy with whatever you have'). Has any leader emerged in this country even after 25 years of Bangabandhu's death who could address the people out of love as 'tumi' even at the age of 70? Certainly not, nobody could dare to do that for fear of rebuff by the people. Sheikh Mujib, on the other hand, loved the people so dearly and the confidence and trust reposed by the people on his leadership was so intense, that both the leader and his followers knew what the language of communication between them should be. Only when a leader becomes one with the general masses does the boundaries and distances between them vanish, and no difference exists between their identity.

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib, 'Mujib bhai' of the Bengalees could truly cross that boundary and become the leader of the common man. That is why, the death of Bangabandhu created divisions, scar, and vacuum in the hearts of the innumerable peasants-laborers-working people of the country. The language and pain of that hemorrhage can only be felt with the heart, and not in any other way.

Translation: Helal Uddin Ahmed

Politics of Killing

unarmed people are usually afraid of military rulers. Since the partition in 47 the common people developed some kind of long drawn fear in their mind about the military junta. That fear terrified the people more after '75.

After the assassination of Bangabandhu the stunned and leaderless people began to languish and suffer. It was forbidden for them even to utter the name of Bangabandhu. Oppression was let loose on the leaders and workers of the Awami League. Attempts were made to cripple the nation through killing, imprisonment and oppression. There was a move to ignore the Bangalee tradition and culture of a thousand year and put the country in the stream of Pakistani period.

The comments of the World Press made immediately after the assassination of Bangabandhu will speak about their assessment of this great leader. The Times (London) in its editorial stated that creation of Bangladesh was not possible without Mujib. Financial Times said, in the killing of Sheikh Mujib the Bengalees lost a charismatic leader—who had the ability to maintain the integrity of the country. The similar comments were made by many other leading papers of the world.

The anti-liberation, reactionary and fundamentalist forces considered that creation of independent Bangladesh by breaking Pakistan was Mujib's greatest crime. For breaking Pakistan, the so-called state based on religion, they incited for killing of Bangabandhu and after his assassination they destroyed the spirit and values of liberation War and put Bangladesh in the track of Pakistani ideology. They damaged Bangalee nationalism on the basis of which Independent Bangladesh was created. By abandoning secularism they have endangered the existence of Bangalee nationalism. They have successfully divided the Bangalee nation like the Pakistani days by encouraging communalism and making Islam the state religion. Through killing of Bangabandhu the road to flourish democracy was closed and autocratic system was introduced. The pro-Pakistani traitors became daring as the killers of Bangabandhu were rewarded instead of punishing

them. They also killed the four national leaders. They indulged in killing, violence and hijacking for enslaving the Bangalee nation. They committed all these things in the name of religion. Terrorists activities increased many fold as the killers of Bangabandhu and four national leaders were not punished. This trend lasted for over two decades in the interest of vested quarters. There was unrest within the country. The power-hungry army Generals resorted to politics of killing and coup ignoring country's interest. Hundreds of freedom fighters were hanged in jail through farce trial. The freedom fighters and their supporters were killed and oppressed even outside the jail General Zia and General Ershad along with some members of arm forces dragged the country to destruction. Later, their pro-Pakistani supporters made political, social, economic, cultural and religious field more complex.

During General Zia Parliament was used as a rubber-stamp-Parliament was used for giving constitutional validity to all the martial law orders and regulations. It is during his time when the infamous indemnity ordinance was made part of the constitution to close the path of trial of the killers of Bangabandhu. This was in force in Ershad's time too and there by fundamental human rights were violated, whereas demand for repeal-

ing this ordinance, arrangement for trial of the killers of Bangabandhu and restoration of the rule of law was getting stronger throughout the country. But Zia and later Ershad rewarded these self-confessed killers and even nominated one of them as leader of the opposition in the parliament. The people of this country never supported autocracy. Beginning from creation of Pakistan to fall of Ershad, people repeatedly took part in the movement against autocracy and for establishment of democracy and for this cause they sacrificed their lives. On sixth December, 1990 people forced Ershad to resign at the face of mass upsurge. The people kept the movement for democracy alive ignoring the threats of imprisonment and oppression. Establishment of the rule of law and restoration of democracy is a long cherished dream of the people. But most of the time the autocratic rulers shattered this dream.

People's movement in ninety ended in victory, but those who came to power in '91 through general election did not repeal the infamous Indemnity Ordinance as per hopes and aspirations of the people. More over, they felt comfortable to rule the country in autocratic manner. As a result they had to face people's movement again. The people through movement forced them to submit to the demand of parliament election under a Caretaker Government and subsequently they were compelled to pass the caretaker govt. bill in their single party-parliament and then

Absconding Self-Confessed Killers



Lt. Col. Khondakar Abdur Rashid



Lt. Col. S H M B Noor Chowdhury



Lt. Col. Shariful Haq (Dalim)



Maj. Ahmed Sharif Hossain



Capt. Nazmul Hossain Ansar



Capt. Abdul Mazed



Risaldar Mousleuddin Khan



Capt. Kismat Hashem



Lt. Col. Abdul Aziz Pasha



Lt. Col. A. M. Rasheed Chowdhury



Maj. A. K. M. Mubuddin Ahmed

Convicted Killers in Custody



Lt. Col. Syed Farook Rahman



Lt. Col. Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan



Lt. Col. Mubuddin Ahmed



Maj. Bazilul Huda