

Bangladesh-USA Relationship: Some Facts and Factors

Abdul Quader Chowdhury writes from Montreal

MOST countries in the world give their relations with the USA a top priority. The collapse of the world communist power and the weakening of the Non-Alliance Movement cleared the way for the USA to become sole superpower. People today don't talk much about imperialism but Globalization. High-tech based globalization through the free market network put the USA in such a position that gives it advantage to influence and control the affairs and behaviours of other nations. And, historically, a special attention is focused on the Bangladesh-USA relationship.

The US is the Bangladesh's largest single trading partner and one of its largest foreign investors, with current investment of about \$750 million. Bilateral relationship is based on a large US food and economic aid programme which began as emergency relief in the seventies. The US appreciates Bangladesh's moderate role in international forums like the G-77, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the OIC. The two countries' militaries have shared a warm and mutually beneficial relationship. Bangladesh supported the USA during the Desert Shield operations (the Gulf War) and provided troops for the coalition. Bangladesh also sent trained manpower to different parts of world like African nations and Balkan region under the US led UN peacekeeping forces. They worked side by side when the US naval task force provided assistance after the devastating April 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh. The relief efforts of the US marines and sailors are credited with having saved as many as 200,000 lives. All these contributed to our current relations, with the USA to grow stronger and closer.

What made Bangladesh, apparently, so important to the USA? As a whole, Asia recently emerged as a potential market for, and as skilled / half-skilled cheap labour supplier to the G-7 world. On the verge of the competition with EU, the USA is trying to suck this type of prospect from Bangladesh. The natural resources of Bangladesh also lure the USA's investment in the power and energy sector for the South Asian market. Rising democratic and secular trends of Bangladesh, an Asian Muslim nation, encouraged the USA to find a reliable friend when it has to deal with other conservative Islamic nations and forces. Geo-political position of Bangladesh also attracts the USA. Sometimes in 1903, G N Curzon, one of the most efficient imperial procurals in India declared that the geographical position of India would push her into the forefront of the interna-

tional politics. Bangladesh's position on the trade route between Europe and the Far-east via Mediterranean, the Red sea, the Indian Ocean and the straight of Malacca provides her a favourable commercial connection with rest of the world.

The historical backgrounds of the USA's relationship is also important to study and grasp lessons therefrom in order to formulate our foreign policy ensuring that our national interests and integrity are well secured. The then Nixon administration was against our Independence War of 1971. There were numerous reasons. That era was characterised by the cold war

highly controversial "gunboat diplomacy". But, as the Anderson Papers subsequently disclosed that after the first week of December Bangladesh was a *fait accompli*, the Nixon administration drawn a closed door decision that Bangladesh would need a large scale foreign aid; and by extending the aid, a sphere of US influence would be established in Bangladesh.

In 1972, the USA recognized Bangladesh as an independent nation in the world and kept to economically help us in various ways with a sort of political conservatism. The father of the nation Sheikh Mujibur Rahman visited the USA. Specifically the

alternatively view that the USA's and donors' friendship, not the native voters, is one of the determining factors of gaining the state power. The mass people are fed up with corrupt politicians and frustrated with their mean politics. In any domestic crisis, big parties seek help (interference) from western ambassadors and representatives in Dhaka to get their political problems solved! That's why, the western envoys in Dhaka take advantages to interfere into our domestic politics in the name of helping develop the environment for more foreign aids and investments in Bangladesh. This is our national image and prestige issue. Normally, these

infrastructure building and service sectors; 2) increased scientific, IT, communication technology and management skill transfer to upgrade our huge human resources and decrease other burden some aids/loans; 3) investment of capital, knowledge and technology in our poor medical and educational sector to reduce wastage of our valuable human energy which is widely recognized abroad as an important asset for national development.

The recent development in Eurasian regional politics that needs timely and proper attention is that there is a growing trend of emergence of a new axis comprising Russia-China-India which is likely to be parallel to the USA axis in Asia or even in the world. So, Bangladesh should address it carefully and properly. Some experts suggest that Bangladesh should take more efforts to construct a solid relation with Russia and to consolidate it with China without ignoring the same with India. The expatriates of China and India significantly contributed in their home countries' recent tremendous development in the ways of 1) transferring capital, technology etc.; 2) boosting import-export trade; 3) lobbying with respective foreign country's political, business, experts and academic giants for their home-country's interests. The embassies of those respective nations actively helped to organize such a positive environment in the USA and all over Europe. But, the Bangladesh government and some non-government agencies and groups unfortunately are not doing such job enough in the western countries. Sectarian grouping and personal power clashes are the usual community activities of some people abroad while only handful are trying to do something constructive for our motherland.

The USA is interested in our huge natural and human resources. To materialize our goal, we can take advantage of it. Our government should address it in a right way at the right time. In the year 2000, the US President Bill Clinton and Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina exchanged state visits. The purpose of Clinton's visit was clear: 1) pursuing the US investment deal in our energy sector; 2) firm assurance of Bangladesh's role against all sorts of terrorism, drug and human trafficking; 3) assurance of regional co-operation for peace working especially with India and Pakistan; and 4) management of aid, grants and loan in various projects. Reciprocally, the main purposes of Hasina's visit made dynamic our relations with the USA. All these factors need special considerations.

But a country like Bangladesh needs a steady, unique, foreign policy based on national consensus processed in parliament with the participation of major parties. Change in government must not and should not change this policy. Foreign Minister should be such a personality who has best professional qualities, modern education and outlook, higher communication and persuasion skills etc. In this case, only party affiliation should not be the norm. Foreign policy must be framed in such a way that would yield a free and healthy environment in which Bangladesh would fare stronger, economically, politically and culturally. To achieve this goal, Bangladesh needs to set its priorities of agenda. Today, we need 1) foreign investment inflow in production,



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between two super powers (USA and USSR) that made US policy far deep rooted in the anti-Communist Asian politics. Specifically, after the murder (1953) of then Pak PM, Liaquat Ali Khan, Pakistan government signed military pacts with the USA called the SEATO and the CENTO. Then the USA thought that Pakistan could be a good channel to communicate with the Muslim world, perhaps even in building relationship with China. On the other hand, Pakistan thought that it could get help from the USA to protect its national geographical integrity against its traditional enemy. As the East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) crisis deepened and Nixon Administration's official (secret) visit to China came nearer, the USA became more dependent on the then Pak regime, and showed open support to Pakistan against India and thus the Bangladesh Liberation War. When all regular diplomacy against India's position on our national struggle was failed, they (USA and Pakistan) resorted to a

UNO, in October 1974. However, that visit didn't produce any positive breakthrough in our relations with the USA. In August 1975, Mujib was brutally assassinated in a coup d'etat by a group of hostile Army officers. Reaping the benefits out of that situation, a section of the military and civil bureaucrats formed series of governments afterward and tried their best to establish a closer relation with the USA. First the Zia government and then the Ershad government perused the free economic policy opening our unorganized market to the foreign investors and gave incentives to the private sector. They somewhat regulated the multi party democratic politics. Those efforts helped to satisfy the westerners, especially the USA administration. Today, a growing trend concerning the USA-Bangladesh issues has assumed a multi-level attention in our political and social arena.

But the way big party politicians currently act in our antagonistic politics, it shows that they

are not supposed to be the way of upholding and strengthening our national sovereignty. The main reason for this is that the politicians do not give the nation's interests maximum priority over their party or personal interests.

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Affirmations: Reflections on the Death of My Mother

by Neeman A. Sobhan

THERE is a chill wild wind raging through the empty room that is my heart today. And like loose sheets of paper, I feel my old self scattered away. It is three weeks since my mother, Hamida Nazir Ahmad (Tally) passed away at the untimely age of 68 from a cardiac arrest in Dhaka. I am back in Rome for the funeral, and now that the howling inside my soul has subsided somewhat, I try to listen to the voice of my mind and attempt to understand my pain, explain my bewilderment, assess my loss.

I realize that I must reinvent myself for having lost my father earlier, I am now a reduced, depleted person; no longer a daughter, no more someone's child. Some vital links in the chain of my existence have been removed, and I feel suddenly anchorless, adrift and utterly alone in a metaphysical sense. The truths of my life have turned to lies. My history is lost; I am now a book of unreliable memories. I look back and they are gone, those familiar landmarks: my parents! And my mother, whom I considered the indelible fact of my life, has been so easily erased!

So who am I, and how real am I this child of shadowy memories, of fragments from the past? And who was she, the woman with the frozen expression we buried? And the body we consecrated to the grave? How could it have given me birth, given me life, and then vanished into the earth as if she never existed, as if death were a casual trip to be undertaken without saying goodbye? If my life-giver were insubstantial as a bubble, what did that make me? Today, I am an unreasonable, questioning child walling to be picked up and comforted with answers.

After the prayers and religious rituals that quieten my pain and tame the winds, I sit within my desolation and take stock of my bereavement. What I see is a flapping tent whose main pegs have gone. The love and support of family and friends keep the tent in place. Still, for now, it's a chill and windy place where my grief abides.

The death of a father leaves a gaping hole in your life, changes the physical circumstances of your world and causes emotional upheavals, but since we are born OF our mothers, the effects of her death are far reaching, changing all the equations of our inner self; her negation blurs and threatens to negate, the defining lines of our own existence and identity. We are rooted in our mothers and her removal uproots us, leaves us from what we consider the certainties of life. We are knitted into the maternal and when the mother goes, the needles drop

and the unravelling of our own selves starts.

In the first week of mourning, at odd moments, I would feel an irrepressible urge to phone my mother or write to her, as if she were only gone away on a trip. Then a sea of silence would crash around me and like Rilke composing the first lines of his *Duino Elegies* at the castle on the sea near Trieste, I too, wanted to shout: 'If I cried out, who would hear me up there, among the angelic orders?'

But somehow, stumblingly, from the wilderness of my sorrow, I found again and again that I had been heard. The voice of the wind has returned to me with a different, comforting kind of silence; now, I constantly feel the spiritual presence of my mother, like a blessing. Ever since she passed away, she has been working small miracles for me, easing my everyday problems, smoothing my life. I feel she is even closer now than before. She is with me all the time, in my intuitions, insights, thoughts, feelings and actions. I am now convinced that death is not an end; it's merely a transformation.

The other day, after I got back to Rome from Dhaka, I stepped onto the terrace of my home. It was a sublime spring-like day. But my heart was bitter with sorrow and regret that I had failed to bring her here to my home, as we had planned. I wished she could have been beside me that very minute, to share the beauty of the unseasonably warm day. In tears I kept repeating, 'And now she is gone. She will never be here...'

I turned to go in when I felt a tug. My shawl was being pulled from behind. I stopped. The tassels of my Pashmina were caught in a prickly dried-up rose bush. I bent towards the thorny plant to loosen my shawl. Then I saw: tiny prickles of new life nudging out in the dead of winter, too minuscule for me to notice from way up, but clearly visible as I bent low. There it was, the testament of the enduring miracle of life, the supreme force and well spring of God into which all of us flow. Nothing dies, we are translated into the eternal. My mother was everywhere, around me and with me.

Even in death, my mother, a spiritual woman who died auspiciously on a Friday in the act of getting up from her prayers, continues to enrich and nourish me with a deeper and different kind of knowledge. Even as I am coming to terms with the illusoriness and transience of the body, I find that my mother's death has taught me some affirmative lessons on the goodness and beauty of life, which is not separable from death. I have

returned to the physical normalcy of life with a full, serene and re-educated heart. The concept that grief and joy are conjoined aspects was something I had always learned to acknowledge at an intellectual and philosophical level, but now I accept it wholeheartedly as an opening of my inner eye, a gift of my mother.

In another life, when my mother was alive and I was innocent of death, I read the German poet Rilke with my head. Today, as I read him with my heart, I know exactly what he means. Once, to his Polish translator he said about life and death: 'To admit the one without the other is, a limitation that in the end excludes all infinity. Death is the side of life that is turned away from us; we must try to achieve the fullest consciousness of our existence, which is at home in the two unseparated realms, inextricably nourished by both... The true figure of life extends through both domains, the blood of the mightiest circulation drives through both; there is neither a here nor a beyond, but the greater unity... Transience everywhere plunges into a deep being.'

I cannot add more to it. The inter-penetration of life and death... the eternal life of the spirit... the release of the soul, alter the body dies, into a greater freedom of God... these are ideas that wait at me through my mother's presence in my heart. We clutch at straws, but I prefer this thatched straw hut of my faith to the wind swept tent of my vulnerable self.

I wanted quick cures for my pain, ready answers to life's terrifying mysteries. But life has to be lived fully and joyously, and death too has to be accepted similarly as an integral part of life, not its end. When it comes, in whatever form, death is another beginning, the start of the soul's new journey. It's my personal belief now, culled from my private grief, that it is the process of child birth creates a new life, drags forth the howling baby from the blind safety of the known world of the womb into the terrifying unknown, thus must the paroxysms of death create a newer, more perfect and eternal life, of which our ignorance produces in us our sense of terror, sorrow and insecurity, makes of us the wailing, inconsolable baby.

My grief is private and it is life long. I will miss my mother the end of my days, but in spirit, I feel no longer alone, nor afraid of the unknown. My mother and I shared a love of mystical poetry. In her book of Rumi some one has underlined: 'Spend less time seeking water, and more time acquiring thirst. Then water will gush forth from the ground.' Today, I am parched, but at peace.

Leadership in the 21st Century

by Bishwa Nath Brahma

THE leader of the future will be supposed to be one who can create a culture or a value system centered upon principles. Creating such a culture in a business, government, school, hospital, non-profit organisation, family or other constituents of social will be a tremendous and exciting challenge in this new era and will only be achieved by leaders, be they emerging or seasoned, who have the vision, courage and humility to constantly learn and grow. Those people and organisations who have a passion for learning, learning through listening and seeing; observing emerging trends; sensing, evaluating past success and mistakes

and absorbing the lessons that conscience and principles teach us. Such learning leaders will not resist change, they will embrace it.

The world has changed in a very profound way. So many more dynamic, competitive forces are operating. Quality standards have risen particularly in the global market. It may be possible to survive in a local market without meeting these standards, perhaps even in a regional market but certainly not in a global market.

In all sectors business, government, healthcare, social, or non-profit service the market place is demanding that organi-

sations transform themselves. They must be able to produce services and goods and deliver them in a fast, friendly and flexible way and on a consistent basis that serves the needs of both internal and external customers. This requires a workforce not only to be allowed to give its full creativity and talent, but enabled, encouraged and rewarded for doing so. Even though tens of hundreds of organisations are deeply involved in quality initiatives designed to produce those results, transformation is not yet being achieved because of a lack of trust in the culture.

So the first role of the leader is to be a model of principle-

centered leadership. Whenever a person or an organisation is principle-centered, that person or organisation becomes a model an example to other people and organisation. It is that kind of model, the kind of character, competence and action that produces trust among people, motivate them to identify with this model and be influenced by it. There is a combination of character (who you are as a person) and competence (what you can do). These two qualities represent your potential. And when you actually do it when you put action together with character you are perceived as modeling.

The leader of the future will

apparently be the same as the leader of the present. There will be little change outwardly, but an internal change will make him/her the leader of the future and he will bring in the required transformation. The main source to personal change seems to be pain and passion. If you are not feeling this pain and passion there is rarely enough motivation or humility for change. Without such pain and passion people tend to be too involved in themselves and their world to raise above their own interests or for that matter politics.

The primary driving force of change now is the global economy itself. The standard of quality now is so high that unless you have an empowered workforce and a spirit of partnership with all stakeholders, you cannot compete, whether you work in the private sector or public sector in economic or social field. We are becoming increasingly and painfully aware of the perilous weakening of our social structure. Drugs, gangs, illiteracy, poverty, crime, violence these all are continuing in a downward spiral. Leaders of the present are beginning to recognise that such social problems put at risk anything in society. The leaders of the future realise that the solutions to these problems are far beyond the ability of the sectors that have traditionally been expected to deal with them, namely the government and social sector.

The enormous needs in society call for a great responsibility to be discharged. People are supposed to serve. Life is a mission, not a career. The whole spirit of this philosophy should pervade our minds.

The inherent capacity to choose, to develop a new vision to make a promise and then keep it in any area of life should always be a moment of truth for every true leader.

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TOM & JERRY



by nathu-brahma



James Bond



by nathu-brahma



নিলাম বিজ্ঞপ্তি

সাবজজ ও ১ম অর্থক্ৰম আদালত, ঢাকা
দেওয়ানী ডিক্রিয়ারী মোকদ্দমা নং-১৩৭/৯৭
সোনালী ব্যাংক, স্থানীয় কার্যালয়, মতিঝিল বা/এ, মতিঝিল, ঢাকা

ডিক্রিহোভার

বনাম

- ১। মেসার্স স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ, ৯৫, মতিঝিল বা/এ, ঢাকা। বর্তমানে- ৩৩৩/১, সেগুন বাগিচা, ঢাকা-১০০০ এবং চান্দনী মহল, দৌলতপুর, খুলনা।
- ২। (ক) তালত আহমদ, পিতা-মরহুম রশিদ আহমেদ, ২(খ) মিসেস ফৌজিয়া আলীম, পতি-জনাব জাফর আমিন, উভয়ের সাং-এপার্টমেন্ট নং-বি-৪, হাউজ নং-২৮, রোড নং-১৩-এ, ধানমন্ডি আবাসিক এলাকা, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা (বাকী ওয়ারিশ ১ ক্রী ২ পুত্র পূর্বের মামলার পক্ষ আছে)।
- ৩। জনাব শামীম আহমেদ, পরিচালক, মেসার্স স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ, ১০, পরিবাগ, ঢাকা। বর্তমানে-এপার্টমেন্ট নং-বি-৪, হাউজ নং-২৮, রোড নং-১৩-এ, ধানমন্ডি আবাসিক এলাকা, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা।
- ৪। মিসেস হোছনেআরা বেগম, পরিচালক, স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ, ১০, পরিবাগ, ঢাকা। বর্তমানে-এপার্টমেন্ট নং- বি-৪, হাউজ নং-২৮, রোড নং-১৩-এ, ধানমন্ডি আবাসিক এলাকা, ধানমন্ডি, ঢাকা।
- ৫। জনাব জাফর আমিন, পরিচালক, স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ, ৬৯৩, ধানমন্ডি আবাসিক এলাকা, রোড নং-৩১, ঢাকা।

জনাব সুলতান আহমেদ, পরিচালক, স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ, বাড়ি নং-এন, ডব্লিউ (ডি-এ) রোড নং-৫৩, গুলশান মডেল টাউন, ঢাকা।

দায়ীক

সর্বসাধারণের অবগতির জন্য জানানো যাইতেছে যে, আগামী ১২/৩/২০০১ ইং তারিখে বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকার সময়ে ডিক্রিয়ার ব্যাংক ৩১-০৫-৯৭ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত ১৬,৯৯,৩৯,২৮৬.৭৫ টাকা ও তৎসহ উক্ত টাকা আদায় না হওয়া পর্যন্ত ২০% হিসাবে সুদ ও যাবতীয় মামলার খরচের টাকা আদায়ের জন্য দায়ীকের ত্রৈমাসিক নিম্নতফসিল বর্ণিত সম্পত্তি নিলামে বিক্রির নিমিত্তে জেলা জজ আদালতের নেজারত প্রাংগণে প্রকাশ্যে নিলাম ডাক অনুষ্ঠিত হইবে। উক্ত বিক্রি তারিখের সময়ের অগ্রাহ্য নিলাম খরিদারগণকে যথাযথস্থানে উপস্থিত হইয়া নিলাম ডাকে অংশগ্রহণ করিবার জন্য অনুরোধ করা যাইতেছে।

নিলাম ডাককারীকে ২০,০০০/- টাকা জামানত প্রদান করিতে হইবে।

নিলাম ডাককারীকে নিলামে শতকরা ২৫% নিলাম ডাকের সময় নগদ পরিশোধ করিতে হইবে এবং বাকী টাকা নিলামের ডাক গ্রহণ করার ১৫ (পনের) দিনের মধ্যে পরিশোধ করিতে হইবে।

নিলামকৃত সম্পত্তির তফসিল

- (ক) খুলনা জেলার দৌলতপুর থানাধীন চান্দনী মহল/মোজায় অবস্থিত মেসার্স স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ এর মালিকানাধীন নিম্নলিখিত দাগসমূহের মোট ০.৪২১/২ একর (কুমবেশি) সম্পত্তি দাগ নং-২৬৩৩, ২৬৩৫, ২৬৩৬, ২৬৩৭, ২৬৩৮, ২৬৩৯, ২৬৪০, ২৬৪১, ২৬৪২, ২৬৪৩, ২৬৪৪, ২৬৪৫, ২৬৪৬, ২৬৪৭, ২৬৪৮, ২৬৪৯, ২৬৫০, ২৬৫১, ২৬৫২, ২৬৫৩, এবং ২৬৫৬ এর সম্পূর্ণ ভূমি ২৬৫০/৩৪০৩, ২৬৫৩/৩৪০৬, ২৬৫৩/৩৪০৬ ও ২৬৫০/৩৪০৮ নং দাগসমূহের আংশিক ভূমি।
- (খ) উপরোক্ত ভূমির উপর মেসার্স স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ কর্তৃক নির্মিত কারখানা, দালান, গুদামসমূহ প্রশাসনিক অফিস, উপক্ৰেশন, স্টাফকোয়ার্টার, গার্ডরুম, পানির ট্যাংক ওয়ার্কশপ, সীমানা দেওয়াল এবং অন্যান্য নির্মিত ঘর ছাউনি ইত্যাদি।
- (গ) উপরোক্ত ভূমি এবং দালানকোঠার মেসার্স স্পেশালাইজড জুট ইন্টারন্যাশনাল এন্ড ট্রায়াল ম্যানুফেকচারিং কোং লিঃ কর্তৃক স্থাপিত সকল ব্যাচিং এবং ক্রটিং মেশিনকাটিং, ড্রাইং স্পিনিং/ডাইনিং, টুইস্টিং এবং রিলিং মেশিনগুলি এবং ট্রান্সফরমার ইত্যাদি উপরে এবং ক, খ, এবং গ-তে উল্লিখিত সিডিউলভুক্ত সম্পত্তি দালানকোঠায় মেশিনারীজ ইত্যাদি সোনালী ব্যাংক স্থানীয় কার্যালয়ের নিকট দায়বদ্ধ যাহা নিলামকৃত বটে।

আদেশক্রমে

সেবেরদ্বারা

নং- সোঃব্যাঃজন/১৬/৩৭/২০০১

জিডি-৮৩

সাবজজ ও অর্থক্ৰম

আদালত নং-১, ঢাকা